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New Zealand: P.O. Box 1358, C.P.O. Auckland

South America: El Alba, c/o Avel y Milo Lupsor, Calle Almirante Brown 674, Monte Grande, Buenos Aires, Argentina

y Miguel A. Ramirez, Padre Bruzzone 1166, Espeleta 1882, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Spain: El Alba, Via S. Leonardo 21, Ottaviano 80044 Napoli, Italy

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HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

GOD AND CREATION SERIES, Part 6

The Great Deception

*“The serpent said unto the woman,
Ye shall not surely die.”*

— Genesis 3:4

IN REVELATION 20:2 we find the expression, “that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan.” Obviously this a reference to the ‘serpent’ which appeared to and deceived mother Eve. The general consensus of opinion among Bible scholars is that Satan, who is a powerful although invisible spirit being, ‘spoke’ through the serpent. Just how he conveyed his message to Eve is not important. For our present purpose we will consider that it was the Devil who deceived Eve, ignoring whatever part ‘the serpent’ may have played in it.

Concerning the Devil, Jesus said, “He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” (John 8:44) Here Jesus takes us back to what occurred in Eden. He states that Satan was actually a murderer, for it was under his influence that our first parents transgressed God’s law, which resulted in their death. Our Lord further identifies Satan’s treachery in Eden by saying that he was a ‘liar, and the father of it.’

Yes, it was Satan who fathered the sin of lying, his first lie occurring when he said to Eve, “Ye shall not surely die.” God had made it plain to Adam, and Adam had communicated the information to his wife, that death would result from their disobedience. But Satan denied this; and not only was he successful in deceiving Eve, but he has successfully carried on his campaign of deception ever since, with the result that only a few have continued to believe God on the subject of death,

the vast majority unwittingly believing Satan, insisting that 'there is no death'. This work of deception will be allowed to continue until the due time in God's plan of the ages when Satan will be bound, "that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed for a little season," and finally, destroyed.—Rev. 20:3,12-15; Heb. 2:14

It was not difficult for Eve to believe that she would not die as a result of disobedience. After all, she had had no experience with death. She had seen no one die. Doubtless she took Satan's denial of the LORD's statement literally, believing that despite her disobedience she would continue to live and to enjoy all the blessings of Eden, and have the added advantage, as she thought, of being much wiser. How bitterly disappointed she must have been when, debarred from the trees of life in Eden, she realized from year-to-year that the seeds of death were working in her, and that she would eventually become feeble and die. Adam had no illusions on the matter, for he was not deceived. He knew that eventually he would die.

The fact that the human race began to die despite Satan's assertion, "Ye shall not surely die," proved that he was a liar, just as Jesus said, many centuries later. But having foisted this deception upon Eve he did not propose to allow subsequent circumstances to prove him wrong, so his next great deception was that death is not what it seems to be, but that in reality, those whom we call dead are more alive than ever. It is held by Satan and those who unwittingly espouse his great deception, that only the body dies. The claim is that there is a separate entity within humans which cannot die, and that at death this escapes from the body and lives on in another realm.

The great power of this deception is in the fact that no one wants to die, therefore it is pleasant to believe that there is no death. In continuing to foster his great deception, Satan introduced into the minds of men almost innumerable theories as to what happens to the 'never dying' part of man when the body dies. There are the theories of reincarnation and the transmigration of souls.

Reincarnationists believe that every time a child is begotten, or born—they are not sure which—a ‘departed spirit’ enters into it, there finding a home until this newest body dies, when the disembodied spirit again is homeless until it has an opportunity to find refuge in another human infant. The theory is that most of us have made many of these excursions, and will probably keep on doing so indefinitely. Just how the reincarnationists explain the constantly increasing population of the earth we have not yet learned; for, according to this no-death theory there are more spirits reaching earth each year than are departing. Where do the extra ones come from?

The idea of the transmigration of souls is somewhat different, and not quite so pleasing. This theory also calls for continuous cycles of the ‘soul’, but it does not always succeed in finding refuge in a human body. While, according to this theory, during our present visit to earth we may be human beings, the last time we were here we may have been a dog, or a cat, or an elephant, or a spider; and the next time we come we may find our soul is being flitted through the air in the body of a bird, or hopping around in the body of a croaking frog. It all depends upon how well we do with ourselves on each visit, as to just what form we will have the next time we come. There is an end to this, for finally the soul departs for the last time, and after that, in due course, finds rest in a mythical Nirvana, meaning, “extinction of the flame of life,” or “loss of all personal consciousness by absorption into the divine.”

This Satanic method of endeavoring to prove true the lie, “Ye shall not surely die,” has been adopted into most heathen religions in one form or another. This is why a Hindu tries to avoid stepping on an insect, or killing a fly, lest he injure the feelings or harm the life of an ancestor. To many it may seem difficult to understand how anyone could believe such apparent nonsense, but it is really no more unreasonable than the no-death theories which have found their way into the professed Christian religion.

All the religions of the world attempt, each in its own way, to deal with the problem of sin. That is to say, rewards are held out to the righteous, and punishments for the wicked. A faithful Hindu might not have to come back to earth as a dog, and he will reach Nirvana with fewer earth cycles than those less faithful. Also, in the creeds of the churches, account is taken of the fact that there are saints and sinners, believers and unbelievers, faithful and unfaithful, and attempts are made to explain how the good will be rewarded and the wicked punished.

In all this theorizing, the simple fact of the Bible that the 'wages of sin is death' is ignored. How could one believe that the wages of sin is death, and at the same time insist that there is no death? When God's penalty for sin is denied, his reward for righteousness cannot be appreciated. Paul wrote, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) But if there is no death, then, as one devotee to the no-death dogma explained, what Paul meant when he wrote that the wages of sin is death was, 'the death that never dies'. If this were true, then Paul must also have meant in his reference to eternal life, the 'life that never lives'.

Refusing to believe in the reality of death, the creed-makers invented their own concepts of how God would punish sinners—the 'soul' of sinners, that is. The creeds of Christendom set forth two general views on this subject—the Catholic and the Protestant. According to the Catholic view, there are two places to which wicked 'souls' go when they depart the dead bodies in which they lived as humans. One of these is called hell, and the other purgatory.

Hell, it is alleged, is only for the out-and-out sinners, those who maliciously and willfully defy the church, and turn their backs upon all its rules and regulations. Many heretics, it is claimed, fall into this category, and therefore are doomed to spend the endless ages of eternity in hell. And 'doomed' is the appropriate word to use here, for in this 'hell' the wicked are said to be tortured—yes, tortured—in burning flames many times hotter than any fire ever produced by man.

From the humane standpoint, the teachings of the heathen seem kinder than the 'hell' dogma. But then, there is an alternative! If one wishes, he can avoid being wicked enough to go to hell, and after death find himself in purgatory. Purgatory, it is explained, is just what its name implies, a place of purification, of cleansing from sin and defilement, so that one is eventually made pure enough to enter into the bliss of heaven. The purging methods in purgatory are, of course, very strenuous. There is fire there also, which is very hot. In this respect probably the chief difference between hell and purgatory is that the tortures of the latter are not eternal in duration. There is an eventual escape, the time spent in the flames being determined by a number of circumstances, one being how well the sufferer responds to the refining process.

In the Middle Ages various reformers began to question such teachings of the established church. They discovered that the doctrine of purgatory is not taught in the Bible, that not even the word purgatory appears in the sacred Word, so they protested against this teaching. It was not a pleasant thing to do, for it left them with somewhat of a problem on their hands. By doing away with purgatory, there was no place, as they thought, for the partially wicked souls—which it was claimed were in purgatory—to go, except to hell. From the standpoint of mercy, the Protestants really worsened the outlook for sinners, particularly the partially willful among them.

Throughout the ages there have been millions who, according to the standards of the church, and the Bible also, have not been good enough to go to heaven. The Catholic Church said, however, that most of them were too good to spend an eternity in hell, so purgatory was provided. Many Protestants will also agree that there are many fundamentally good people in the world—fine neighbors, willing to do a good turn whenever they have an opportunity—but they are not good enough for heaven because not devoted to the cause of Christ. But still, according to the Protestant view, these must all spend eternity in a hell of torment. It is a repelling thought, and one of the many God-dishonoring teachings which have naturally followed in the wake of Satan's lie, "Ye shall not surely die."

The doctrines of purgatory and of eternal torture are not taught in the Word of God. Some have reasoned, "If there is a heaven, there must be a hell." There is a heaven—that we will discuss in a later article. However, the alternatives set before us in the Bible are not heaven and hell, but life and death. Death is the penalty for sin, and life is the gift of God. This marvelous gift was proffered to our first parents, and was available to them on condition of obedience to God's law. They disobeyed, and the penalty of death came upon them.

But God's gift of life is again available. Jesus tells us about it, as recorded in John 3:16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Notice that Jesus uses the word 'perish', meaning complete destruction, not torture. Except for God's gift of life through Christ, the Redeemer, the human race would have perished, but it was never threatened with torment.

Satan's deception has been so great that it has robbed language of its meaning. Ordinarily everyone would know the meaning of the words 'die' and 'death', but Satan's lie has been so deceptive that in theological circles these words are twisted to mean 'separation from God', and separation from God means torture in a fiery hell. But suppose we apply this false meaning in reading the account of the loss of life during the Deluge. The record says, "All flesh died [separated from God] that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man."—Gen. 7:21

This text of Scripture makes no distinction between the death of beasts and man. It does not state that man was swept away to a place of torment by the swirling waters of the Flood. It does not state this, because it would not have been true. The Bible says, "As the one dieth, so dieth the other; . . . all go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."—Eccles. 3:19,20

It is man's earnest desire to live that makes him so readily susceptible to Satan's no-death deception. Even under the abnormal conditions of sin and sickness and war, life is consid-

ered by most people a boon, a blessing. It is hard to believe—millions refuse to believe—that when the heart stops beating there is no more life. With this determination to live, mankind has fallen ready prey to Satan's lie, "Ye shall not surely die." "There is no death."

