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Table of Contents

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

- Creation, Part 4—
"In the Image of God" 2

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

- Called to Greatness 16
Trusting God's Promises 18
The LORD Will Provide 20
Living with Conflict 22

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

- The Search for God's People
Part 5—Establishing the
Brethren at Corinth 24
The Throne of David 38
The Voice of God 48
Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts 37

VOICES FROM THE PAST

- The Will of God 43

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

- Radio Schedule 34

THE BIBLE ANSWERS

- TV Schedule 36

ENCOURAGING LETTERS 59

OBITUARIES 46

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS 63

CONVENTIONS 64

Highlights of Dawn

CREATION, PART 6

The Bible says man was created in the image of God.

If this means that humans have a bodily form similar to God, then likewise many of the lower animals are in the image of God, as they obviously are quite similar in form to man.

Yet the Bible strongly implies that animals were not created in the image of God—only man.

What then is meant by the expression . . .

“In the Image of God”

THE Bible tells us that the first man was the direct creation of God and that, as he came from the hand of his Creator, he bore the divine image. This means that he was perfect in physique and capable of exhibiting those qualities of kindness, sympathy, and love which we naturally attribute to God and which the Scriptures assure us actually belong to him. That man is not perfect today is Scripturally attributed to retrogression due to disobedience of divine law. Have scientists been able thus far to produce any proof that this is not true?

Evolutionists claim, on the other hand, that man's present condition of imperfection is not due to retrogression, but to the alleged fact that we are not far enough along on the road of evolution to expect to find man any more perfect than at present, but that as the evolutionary process continues, man of the future will really be more nearly perfect in every way than now. Are scientists able to substantiate this theory of human evolution, or does it as yet continue to be

merely an unproved theory? Which is correct, the Scriptural view, or the evolution theory? This is the issue we wish to face in this article.

There is no question concerning the significant Scriptural testimony relative to the origin of man, but there is a serious question as to the meaning of the best evidence thus far produced by scientists to prove that the Bible does not tell the truth on the subject of creation. Let us examine this evidence in the order of its alleged importance. Evolutionists are agreed that Paleontology, or the study of fossils, is their most hopeful source of research. Fossils, as all know, are the remains of plants or animals found in or upon the earth; and evolutionists concede that the remains of extinct species which have thus far been found constitute their strongest argument for evolution. Admittedly, however, this falls far short of proof.

It was the dream of Darwin, and it is the hope of all his followers today, that eventually sufficient fossils of extinct and current species may be found to enable scientists to make up a series of such similar structures as will show an unbroken gradation, from the lowest to the highest in order of development, and thereby prove evolution's case by circumstantial evidence.

But modern paleontologists are not so hopeful of success as were their fellows some years ago. They have, of course, found many fossils since Darwin's day and have tried to arrange them in an unbroken series; yet they have so many missing links in their chain of evidence that their fossil record is becoming exceedingly discouraging.

Of course, the science of paleontology is relatively new. No scientist had suspected that there were such things as fossils of extinct species of animals until the beginning of the nineteenth century. At that time some workmen, digging in an old quarry near Paris, found the remains of a prehistoric elephant, which was unlike the skeleton of any known variety of elephant now living on earth.

That opened a new chapter in scientific history. Since then the earth has been combed for specimens of extinct species, in an

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endeavor to complete the fossil record and thus permit the evolutionists to present a series of skeletons in a progressive chain, each one nearly like its predecessor but showing some small step of improvement, such as Darwin's theory calls for. In this way they have hoped to prove circumstantially an evolutionary law of development that has operated from the very beginning of life upon this planet.

The scientists have made up a few sectional series of certain types of fossils, each showing more or less similarity to the other, which they fondly display in the museums. But, said the late Professor C.A. Seward, of Cambridge University in an article in "Nature" magazine, "A student who takes an impartial retrospect soon discovers that the fossil record raises more problems than it solves."

Instead of revealing a perfect gradation from the lowest to the highest in plant and animal structures, as the evolution theory requires, it rather indicates thus far that from time to time during geologic history new and distinct species have suddenly appeared which possess organs and structures that in no way resemble those of any preceding type.

For example: The evolutionists have theorized that reptiles, by several successive minute steps, gradually evolved into birds. Yet the fossil record reveals that birds made their appearance suddenly and dramatically with full feathers and wings; and no intermediate types of creatures between reptiles and birds thus far have been found. Such unbridged gaps as these throughout the fossil record create the unsolved problems to which Professor Seward alluded in the foregoing quotation, but they agree perfectly with the Bible account of creation.

And the reptile-bird gap is but one of the yawning chasms in the fossil chain, of which the ordinary layman has heard little. Everybody, of course, is familiar with the fact that there is a "missing link" between the so-called anthropoid ape and mankind. But this link, even if it could be found, would not complete the case for organic evolution—there are too many other and even larger gaps that must yet be spanned before Darwin's theory can be confirmed by the fossil record.

Darwin himself appreciated all this even in his day, and in his "**Origin of Species**" he made this frank admission: "Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely gradated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and serious objection which can be urged against the theory." Darwin, however, expressed the hope that the many gaps in the fossil record would eventually be filled by further geologic research.

More than a century has elapsed since Darwin's death, and geologic research has gone forward on a worldwide scale as never before, but his fond hope has not yet been realized. Indeed, the more the geologist delves into earth's silent strata, and the more the paleontologist seeks to complete his finely gradated organic chain, the more pronounced becomes the divergence between theory and fact, even as Professor Seward tacitly admits.

Professor Louis Trenchard More, Dean Emeritus of the University of Cincinnati, also doubtless considers himself a believer in organic evolution. Yet he has this to say: "The more one studies

paleontology [fossils] the more certain does one become that evolution is based on faith alone; exactly the same sort of faith it is necessary to have when one encounters the great 'mysteries' of religion. The changes that are noted as time progresses show no orderly and no consecutive evolutionary chain and, above all, they give us no clue whatever as to the cause of variation. . . . The evidence from paleontology is for discontinuity; only by faith and imagination is there continuity of variation."—"Dogma of Evolution," p. 160

The Darwinists have contended that nature makes no leaps, but moves by slow infinitesimal steps of perpetual progress. Yet the fossil record does not confirm that theory. Either nature in the remote past has made sudden, enormous jumps contrary to all human experience and observation, or else there was a special creation of the successive fixed species throughout all geologic times. And certainly the latter does not call for any greater degree of faith than does the former.

The fossil record at its very start presents us with several unfilled gaps which no evolutionist can explain. Fossils from the very earliest strata show wide differentiation of species then in existence, with no intermediate forms to connect one species with another. Professor Cook, of Cambridge University, says this concerning these earliest living forms in that remotely distant Cambrian geologic era ("Cambridge Natural History," Vol. III, page 5): "The first undisputed traces of animal life to appear in the Cambrian epoch, exhibit the same phylectic distinctions as now exist—sponges, echinoderms, mollusca, and worms, formed already, in those immeasurably remote ages, groups apparently as generally distinct from one another as they are at the present time."

Another conundrum for the evolutionist is the fact that we still have these same types of sponges, mollusca, echinoderms, and other Cambrian sea life living on earth today. They have never evolved a step in all these ages, but appear in the same form throughout all geologic strata, down to modern times. Although

many of the ancient species have become extinct, nevertheless those which are still in existence look just as they did when they made their initial appearance on earth.

Speaking of the earliest fossils of shellfish, the late Professor Geoffrey W. Smith of Oxford University says in "**Primitive Animals**," page 91: "If we examine the fossil shells, and those of the living animals, with the minutest care, we would not be able to detect the smallest difference."

We thus see, by the admissions of evolutionists themselves, that the Darwinian theory, which has been foisted upon the immature minds of school children for the past three generations and which has caused the world to believe in it, is recognized by its own sponsors to be faulty at its foundation and unstable throughout its entire structure.

Clearly the following utterances of Dr. D.H. Scott in his epoch-making address some time ago before the British Association, cannot be disputed: "For the moment, at all events, the Darwinian period is past. We can no longer enjoy the comfortable assurance that once satisfied so many of us, that the main problem has been solved—all is again in the melting pot. Now, in fact, a new generation has grown up that knows not Darwin."

Deceptive Museum Exhibits

In view of the frank admissions by the paleontologists that there are numerous unbridged gaps in the fossil record, many doubtless will wonder about the so-called fossil exhibits to be seen in some of our museums. The fact is that these exhibits are artificially arranged, wholly without respect to any chronological sequence, and are therefore plainly deceptive.

These museum exhibits always begin with the smallest and the simplest fossils and gradually go on up to the more complex organisms, without any regard to the time when each of these animals first appeared on earth. Perhaps the largest and the smallest skeletons in the group may be those of animals which actually lived

contemporaneously; yet the artificial arrangement of them by the museum managers leads visitors to suppose that the first animal in the group must have lived millions of years prior to the last and largest one in the group, since that much time apparently would be needed for one to evolve into the other by slow, successive steps.

But what may seem to be evolutionary proof to school children is far from proof to the studious scientists themselves. Professor Morgan, mentioned earlier, in his "**Critique of the Theory of Evolution**," page 9, says: "Because we can often arrange the 'series' of structures in a line extending from the very simple to the most complex, we are apt to become unduly impressed by this fact and conclude that if we found the complete series we would find all the intermediate steps, and that they have arisen in the order of their complexity. This conclusion is not necessarily correct."

Professor Johannes P. Lotsy, the late Dutch scientist, also seems to see the utter hopelessness of trying to prove Darwinism by these artificially arranged fossil displays and by guesswork reconstructions made from fragmentary remains. And he should have known what he was talking about, for he was a leading phylogenist who had made reconstructions and fossil exhibits for many years. In "**Evolution by Hybridization**," page 140, he says: "Phylogeny, that is, construction of what has happened in the past, is no science but a product of fantastic speculations. Those who know that I have spent a considerable part of my life in efforts to trace the phylogeny of the vegetable kingdom will know that this is not written down lightly; nobody cares to destroy his own efforts."

Such statements as these by scientists plainly indicate that the modern scientific trend is to agree with the late Dr. Etheridge, who for many years was the great fossil expert of the British Museum and who is quoted by Professor Townsend in "**Collapse of Evolution**" as saying: "Nine-tenths of the talk of evolutionists is sheer nonsense, not founded on observation and wholly unsupported by facts. The museum is full of proofs of the utter falsity of

their views. In all this great museum there is not a particle of evidence of the transformation of species."

Professor J.B. Warren, the University of California, is another scientist who seems to agree fully with the foregoing. He is quoted by Dr. Williams in "**Evolution Disproved**" as remarking frankly that during the course of human history "there should certainly be known at least a few instances of the evolution of one species from another," but that "no such instance is known."

Before we leave this phase of the subject, let us examine the views of scientists relative to three groups of fossil remains, known as (1) the Trinil bones; (2) the Heidelberg jaw; and (3) the Piltdown fragments. These have been considered by some as being evidence that at one time there existed on this earth a race of creatures which, as species, were midway between man and the fictional tertiary apes. No evidence has yet been discovered that these latter ever existed, so in reality there are at least two missing links between ape and man.

(1) **The Trinil Bones:** It is from these bones that the 'Java man' has been imagined. This group of fossil remains consists of an ape-like skull, two ape-like teeth, and part of a human-like thighbone, which were found in 1891 at Trinil, Java, in an excavation forty feet below the surface. They were not lying together when

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found. The teeth were three feet from the skull; and the thighbone, discovered a year later, was nearly fifty feet away.

These bones were found by the late Dr. Eugene Dubois, and from these he built his Java man. But, as related by Dr. William Howells, Research Associate, American Museum of Natural History, in his book published in 1944 entitled, "Mankind So Far," authorities have ever since 1891 agreed and dissented, accepted and rejected, and quarreled over, the real significance of the Trinil bones.

Dubois, having fairly well established his opinion that he had found the remains of a missing link—scientifically designated *Pithecanthropus*, meaning 'erect ape-man'—withdrew from the controversy. Twenty years later, however, he reappeared with a radical change of opinion. He had reconstructed his Trinil bones into a true ape instead of an ape-man, supporting his later convictions by several new fragments of fossil femurs.

Dubois died in 1940, convinced that he had not discovered the fossil remains of an ape-man at all. Since then, however, a young geologist, Dr. Von Koenigswald, has made further explorations in Java, with the result that scientists now have no less than three adult skulls in fair shape, and parts of the upper and lower jaws with a number of teeth. These, it is claimed, are of the same species as were the fossils found by Dubois.

Upon the basis of these additional discoveries, it has now been quite generally decided that the creatures to which the bones once belonged were not apes at all, but men. The scientists attempt to say, of course, that they were halfway between apes and men, but, nevertheless, men. The 'halfway' theory is deduced from the brain capacity indicated by the size and shape of the skull—900 to 1,000 cubic centimeters. The average man of today has about 1,450 cubic centimeters of brain space in his skull. But this is the average, and often it is much less. In his book, "Mankind So Far," Dr. Howells says: "Now there is one point about this which should be made plain, and it is that the size of one's brain is not an exact index of one's mental powers. There is only slight relation among modern men

between the two, and individuals with normal intelligence occur whose cranial capacity is less than 1,000 cubic centimeters, or halfway back to the ape."

The Java men, it is admitted, were small in stature—about five feet, six inches in height. Naturally their heads would be somewhat smaller than the average of today, and if there are men now with normal intelligence having a brain capacity 'halfway back to the ape', why would it not be possible for the creatures to which the Trinil bones belonged, who had the same brain capacity, to be true men?

(2) **The Heidelberg Jaw:** This is a massive jawbone which resembles an ape's jaw, but has human-like teeth. It was found near Heidelberg, Germany, in 1907, in a shaft sixty-nine feet below the surface. No other part of the skeleton was found; yet from this one bone the scientific plastic artists have pretended to 'reconstruct' the whole creature, just as they have reconstructed the Trinil ape-man from equally flimsy evidence. This Heidelberg jaw may be that of an extinct and rare species of ape, whose teeth were straight instead of slanting; or it might be that of an abnormal man—a monstrosity or 'freak of nature'.

The late Henry Fairfield Osborn, former president of the New York Zoological Society, seems to eliminate this Heidelberg jaw entirely as a 'missing link' between ape and man; for on page 99 of his book, "**Men of the Old Stone Age**," he says concerning this jaw and teeth: "It is absolutely certain that these remains are human. They bear no trace of being intermediate between man and the anthropoid ape."

Dr. Howells, in "**Mankind So Far**," says concerning the Heidelberg jaw, "It is, of course, not safe to conjecture what the rest of the Heidelberg skull might have been like."

(3) **The Piltdown Fragments:** This fossil exhibit consists of a small piece of skull, part of a jawbone, three teeth, and two small bones from the nose. These bones were found scattered through a gravel pit, at Piltdown, England, but not all at one time.

The finds were made during 1910, 1911, and 1912, and it is not known that they all belong to the same creature or type of creatures.

The accuracy of the reconstructed Piltdown skeleton still remains in question according to Dr. William Howells who, in 1944, again took up the cudgel on behalf of the theory of evolution in his book, "**Mankind So Far.**" He describes at length the circumstances surrounding the scattered fragments of the few Piltdown fossils and the furor it has caused. He explains that of the manner in which these specimens were found and the structural differences of the bones, two main controversies have arisen and are still unsettled. He says that the dilemma rests on the incongruous mixture of the skull of a man and the jaw of an ape, "a combination of two extremes rather than a mingling." Says Dr. Howells: "The first controversy has the incongruous mandible for its theme. In this, the question at issue is whether Eoanthropus represents a single creature or two different ones. Half of the body scientific accepted the find at its face value, but to others the idea of so human a skull having so simian a jaw was too great an outrage to credulity, and they rebelled with justice."

Experienced morphologists felt that "the Piltdown Man represented a greater illogicality than they had ever seen in their work; that it looked like a sort of immorality in nature." The other controversy arose out of the fact that in the skeleton reconstruction at no point did any fragments of the skull, except in one dubious

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instance, touch each other and fit. Says Dr. Howells, "The anatomists were somewhat taken aback to find that two qualified experts could reach such different ends, and began to doubt as to whether any valid reconstruction could be made from four such ill-fitting fragments as the remains of the Piltdown brain case."*

The more we investigate the evidence found in fossil remains which is supposed to prove the Bible untrue, the more apparent it becomes that this evidence is wholly unconvincing. Man is a direct creation of God, and no fossils yet found disprove this well-established Scriptural truth.

We are not, of course, unmindful of the theories which have been developed upon the basis of discovered fossils concerning 'Neanderthal' and other 'dawn men.' We wish to emphasize that they are only theories, and are freely admitted as such by many of the world's leading scientists. These theories have been made to mean more to the general public than the weight of evidence back of them warrants, by the cleverness of reconstruction artists. Their 'reconstructions', as we have seen, are wholly artificial, and they invariably represent early man as bearing a very close resemblance to the ape.

But the plastic artists who made them knew no more about what early man looked like than does anyone else—they simply drew upon their vivid imaginations. Dr. Howells now has decided that Neanderthal man was as intelligent as we of today, which, he states, is a compliment to us! He also had a religion, Dr. Howell asserts—probably crude—but it emphasizes his wide separation from the brute creation.

*NOTE: Late in 1953, several years after the above was written, scientists discovered that the Piltdown fragments had been deliberately faked by some unknown trickster. It seems that the jawbone and teeth were those of an ape, the teeth having been filed to give them the appearance of being human, and the jawbone discolored to give it the appearance of age. It is now believed that the small piece of skull belonged to a human being.

Structural Similarities

Much literature has been written under this head in an attempt to prove the alleged law of natural evolution. Such books point out various anatomical similarities in the different species of animals—also structural similarities in the many plant families. They contend that this suggests kinship through evolution; for example, man's arm and hand bear a resemblance to that of the ape, and indeed are somewhat like the forefoot of the dog, rat, or cat.

• There is also the general similarity in the construction of the backbone of nearly all vertebrate animals. There are resemblances between the heart, stomach, and other organs and structures in nearly all the animal species including man. Some scientists argue that it is not reasonable to believe that such complex, yet similar, things have arisen independently. But this is only an opinion, and proves nothing.

To those who accept the Bible account of creation it seems reasonable that there should be structural similarities, for the simple reason that the same mechanical and biological principles are commonly involved. The same thing is true in mechanics generally, and in architecture, or in any of the arts. Buildings frequently employ the same architectural principles because they are intended to perform similar functions, but this does not imply that the one has evolved from the other.

Common anatomic resemblances no more prove that man was evolved from the ape than architectural resemblances prove a kinship between St. Peter's in Rome and a Masonic temple. There are close anatomic resemblances between a dog and a lion, yet evolutionists do not even place them in the same group, for the one is a canine and the other a feline. Neither should man be grouped with the anthropoid ape simply because of certain anatomical similarities.

But why stress resemblances and overlook the enormous divergencies? There are quite as many differences as there are similarities between them. Is it not just as reasonable to suppose that

the differences disprove the theory of evolution as it is to conjecture that the similarities prove it? In any event, the one theory at least offsets the other, and we are left again without real proof that the Bible is in error in stating that man was created directly by God and in the divine image.—Gen. 1:26

Evolutionists also rely on genetics as one means of proving their theory. This phase of the subject will be discussed in Part 5 of this series, and found to be void of any actual proof that one species of either plant or animal life has ever evolved into another. Hence, no matter which way the evolutionist turns, he finds himself still a theorist, and a very unreasonable one at that.

The Bible story of creation, on the other hand, is harmonious with the actual discoveries of science. It also accords most fully with reason. Adam and Eve were created perfect, in the mental and moral image of God—so much so that even in his fallen state, God can say to him, “Come now, and let us reason together.” (Isa. 1:18) Adam and Eve could have lived here on the earth forever had they obeyed divine law.

Many scientists say it should be possible for living cells to rebuild or multiply themselves indefinitely if given a perfect environment. The Scriptures assure us that this great boon, which was lost by Adam, will be restored by Christ, that all mankind will be provided with the necessary perfect environment, which will enable them to live forever.—Acts 3:19-21

“**Hast** thou not known! Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. . . . They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”—*Isaiah 40:28-31*

International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR OCTOBER 4

Called to Greatness

KEY VERSE: “*I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing.*”—Genesis 12:2

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Genesis 11:31, 32; 12:1-9

THE name of Abraham is mentioned seventy-four times by the writers of the New Testament, and this was nearly two thousand years after Abraham's time. It is difficult to deny the fact of greatness to one who was remembered and respected for so many centuries.