This human attitude toward life is one of the things that sets man apart from the lower animals. God created man with the intention that he should live, not temporarily, but forever. Death, therefore, was the severest penalty that could have been attached to sin. Little wonder that we should shrink from it, and it is not surprising that so many are willing to insist that it is not real, but rather that what we call death, is merely a means of escape into another life.

Hope for Life Is Not a Vain Illusion

But, severe though the death penalty is, the Scriptures emphasize its reality. Nevertheless, the Bible does hold out hope for a future life. This hope is not predicated on the vain illusion that no one really dies, but on God's promises to restore the dead to life. The followers of Jesus are promised a heavenly home with him—not because there is some death-proof element within them which escapes when the body dies and which is whisked off to heaven—but because the power of God will restore them to life in the resurrection and exalt them to "glory and honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7

When the Prophet Job had suffered beyond the point of ordinary human endurance, he asked God to let him die. Having thus prayed for death, Job raised the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14) Job did not ask, "If a man die, is he really dead?" Job knew that those who die are dead. It is because he knew this that he asked God to let him die, for this, he believed, was the only way he could be free from suffering. What concerned Job was whether or not God would restore him to life at a later time.

Job spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, or power of God, and, answering his own question, he said, "All the days of my appointed time [in death] will I wait, till my change come; [then] thou shalt call, and I will answer thee:

thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.” (Job 14:14,15) As recorded in the New Testament, Jesus confirmed this hope of being called forth from death in God’s due time, using as an example the death of Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary of Bethany. This account is recorded in John 11:1-46.

When Jesus was in the north country of Galilee, Lazarus became ill, and his sisters sent word to Jesus saying, “Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.” (John 11:3) The sisters evidently thought when their Master received this information he would come to Bethany and to their home at once. Instead, he waited for two days, and then announced to his disciples, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.” The disciples did not understand the intent of this remark. They thought Jesus referred to “taking of rest in sleep.” Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.”—vss. 11-14

A very fundamental truth of the Scriptures is set forth in this conversation between Jesus and his disciples. Actually, as Jesus said, Lazarus was dead. But because he expected to restore him to life, Jesus spoke of death as being merely a ‘sleep’. The same is true of all mankind—the dead and those who will yet die; they are dead. Satan lied when he said, “Ye shall not surely die.” This penalty for sin would have been eternal oblivion for all of Adam’s children, except for the provision of divine love through Christ, who gave himself in death as a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam. Paul wrote, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”—I Cor. 15:22

They are not actually made alive until God’s due time to restore the dead to life. But as God now looks upon those who have died, he sees them as though they were asleep. Those who sleep are unconscious, and so are the dead. For those who are asleep we have an expectancy of an awakening, and God has promised that through Christ those who sleep in death will also be awakened.

Jesus returned to Bethany, and as he approached the home of that little family which he so dearly loved, Martha

met him, and said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Jesus replied, "Thy brother shall rise again." (John 11:21,23) Jesus did not tell Martha that her brother was not really dead—that now he was actually more alive than ever. No! Jesus knew that to comfort Martha in this way would have been agreeing with Satan's lie, "Ye shall not surely die." Jesus' message of comfort was, that although Lazarus was indeed dead, he would be restored to life. This is the great hope of life the Bible holds out to all mankind.

Martha then replied to Jesus, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." (vs. 24) The Bible reveals that the 'last day' mentioned by Martha is the final age in God's plan for the recovery of man from sin and death. With this recovery program completed, endless ages of peace and joy will spread out before the restored human race. Martha knew that her brother would be restored to life in that time of the general resurrection, but, of course, that did not take the loneliness from her heart which all experience when they lose their loved ones in death.

Jesus replied to Martha again, saying, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." (vs. 25) The **Rotherham Translation** translates the next verse properly: "No one who lives again and believes in me shall in any wise die." From this wonderful statement we have Jesus' own assurance that both believers and those who have not had a full opportunity to believe in this life will be awakened from death, the believers to immediate perfection of life, and the unbelievers to an opportunity to believe and live forever.

A little later Jesus awakened Lazarus from death as an illustration of the divine plan for all mankind. In John 5:28,29, **Revised Standard Version**, we read, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good [the believers], unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."

There are many Bible texts to show that, in the resurrection, the faithful believers in Christ of this age will be rewarded

with immortality. The Apostle Paul used the expression, "glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) But those who are awakened from death, or 'come forth to judgment', will, if they pass through the judgment successfully, be restored to perfection of human life as it was originally given to Adam and Eve. The word judgment in this text translates the Greek word **krisis**. It means 'a test', or 'trial'. So, in that time of the general resurrection, all mankind will be placed on probation, as Adam and Eve were on trial in Eden.

The great difference between the future probation period of all mankind and the trial of our first parents will be that the people will not then be deceived by Satan, as Eve was deceived, and as almost all mankind have since been deceived by him. Then all will know that God spoke the truth when he said that death would be the penalty for sin, because they will have observed and experienced it. When they are awakened from death and learn how much time elapsed without their knowledge of it, they will know that they were dead. They will know that while dead they were neither in a hell of torture, nor a purgatory of pain. They will know that they had not been in a heaven of bliss. Those who had been Hindu believers will know that they had not been a butterfly or a tiger while they were dead. All will know that they knew nothing while they were dead, and will thank God for the opportunity he has given them through Christ, the Redeemer, to live again! ■



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with an opportunity for eternal salvation.

In Ephesians 2:2 we read: "In time past ye walked according to the course of this world." All through Ephesians we find this word 'walk', or 'walked'. We are told that in time past—before we were children of God—we walked not in the narrow way that leads to life, but as people of the world walk, in the broad way that leads to death. But since consecrating our lives to the doing of God's will, we are no longer walking in "the course of this world" (vs. 2); that is past. Now we have received the gift of salvation. We are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (vs. 10) So we are now to walk in good works.

The good works are those ordained for God's New Creation. They are the good works which develop as an outgrowth of our faith. Let us note also that we are here exhorted to walk in the good works prepared for us by God. The people asked Jesus, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" (John 6:28,29) Our

Master said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." This simple formula contains the complete solution to the relationship of faith and works, for true belief leads to the action of faith, to the surrendering to God in consecration.

In summary, good works, within the Scriptural meaning of this term are: (1) Consecrating ourselves to God. (2) Being steadfast and unmovable in our consecration. (3) Doing those works planned for us by God. (4) Increasing in the knowledge of God. (5) Relying on the Word of God as our source of information regarding good works. (6) Being zealous in doing the will of God. These are good works.

We are a people "zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14), and I Peter 2:12 tells us that by our "good works" which the world shall "behold," they will "glorify God in the day of visitation." O, may we show forth his truth; may we let our light shine! These too, are good works. We are not saved by good works, but are created unto good works. ■

LESSON FOR AUGUST 8

New Fellowship

KEY VERSE: "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."—*Ephesians 2:19*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Ephesians 2:11-22*

THE BASIC PROPOSITION in this portion of Ephesians is the "mystery" that Paul spoke of to the Early Church. (Eph. 3:9; 6:19) He calls the Gentiles "fellowheirs" with the Jews. (Eph. 3:6) Paul describes the enmity that had existed between Jews and Gentiles as a 'middle wall of partition between them'. By abolishing the Law of commandments through the cross, Jesus Christ made a common ground upon which both Jews and Gentiles could come into fellowship with God. There is no middle wall, to those who are in Christ Jesus. But the enmity still exists for those who are not in Christ. Our Lord "came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh." (Eph. 2:17) Both Jews and Gentiles needed peace.

To grasp the beauty of the word 'peace' used in verses

14,15, and 17, we should know the full meaning of the word; it means more than tranquillity and quietness—it also means reconciliation. Through Christ we are reconciled to God. "He is our peace." **Weymouth** puts it nicely in *Colossians 1:19,20*: "It was the Father's gracious will that the whole of the divine perfections should dwell in him [Jesus]. And God purposed through him to reconcile the universe to himself, making peace through his [Christ's] blood."

God's method for the calling of his people during the Gospel Age is still a program of selection—of choosing, not a nation, but individuals who, by proving faithful, become united to form a "holy nation" which later will be used for the blessing of all the families of the earth. (I Pet. 2:9) These individuals are reached through the dissemination of the Gospel—the

"word of reconciliation." Paul wrote, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."—Rom. 1:16

But Jesus explained that no one could come to him unless drawn by the Father (John 6:44), and that those who were drawn by the Father he would receive. (vs. 37) Just how the Heavenly Father exercises his drawing power toward individuals whom he would bring to Christ during this Gospel Age is quite beyond our comprehension. Solomon wrote: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." (Eccles. 11:5,6) This is an important lesson for us who have been made ministers of reconciliation. Our chief responsibility is to disseminate the "word of reconciliation," to plant and water the seed of truth, but it is God who giveth the increase.

During the present Gospel Age only a comparatively few

are reached by the ministry of reconciliation. God permits us, as the ambassadors of Christ, to have a share in this ministry that we might, through faithfulness to it, prove our worthiness of sharing in the future great work of carrying the message of reconciliation to the whole world of mankind. Only by faithfulness in the little things of today can we have a hope of sharing in the larger work of tomorrow.

And although the results of our sacrificial efforts are at the present time small, it is nevertheless a privilege to participate as co-workers with the LORD. And, thank God, this it is not merely that those who are called of God and blessed in this age might be saved. But it is also that through them, deliverance from sin and death might be brought to the whole world of mankind! It is for this manifestation of the sons of God that all humanity, steeped in sin and dying, are unknowingly waiting. (Rom. 8:19) Let us appreciate more and more each day the grand part we have in God's ministry of reconciliation. ■

LESSON FOR AUGUST 15

New Behavior

KEY VERSE: *"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us as an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour."*—Ephesians 5:1,2

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5:1-20

THE LOVE OF Christ, by which every true Christian is encircled, is described by Paul as being "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:39) Failing to realize this, many have erroneously supposed that Christ is more loving than God—that God is austere and unloving, ready to visit wrath upon his creatures at the slightest provocation. But this incorrect idea could not be farther from the truth, for the Scriptures reveal that it was God's love which provided the way of salvation through Christ, and that what Christ has done, and will continue to do for us and for the human race as a whole, is by the Heavenly Father's design, and therefore an expression of his abounding love.—John 3:16

Of course, this does not mean that Jesus is not also loving, nor that he does not

personally have our interests at heart. Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14:9) All the glorious characteristics of the Creator are revealed through Christ, including his love. So we find in our study of the Word that divine love is referred to interchangeably as being the love of God and the love of Christ. Or, for example, as we have stated earlier, when the writers desired to be more specific, they defined it as the love of God "which is *in* Christ Jesus our Lord."—I Tim. 1:14

First, in the acknowledgment of our undone condition, and that Christ died in order that we might be reconciled to God, there results a further constraining power of divine love; and, secondly, the result of this is our recognition that we do not belong to ourselves, but to him who loved us and died for us.

Third, divine love thus compels us to give our all to the LORD, persuading us that we should devote ourselves wholly to him and to his service; and this, we now realize, includes even life itself. Thus we have the steps by which we enter into the circle of special divine love.

In Romans 12:1 Paul describes this as presenting our bodies a "living sacrifice." Paul declares also that such a dedication of ourselves is but our "reasonable service." Paul expresses this thought by the words, "because we thus judge," that is, our reasoned conclusion is that in view of the circumstances we owe our all to the LORD, so we consecrate ourselves to do his will.

To make this full consecration, and then faithfully devote our lives to him day by day until our sacrifice is wholly consumed and we have been faithful even unto death, is our part of a wonderful arrangement whereby we become sons of God. This is the age of the "heavenly calling," when those constrained by the love of Christ to make a consecration to the LORD are given the hope of

joint-heirship with Christ, to live and reign with him in his kingdom.

Paul assures us that if we present ourselves a living sacrifice, our offering will be acceptable to God. Such a consecration implies the surrender of our wills and the acceptance of the will of God as it is expressed through Christ. "Therefore, if any man be in Christ," the apostle explains, "he is a New Creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—II Cor. 5:17

We become New Creatures through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and for those who receive this begetting, "all things" become new. They have new hopes, new aims, new ambitions. These have a new vocation in life which is to serve the LORD rather than self. They set their affections on things above, rather than on things of earth—they run diligently for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, which is everlasting gain, rather than for material wealth which fades away—worldly honor, glory, and riches. ■

LESSON FOR AUGUST 22

New Family Order

KEY VERSE: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear [reverence] of God."—Ephesians 5:21

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5:21; 6:4

NO HOME LIFE can be more beautiful than one in which the Spirit of the LORD prevails. The First Commandment given by God through Moses sets the proper pattern for such a home: "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." When the members of a family thus love the LORD supremely—more than even life itself—there is no room for selfishness to exercise its blighting influence.

Moses insisted that this first love for God should be more than a motto hanging on the wall. "These words shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house. . . . And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes."—Deut. 6:6-8

In other words, the importance of putting God first in the affections was to be kept prominently before every Israelitish family continually. Moses knew that in this was the secret of family peace and joy, as well as national security. The whole nation of Israel was as one large family, the prosperity of which depended upon obedience to God's Law. Moses knew that if the individual families of the nation loved God supremely and were therefore obedient to him, the entire nation would be the same. It was because the people did not obey Moses' injunction that they lost God's favor.

Paul's lesson in Ephesians concerning family relationships pertains also to two kinds of families. He admonishes husbands, wives, parents, and children—our natural families—and at the same time reminds us of our responsibility as members of the spiritual family of God.

He speaks of submitting ourselves one to another "in the fear of God." As members of God's family we cannot live unto ourselves, in the sense of always having things 'our way' in the church or in our cooperative ministry. Paul applies the same principle in admonishing Christian wives to submit to their own husbands "as unto the Lord." This is in keeping with our being subject to Christ, who is the Head of the church, even as the husband is the head of the wife. But this does not authorize a domineering attitude on the part of a husband, for Paul continues, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it."

Paul speaks of the Scriptural truth that when a man and woman are joined in marriage they become "one flesh." "This," he says, "is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." This oneness of Christ and his church as members of the same body has indeed been a 'great mystery', so great that only those specially called by God

have been able to comprehend it.

But to these it is a glorious reality, for they know that all the wonderful Messianic promises of peace and blessing for the world of mankind must await fulfillment until this 'body' is complete. The Christ [Messiah] is not one member, but many, Paul explains. (I Cor. 12:12) Failure to recognize this fact has led to all sorts of error in thought and practice; among them the false idea that God has been trying to convert the world during the present age. In reality he has merely been selecting from the world those who are to be members of the Christ company, members of his 'body'.

Paul addressed the opening verses of the 6th chapter to the "children" of the consecrated. He felt a responsibility of admonishing them to a proper respect for their parents. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the LORD." Children 'provoked to wrath' might not be interested in what their parents try to teach them concerning the LORD. ■

LESSON FOR AUGUST 29

New Strength

KEY VERSE: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might."—Ephesians 6:10

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 6:10-20

PAUL INDICATES THAT to be "strong in the LORD," includes the need for putting on the 'armor of God'. "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil." And again, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done [*Margin, "overcome"*] all, to stand." (vs. 13) Putting on the whole armor of God implies proper use of all aspects of truth in relationship to the Christian life.

Certainly we need the whole armor of truth as a protection against the many defiling errors and other evil influences of the present time. We need the truth as a 'helmet' of salvation. Since the helmet protects the head, it well represents our need to understand the doctrines, and how they apply to us as Christians. We need to know God, and to be assured that

he is caring for us, and causing all our experiences to work together for our good. Without this knowledge we might well become discouraged and give ear to one or another of Satan's sophistries designed to lure us away from the light of God's Word, and into the darkness of human traditions.

We need the 'breastplate of righteousness'. Since the breastplate protects the heart from dagger and spear, it represents the protection of the heart by application of the truth as it is centered in Christ Jesus and his blood by which we are justified. How wonderful it is to know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, and that our imperfect works are, through Christ, acceptable to the Heavenly Father!

We need also the 'shield of faith'. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" As the shield can

be maneuvered according to the situation threatening, so faith is our protection under every circumstance. (I John 5:4) We also need the 'girdle of truth', which garment of servitude well symbolizes our consecration to the service of the LORD, the truth, and the brethren. All the other parts of the armor fail of their purpose if we do not serve the truth.

We are also to have our feet shod with the 'preparation of the Gospel of peace'. This indicates that our walk in life as children of the day should be in keeping with our most holy faith. Walking in this way, we are promoters of peace and goodwill, rather than of strife and hatred.

"The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," is also a very essential part of our armor as New Creatures in Christ Jesus. Possessing the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God—suggests a faithful use of the truth as represented by the helmet of salvation. This knowledge is important, and we should seek to know the truth in as great detail as possible. However, this knowledge alone will not protect us against the

wiles of the Adversary in this evil day. As well as possessing knowledge, we also need a heart reliance and appreciation of the message, and a realization of the righteousness of God as it is represented in the truth.

In addition to having on the whole armor of God and a well sharpened sword of the Spirit, we must be of good courage, and war a good warfare in the face of the enemy, remembering that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God."—II Cor. 10:4,5

Just as soldiers before going into battle appeal to their gods for protection and victory, so it must be with the good soldiers of Jesus Christ. We should, "Pray always with all prayer and supplication for all saints." (Eph. 6:18) Throughout our course we should be able to say with Paul, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—I Cor. 15:57 ■

The Rest of Faith

THE REST OF faith is of particular interest to the Christian of this Gospel Age. The subject is developed by the Apostle Paul beginning in the third chapter of Hebrews. First of all, he asks us to consider the "Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (vs. 1) Then he contrasts Jesus and his house, with Moses and his house.—vss. 2-6

Moses' faithfulness as a servant is vouched for in verse 5. We think of the great care which he took to see that every feature in the building of the Tabernacle was carried out to the letter. We remember, too, that Moses testified that a greater prophet than he would arise to teach the people. (Deut. 18:15) This testimony, augmented by pictures and types, was for the benefit of the followers of Christ during the Gospel Age.—Rom. 15:4

Moses had the honor of being a servant in the house of his God. But how much more honor to be a son and to share in the possession of the house as an heir! Christ is a Son over his own house, and Paul hastens to assure us that we are of Christ's house "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."—Heb. 3:6

Most of Hebrews 3:7, and on through verse 11, is a parenthesis dealing with Israel's rebellious attitude against the LORD which barred them from entering Canaan, the Promised Land. Without this parenthesis, our text reads like this: "Wherefore, . . . take heed, brethren. lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end!"

Paul here reiterates the very pointed admonition that being partakers with Christ is conditional upon our steadfastness

'unto the end'. He tells us plainly that it is possible to lose our confidence and hope of being included in the house of Christ. This can come about through lack of faith., which can lead to a coldness and a hardening of the heart in resisting the providences and disciplines of God that are shaping us into the character-likeness of Christ.

Paul bases his admonition on the example of unbelief on the part of the children of Israel in the wilderness. In Hebrews 3:15-19 he rehearses briefly their provocation of the LORD during those forty years, and its disastrous effect on those who sinned, and thus failed to enter into the Promised Land. Did not Israel provoke the LORD? Let us consider briefly some of the many incidents during that significant forty years in the wilderness when the children of Israel provoked the LORD, and that continuously.

After crossing the Red Sea that miraculous event should still have been vividly imprinted upon their minds. But, nonetheless, we find a murmuring arising within this great throng of people. After journeying three days into the wilderness they came to water, but it was unfit to drink. It was only natural that they should be very thirsty and desirous of water to quench their thirst. It was natural also that their disappointment should be keen when finding the water to be bitter. However, it was not the proper response to commence complaining to Moses against the LORD. Had not the LORD just delivered them from the armed might and vengeance of the despotic army of Egypt? Could he not easily supply their temporal needs, having brought them thus far? They were not exercising faith in the Almighty Jehovah!