In these multiple references to Abraham made by our Lord and the apostles, it becomes clear wherein his greatness lay. God considered him great by reason of his outstanding faith. The promise stated in our text was a severe test to Abraham, as he realized that its fulfillment necessitated the birth of a son by a wife who was barren and approaching the latter years of life. He, too, was seventy-five years of age when the promise was first given.

Years slipped by, however, with no apparent change—ten, then twenty—finally reaching the point where both he and Sarah knew that without a miracle from God some

alternative means would be needed to produce a seed. On two occasions they sought the LORD'S acceptance of a seed that had not come from Sarah, and in both instances the LORD spoke to Abraham and reiterated his requirement that it would be Sarah who would fulfill the cherished promise.

To a husband and wife of lesser faith, the impossibility of the situation might have caused the original words of God to have lessened in importance and credibility as time went on. But not so with these two. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Romans, makes mention of the fact that his unflagging faith earned Abraham the title, “father of the faithful.” “As it is written I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might

become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform." (Rom. 4:17-21) And again the apostle tells us in another statement that Sarah shared this same faith with her husband, "because she judged him faithful who had promised."—Heb. 11:11

What a wonderful testimony of faith! What a magnificent example the LORD has placed before those who are seeking to have a part in the larger scope of the promised seed as it is represented in the Christ. How incredible, yes impossible, it seems of personal fulfillment, except as the great power of God can assure its accomplishment to us, if our faith fails not!

The Apostle Paul says that Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness. But he adds that this fact was not written for his sake alone, "but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." (Rom. 5:22-24)

Abraham's faith and justification rested in the prospective birth of a typical seed. Ours, on the other hand, is founded not only upon a belief in the one who was born in antitype, but also "who was delivered [in death] for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."—vs. 25

Paul goes on to imply that the difference between Abraham's justification and ours is that his faith did not save him from wrath [Adamic condemnation], while ours, based on the ransoming merit [blood] of Jesus effects a release from the sentence of death. "Much more then [than in the case of Abraham] being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."—Rom. 5:9

The spiritual lesson in the story of Abraham is that God is pleased to honor faith, and that the experiences of life which he permits to come to the faithful are intended for their development in faith and in the graces of the Holy Spirit, and that these all are unitedly in preparation for God's still greater work of the future.

Abraham and Sarah had faith that God could make possible that which was by nature impossible, So it must be with our faith, also, if we would be Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.—Gal. 3:29

Trusting God's Promises

KEY VERSE: *"My covenant I will establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year." Genesis 17:21*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Genesis 15:1-4; 16:3,4; 17:15-21*

ABRAHAM was ninety-nine years old. It was thirteen years since he had taken Hagar for a wife and Ishmael was born. He had hoped that God would receive this child as the promised seed, but now it was being made clear that this proposed arrangement was not acceptable.

Again God spoke to Abraham, reiterating that Sarai would be the mother, and to emphasize the nobility of the seed she would bear, her name was changed to Sarah, meaning 'a princess' or 'a queen'. God said, "I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations, kings of people shall be of her."—Gen. 17:16

God now was becoming much more specific in his statement concerning the seed. He said, "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac" (vs. 19), and he added that this would happen at a set time in the

next year. Abraham was no doubt beginning to realize God had waited so long that a miracle would be required to bring Isaac into the world.

The Apostle Paul, referring to the words of our text in his letter to the Romans, places them in an allegorical setting. He said that Israel—a nation descended from Abraham under the Law—had hopes of being the seed of blessing, but like Ishmael they were unacceptable to God in this capacity. (Rom. 9:6-9) Also, as was pictured, the seed would be brought forth through a promise which only God would have the power to fulfill. "This is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." It was God's intervention which gave Abraham and Sarah the strength to conceive and bear a child.

It was God's intervention of the natural process which caused Jesus

to be brought forth by a miraculous birth; and this occurred in keeping with a set time God had previously stated in the prophecy of Daniel. (Dan. 9:25) But further, it was through the power of God's Holy Spirit that our Lord was begotten to divine sonship when, at the age of thirty, he was immersed by John the Baptist.

This pouring out of God's Spirit, pronouncing Jesus as a Son in whom he was well pleased, set the pattern for all who will be part of that seed. Their begetting is from God, through the operation of the life-giving and transforming power of the Holy Spirit. It is to the divine nature. This is the kingly station of life to which the seed is called and from which it will bless all the families of the earth.

The LORD told Abraham on this occasion that he would establish his covenant with Isaac "for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." (Gen. 17:19) Abraham understood the LORD to be referring to the only covenant he knew about—the promise of a seed and subsequent blessings to all mankind.

While God was speaking to this faithful patriarch he also changed his name from Abram to that of Abraham, "for a father of many nations have I made thee . . . and

kings shall come out of thee."—vss. 5,6

Centuries later, the Apostle Paul was used to identify the seed and the prospective kings. He wrote: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29) And again, "Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."—Gal. 4:28

In his interesting discussion of this type, Paul likened Sarah to a covenant linked with the future kingdom government—Jerusalem which is above. He said that those brought forth for this purpose by this mother are free. (vs. 26) Unlike natural Israel, they are unencumbered by any other covenants.

The Apostle then turns to an inspiring prophecy of Isaiah in which God gives assurance that though the wait would seem long, the antitypical Sarah would indeed bear her children—the entire Isaac class.

"Sing O barren, thou that didst not bear, break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child. . . . Enlarge the place of thy tent, . . . for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles . . . for thy Maker is thine husband. The LORD of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel."—Isa. 54:1-3,5

The LORD Will Provide

KEY VERSE: *"Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him."*—Genesis 21:1-7

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Genesis 21:1-7*

WE CAN imagine the joy and elation in Abraham's house, when that which they hardly dared hope for became a living reality! Isaac was the most beautiful boy they had ever laid eyes on! He was the apple of their eye, the fulfillment of all that God had spoken, and the reward of their faith.

Sarah said, "God hath made me to laugh [be glad], so that all that hear will laugh with me. . . . Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? For I have borne him a son in his old age."—Gen. 21:6,7

With what tender affection and loving care this cherished son was raised, in the awareness that he would be the recipient of God's promises, the possessor of a birthright beyond measure.

But as the child grew to a young lad, the day came when a dark shadow fell across the lives of this family. The most severe test of faith that anyone has ever been required to endure was asked of Abraham,

Sarah, and Isaac. God said to Abraham, "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains."

These words pierced through the very soul of Isaac's parents, and yet not one word of protest is uttered in the Bible account. They knew that God had made possible the life of their child, and he had the right to take it away. But the Apostle Paul was inspired to tell us that their faith went even deeper than this. He wrote: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried offered up Isaac, and he that had received the promises, offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said That in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure."—Heb. 11:17-19

Abraham's faith was so strong in the promises of God centered in Isaac that, with a firm conviction

that God would restore his son's life again, Abraham raised his knife to offer up in death the dearest treasure of his heart. And at the crucial moment, when his hand was stayed, it was indeed as if he had received his son again from the dead.

The Apostle Paul said that he received him 'in a figure'. Yes, a picture was being enacted, portending a future dark day to come for another father and another son. A son who, like Isaac, was an only son, greatly beloved, and an heir of promise. Who, like Isaac would have such great trust and faith in his father, that he would willingly consent to die. Jesus said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life. . . . No man taketh it from me but I lay it down of myself."—John 10:17,18

When the day finally came for this difficult experience to take place, the prophecy of Isaiah well described Jesus as that of a lamb being led to the slaughter. Unlike with Isaac, the angel of the LORD was now instructed not to intervene. The twelve legions of angels, whom Jesus said would offer immediate help should he request it, were called upon to stand aside and watch their charge die on a cross, at the brutal hands of sinful men.

The innermost pain of a loving father could not go unexpressed, as

the day grew dark as night, and a mighty earthquake shook the land, and the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom.

We can well imagine the great rejoicing of Isaac and of Abraham as he lifted his son from the altar and received him to his bosom. No less was the rejoicing in heaven, when he who had proven faithful unto death was restored by the mighty power of his Heavenly Father, and received to a place at his own right hand.

All who are called to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, are also pictured in this experience of Isaac. In association with their Lord they too are laid on the altar of sacrifice; and it is only when the entire sacrifice of this age is complete that they will be united with the Lord as the Christ in resurrection glory, received from the dead, unto God. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. 3:21

When God swore an oath to Abraham stating, "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son" (Gen. 22:16), he was in essence saying to us that the ransom sacrifice of Jesus constituted his oath to us of the sure accomplishment of all his good promises.—vs. 17

Living with Family Conflict

KEY VERSE: *"He said, Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he hath supplanted me these two times; he took away my birthright, and behold he hath taken away my blessing."—Genesis 27:36*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Genesis 27:5-10, 41-46*

JACOB'S name had the meaning of 'supplanter'. Even though he was Esau's twin, Esau was the firstborn and, according to the custom of the time, the chief family inheritance—called the birthright—belonged to him. The confirmation of this arrangement was by a special 'blessing' bestowed by the father.

But early in life, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a mess of "pottage." We are told that "Esau despised his birthright." (Gen. 25:29-34) In the New Testament he is called a "profane person." (Heb. 12:16) In Romans 9:13 we read, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Mal. 1:2,3) Professor Strong suggests "detested" or, by extension, "to love less," as a proper translation of the Greek word translated "hated" in this text. Understand it as we will, the thought is clear that the LORD loved and appreciated Jacob, and favored him above Esau.

Esau's sale of his birthright was bona fide. He even sealed the arrangement with his oath. (Gen. 25:33) In later years, when it came time for Isaac to bestow the blessing of the birthright, Esau should have explained this situation and should have seen to it that Jacob be given the blessing. But he did not. Only by maneuvering on the part of their mother did Jacob receive that which properly belonged to him.

According to Christian standards, the misrepresentation practiced by Rebekah and Jacob was wrong. The ethical code of that day apparently was different from what it is now. So far as the record goes, the LORD did not condemn them for it, and we will let the judgment rest with him. The entire Scriptural testimony on the subject is that the LORD wanted Jacob to have the birthright.

Concerning Esau, Hebrews 12:17 reads, "Ye know how afterward, when he would have inherited the

blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." The margin suggests 'repentance' meant, "or way to change his mind." Turning to the record in Genesis, we find nothing to indicate that Esau was at all repentant. The "tears" were shed in an effort to get Isaac to change his mind about the blessing and give it to him even though he had already bestowed it upon Jacob. Paul did not say that Esau sought a change of mind on his own part; and Genesis reveals clearly that it was Isaac's mind he endeavored to change.

Since Jacob had purchased the birthright, his mother, Rebekah, made sure he obtained also the paternal blessing which more or less ratified it, by working with Jacob to deceive his aged father. Now that Jacob had received the blessing which belonged with the birthright, Esau was very angry and threatened to kill him. So Jacob was advised by his mother to flee to the home of her brother, Laban, in Padan-aram.

Isaac, realizing now that Jacob was the true heir of the Abrahamic promise, instructed Jacob that he should not take a wife from among the daughters of the Canaanites, but seek a bride from among the daughters of Laban, his uncle, Rebekah's brother. Thus did the LORD over-

rule to prevent the promised seed from becoming contaminated. Both his mother and father advised him to seek the home of Laban—his mother's motive being Jacob's escape from the wrath of Esau, while his father's desire was that he take a wife from among their own people.

This all happened during the Patriarchal Age, when the LORD was dealing with individuals, so the blessing of the birthright had to be exclusively to Jacob. The valuable part of this birthright was the inheritance of the promise made to Abraham concerning his seed being the channel of blessing to all the families of the earth. So far as earthly riches were concerned, Isaac did say to Esau, "Thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above." — Gen. 27:3

Jacob was the last of the individual patriarchs. At his death, the plan of God moved forward into another phase, and the Jewish Age began. The twelve sons of Jacob constituted the nucleus of the nation of Israel—a nation which was entitled to receive God's blessing. The descendants of Esau, on the other hand, received no special blessing. They were the Edomites who became enemies of Israel, and who, throughout the Scriptures, were denounced by God.

Christian Life and Doctrine

THE SEARCH FOR GOD'S PEOPLE, Part 5

Establishing the Brethren at Corinth



PAUL, AT PRISCILLA AND AQUILA'S HOME IN CORINTH

PAUL was forced through persecution to hurriedly leave Berea. His two traveling companions— Silas, whom he left behind in Berea, and Timothy, who had gone to Thessalonica—were left the message that they should join him in Athens, where they would resume their journey together. But as circumstances would have it, both brethren were considerably delayed, and when Paul could wait no longer he went on alone to Corinth. Soon after he reached that city he began working at his trade of tent-making in order to secure a living for awhile. This led him to become acquainted with fellow tent-makers, Aquila and Priscilla. This Jewish couple were new arrivals in Corinth, after the edict to expel all Jews from Rome had been enacted by Emperor Claudius.

No doubt circumstances were directed by God, who desired that these two devoted brethren should come to a better knowledge of his plan, gaining an understanding of his calling, through association with the apostle. Paul was invited to live in their home. He stayed with them for about two years, laboring together in their common trade and enjoying the wonderful fellowship of the Gospel. It is likely that Aquila and Priscilla were the first brethren in Corinth to learn of God's plan, and to be immersed into the body of Christ.

They also were of great assistance to Paul in his ministry there. The Scriptures tell of their devotion and zeal for the truth. In his letter to the Romans, Paul wrote, "Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus: who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house." (Rom. 16:3,4,5) This salutation is indeed fitting tribute to their characters, and evidences their readiness to lay down their lives for their brother. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) Those early Christians were literally put to the test, and have left a legacy of martyrdom as proof of their brotherly love.

These faithful friends were addressed again by Paul in one

of his letters: "Salute Prisca and Aquila."—II Tim. 4:19

Later, when Paul went to Ephesus, he stayed with Aquila and Priscilla, who had since moved to that city. From their home he wrote to the brethren in Corinth saying, "The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the LORD, with the church that is in their house." (I Cor. 16:19) We note that in Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla's home was one of the places where the brethren held meetings. They served willingly in every way and indeed were true brethren in Christ.

The importance of such brethren cannot be overemphasized. The work being done by the LORD in this Gospel Age does not rest solely upon the shoulders of more prominent brethren. This lesson is emphasized in the **Manna**, March 8, which brings to our attention the text, "God hath set the members everyone of them in the body as it hath pleased him." (I Cor. 12:18) The comments on this scripture read:

"No member of the body of Christ can say that he has no need for another member, and no member may say that there is nothing whatever that he can do in the service of the body. Under the guidance of our glorious Head each member who is filled with his Spirit, and desirous of serving him, may do so. When the time for rewards shall have come, who knows how much of the usefulness of Paul and Apollos may be accredited to some of the humble ones, such as Aquila and Priscilla, who in various ways ministered to and encouraged and supported their abler brethren in the LORD'S work."

Going back to Paul's arrival in Corinth, we read in Acts 18:4 of his initial ministry in the synagogue. His reasoning on the Scriptures apparently was forceful, but not controversial, and he was able to persuade both Jews and Gentiles who heard his message. However, from the record of subsequent scriptures, it appears that Paul was very careful in his presentation of the Gospel of Christ. The memory of experiences during his first journey when overzealous Jews incited riots against him, and stoned him nearly to the point of

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death, as well as his recent experiences in Thessalonica and Berea, caused him to be more subdued and cautious when preaching the truth.

Then Silas and Timothy finally arrived from Berea and Thessalonica with a good report. The brethren in these cities, particularly in Thessalonica, were suffering severe persecution at the hands of both Jews and Gentiles. But they were receiving these experiences well, and were growing in grace and knowledge. Paul later told of the comfort he received from Timothy's words. "Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-laborer in the Gospel of Christ [was sent] to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith; that no man should be moved by these afflictions, for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should

suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor be in vain. But now, when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you. Therefore brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith!"—I Thess. 3:2-7

This report made Paul so glad it inspired him to speak out more boldly to the Jews in the synagogue concerning Jesus. Luke states, "When Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ." (Acts 18:5) This straightforward message had an immediate and expected effect. Many Jews began to ridicule and oppose Paul, blaspheming him violently. In exasperation he denounced them, telling them he was going to preach to them no more, but from that time on his message would go to the Gentiles. However, some had already accepted Paul's Gospel message. Crispus, ruler of the synagogue, and his house, were among these. They believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, and were immersed. Paul no longer used the synagogue, but instead accepted the offer of a home adjoining the synagogue for a meeting place. It was the home of a man named Justus. There Paul continued to preach to all who would listen, and a great many Gentiles heard the Gospel.

It is evident that the constant physical abuse and life-threatening experiences which accompanied Paul's missionary work up to this time was taking its toll in the stamina and health of the apostle. Paul needed some rest from this kind of pressure, and so the LORD overruled circumstances for its accomplishment. The record states: "The LORD [spoke] to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." (Acts 18:9,10) The LORD knew that Paul's reticence in speaking out was because of the potentially hazardous situation it

would undoubtedly cause. But in these words the Heavenly Father gave Paul the assurance that in Corinth he would overrule the opposition, enabling his preaching to have its greatest effect, because there were many people in that city God was seeking to call into the body of Christ.

And the LORD was true to his promise. No one hurt Paul during his stay in Corinth. Oh, he made many enemies! There were those who wanted to stop his preaching the message of Christ crucified and risen, but protection was given to him through the magistrates and civil rulers of Corinth. At one time there was a change of office in the province, when a new procounsel named Gallio took charge. The Jews, including Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, thinking it an appropriate time to take action against Paul, seized him and brought him before the new magistrate. They said, "This man persuaded men to worship God contrary to the Law." (Acts 18:13, **Diaglott**) Paul was set to defend himself, but much to his surprise, there was no need for him to do so! Gallio spoke up and said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you. But if it be a question of words and names, and of your Law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters." (vss 14-16) Gallio must have had some previous acquaintance with the Jews and their Law; he would not be deceived into believing that Paul was violating civil law, and he sent them out of the tribunal.

Generally, when accusations of this sort were leveled against Paul, he would bear the brunt of a beating or imprisonment, being considered the cause of the turmoil or the riot. But on this occasion things were different. It was Sosthenes who was seized and summarily beaten, while Paul went unhurt. Yes, the LORD did indeed keep his promise, and in this instance caused the accusers and the attackers to suffer.

When some take courses contrary to the LORD'S will, corrective lessons may come to them as a result. These extreme measures are to help them realize the error of their ways. Sosthenes

must have realized that the protection given to Paul by the magistrates was directed by God. It is very possible that he had talked with Crispus, the former ruler of the synagogue; who had been converted by Paul and who was aware that Paul had been assured God's special protection. Sosthenes, pondering upon this experience, and no doubt receiving earnest sympathy from Paul for his injuries, began to attend the meetings, and soon was converted. Several years later, Paul, writing from Ephesus, included Sosthenes in sending greetings to the brethren at Corinth. His salutation reads: "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother." (I Cor. 1:1) This dear brother and beloved member of the class in Corinth had by that time come to Ephesus to assist Paul.

This obvious attempt by the Adversary to disrupt Paul's work was unsuccessful. Paul continued his witnessing efforts in Corinth for another year and a half. During that time he also established a congregation in Cenchrea, a port city nearby. We do not know too much about the brethren from that city, except for a sister named Phebe. We read about her in Romans 16:1,2: "Receive her in the LORD, as becometh saints, and . . . assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also."

In that place Paul made a vow, apparently according to the law of the Nazarites, at the conclusion of which he shaved his head. (Acts 18:18) We do not know conclusively what the nature of the vow was, but might speculate that it involved making a difficult and hazardous trip to Jerusalem to visit the other apostles and brethren there.

Finally Paul bid farewell to the brethren of this new congregation, and set sail for Syria. Aquila and Priscilla sailed with Paul, their destination being Ephesus which was a port of call along the way. Paul took advantage of the ship's layover in Ephesus to go to the synagogue and reason with the Jews. They wanted Paul to remain, but he could not—no doubt because of the vow he had taken. And so once again he resumed his voyage to his destination, Syria.

However, since Aquila and Priscilla had taken up residence in Ephesus they were able to continue expounding the truth as opportunity afforded.—Acts 18:18-22

While Paul was completing this second journey and preparing for a third, another servant of the LORD, named Apollos, came through Ephesus. He was a Jew from Alexandria, well versed in the Scriptures and a gifted speaker—indeed he was an eloquent orator. He believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and preached this message with boldness in the synagogues of the Jews. He was fervent in spirit and understood many scriptures as having had their fulfillment in Jesus. However, his knowledge was incomplete as he only knew of the baptism of John. When he went to the synagogue in Ephesus and spoke about Jesus being the Messiah, he became acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla. They befriended him, taking him aside and explaining more accurately God's plan, "the way of God."—vss. 24-28

Apollos told Aquila and Priscilla of his plan to go to the province of Achaia. They wrote to the brethren at Corinth and exhorted them to receive him, which they did. Apollos was a welcome addition to their congregation. With his talent for speaking, and enthusiasm for the truth, he helped fill the void left by Paul's departure.