But, despite their lack of faith, God supplied their needs by instructing Moses to cast the branches of a certain tree into the bitter waters to make them sweet. Later they came to Elim where they were refreshed from twelve wells of water, and rested under the shade of seventy palms.—Exod. 15:23,27

Following this, we find Israel longing for the fleshpots of Egypt, and manifesting a lack of faith in the ability of God to supply them with necessary food. In Exodus 16:4,5 the LORD

instructs Moses in the use of the manna, which he planned to send to feed the Israelites. But soon they complained about the manna, and wanted something more substantial to eat. The LORD provided them with an abundance of meat, even to Moses' surprise, by sending droves of quail which fell in the camp. (Exod. 16:13) God's displeasure is manifested by the plague which came upon Israel while they were eating the flesh, when many of them died.—Num. 11:31,33

It was a difficult situation, one which required the exercise of faith in God to look beyond their immediate difficulties and be assured that God would bring them safely through this wilderness to the land he had promised. But their lack of faith again caused them to doubt, and to complain bitterly to Moses that they had no water. (Exod. 17:37) This time their needs were supplied when water gushed forth from a rock smitten by Moses. Copious supplies of life-giving water flowed from the rock, provided by their long-suffering God.

Three months after their deliverance from Egypt we find the Israelites camped round at the foot of Mount Sinai. Moses was absent, being in the mountain receiving instructions from God. After many days they began to wonder what had become of their leader. They desired something tangible to worship. So they induced Aaron to make them a golden calf, which they acclaimed as the god which had brought them out of Egypt. For this, God would have blotted out the entire nation, but Moses interceded. Nevertheless, they were punished by God and many of those idolators were slain.—Exod. Chapter 23

We read of the rebellion of Miriam and Aaron against the leadership of Moses. God's displeasure at their presumption was evidenced in Miriam's turning leprous. Moses' greatness is evidenced in his petition for mercy which was granted, although Miriam was forced to remain outside the camp for seven days before she was clean.—Num. Chapter 12

Then, in the thirteenth chapter of Numbers are recounted the details of the LORD's plan to send out spies, one from each tribe, preparatory to entering the land. The LORD was

letting them do all they could by themselves, but he was also seeking to prove their faith in him.

This proved too great a test for the faith of ten of the spies. They all reported that it was indeed a land flowing with milk and honey and a wonderful inheritance. However, ten of them reported that it would be impossible for them to conquer the people of this land. In fact, they went so far as to report that the people were “giants.” (vs. 33) The meaning of this Hebrew word, ‘*nephityl*,’ translated “giants” [*Revised Standard Version*, ‘*nephilim*’] suggests great warriors, tyrants, bullies. It comes from a root meaning ‘to fall’ according to **Dr. Strong**. **Professor Young** gives the meaning as ‘fallen ones’, following from *nephilim*. Seeing these fierce ones undoubtedly caused great fear in the camp, for they would have been quite familiar with the account of the fallen angels and the tyranny of their monstrous offspring who were drowned in the Flood of Noah’s day.

In Numbers 14:11 God asks the question: “How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me for all the signs which I have showed among them?” This episode not only showed a lack of faith in God’s ability to give them the land, but an utter lack of appreciation of God’s motives and purposes in bringing them out of Egypt. For this breach they were to be punished by remaining in the wilderness for forty years—a year for each day that they spied out the land. And the males of twenty years and over were to die in the wilderness and not be allowed to enter Canaan. (vs. 23) “Surely,” the LORD said, “they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it.”

Strangely enough, the very next day this rebellious people had overcome their objections sufficiently to decide that they would go into the land—but it was too late. Their efforts to conquer the people proved how foolish it was to attempt such a thing in their own strength; for the LORD was not with them, and they were routed with heavy loss of life.

Canaan was to have been their place of rest, but they were not then permitted to enter into that rest. "Ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you. But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about."—Deut. 12:9,10

Some five hundred years after Israel had actually entered their Promised Land, we read David's words concerning that time in Psalm 95:7-11, "Today if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation . . . when your fathers tempted me . . . unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."

We might well wonder why David should write this so long a time after Canaan had been entered. But we are not left in doubt, for the Apostle Paul's reasoning in Hebrews 4:7,8, brings the subject into focus. "He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, today, after so long a time; as it is said, today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, for if Jesus [*Margin*, Joshua] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Here Paul explained that David had been speaking prophetically. Yes, God has promised a 'rest' of which the land of Canaan was a symbol, or type.

As we read in the first chapter of Genesis, Adam was created just at the close of the sixth Creative day, and God declared that the work thus concluded was "very good." (vs. Gen. 1:3) With the dawning of the great seventh Creative day, "He [God] rested on the seventh day from all his works." (Gen. 2:2) God promised Israel a rest. Let us see how they failed to enter that rest. In Hebrews 4:2, we read that "the Gospel was preached unto them"—that is, the good news. This, briefly stated, was the good news that under the leadership of Moses they would inherit the land and, as chosen people, they would bless all the families of the earth.

When told to go in and possess the land, through lack of faith they refused. Canaan was designed to be their rest. Was this God's rest? No, it was only a picture. If Israel had exer-

cised faith, they could have entered Canaan and undoubtedly would have been able eventually to enter into the true rest.

The Gospel, or good news, in substance is the same as that preached unto Abraham: "In thee [and in thy seed] shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. 3:8) Abraham's natural seed, Isaac, came through faith. He pictured the greater 'seed' which was to bless all nations, which seed was to be developed by faith. Abraham sought to make his servant Eliezer his seed and heir. (Gen. 15:2) Next he sought to help God by counting Ishmael as his heir. But neither of these efforts were blessed by Jehovah.

Israel fully expected to become that promised 'seed' by keeping God's perfect Law. That this was impossible for imperfect beings was manifested in Israel's failure to keep the Law. In fact, most Israelites put forth very little effort to keep the Law. The Apostle Paul confirms this, saying that no man is justified by the Law, and that the Law is not of faith. (Gal. 3:11,12) He continues, saying that Christ redeemed the Jews from the curse of the Law, that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, and that the promise of the Spirit might be received through faith. He also states that the "just shall live by faith." (Heb. 10:38) We might put it another way by saying that it is only through faith in Christ's sacrificial death that we may be justified, or made right with God.

Therefore, we conclude that it is impossible to enter God's rest through one's own works. So it was that Israel could not enter by the works of the Law. But a rest was promised, and we see that a remnant from Israel did enter into God's rest. Paul wrote, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. 11:57

We ask ourselves, how was it that God rested from his works? It was not because of weariness, for we find in Isaiah 40:28, that the "LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary." And it was surely not due to the lack of something to do. He rested in the sense that he anticipated the finished work of Christ, and left the outworking of the seventh Creative day to him. Therefore, we conclude

that the only way to enter into God's rest is to cease from one's own works and accept the finished work of Christ. The Apostle Paul expresses it in this way, "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."—Heb. 4:10

We ask, then, on what are the works of Christ based? They are based on his perfection, his keeping of God's Law, and the fact that he willingly gave up his own life, which was a perfect human life, as a ransom for all. This constitutes a corresponding price for Adam. Because all in Adam die, therefore Christ has tasted death for every man. (Heb. 2:9) Beyond this, the works of Christ are based upon his resurrection from the dead in order that the benefits of his ransom could be made available to mankind.

We have seen that because of their unbelief, Israel could not enter God's rest. Failure to keep the Law also hindered them, although a remnant at the end of the age did 'enter into rest'. Then the opportunity was presented to the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. So this Gospel has been preached since the First Advent unto the present day.

Throughout this Gospel Age there has been a mixture of 'wheat' and 'tares.' (Matt. 13:25-30) Many for a time sought rest in the creed 'beds'. These were uncomfortable and chilly. Concerning these resting places Isaiah wrote, "The bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." (Isa. 28:20) The true wheat class has found that their only genuine rest is in Christ. This has been true of all during the Gospel Age, and in this harvest time in which we live.

In Romans 4:19-25, Abraham's faith is brought to our attention. Undoubtedly Abraham's faith was great. But it is not just the fact that he believed that commended him, but additionally, the fact that he acted upon his faith in God's promises. Thus he attested his assurance that God's promises would come true.

When Abraham sought to make his servant, Eliezer, his heir, God told him that his own offspring would be his heir

and that his seed should be as the stars of heaven. Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. (Gen. 15:6) Paul quoted this as recorded in Romans 4:22-25, and explained that these words were not merely for Abraham's benefit, but were spoken for our benefit also.

Verses 24 and 25 enlarge on the subject and show how it is that this righteousness is imputed to us. "We believe on him [God] that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." We read in Hebrews 9:24 that he appeared "in the presence of God for us," to apply the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf.

So if we believe in Jesus' sacrifice and if we make a full consecration to do God's will and to serve him faithfully until we die, and if we are accepted by God, we then have been justified and begotten of the Holy Spirit. The apostle continues his reasoning in Romans 5:1,2, saying: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Standing now in this grace, covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness, we are no longer at enmity with God, and no longer depending on our own works. Then, and only then, have we entered into God's rest. "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." This constitutes, for the Christian, a present and continuous rest in Christ. However, we realize that this is only a down-payment, a foretaste of the final rest beyond the veil.

In Hebrews 4:11, we read, "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest." This brings to mind another illustration which the Apostle Paul used—those who contend in the games. They must strive lawfully. (I Cor. 9:24-27; II Tim. 2:5) Having gained access to the racecourse we must press along the line, earnestly and zealously running for the prize of the high calling. (Phil. 2:14) We must be determined that nothing will hinder or divert us as we steadily progress toward the goal

These efforts will cost us something—everything we have—in time and energy. Our weak flesh may cry, ‘Enough!’ but the sacrifice must be consumed if it is to be acceptable to God.

“Ne’er think the victory won,
Nor once at ease sit down;
Thine arduous work will not be done
Till thou hast gained thy crown.”

Paul gives his reason for urging us to labor—“Lest any man fall after the same example of [Israel’s] unbelief.” These words are full of meaning to us. Nor does he let the matter rest here. In Hebrews 3:12 he says: “Take heed, brethren,” and in 4:1, “Let us therefore fear.” These are warnings, danger signals, that we who have entered into God’s rest now, could fall short of entering the ultimate and complete rest in glory. This is far from what God expects of us, and it is far from what we desire for ourselves.

How Paul magnified the importance of faith! Faith is the basis upon which we must build a character adorned with the fruits and graces of the Spirit. Some of these are “fortitude, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness brotherly-kindness, love,” “joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” (II Pet. 1:5-11; Gal. 5:22) We realize that of our own selves we would be unable to accomplish this transformation of character, but we are thankful to realize that having begun a good work in us, God is able also to finish it. We have been promised all the help that is necessary to complete our task.

Coming now to Hebrews 4:12, and on to the end of the chapter, Paul concluded his thoughts with the encouraging assurance that those who have entered into God’s rest, have every provision made for them to receive help through their “great High Priest” and, by availing themselves of these privileges, will be able to take their place among the “more than conquerors.”—Rom. 8:37

“The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.” (Heb. 4:12) The truth of God’s

Word is the source from which we gain eternal life. It reveals God's purposes both for the church and for all mankind. It reveals our faults and failings, and shows us how to overcome them. It is given "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—II Tim. 3:16,17

"All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him [our LORD] with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4:13) We may hide things from others and even from ourselves, but we cannot hide them from God, for he knows the very thoughts and intents of our hearts. It should be our constant prayer to be cleansed from secret faults and thus be kept back from presumptuous sins. David expressed this thought beautifully: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart."—Ps. 24:3

But how can we maintain this purity of heart? How can we overcome the wiles of the Adversary, the lust of the world, and the many weakness of our own flesh? Are we sometimes overwhelmed and discouraged at our failures? Do we sometimes allow our eyes to leave our Savior momentarily and look upon the roaring waves, or, perhaps, think that the fiery trials are more than we can endure?

What consolation is brought to us in the following verses: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. 4:14,15

What comfort it brings to consider Jesus! We have been be-headed and have accepted Christ instead as our Head. (Rev. 20:4) He knows each member of his body and is looking after the needs of each one, no matter how small or insignificant those needs may be. He is our heavenly Bridegroom and is very solicitous for the welfare of his 'bride' (Isa. 62:5 Rev. 21:2,9) He is anxiously awaiting as, one by one, they complete the adornment of their wedding gowns. Finally the mar-

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Lancaster KVOY 1340 8:15 a.m.
Los Angeles(Span) KALI 1430 5:45 a.m.
Monterey KNRY 1240 8:30 a.m.
Sacramento KFIA 710 2:45 p.m.
San Francisco KEST 1450 3:30 p.m.
Tehachapi KTPI FM 103.1 8:15 a.m.

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Jacksonville WXTL 1010 7:45 p.m.
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ILLINOIS

LaSalle WLFO 1220 9:45 a.m.
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KRMS FM 93.5 8:30 a.m.
St. Louis(Sat.) KSTL 690 8:30 a.m.

NEW JERSEY

Camden(Tues.) WTMR 800 9:30 p.m.
Salem WJIC 1510 9:45 a.m.
WNNN FM 101.7 9:45 a.m.

NEW MEXICO

Los Alamos KRSN 1490 6:45 a.m.

NEW YORK

Buffalo WWKB 1520 11:00 a.m.
Buffalo WHLD 1270 12:00 noon
New York WOR 710 9:15 p.m.

OHIO

Cincinnati WLW 550 6:30 a.m.
Cleveland WRKG 1380 7:45 a.m.

OKLAHOMA

Muskogee KHJM FM 100.3 5:00 p.m.

OREGON

Portland KKEY 1150 7:00 a.m.

PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown WHOL 1600 10:45 a.m.
Pittsburgh WPLW 1590 8:00 a.m.
Pottstown WPAZ 1370 12:45 p.m.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Beaufort(Sat.) WVGB 1490 1:00 p.m.
Charlestown WOKE 1340 7:06 p.m.
Lexington WLGO 1170 12:30 p.m.

TENNESSEE

Nashville WSM 650 7:45 p.m.

VIRGINIA

Richmond WGGM 820 7:45 a.m.

WASHINGTON

Tacoma KAMT 1360 10:15 a.m.

WEST VIRGINIA

Wheeling WWVA 1170 6:30 p.m.

WISCONSIN

Jackson WYLO 540 5:15 p.m.
Milwaukee WNOV FM 85.6 7:00 a.m.

Please note
changes which
occur frequently.

... WORLDWIDE RADIO BROADCASTS

Canada

ALBERTA

Banff	CFHC 1340	11:45 a.m.
Brooks	CIBQ 1340	9:00 a.m.
Canmore	CFNC 1450	11:45 a.m.
Stettler	CKFQ 1400	7:45 a.m.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

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

MANITOBA

Winnipeg	CKJS 810	9:00 a.m.
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ONTARIO

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

SASKATCHEWAN

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

Angola and Zambia

Radio Africa #2 (Thurs.)	9:00 a.m.
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Argentina (Spanish)

Buenos Aires (Sat.) FM Malvinas 91.5 mHz	10:00 a.m. & 10:00 p.m.
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Brazil (Portuguese)

Curitiba Radio Capital 1270 kHz	8:45 a.m.
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British West Indies

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

Chile (Spanish)

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

China

Manila Radio (Sat.)	6:00 p.m.
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Costa Rica (Spanish)

San José Radio Sonora 105.9 FM, 700 AM	6:15 a.m.
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Kenya and Uganda

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

Culiacán Ranchera XECQ	8:30 a.m.
Guadalajara XEWK 1130	8:30 a.m.
Monterrey XHSR FM	
Torreón XETB 1350	8:15 a.m.
Tuxtla Gutierrez XEON 720	7:30 a.m.

New Zealand

Whakatane IXX	8:10 a.m.
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Nigeria

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

Panama City (Fri.) HOQ 1250	6:15 p.m.
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Peru (Spanish)

Trujillo 105.7 FM	9:30 a.m. & 10:00 p.m.
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Philippines

Manila (Sat.) DZAM 1026 kHz	7:15 p.m.
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Russia (Russian)

Novgorod FM 71.3	10:00 a.m.
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South Africa

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

Sri Lanka

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

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

Montevideo Radio El Espectador 810	9:15 a.m.
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THE BIBLE ANSWERS PROGRAMS

UNITED STATES: *New Jersey Cable TV*—Programs are shown every Sunday evening at 6:00 p.m. EST.

Nostalgia Network—Programs are shown every Wednesday morning at 6:00 a.m. EST.

Pittsburgh, PA, WNEV TV 63—Programs are shown Sundays at 9:00 a.m. EST.

CANADA: Programs are shown every Sunday morning. Consult your local newspaper for the station in your area.

Atlantic Time—10:30 a.m. Eastern Time—9:30 a.m.

Central Time—8:30 a.m. Mountain Time—7:30 a.m.

Pacific Time—6:30 a.m.

Keystone Inspirational Network Every Sunday Morning

CALIFORNIA

Hemet TV 53
Palm Springs TV 20
Sacramento TV 62
Twenty-nine Palms TV 25

DELAWARE

Wilmington TV 14

FLORIDA

Pensacola TV 12

GEORGIA

Rome TV 56
Tifton TV 5

IDAHO

Cottonwood TV 39

LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge TV 52
Crawley TV 65
Lake Charles TV 63

MARYLAND

Leonardtown TV 52

OHIO

Bucyrus TV 54
Findlay TV 6
Marietta TV 26

PENNSYLVANIA

Coudersport Cable 66
Lancaster TV 49
Williamsport TV 5
York TV 49

SOUTH CAROLINA

Monks Corner Cable 6

SOUTH DAKOTA

Sioux Falls TV 48

TENNESSEE

Union City TV 9

TEXAS

Corpus Christi TV 55
Falfurrias TV 7

NEWFOUNDLAND

Harbour Grace TV 25

Eastern Time—11:30 a.m.

Mountain Time—9:30 a.m.

Central Time—10:30 a.m.

Pacific Time—8:30 a.m.

riage will take place. As the hymn says, this will be, "A marriage such as earth hath never known, when bride and Bridegroom are made one before the great white throne."

We think of the anointing which we have received in coming into the body of Christ, and of all the privileges that we enjoy as we endeavor to follow faithfully in the steps of our Beloved. And how blessed the invitation, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. 4:16

Having received all the admonition and encouragement of the preceding verses it is only logical that we should avail ourselves of the opportunity of coming to God in prayer. Indeed, we should feel the warmth of his relationship as a Father to his children, and should joyfully and eagerly go to him in prayer.

The word 'boldly' containing the thought of 'frankly' and 'with assurance.' We can bring our failures and short-comings to our Father, for we have an Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous, who pleads our cause, who intercedes on our behalf that our robes may be cleansed from every spot, stain, and wrinkle.—I John 2:1; Eph. 5:27

So then it is by faith that we enter into God's rest in Christ. It is the proving of our faith that will determine our worthiness to enter into that full rest beyond the river of death.

It has been well said, "He who believes fully, rests fully." "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds."—Ps. 149:5



EVERY VALLEY SHALL be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:

And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together:

For the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.—*Isaiah 40:4,5*

The Light of God's Countenance

"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

—II Corinthians 4:6

DARKNESS IS USED in the Scriptures to symbolize ignorance of, and alienation from God, and all that this implies of sin, suffering, and death. Light on the other hand, symbolizes a knowledge of God and harmony with him—a state in which the Creator delights to bestow his favor and blessing. This, in turn, results in peace, joy, and life.

Because sin entered the world, the human race was cast off from God's favor, but not forever. David wrote, "His anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. LORD, by thy favor thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled."—Ps. 30:5-7

In this passage David uses an additional symbol—the "face" of the LORD. He said that when the LORD hid his face he (David) was "troubled." Associating these symbols we could say that when the LORD hides his 'face' there is 'darkness', and when God shows his face there is 'light'. Where there is 'darkness' there is fear and unhappiness—where there is 'light' there is assurance and joy. To illustrate this, in a prophecy concerning the casting off of natural Israel, the LORD said, "I will show them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity."—Jer. 18:17

Another familiar illustration is when Moses said to Israel, "The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: the LORD make his

face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” (Num. 6:24-26) In the expression, ‘make his face shine upon thee,’ the ‘face’ and ‘light’ symbolisms are combined. Even today we speak of one’s face ‘beaming’ with joy and approval. A person’s facial expression usually reveals very clearly whether he is pleased or angry.