Meanwhile, Paul arrived at Caesarea and from there he went to Jerusalem to see the apostles and the brethren, no doubt in keeping with his vow. In the Scriptural record of this visit so little is said that some have concluded that Paul's welcome by the brethren there was not very warm. The account reads: "When he landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch." (vs. 22) It is true that many brethren in Jerusalem were not enthused about the work being done among the Gentiles, and it is highly probable that his reception was disappointing. But, lacking specific information to this effect, it is also a possibility that Luke, the narrator, was merely being brief.

After leaving Jerusalem, Paul finally came to his journey's

(Continued on Page 37)

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The Bible Answers

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end—his home class at Antioch, in Syria. We can be certain that they were happy to see him! It had been about three years since he had left Antioch with Silas as a fellow-traveler. Later, Timothy had joined them in Derbe, and Luke in Troas. Now Paul returned alone. Timothy and Silas had stayed in Corinth to help the brethren there. Luke was in Philippi. For what length of time Silas remained at Corinth, we do not know. He may have returned to Jerusalem after a short while, as he is no longer mentioned as Paul's traveling companion or helper. Silas was mentioned by the Apostle Peter, and apparently became his assistant until Peter finished his course. (Silas is a contraction of Silvanus.)—I Pet. 5:12; I Thess. 1:1

During his third journey, Paul wrote to the brethren in Corinth on two occasions. In his second letter, written from Philippi, he reminded the brethren of the preaching done in their midst by himself, Timothy, and Silvanus. These three brethren had done a remarkable work in Corinth! God had used them to search out the people for his name whom he had known were in that city. A large congregation of brethren in Christ was firmly established there because of their faithful, courageous, and tireless efforts.

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

OCTOBER 1—"I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me."—Psalm 39:1 (Z. '97-156 Hymn 196)

OCTOBER 8—"Be not deceived, . . . he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Galatians 6:7,8 (Z. '04-57 Hymn 127)

OCTOBER 15—"Have faith in God."—Mark 11:22 (Z. '04-59 Hymn 124)

OCTOBER 22—"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"—Matthew 20:22 (Z. '04-138,139 Hymn 14)

OCTOBER 29—"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus."—II Corinthians 4:8-10 (Z. '01-55 Hymn 146)

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Throne of David

“Say unto my servant David . . . I will set up thy seed after thee. . . . Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever.”—II Samuel 7:8,12,16

DAVID was a man after God's own heart. God made promises to him concerning his seed, kingdom, and throne. All these promises will be fulfilled through the “son of David,” who will accomplish more than David ever imagined!

God promised that David's throne and kingdom would continue long after David fell asleep in death. Many Israelites thought this promise would be fulfilled in Solomon, one of David's sons. But Solomon and his descendents through King Zedekiah represented only the typical kingdom of God. With the overthrow of Zedekiah that typical kingdom came to an end.

The words spoken by the Prophet Nathan in our theme scripture, tell us that David was to have a seed; that seed would build a house; and that the line of David would be the royal line of the kingdom of God. It also speaks of a throne, although the prophecy does not concern a literal throne of wood or stone. The word is used as a symbol of sovereign power: the right to rule would always belong to one of David's seed.

This theme continues to unfold in other Old Testament prophecies. Notice Isaiah's words: “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of

David and upon his kingdom . . . forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.” (Isa. 9:6,7) This prophecy tells us not only about blessings of the kingdom, but also of the one who will bring those blessings. And that one, of course, is Jesus Christ.

Notice how Matthew recounts the geneology of Jesus: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” (Matt. 1:1) David is mentioned before Abraham, the friend of God, because prominence was being given to the kingly line of David.

When the angel announced to Mary the wonderful thing that would happen to her, he said: “Thou shalt bring forth a son and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the LORD God shall give unto him the throne of his father David . . . and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”—Luke 1:31-33

This proclamation tells us that the promises to David have their fulfillment in Jesus who will forever have the ‘right to rule’ as signified in David’s throne. What this scripture does not tell us is when he will actually begin to exercise that right. Certainly Jesus did not rule in any sense of the word at his first advent, when he died as a ransom for Adam and the entire human race. But the prophecy concerning his role as king upon a throne will be fulfilled during Christ’s thousand-year kingdom.

Two Thrones

Consider these encouraging words directed to the faithful of God: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.”—Rev. 3:21

Two thrones are mentioned: the Father’s and Christ’s. During the past two thousand years of this Gospel Age, our Lord and his father have been jointly sitting in the Father’s throne. His activity since his resurrection has been as Jehovah’s representative. But the time is coming when he will sit on his own throne. When he does,

faithful overcomers will be granted the right to sit with him as joint-inheritors in the kingdom.

Jesus said, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." (Matt. 25:31) Peter said, "God . . . raised up Christ to sit on his [David's] throne." (Acts 2:30) The Matthew text associates the faithful overcomers with Christ in the throne of his glory, which Peter calls David's throne. We might term this Christ's 'millennial throne', because when he is on that throne, "Before him shall be gathered all nations and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."—Matt. 25:32

The Scriptures contain numerous promises that the faithful footstep followers of Jesus will share in reigning with him in the kingdom. "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6) "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." (II Tim. 2:12) But, of course, these promises have yet to be fulfilled.

When Will Christ Sit on David's Throne?

In Revelation, the Lord said he had sat down in his Father's throne. That throne is not, of course, David's throne. Christ sits down on David's throne when the entire church has been glorified and is with him. Because God is still accepting new members of the church who make a covenant by sacrifice to serve him, the time for reigning from David's throne is yet future.

When Peter, Paul, and Barnabas talked about how God had begun to deal with Gentiles, the elders at Jerusalem met to discuss it. At the end of this discussion, James spoke: "Simeon [Peter] hath declared how God at the first [for the first time] did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the LORD, and all the Gentiles,

upon whom my name is called, saith the LORD, who doeth all these things.”—Acts 15:14-17

Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, James stated that Christ as Jehovah’s agency returns to set up the tabernacle (tent or habitation) of David—David’s throne—*after* the work of selecting a people for his name. David’s son and David’s Lord, together with a people for his name, will jointly be responsible for blessing all the families of the earth.

Christ is not now on David’s throne bringing the blessings spoken of by all the holy prophets. He is still in the Father’s throne. The disciples asked Jesus after his resurrection, “Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6) They were really asking about the reestablishment of David’s kingdom. They had been promised that they would sit with him judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matt. 19:28) They did not know their kingdom hope would be postponed for nearly two thousand years as the truth was preached throughout the world and others, like themselves, would be gathered as ripe wheat in time of harvest.

The beauty and holiness of the coming kingdom is described in some of the last words of our Bible: “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”—Rev. 22:16,17

In this text, our Lord says he is the offspring of David. Jeremiah said, “In those days and at that time will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.” (Jer. 33:15) The faithful followers of the Lord are collectively called the ‘bride’. The Lord, the bride, and the Holy Spirit work together to bring the water of life to a thirsty world.

So let us thank God for the throne of David. The LORD has done great things for us whereof we are glad. He promised that if we

are faithful, we will have a share in blessing all the world of mankind. The first blessing the world will receive is a resurrection from death. What a wonderful privilege is ours: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall *ye* also appear with him in glory."—Col. 3:

"Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all."

—I Chronicles 29:11

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Voices from the Past

BROTHER ORLANDO D. DEIFER
Allentown, PA

The Will of God

*"That ye may prove what is that
good and acceptable, and perfect,
will of God."—Romans 12:2*

THIS subject is of paramount importance as is demonstrated by the following scriptures: Mark 3:33-35 and John 5:30. Jesus esteemed the will of God far above any earthly tie or relationship, as revealed by this excerpt from Mark. In John, Jesus is quoted as saying that he came to do the will of God who had sent him. And in Psalm 40:7,8, we find a prophecy concerning Jesus which expresses his heartfelt motivation, "Lo I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will. . . . Thy law is written within my heart."

In Colossians 1:9 and 10, the Apostle Paul expressed this same thought of submission to and supreme respect for God's will, when he prayed that the brethren might be filled with the knowledge of God's will, as well as in Romans where he spoke of "that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."—Rom. 12:2

Still another scripture reading which shows the importance of this matter is Psalm 119:1-8. Here the will of God is described in various ways as "the law of the LORD," his "ways," his "commandments," his "precepts," his "statutes," and his "judgments."

In Deuteronomy 13:3 and Luke 10:25-28, the LORD gives us the universal, eternal law, which applies to all intelligent creatures forever, and which expresses his will: "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all

strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." This all-comprehensive law would not require any amplification whatever to a perfect creature such as the Logos, or our Lord Jesus in the flesh. But God is dealing with very imperfect creatures, fallen humanity, hence he has broken down this law into a number of 'do's' and 'don't's, for our benefit. By these we can gain an understanding from the Bible of what our Heavenly Father expects our conduct to be. It contains rules which govern all our various relationships while in the flesh—first with God, himself; second, respecting our consecration; thirdly, our interdependence on our brethren; fourth, our bond with the truth; and fifth, our relationship present and future with mankind in general.

Our First Duty Toward God

It will be well for us to consider these all-important rules in the order given. First, and foremost, God's expressed will for us, as well as all creatures who will have life-everlasting on any plane, is that we must love him supremely, and give him our complete obedience.—Luke 10:27

Our Consecration Vows

Secondly, with respect to God's will concerning our vows of consecration, there are many significant aspects to this subject, but here we will mention only some of the key facets of this subject: We are to consider consecration to be our "reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) It is essential to "keep our [fleshly] bodies under." (I Cor. 9:26,27) We are urged to put on the "whole armor of God." (Eph. 6:13-17) We are admonished to "add" to our "faith." (II Pet. 1:5-9) "Study" is necessary. (II Timothy 2:15) Both the apostles James and Peter explain that if we "resist the devil" he will "flee" from us. (I Pet. 5:8,9; James 4:7) "Obedience is better than sacrifice." (I Sam. 15:22) We are invited to "surrender" our hearts. (Prov. 23:26) And I Corinthians 11:31 tells us that if we "judge ourselves" we shall "not be judged." Not only must we follow these admonitions faithfully, but we must persist in doing so until death!