“Seek Ye My Face”

David wrote, “When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek. Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.” (Ps. 27:8,9) While David is expressing his own desire to be in harmony with his Creator, the great God of Israel, and to enjoy his blessings, he is also expressing the heart sentiments of all who love the LORD.

Our first parents, created in the image of God, must have loved their Creator, and they were blessed with his favor and fellowship. But when they transgressed God’s law he withdrew his favor from them. He showed them his ‘back’ instead of his ‘face’. We read that after they had sinned they “heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God.”—Gen. 3:8

The fact that our first parents recognized the ‘voice’ of the LORD indicates that this was not the first time they had heard it. It is not important for us to know the manner in which the Creator communicated with this perfect human pair whom he had created in his image. However it was done, Adam and Eve must have greatly rejoiced in the privilege of fellowship with him. Suddenly it was different. Knowing that they had sinned, the ‘voice’ of God struck fear into their hearts. No longer did they enjoy the light of his countenance.

Actually, God did continue to love his human creatures, and he did not intend to permit them to continue living forever in a state of alienation from him. However, justice demanded that the foretold sentence of death be imposed

upon them. But a ray of hope was given in the statement that the "seed" of the woman would "bruise" the "serpent's" head. (Gen. 3:15) This faint ray of light in an otherwise 'dark' situation has since—by the unfolding plan of God for the redemption and recovery of the world from sin and death—continued to be made 'brighter'. Indeed, it has served to illuminate the pathway and cheer the hearts of all in every age who have seen its shining rays and recognized it as emanating from the 'face' of the LORD.

In the case of all these, however, there was the necessity of seeking the LORD. On Mars' Hill Paul spoke of those who "seek the LORD, if haply [perhaps] they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us." (Acts 17:27) Man, in his original perfection, was endowed with the desire to know and to worship his Creator. While this quality became relegated to a secondary place in the lives of the vast majority of the fallen race—and with many has been almost completely effaced by sin and selfishness—it has persisted as a potent factor in the hearts of some in every generation.

It has been upon as many of these as the LORD has elected to use in the outworking of his plan that he has caused the light of his countenance to shine. Abel was illuminated sufficiently with this light to enable him to offer a "more excellent sacrifice" than Cain. (Heb. 11:4) It enabled Enoch to "walk with God." (Gen. 5:24) The light of the LORD's countenance shining upon Abraham enabled him to look down through the centuries and see the day of Christ, and rejoice in it.—John 8:56

Moses also was blessed by the fact that the LORD beamed upon him with the light of his countenance. Laying hold by faith upon the significance of what he saw, Moses was given strength to turn aside from all the advantages that were offered him in the court of Pharaoh, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."—Heb. 11:25,26

The Messiah Came

All the Ancient Worthies similarly rejoiced in the light of God's countenance, as by faith they laid hold upon the Messianic promises which were recorded by one after another of the holy prophets. All they had, however, were the promises, which revealed that the time would come when through a 'seed', a "Wonderful Counsellor," an "everlasting Father," "the Prince of Peace," that God would again show his face to his whole human creation; that his "anger" would be turned away, and his favor manifested. (Isa. 9:6,7) They continued to believe and to rejoice in these promises, and finally, in due time, Christ, the promised Messiah, did come. Promises now began to be translated into reality.

Simeon, speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said concerning the significance of the birth of Jesus, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (Luke 2:30-32) Later Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12) "In him was life," John wrote, "and the life was the light of men."—John 1:4

When Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," he added, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12) Those who are in the light have life, which is the same thought as that expressed by David when he wrote that in God's favor is life.—Ps. 30:5

Jesus came not on a mission of his own, but as a representative of his Father. John later wrote, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." (I John 1:5) However, we cannot know the Father except through Jesus. It is only through Jesus that we enjoy God's favor. It is this thought that is expressed in our text: "God . . . that shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Some have mistakenly thought this to mean that the glory of God was manifested by a radiance on the literal face of the man Jesus, but this is not what Paul meant. Rather, he referred to Jesus' face in a symbolic manner. Just as the Bible speaks of Jehovah causing his face to shine upon his people, so Paul applied the same symbolism to Jesus, and for the

reason that the favor of the Heavenly Father is now manifested through his Son.

So, to paraphrase Paul's statement, we might put it this way: God has shown his favor to us, having shone into our hearts through the Gospel. But not directly, for the Gospel reveals that his favor now reaches us through Christ, or 'in the face of Jesus Christ'. It was in anticipation of the provision he would make through Jesus that our Heavenly Father lifted up his countenance upon his faithful people of ancient times. But now that Jesus has come, the Father wants us to realize and appreciate the fact that the light of his countenance is manifested in the 'face' of this beloved one, our Redeemer and Advocate.

Seeking God's Face

In retrospect we can look back to the time when, as Paul stated it, we were seeking after God if perhaps we might feel after him and find him. At that time we were in the "horrible pit," and "clay" of sin and death. (Ps. 40:1,2) As David wrote, we "waited patiently for the LORD," and in his own due time he "inclined" unto us and "heard" our cry.

But in that miry clay of sin, God could not lift up his countenance upon us and give us peace in the sense that we would no longer be alienated from him. This "peace with God" we could obtain only through a living faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:1) But the LORD did encourage us to seek his 'face', his favor, through continued study of his Word, and by conforming our lives to its precepts. As we came to understand them, we were responding to the invitation to seek the LORD's face. In effect we were saying, "Thy face, LORD, will I seek."—Ps. 27:8

As we continued to seek we found. We learned that only by accepting the Master's invitation to deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow him could we experience the great joy of walking in the light of God's countenance. After we counted the cost for a time, we eventually took that step of full consecration to the LORD, and when we did, our hearts were flooded by those radiant beams, the light of the knowl-

edge of the glory of God, which were shining from the uplifted light of the countenance of the great Jehovah, our Heavenly Father.—Ps. 4:6; 44:3; 89:15; 90:8

While we are rejoicing in the realization that the LORD has now allowed the light of his countenance to shine upon us, we also are conscious of the fact that he has freely given us all that we need. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Through Christ he has justified us. Who is it that condemns us? Is it our own imperfections? We must remember that they are covered by the blood of Christ. Is it the world? We must not be discouraged. We must spurn the frowns of the world, and rejoice that we are walking in the light of God's countenance. Is it the Devil? We know that he goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. We know that he is ever trying to strike fear into our hearts—which is cruel, for fear has torment, as well as restraint. But we will not fear for we know that God is far more powerful than Satan, and no matter what slanderous attacks he may cause to be made against us, we are God's beloved children. And Jesus, our elder brother is now at the right-hand of God, ever living to make intercession for us.

How wonderfully reassuring are the words of our Heavenly Father! Since we have sought his face and found it, he wants us to know that we cannot fail, save only by turning willfully aside from the pathway in which the light of his countenance reveals each onward step. Since he gives us the strength to take each step, will we become separated from him? Even though we may have tribulation, and be "killed all the day long," we know that through him who loves us we can be "more than conquerors." Indeed, we are persuaded that "neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 8:31-39

Sustained by Faith

While still on this side of the veil we can see our Father's face only by the eye of faith. To walk in the light of his countenance does not imply freedom from trials and difficulties,

Sustained by Faith

While still on this side of the veil we can see our Father's face only by the eye of faith. To walk in the light of his countenance does not imply freedom from trials and difficulties, but strength to bear them. However, the light of divine favor reveals that there is a purpose in our suffering, that by it we are being prepared to live and reign with Christ. The light also reveals that the purpose of Christ's reign is to make an end of all suffering, and to establish peace and joy throughout the whole earth. The knowledge of this glorious consummation of the divine plan constituted a large measure of the joy that was set before Jesus—the joy that enabled him to endure the cross and to despise the shame that was heaped upon him.—Heb. 12:13

The same is true of us. David wrote, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living." (Ps. 27:13) How wonderful it is to know that the goodness of the LORD is yet to be manifested throughout all the earth, that a true knowledge of his glory is to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea! This means that in God's due time all mankind will be blessed by the light of his countenance.

It is this thought that was emphasized by the Apostle Peter when he said that "times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the LORD [Greek, "face of Jehovah.]" (Acts 3:19-21) Thank God for this assurance that he is yet to make his face shine upon all the families of the earth! Peter explained that this would be accomplished by sending Jesus Christ, who would usher in "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

And how wonderful to realize that our Heavenly Father, at the time of Creation, caused the light to shine out of darkness. He has now shined into our hearts and revealed his desire to use us, together with Jesus, in the bringing about of this glorious time of "refreshing" for the people of all nations. Truly, in view of this great joy that is set before us, any suffering with Christ which divine wisdom may deem necessary in order to prepare us for such an exalted role in the divine plan, must be

considered as indeed “light afflictions” which are but for a “moment” as compared with that future and “eternal weight of glory.”—II Cor. 4:17

But if this knowledge is to prevent our becoming weary in well-doing, we need faith to believe God’s promises—faith which sees the invisible. Jesus would have fainted had he not, by faith, laid hold upon the promises concerning that glorious future day when his Father’s goodness would fill the earth. And we should now look unto Jesus as our example—he who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself—lest we become faint and weary.

Proverbs 10:22 declares, “The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.” Through the truth and in the face of Jesus Christ, our Heavenly Father has filled our hearts and lives with the richness of his blessing, and we have his promise that no sorrow will be commingled with this blessing. There are trials and testings. There is often pain and tears. But if our faith is strong we will count all these experiences as joy, because we will know that they are among the “all things” which are “working together” for our good.—Rom. 8:28

Yes, if our faith is pure, and simple, and strong, we will take the LORD at his word. To the extent that we are able to do this, our lives will be all sunshine, with no earthborn clouds to hide the beaming countenance of our God. Any sorrow of heart we might have, does not come from the LORD, but from the experiences we share in common with the world—sickness, death, loss. As our own faith in his promises and providences increases, these experiences begin to take on their proper perspectives in our lives.

One of the important lessons we need to learn, as we walk in the light of the LORD’s countenance, is patience. But in this also our faith must be strong enough to believe that in God’s due time and way, each experience of our consecrated lives is what we need most to develop us in a Christlike manner. God knows best how and when to supply the strength to overcome in every time of trial. How much we need to wait on the LORD, and to be of good courage. And how precious is the

promise to all who have sought the Father's face, have found it—who are continuing to walk in the light of his countenance: "He shall strengthen thine heart."—Ps. 27:14

We continually thank our dear Heavenly Father, for this further assurance of his love! By his grace we will wait on him and be of good courage, confident that in his own due time the light shining into our hearts, reflected from the 'face of Jesus Christ', will guide us into his presence, to see him face to face! ■



WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

AUGUST 5—"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."—Romans 8:28 (Z. '00-22 Hymn 298)

AUGUST 12—"Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. . . . Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer."—Psalm 19:12-14 (Z. '98-22 Hymn 199)

AUGUST 19—"Abstain from every form of evil."—I Thessalonians 5:22, *RSV* (Z. '03-26 Hymn 89)

AUGUST 26—"Love . . . is kind."—I Corinthians 13:4 (Z. '03-153 Hymn 165)

YOUNG ADULTS BIBLE STUDIES

THE GOLDEN THREAD SERIES, Part 41

The Stoning of Stephen

MORE AND MORE Israelites believed Jesus was the one whom God had sent to guarantee that all of his promises will come true. Thousands were moved by the spirited sermons of the apostles and by the miracles of healing that they performed. Jesus said that this period of time was like a harvest. All summer long, fruits and vegetables are nourished by sun and rain with only one purpose in mind—to prepare them for the harvest season. Then they are picked to be appreciated and enjoyed.

The Jewish Age was like the growing season. The Israelites were given the sunshine of God's favor, and the refreshing rain of his Law and its Tabernacle arrangement. These blessings should have prepared them to realize their need for a Savior, their Messiah, and also to recognize him when he arrived.—Luke 10:2

Through the difficult labors and hardships suffered by the apostles many thousands of Jews were 'harvested' during the early days of the church—just after the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. They believed in Jesus and became Christians. When the harvest work ended, the Jewish Age of favor also ended and a new age then began to dawn—the Gospel Age.—Matthew 23:37,38

“Among the large numbers who had become believers, there was complete agreement of heart and soul. Not one of them claimed any of his possessions as his own, but everything was common property to all. Indeed, there was not a single person in need among them, for those who owned land or property would sell it and bring the proceeds of the sales and place it at the apostles' feet. They distributed to each one according to his need.”—Acts 4:32-35, *Phillips Translation*



After a while, some small problems arose, simply because of the large numbers of people involved. The apostles found that much of their time was taken up seeing to the daily necessities, such as feeding and housing everyone comfortably. They called a meeting and said, "It would be a grave mistake for us to neglect preaching the Word of God in order to serve tables." All agreed that this was true. "Look around you and choose seven men who are of good reputation, practical, and spiritually minded, and we will put them in charge of these matters." And so this is what they did. One young man whose name was Stephen was selected.

This is the beautiful description given of him: "Stephen, full of faith, grace, and power of the Holy Spirit, did great wonders and miracles among the people!" It was not long before he drew the attention of powerful enemies—the scribes and Pharisees! They had not changed. Their object continued to be a determined effort to stamp out the new religion called Christianity. Since Stephen was a very active Christian, and successful in making converts, he had to be stopped.

Their first step was to find men willing to falsely accuse Stephen of disrespect for Moses and the Jewish Law. After they had found several, they seized Stephen and brought him

before the Council. Stephen, following the example of the Apostle Peter, took the opportunity to preach the most wonderful sermon to that group of Israel's highest religious leaders. He was just a young man, but he had a detailed knowledge of the history of the Jewish nation, and God's dealings with them down through the ages. So, beginning with the life of Abraham, he called to their minds how all the prophets of God had suffered persecution. He spoke of Joseph and how he came to be in the land of Egypt. He went into great detail concerning Moses' life, and how he was called to lead the people out of Egypt. He spoke of Joshua, David, and Solomon. Then he told the council that just as Israel had not listened to the prophets God sent them now they were rejecting the greatest of prophets. He said they had betrayed and murdered the Righteous One!

The council became enraged, crazed with fury at his words! They dragged him beyond the walls of the city and stoned him. He looked up to heaven and said, "Behold, I see the heaven opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." The scribes and Pharisees cried out with loud voices and covered their ears so they could not hear Stephen's words. As they continued hurling rocks at him, he kneeled down and prayed aloud for them in a clear, firm voice, "Father, forgive them for this sin!" And with these words, he fell into the deep sleep of death.—Acts 6:8 through Acts 7:60, **New English Bible**

Stephen certainly is one who will receive the promise of Revelation 2:10: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" at the time of his resurrection.

QUESTIONS:

1. What do we mean by the Jewish Age? The Gospel Age?
2. When did the Jewish Age end?
3. What picture did Jesus use to describe the end of the Jewish Age? Why is this a good illustration of what happened after the death and resurrection of Jesus?

4. Why did the Early Church elect seven deacons?
5. What was the name of one of these church servants?
6. Why did the scribes and Pharisees bring him before the council?
7. Did Stephen give a good sermon to the council? What was the main point he brought to their attention?
8. What was their reaction? Why?
9. What did they do to Stephen?
10. Was Stephen angry with them? Did he ask God for revenge against these sinners?
11. Will Stephen receive a reward for his faithfulness to God? When will that happen? ■

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- 15-The Thief in Paradise
- 22-A Worldwide Religion
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To the left is a suggestion for a small advertisement in your local newspaper. This outline is designed for three and one-half inches in one column.

AUGUST SPECIAL

On Sunday, August 15th, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss a topic of interest to many, **"The Thief in Paradise."** Free circulars are available which announce this program, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. Write to:

The Dawn

East Rutherford, N.J. 07073

Lessons from Jude

***“Keep yourself in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” —
Jude 21***

WE KNOW THAT we cannot measure up to the perfect standard that is held before us in the Scriptures—in the person of Jesus, the Lord. So we are thankful, as Jude reminds us (vs. 3), that through our Lord Jesus Christ “mercy” is shown toward us in our imperfections. This loving provision of divine mercy does not provide an excuse for us to relax in our efforts to know and do God’s will. But it does give us cause to rejoice in the realization that through Christ our imperfect works are reckoned acceptable, and that God will bless us, not according to how well we succeed, but in proportion to the sincere efforts we make in trying to come as closely as we can to follow his example of perfection.

In the second verse of his epistle, Jude admonishes us to contend earnestly “for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,” and in verse 20 he speaks of building up ourselves in this “most holy faith.” It is in the next verse that he exhorts us to keep ourselves in the love of God. These verses emphasize the close relationship between the ‘most holy faith’ and divine love. Actually, it is through this ‘faith once delivered unto the saints’ that God has revealed his love to us, and it is by obedience to the glorious truth of the divine plan that we keep ourselves in divine favor.

Many speak in a general way of the love of God, but it is only through the truth of the divine plan that one can appreciate the length and breadth, and height and depth of that love. Those, for example, who read the text that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, and believe that the purpose of this gift was to rescue believing sin-

ners from an eternity of torture certainly have not come very far in discerning God's love. Associated with the grotesque and blasphemous dogma of eternal torture, is the distorted idea that God actually is his own Son, and the Son his own Father.

Only those who know the joyful sound of present truth, the 'faith which was once delivered unto the saints', and through the truth have glimpsed a more accurate vision of God, really know to any degree that love of God which, so far as its fullness is concerned, is quite beyond human understanding. So, if the 'faith which was once delivered unto the saints' has been revealed to us, and we have been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, let us rejoice and be willing at all times to contend earnestly for this divine revelation, and be diligent in building ourselves up in this blessed truth.

Contending for the faith (vs. 3) is by no means limited to upholding it against the attacks of its enemies. This 'contending' is in reality our good fight of faith—the Christian's warfare against his fallen human nature. In this warfare we have three principal enemies with which to contend. These are the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Each of these enemies is formidable in its attacks against our hearts and minds; and when they work together—as frequently they do—we would be helpless before them but for the marvelous provisions of divine grace by which we are kept from falling.

One of these provisions is the truth itself, which Paul likens to an ancient soldier's armor, with its helmet, shield, breastplate, girdle, sandals, and sword. Each of these articles, from one standpoint or another, is symbolic of the truth which is our shield and buckler. If we keep this armor on, and girded closely to us, we will be able to withstand all the "fiery darts" of the Adversary.—Ps. 91; Eph. 6:10-17

Prayer is also a bulwark of strength in the Christian life. In the parable of the importunate widow, Jesus' lesson is that "they [Jesus' disciples] ought always to pray and not to faint." (Luke 18:1) Going to the throne of heavenly grace is the sure way of finding "grace to help" in every time of need. (Heb. 4:16) When the way is difficult, the storms are raging, ene-

mies are pressing hard, and we can scarcely see the next step before us, instead of fainting and giving up, let us pray.

If we hold the truth both in our minds and in our hearts it will manifest itself in our lives. Since the truth reveals the love of God, to be built up in this most holy faith implies a development into the character-likeness of God, and being transformed into the image of his dear Son. Every influence exerted to prevent this growth of grace is something against which we should contend, whether it be from within—our own flesh being the enemy—or from without, emanating from Satan or the world.

Satan is a wily foe, and is quick to take advantage of every weakness of the flesh in his efforts to destroy us as New Creatures in Christ Jesus. Jude knew this, and in his epistle used various illustrations and examples to help us to be on guard against the “wiles of the Devil.” (Eph. 6:11) He wrote, for example, of some in his day who had “gone in the way of Cain,” and of others going “greedily after the error of Balaam for reward.” He writes also of the “gainsaying of Core.” (vs. 11) Perhaps most of us may feel that we are in no danger of committing such gross sins as Jude has suggested. But Jude has simply presented the ultimate to which various weakness of the flesh, with the wrong influence of Satan, might lead, if their early beginnings are not detected and the proper measures taken to cleanse ourselves from them.