Love and Concern for Our Brethren

The third rule we will consider has to do with our relationship with our brethren. God's final judgment of whether we are worthy of life-everlasting or not will depend largely on how we feel about our brethren, and how we faithfully and lovingly attend to their spiritual and natural needs. In II Corinthians 9:1,2, the apostle speaks of ministering to the material needs of the saints. Many, indeed, are the instructions to the new creation on this subject. We recommend a careful reading of the following scriptures: Romans 12:9,10,13,15,16; I Thessalonians 5:11-15,16,22; Ephesians 4:1-5; Hebrews 10:23-25; and I Peter 1:22.

Our Respect for the Truth

The fourth rule has to do with God's will regarding our association with the truth he has revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. May we ever keep in mind what a sacred trust we have received from God. Some of the outstanding instructions follow: Psalm 43:3; Proverbs 23:23; and Jude 3. We recommend reading the Manna comment for September 23, on contending for the faith.

"It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." (I Cor. 4:1,2) "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season," we are exhorted in II Timothy 4:2. Ephesians 4:11-15 demands our careful study. And in Isaiah 61:1-3 we are reminded of the purpose of our anointing. The Apostle Paul shows how seriously he took his relationship to the truth in these words: "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!"—I Cor. 1:9-16

Fellow-man, Now and Future

The fifth rule concerns our relationship to our fellow-man during the present time, and some excellent advice is given to us in Galatians 6:10: "As ye have therefore opportunity let us do good unto all men." I Thessalonians 5:14 reminds us that we must be "patient toward all men." And finally, Galatians 3:29 indicates what our relationship with the world of mankind will be in the future, during Christ's thousand-year kingdom.

The Universal, Everlasting Law

It is quite clear that the many rules given to us in the Scriptures and broken down into the five categories listed above, are all comprehended in that universal law, "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God, with all thy heart, mind, soul, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself." Truly this law is not limited to time or space.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord [who is the embodiment of God's law], so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." (Col. 2:6,7) "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, foasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the LORD!"—I Cor. 15:58

May the fullness of God's blessings encompass all our way;
The fullness of his promises crown every bright'ning day;
The fullness of his glory come beaming from above,
While more and more we learn to know the fullness of his love.



Obituaries

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

Sister Philippine Laager, Pittsburgh, PA—April 25. Age, 99.

Sister Bessie Yank, Syracuse, NY—June 12. Age, 96.

Brother Nicholas T. Constant, Santa Ana, CA—July 27. Age, 87.

Brother Samuel W. Stanley, Newfoundland, Can.—July 27. Age, 87.

Sister Lydia Peck, Buffalo, NY—August 3. Age, 86.

Sister Effie Churchill, Victoria, B.C.—August 10. Age, 94.

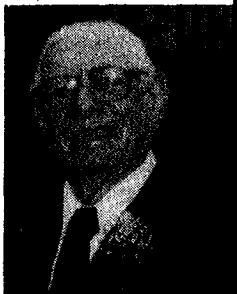
Sister Caroline Hubacz, North Brookfield, MS—August 18. Age, 98.

Brother Pantel Hatgis, New York, NY—September 1. Age, 92.

Pantel Hatgis, 1895-1987

BROTHER Pantel Hatgis was born in Corinth, Greece on January 23, 1895. He finished his earthly course in Flushing, New York, on September 1, 1987.

Brother Hatgis became acquainted with the truth in 1922 while living in New York City. A year later he moved to Norwich, Connecticut, where he helped establish a good-sized class of Bible Students. Moving back to New York City in 1928, he became associated with the Greek Bible Students Ecclesia, and served as an elder until the dissolution of the class in the 1950's. Since 1945 until the end of the Greek Class, he served as elder both there and in the Brooklyn/New York Bible Students Church, where he was an active elder until his death. His sixty-five years of consecrated life were exemplary of an earnest Christian, endeavoring to follow in the footsteps of his Master.



Brother Hatgis served as a trustee of the Dawn Bible Students Association for many years, and was active on the Management Committee.

As a pilgrim, in addition to his many years of service here in the United States, he made seventeen trips to Greece as well as pilgrimages to England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Israel, and Egypt. In 1935 he purchased a projector and sponsored truth film showings for Greek and English-speaking public all across the country. In more recent times he wrote articles for the Greek Dawn, and translated many Dawn booklets into the Greek language.

He was greatly beloved by all, and his service to the Dawn and the brethren worldwide will be deeply missed.

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Voice of God

HOW may we know that we have heard the voice of God? Amid all the confusion of religious thought, how are we to know that what we have accepted as truth is in reality the voice of God, and that in obeying that voice we are fulfilling the divine will? This is a question of vital concern to all of us, but a question, nevertheless which we should be able to answer to our satisfaction, else we are left in a condition of partial doubt and uncertainty. We say we have the truth, but how do we know?

There are many lines of approach to this question. We know we have heard the voice of God because what we have heard is in harmony with the entire Bible. It is also in harmony with what we should expect the character of God to be—infinite justice, wisdom, power, and above all, love. It is also in harmony with all known historical facts and with our own experiences and observations. In short, what we have accepted as the voice of God, the voice of truth, leaves no unanswered questions or problems. It does not tell us that there is no such thing as sickness, when we know there is. It does not tell us that there is no death, when we know people are dying all around us.

There is still another manner in which we can assure ourselves that we have heard the voice of God, and that is upon the basis of his unchangeableness. The Scriptures tell us that God changes not; that in him there is no "shadow of turning." (James 1:17; Mal. 3:6) This being true, it means that the divine purpose as revealed through God's prophets of old is still God's purpose. This in turn, means that if we have heard the voice of God we have heard the same things which that voice made known through the prophets.

True, the working out of God's plan may vary in detail from age to age, but not the plan itself.

Blessings for All

The great fundamental truth of God's plan, the cardinal theme which characterized his message through all the prophets, is identified by Peter and recorded in Acts 3:19-23. Here the apostle is telling of the blessings coming to all nations following the second advent of Jesus, and he describes these blessings as "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." It was to provide the opportunity for restitution that Jesus died.

Ransom and restitution, then, are the dominant chords in God's great theme-song of love. There are various minor arrangements associated with the outworking of this divine purpose, but the great objective to which these are leading is the blessing of all the families of the earth during the times of restitution. Have we heard and appreciated these great fundamental facts of truth? If so, we have heard the voice of God; if not, then God has not spoken to us.

There are many incidentals of truth which are good in themselves, and many of which are understandable by those not enlightened by the voice of God. Even a natural-minded man or woman can appreciate to a large extent the value of kindness, and mercy, and self-control, as well as other manifestations of righteousness. Those who believe in eternal torture for the wicked may adhere to high principles of righteousness in their daily living. But moral and devotional teachings are only the surface truths of the Bible, and no matter how valuable they may be to us from the standpoint of righteous standards, apart from the theme-song of God's love for and intention to bless all nations, they do not constitute his voice of revelation.

God Spoke to Noah

As we have already suggested, it is a blessed thing to hear

the voice of God, but it is costly. We find this exemplified in the experiences of Noah. Genesis 6:8 informs us that Noah found grace or favor in the sight of the LORD. As the narrative unfolds, it shows divine favor was manifested toward Noah in that God used him to build an ark, and thereby to carry over a few from the first to the second world. God also established a covenant with Noah concerning his intention never again to destroy all flesh. These divinely appointed experiences of Noah are referred to in the New Testament by both Jesus and Peter, and are used to illustrate different features of the divine plan.—Luke 17:26, 27; I Pet. 3:18-22; II Pet. 2:4,5

We read about the building of the ark by Noah, but may fail to realize what it meant in the way of wearying toil through the long years it took him and his sons to build it. It was a difficult assignment, for there was not only the work involved, but there was also the scoffing of the world to endure. Noah preached as well as worked. He preached to an unresponsive public, hence there were no apparent results from his preaching. Those with but little faith, and less appreciative of the fact that God had spoken to them, would have become weary in well-doing, concluding that God did not expect them to continue bearing witness to the truth, for after all, nothing really worthwhile apparently, was being accomplished—only wasted effort on an ark with no evidence of a coming rain or flood of waters.

But Noah had heard the voice of God and by it was enjoined to continue serving, irrespective of results. The due time had not arrived for a clear unfolding of the divine program for the blessing of all nation. But God used Noah as an illustration of certain phases of his plan, and this was a great honor. The covenant God made with Noah that never again would he destroy all flesh from the earth, afforded a faint suggestion even at that early date of God's intention that mankind should live forever upon the earth.

Having heard God's voice, Noah was faithful to it, faithful despite the cost of weariness, persecution, seeming failure of his efforts and cold indifference of virtually all by whom he was

surrounded. He had heard the voice of God because God had something for him to do, and Noah responded with his whole heart and life to perform the divine commission faithfully. And was it all for nothing? By no means! Two important results accrued from Noah's faithful response to the voice of God. Paul mentions them, saying that he "condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."—Heb. 11:7

Noah's faithfulness in preaching righteousness to his generation proved the justice of God in destroying the "world which then was." (II Pet. 3:6) When the plan of God is complete, the knowledge of his glory will fill the earth. This means the people will then know that all the acts of God throughout the age have been righteous, and that the suffering of humanity has been permitted for a particular purpose. It will be seen that the great catastrophe of that Flood which destroyed the first world was justified by the lack of response to Noah's preaching and the altogether too prevalent evil of those times. Thus, while none but his own immediate family then gave heed to his message, his seemingly fruitless preaching will, in the coming age, be esteemed for what it was worth, and will help to fill the earth with God's glory.

In addition to this satisfying result of his efforts, Noah's faithfulness made him an "heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Among other things that heirship includes a "better resurrection." (Heb. 11:35) Psalm 45:16 also indicates that those who obtain this promised better resurrection are to be made "princes in all the earth." Did Noah, then, waste his time? Surely not! He heard God's voice, he obeyed it, was blessed in his obedience, and will yet be more than fully compensated for every sacrifice which he made.

God Speaks to Abraham

"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a

blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”—
Gen. 12:1-3

In God’s message to Abraham we have the first definite statement of his purpose to bless all the families of the earth. Here the melody of the divine plan anthem began to sound forth with a definiteness over and above the incidental and harmonious accompaniment which, throughout the ages, has been associated with it. Surely Abraham was favored to hear such a message. But, as with Noah, it cost him much.

There was no other reason why God spoke to Abraham than that of inviting his cooperation in the outworking of his plan: so the message and the invitation, or call, were heard together. God said to him, “In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed,” but I want you to leave your own people and your father’s house, and go into a land which I will show you. “Thou shalt be a blessing.” God had said. But the patriarch discovered that in order for this promise to become a reality to him it would cost the uprooting of his whole way of life.

God’s promise to bless all the families of the earth was unconditional. That promise will be fulfilled regardless of what any individual may do about it. But when it was made to Abraham there was coupled with it the invitation to cooperate. Those since to whom the purpose of God to bless all nations has been revealed have likewise been invited to cooperate. This is God’s method of dealing with his people. First he reveals his plan, and then invites cooperation therein.

Has it not been so with us? How sweet was the voice of God telling us of the great hope of restitution for the sin-cursed and dying world. It appealed to us as being just like God, and we rejoiced to think of all mankind walking over the highway of holiness, and finally inheriting the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. But we soon realized that there was more than that to it. Together with God’s sweet voice of love for all mankind, were the words of invitation to us asking our participation in the divine

plan. We, too, like Abraham, were asked to leave our own people and our father's house.—Ps. 45:10,11

'Our father's house' is the Adamic household. God's invitation to leave this house we recognized as a call to give up the hope of restitution for ourselves, and in its place to run for the prize of the high calling—to set our affections on things above and not on things of the earth. (Col. 3:2) But this meant more than merely to exchange an earthly hope for a heavenly hope. It meant following in the footsteps of Jesus—steps of sacrifice and suffering even unto death—until that which remained of our present earthly life was wholly consumed in the service of God.

Yes, it was grand to hear the voice of God but if we continue to respond to it faithfully it will finally cost us our lives! For if we properly appreciate the message of God's love we will realize that we do not belong to ourselves, but to him who loved us, and died for us. (I Cor. 6:19,20; Col. 3:3,4) We will endeavor not to live for ourselves, but to live for God by participating in the sacrificial work of this age, presenting ourselves and devoting our bodies to God's service—keeping our sacrifice on the altar until it is wholly consumed.

Abraham was asked to give up his home in Ur, and for the remainder of his life he lived in tents, having no permanent home—no "continuing city." (Heb. 11:8-10; 13:14) Not only that, but God continued to test him, finally to the point of asking that he offer his son, Isaac, in sacrifice, which he showed his willingness to do. Abraham learned to know the voice of God more familiarly with the passing years, and he knew that it was a voice which not only promised wonderful blessings, but also invited sacrifice.

At the Burning Bush

God spoke to Moses at the burning bush, and it meant that thereafter his life was to be wholly devoted to the service of God. Even before this Moses was not unaware of his responsibility to the God of his fathers. The apostle explains that Moses had withdrawn

from his position of honor in Pharaoh's palace because he esteemed the reproach of his people more precious than all the enjoyment he could obtain by remaining attached to the Egyptian court.—Heb. 11:24-26

Moses had fled from Egypt following an ill-timed effort to relieve the oppressions of his people, the children of Israel. Forty years he had been in seclusion in Midian, serving as a shepherd over his father-in-law's sheep. Doubtless he often thought of his early life in Egypt. Although he was called an Egyptian, he knew in reality he was an Israelite, and that his kinsmen were serving as slaves under the oppressive hand of Pharaoh. From his mother, who was hired to care for him as a child, Moses would certainly have learned much about the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—promises concerning the development of a seed and also of the blessings which would come to all nations through that seed.

The God of Israel was far from an unknown God to Moses. Hence, when his attention was attracted by the burning bush, and he heard the announcement, "I am the God of . . . Abraham, . . . Isaac, and . . . Jacob," Moses knew who was speaking. (Exod. 3:1-6) He knew he was to receive a message which in some way was related to the promises God had made to his fathers. It was even so, for the time had come when the natural seed of Abraham was to be delivered from Egyptian bondage, and Moses had been selected to serve as their leader in this great exodus.

It was in the providence of God that the Israelites had gone into Egypt, for thereby the life of the nation had been saved. Now it was necessary for them to be delivered, and for the same purpose. God was watching over these people. They were the natural seed to whom the promises had been made. Through this nation, the Messiah later was to come. Any service, therefore, which related to this people had to do with the working out of God's plan for the blessing of all nations.

God told Moses to take off his shoes, for the place whereon he stood was "holy ground." Of course it was holy. God chose

the spot to hold a rendezvous with his servant, to commission and empower him to be the savior of his people. That ground was therefore being used for as holy a purpose as has ever been given to man to know. True holiness to God today is represented in a full devotion to him and to the service of that same Messianic cause. We too, like Moses, have the privilege of laying down our lives for our brethren, who are the spiritual seed of Abraham.

One of Moses' characteristics was that of meekness. (Num. 12:3) He felt unequal to the great task which God was asking him to perform. Meekness is an essential quality of Christian character, but true meekness is not weakness. Moses was meek in that he recognized his own limitations, but when God assured him that all his needs would be supplied, his faith laid hold upon the promise and he was made strong and courageous. God can use only those who rely on his wisdom and strength. "When I think of self I tremble, when I look to Thee, I'm strong," wrote the poet. This was the experience of Moses, and in the LORD'S strength he courageously took up the task which God had assigned to him.

Yes, Moses heard the voice of God, and now that he was one of God's servants he was no longer free to think, to choose, to act, or to do as he might prefer. Henceforth the will of God was to be the guiding star of his life. True, God's presence accompanied Moses, and he had peace of heart and mind; but his way was difficult, his burden was heavy. He had to face and defy the austere and arrogant Pharaoh; hear and bear patiently the murmurings of his own people; put down rebellion against the divine arrangements of the priesthood; and in many other ways bear the load of care and responsibility which was his because of the high position of honor God had given him in the outworking of his plan. It was a blessed experience to hear the voice of God—but it was costly!

The Greater Than Moses

Moses, who under God, was the great deliverer and law-giver of Israel, prophesied that one greater than he would be raised

up for the blessing of Israel and the world. (Deut. 18:15, 19; Acts 3:22,23; 7:37) Thus he pointed forward to the coming of Christ, and to the establishing of his kingdom. The deliverance which will come to the people under the leadership of Christ awaits the inauguration of the kingdom. He came at his first advent to lay the foundation for that kingdom by the sacrifice of his life as man's Redeemer.

In Galatians 3:8,16, Paul explains that the seed which God promised to Abraham—the seed through whom all nations would be blessed—was Christ. The entire ministry of Jesus was therefore related to the loving purpose of God to give life and peace to all nations. It is in keeping with this that at the outset of his ministry he dedicated himself to God, agreeing to do all that was written of him “in the volume of the Book.”—Ps. 40:6-8; Heb. 10:7

The apostle explains that whatsoever had been written by the prophets was written for “our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” (I Cor. 10:11; Rom. 15:4) If this is true concerning the followers of Jesus, how much more true it was of him! Yes, much of what all the prophets had written constituted the voice of God to direct Jesus in performing his part in the divine plan.

Not only was Jesus blessed by the revealing testimony of the prophets, but he heard the voice of God speaking to him directly, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22) What a blessed assurance this must have been to Jesus! Yes, he was honored and he was blessed; but nothing short of the complete sacrifice of his perfect humanity could discharge the responsibility which this honor and blessing had placed upon him. God had spoken to his Son by the mouth of all his holy prophets, and Jesus agreed to do all that they had spoken.

Thou Art the Christ

When Peter identified Jesus as the foretold Messiah saying, “Thou art the Christ,” Jesus explained that this knowledge could come only from the Father. God had spoken to Peter, and he was to be widely used in the divine service, but at a great sacrifice of himself

and his earthly interests. Peter was given the “keys” of the kingdom, and he used them in opening up kingdom privileges, first to the Jews, and later to the Gentiles.

Surely this was a high honor, and it was a joy thus to be used in the service of God and of his people. But Peter was no longer his own—he belonged to God whose voice he had heard. When, after his resurrection, Jesus conversed with Peter, he said to him, “When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.”—John 21:18

The Apostle John explains that this statement to Peter was an indication of the death that he was to die. Very true! It was to be a sacrificial death. He was to be “crucified with Christ”—“planted together in the likeness of his death.” (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:5) Before he had heard the voice of God, Peter was free to choose for himself, to plan his own life, but now it was to be different. From henceforth he was to be led whither his own natural inclinations would not wish to go. The will of God was from that time forward to be the guide of his life, which was to be a life of sacrifice. He had heard the voice of God!

“Who Art Thou, Lord?”

When, through Jesus, God spoke to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road, this devout Israelite realized at once what it signified. Saul first made sure who was speaking, and, assured that he was receiving a message from the God of Israel, through the Messiah of Israel, he responded with the inquiry: “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:6) Saul was acquainted with the manner in which God dealt with his servants in the past. He knew that an experience of this nature implied more than merely that he was being enlightened concerning the fact that Jesus was the Messiah. God allows people to continue on in darkness until he has a place for them in his plan. Saul knew this, and now that he was enlightened he realized that God was calling him into service.

Yes, Paul was a chosen vessel. He had been selected to bear the Gospel to the Gentiles—even to Gentile kings—and also to the “children of Israel.” What an honor! But at what great cost! The Lord said, “I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake.” (Acts 9:15,16) Here again we find the same principle operating: God had spoken; truth had been revealed; a commission had been given; and great things were to be suffered. The record of the apostle’s ministry demonstrates the sincerity of his question, “What wilt thou have me to do?”

“In These Last Days”

In our text the apostle explains that in “these last days” God has spoken to his people through his Son. That was true of the Early Church, and it has been true during the entire Gospel Age. But it is true in a very special sense at this end of the age. In Luke 12:37,42-44 is recorded a promise by Jesus that at the end of the age he would return and through a faithful servant serve the household with “meat in due season.”

God has given us the truth! Through present truth he has spoken to us. His voice has enlightened us. His truth has girded us, and by it he is leading us forth as lightbearers for him—ambassadors of the kingdom.

1987 Convention Audio Tapes Now Available

THE Audio tapes of the discourses and musical programs from the 1987 General Convention can be purchased for \$2.00 per tape, or for \$40.00 for the complete convention. To request your copies or to obtain a listing of available tapes, write to:

Dawn Recorded Lecture Service
199 Railroad Avenue
East Rutherford, NJ 07070

Encouraging Letters

Inspiring & Informative

Dear Dawn: I was in the waiting room at the hospital and happened to pick up a copy of **The Dawn** lying on one of the tables. I started reading it and couldn't put it down. I asked the receptionist if I could have it. I took it home and have been studying it and the scriptures that go with it. It is very inspiring and informative. I would like to become a regular subscriber. Thank you and God bless you.—

MI

A Need for God's Love

Dear Sir: While on jury duty, someone left the booklet called **The Dawn**. I've really enjoyed it and would like to receive another **Dawn** booklet each month. Also, if you have any tract on encouragement, or God's love, please send me a few. I have too many hell and damnation tracts! The unsaved need to read about Christ's love. God bless you.—

NY

All In God's Hands

Dear Brethren: Loving greetings in our dear Redeemer's

beloved, precious name, Jesus Christ! We look around us and the world is not getting any better, but we know it is all in God's hands and we must wait patiently on him as he knows best. We wonder how much longer, as we think it cannot go on much longer, but that is not for us to say. Again we wait patiently on the LORD. **The Dawn**, as usual, was excellent this month. I am sending a remembrance for the general fund. May the dear Heavenly Father richly bless and watch over each and everyone at the Dawn as you strive to do his will. Warm Christian love.—

MO

Looks for Understanding

Dear Sir: I have a friend who does not practice any religion. Lately she has shown an interest in learning about some religion. I am looking for a simple, easy-to-understand book that explains about God, and some simple reading for someone who has never experienced any belief. Would the book "**The Divine Plan of the Ages**," or

"The Creator's Grand Design," be such a book? I thank you for any help you can give me. Sincerely.—*WI*

Program 'Sits Apart' from Others

The Bible Answers: I have caught your show several times now on television. There is something that sits it apart from the so-called traditional Christianity shows. I would like to request some material that has been advertised over the last month. They are: "God and Reason," "Why God Permits Evil," and "Science and Creation." I was also wondering if you publish a list of the different materials you have for the public. I look forward to receiving your reply soon.—*IN*

A God of Love, Not Fear

Dear Sirs: Please send me a copy of the booklet, "The Truth about Hell." Maybe it shall clear up my fears of such a horrible place to which I deeply believe that a truly loving God would never send his own creation, his own children. If we were created in his image, then he would never send us there. I need to read your booklet so that I can tell those

who tell me that's where I'm going to go if I sin. Since I am not a murderer, or a thief, or any such character, I need to tell those who preach to me and to others, trying to instill fears instead of instilling reason and love, that their preachings are false. People should never fear God—never! For God is *all love*, and a God who is all love would never send us to eternal torment. Thank you for your help. Sincerely yours.—*TX*

Praises God for Program

Dear Sirs: Quite by accident (No, it was through God's direction that I found your program!), I tuned in "**The Bible Answers**" just ten minutes before it went off the air. I couldn't get my usual Christian music station that early in the morning—I knew I would be missing my usual Sunday morning programs, and I just wasn't satisfied until I found a Christian program to start my day. Praise God for his glory! Yes, thank you. I would very much like to receive the book you offered on this morning's telecast entitled the "**Israel Book**." God bless you.—*FL*

A Prisoner Impressed

Dear Sirs: For the last few months I have had the opportunity to watch a few of your television programs, and frankly I am quite impressed with what is being taught. I am a prisoner for crimes which I committed against society. I do not try to hide this as I know God Almighty has forgiven me of my sins through the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus. My purpose in writing is to request the various pieces of literature you offer on your programs for study. I love studying God's written Word, and I feel from what I have observed that you are closer to the truth than what others are claiming as truth. If it is possible I would very much appreciate any and all literature you can send me for study. I remain, respectfully yours.—*MI*

Broadcast Challenging

Dear Brothers "Frank and Ernest": I heard part of your broadcast on the radio yesterday and I was challenged by your comments. Please send me a copy of the booklet you offered, "God and Reason." Let me thank you in advance for it. I

pray that God will continue to bless his work through you, that many may be brought to a deeper understanding of God, his Word, and his will for man. With faith in Christ Jesus.—*DC*

Desires Truth Spread

Dear Publishers: Will you please renew my subscription to **The Dawn** magazine. I owe you the compliment that **The Dawn** must be one of the few great ones of religious literature. May its readership spread throughout the world where the churches have failed to instruct in the truth. Thank you.—*OH*

Program Inspiring

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I listen to your program and it helps me search out things more deeply. God bless you both, and please continue in your work for the LORD. Your program is inspiring! Please send me your booklet, "God and Reason." May God richly bless you in whatever you do.—*DE*

Old-Time

Minister Helped

Dear Bible Students: Please send me the "Basic Bible Study Course." I want also to thank you good people for the

great teaching you have in your books; they have helped me to see a lot of truth I did not see before. I have been a minister and a teacher for thirty-five years before I came in contact with your books. The first one I got was "**Studies in the Scriptures**," and now I think I have most of your books. Yours in Christ.—OK

Enjoys "Real Life" Programs

Dear Sir: I enjoyed your ["The Bible Answers"] program again this morning. I like the way you kind of use real life situations. I trust the LORD will continue to bless your message and ministry. I would like to get the free booklet, "Hope for a Fear-filled World." Looking forward to next week, and may the LORD bless. Sincerely.—IN

"Hope" Most Comforting

Dear Sirs: Once again we are about to run out of your booklet, "Hope." For several years, because of you, we have been able to give a copy to each minister and each family we serve [at our funeral home.] It is graciously received, and has been most comforting and consoling to all

who have received it. We would like to have five hundred copies, and some of the booklet, "God and Reason." Thank you.—OH

Easy to Understand

"The Bible Answers": May I have the pamphlet called, "Life after Death." I was very impressed with the program on television. It sure makes things easier to understand and remember. Thanks.—MI

Praises the LORD

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Quite by accident I found your program while I was turning the dial on my radio. I praised the LORD that he gave us teachers who still teach the Word. Please send me your booklet on "Israel and the World." Thank you for your teaching. With love and prayers.—CA

Touched with God's Truth

Dear Sir: Please send information on "The Bible Answers." I tuned in to hear the news at five o'clock tonight. Your program came on instead and I was touched with God's truth. Thank you. Sincerely.—MT

"The Dawn" a Blessing

Dear Friends at the Dawn: I have been taking The Dawn magazine for two years now, and would like you to know what a blessing it has been! I obtain your literature from the brethren in Great Britain, and also borrow tapes from the Recorded Lecture Service, as well

as listening to "Frank and Ernest" over Radio Caroline. The brethren here have been most helpful in helping me trust in our Lord, especially after my dear wife fell asleep in God's care. May your ministry continue until Christ's kingdom is established here on earth. God bless you all. Yours in Christ.—
England

Speakers' Appointments

MINISTERING THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF CHRIST

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

M. BALKO

Winnipeg, Man.	October 1-4
Sturgis, Sask	5
Prince Albert, Sask.	6
Havre, MT	8
Helena, MT	9
Denver, CO	11
Kansas City, MO	13
St. Louis, MO	14
Indianapolis, IN	15
Columbus, OH	16

W. BLICHARZ

London, Ont.	October 11
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R. GORECKI

Grand Rapids, MI	October 11
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G. JEUCK

Berwick, PA	October 11
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N. KASPEROWICZ

Middletown, NY	October 4
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S. KRISTEK

Fresno, CA	October 4
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F. NEMESH

New York, NY	October 4
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E.K. PENROSE

Detroit, MI	October 25
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L. POST

Cincinnati, OH	October 10, 11
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S. ROSKIEWICZ

Detroit, MI	October 25
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H. SNYDER

LaSalle, IL	October 1
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Milwaukee, WI	3, 4
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St. Louis, MO	6
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Allentown, PA	18
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Conventions

NEW ENGLAND CONVENTION, October 2-4—Quality Inn, Chicopee, MA. For information and reservations (by September 10th): Mrs. Richard Suraci, 171 Johnson Road, Hamden, CT 06518
Phone: (203) 248-3793

MILWAUKEE, WI, October 3,4—Aurora Hall, 734 N. 26th Street. For information contact: Mrs. John Pazucha, 4454 S. 14th Street, #3, 53221-2357
Phone: (414) 282-4667

RICHMOND, VA, October 9-11—Roslyn Conference Center, 8727 River Road. Contact: Miss Katharine Warren, 2805 Stonewall Avenue, 23225

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA, October 10,11—Motel Inn, 2223 Monterey Street. Contact: Mrs. Audrey Dunn, 2078 Johnson Avenue, 93401
CINCINNATI, OH, October 17,18—Ramada Inn Sharonville, 11029 Dowlin Drive, 45241. Phone motel directly for reservations: (513) 771-0300

GRAND RAPIDS, MI, October 17,18—Kenowa Hills H.S., 3950 Hendershot, N.W. 49504. Contact: Ruth Kowalski, 862 First Street, N.W. 49504
Phone: (616) 456-5069

CONNELLSVILLE, PA, October 23-25—Conley's Inn, New Stanton. Contact: Mrs. Wesley Cramer, RD 1, Box 326-C, Monongahela 15063
Phone: (412) 258-2585

ORLANDO, FL, October 24,25—Orlando Garden Club, 710 E. Rollins Street, Orlando. Contact: Mrs. Stanley Jeuck, 587 Queens Mirror Circle, Casselberry 32707
Phone: (305) 699-8303

CHICAGO, IL, October 25—Elmhurst Masonic Temple, York Road and Arthur Street, Elmhurst. Contact: Joe Megacz, 1431 South Fairview Avenue, Park Ridge 60068

DENVER, CO, October 25—Bonanza Rest., I-25 at 84th Avenue. Contact: Marcia Kuehmichel for information.
Phone: (303) 450-0582

SAN DIEGO, CA, November 26-29—LaJolla Village Inn, 3299 Holiday Court, LaJolla.
Phone: (619) 453-5500

NEW HAVEN, CT, November 1—Italian-American Club, 85 Chase Lane, West Haven. Contact: Mrs. Stephen Suraci, 19 River Road, East Haven 06512
Phone: (203) 467-0813

JERSEY CITY, NJ, November 21,22—Masonic Temple, 1912 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ. Contact: Mrs. Charlotte Teklinski, 84 Arthur St., Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660
Phone: (201) 440-0925

PHOENIX, AZ, January 1-3, 1988—Days Inn, 502 W. Camelback Road 85013. Contact: Mildred Enteman, 542 W. Southern Avenue 85041