The Prophet David prayed for help from the LORD to keep him from any small beginnings of sin which might lead to tragedy in the end. He said to the LORD, “Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my Redeemer.”—Ps. 19:12-14

Jude did not write his epistle to unbelievers or the worldly minded, but “to them that are sanctified by God the Father.” (vs. 1) So it must have been some of these who had ‘gone in

Jude did not write his epistle to unbelievers or the worldly minded, but "to them that are sanctified by God the Father." (vs. 1) So it must have been some of these who had 'gone in the way of Cain', This suggests the possibility of the LORD's people taking the same wrong course if they are not diligent in keeping themselves in the love of God.

The 'way of Cain' was the sin of jealousy. In his case it became so deeply rooted that Cain was led to commit murder. Jealousy is, indeed, "cruel as the grave." (Cant. 8:6) But jealousy, like every other sin, usually has a small—perhaps almost imperceptible—beginning. "Who can understand his errors?" David asked, and then prayed to the LORD to cleanse him from secret faults. We also should pray to be cleansed from secret faults. And in addition to praying, we should probe deeply into our own hearts in order to discover any possible small beginnings of jealousy that may be taking root in order that we may take action against them.

To begin with, jealousy may be but a passing thought. But Satan is quick to pick up such thoughts and urge us to develop them. And, before we know it, the passing thought can become a firm conviction. This can lead to bitterness of heart, and envious attacks upon those who are the objects of our jealousy. Then the evil roots of jealousy blind us to the real truth, making it impossible longer to reason correctly on any question coming before us in which these ones are involved. How timely are the words of the poet "My soul be on thy guard: ten thousand foes arise; The hosts of sin are pressing hard to draw thee from the prize."

Prayer and a proper application of the Word of God will cleanse us from the possible beginnings of jealousy. To be jealous means that we consider ourselves more worthy of, and better qualified for certain blessings—even privileges of service—than those to whom they are given. Paul gave us good advice in this connection, writing, "I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."—Rom. 12:3

Faith definitely enters into this matter, for if we lack faith we will fail to have confidence in the fact that God has set every member in the body as it has pleased him. (I Cor. 12:18) Perhaps God's purpose, in permitting others to have a position which we think we could fill much better, is to test us. King Saul was the LORD's anointed. Even though he lost God's favor, David—who knew he had been anointed to take Saul's place—patiently waited for the LORD to remove the disobedient Saul. He did not lift up his hand against "the LORD's anointed."—I Sam. 26:11

There is a good lesson here for all God's people. It means that we should be content with what the LORD, through his providences and in his own time, sees best for us. If our lot does not seem as favorable as that of others, let us wait on the LORD to change things, rather than to be too hasty in taking matters into our own hands.

Jude spoke of others in his day who, being once in the "love of God," did not keep themselves there, but instead "ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." (vs. 11) The example of Balaam is a very revealing one. He was asked by a heathen king—Balak, of the Moabites—to curse the people of God. Balaam was not a worshiper of Jehovah, but having heard of the many miracles accredited to Jehovah on behalf of the Israelites, he refused to curse them unless he could secure the permission of Israel's God.

There is considerable detail to the story as presented in chapters 22 to 24 in the Book of Numbers. The point of the lesson for us is that Balaam really wanted to do the bidding of King Balak in order to get the reward that was offered, but refrained from doing so only because he feared what might happen to him. He 'greedily' desired the reward, and cared little or nothing about what the result of his curse might be upon the Israelites. Outwardly he conformed to the LORD's will, but at heart he still wanted the offered reward. Various rewards could be suggested to us, either by the world, the flesh, or the Devil—or even by all three—which might lure us out of the love of God.

In this connection it should be helpful to consider what a priceless heritage we have in the church of God. Most people consider themselves fortunate if in a lifetime they can be assured of having made two or three real friends. But the LORD's people have friends—loving, loyal, understanding friends—almost the world over. They have these friends because they are 'in the love of God', and the love of God is in them and in their brethren in Christ. It is a genuine and glorious fraternity of love. If we appreciate this as we should, we will gladly lay down life itself in helping to safeguard the interests of our friends, who are also the LORD's friends, yea, his children.

It is well to remember that Jehovah consented to Balaam's starting out to curse the Israelites—hindering him later, of course. So we might wrongly conclude that because the LORD seemingly does not interfere with what we are doing, it is his will that we continue. But in this delay the LORD may only be testing us. Those who keep themselves in the love of God are those who in their hearts are so loyal to the principles of righteousness that even the thought of saying or doing anything which might even remotely result to the disadvantage of one of the LORD's little ones, would give them pain.

The name Core is a Greek form of Korah. He was one of the sons of Aaron who led a rebellion against the leadership of Moses and Aaron. (Num. 16:13) The fact that Moses and Aaron had been appointed by the LORD for the service they rendered seemed to escape his reasoning. Korah concluded that he and his associates were just as qualified, and therefore should share the privileges and honors which, in their false reasoning, they concluded Moses and Aaron were selfishly holding for themselves.

We doubt if at the time Jude wrote his epistle and mentioned those who followed the 'gainsaying of Core' that there were any situations in the church which were exactly like the case of Korah. There were, of course, false apostles in the Early Church, and these might have been questioning the authority of the LORD's true apostles, insisting that they had as much authority to speak for the LORD as anyone else. But

the LORD's supervision over his people at that time was not through any one or two of the apostles, as it was through Moses and Aaron.

And the same is true today. But the principle is important now, even as then, that principle being the recognition of the LORD's supervision over his people, especially in our own individual affairs. It implies the humbling of ourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt us in due time. It means the humble and thankful acceptance of the LORD's providences in every aspect of our lives.

There are very few in the church today—perhaps not any—who find themselves in just this sort of situation. But this principle applies in all life's affairs. In our work there may be those who are promoted ahead of us, when we feel that we are equally, or even better qualified. Usually there is little or nothing that can be done about situations of this kind, but we do need to guard against any rebellious spirit that could easily develop in our own hearts. This could well lead to bitterness of heart which, if allowed to develop, would eventually take us out of the love and favor of God.

We might even become rebellious against the LORD's providences in which others are not involved at all. Starting with the question, Why did this have to happen to me? the spirit of resentment against the LORD's providences could easily become stronger, leading to bitterness that would hide the smiling face of our Heavenly Father from us, and therefore cause us the loss of his favor.

As we have already noted, sinful attitudes of this sort do not take possession of us suddenly. At first, as David said, they are 'secret faults'. It is only through prayer and a day-by-day diligent searching of our hearts in the light of the principles of righteousness revealed through the most holy faith, that we are able to detect these small beginnings of sin. But when we do detect them, we should diligently wield the 'sword of the spirit' to destroy the enemy.

Keeping ourselves in the love of God means that the love of God fills and controls our lives—our thoughts and actions.

One aspect of God's love is his compassion. How truly thankful we should be that he has compassion for us! But he wants us to exercise a similar compassion toward others, particularly toward our brethren in the truth who may have deviated temporarily from the right way, or have stumbled and fallen.

In other words, as it has been so often stated, while we are to hate the sin, we are to love the sinner. We should not cease to endeavor to help those who have erred until it becomes unquestionably certain that it is no longer possible for them to be extricated from their sinful condition. The disposition of mind and heart which will prompt us thus to do all we can to help an erring brother is a powerful influence in keeping ourselves in the love of God.

Those who are keeping themselves in the love of God will, as Jude indicates (vs. 23), hate even the garments "spotted by the flesh." Garments sometimes symbolize that by which one is identified. Garments spotted by the flesh would be professions and customs arising out of selfish, fleshly reasonings in which the instructions of the LORD are ignored, and the principles of divine righteousness and love are set aside or forgotten.

If we are keeping ourselves in the love of God we will hate 'garments' of this sort, and we will be especially on guard lest we be found wearing them. Fully realizing the imperfections of our fallen flesh, we will diligently endeavor to keep our bodies in subjection to the new mind, and rejoice to wear the robe of Christ's righteousness, which, because of what it means to us, becomes a 'garment of praise'.

Let us, then, continue to rejoice in the love and favor of God. Let us contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, through which his love has been revealed to us. And may we be more and more emptied of self and filled with divine love which will spur us on to faithfulness in serving one another, bearing the burdens of the weak rather than pleasing ourselves, laying down our lives in helping to build one another up in the most holy faith. ■

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

More Precious than Gold!

Dear Friends: The TV and radio is saturated with false teachers with their doctrine of fear which is taught by the precepts of men. However the truth we have in "**Millennial Dawn**" is more precious than gold!—VA

Great Work

Praise the LORD! for allowing me to come in contact with your great work in publishing the truth. Thank you in the LORD's name.—OH

Extremely Pleased

Dear Sirs: My wife and I have not attended any church for several years as we do not believe in the false teachings in the churches, but I keep studying the Scriptures daily always seeking the truths. We have found your booklets to agree with the Scriptures and I would be pleased to become a part of your organization. I am extremely pleased with the Scriptural truths that you write and expand on.—MN

Wonderful Magazine

Dear Ones: I would perish if it were not for your wonderful magazine which I eagerly await each month.—PA

Misunderstood

Dear Brethren: No book on earth has been so misunderstood as the Bible! We have been receiving tracts from some others containing errors and our class has addressed one of these errors in an open letter in our newspaper. Your brethren in Christ.—TX

Concerned

Dear Sirs: I am concerned about the way mankind is going, knowing that Satan can present himself as an "Angel of Light," and will mislead many. I fear for the ones trying to do right but not being informed enough of his deceptions during the last days. I wonder if you can advise me of things concerning the end of the age? I am a senior citizen and have daughters and grandchildren to go through these perilous

times. What can I tell them as a warning?—MO

Inspiring

Please send me a free copy of "**Hope**" booklet. It is really good and inspiring. Thanks.—CA

A Real Bargain

I think in August, you gave me the largest return for \$1.00 I ever recieved with your first edition. I also enjoyed that little book "**Archeology Proves The Bible**"—very enlightening. Frankly I have never read those little Dawn booklets through. I was too involved with wading through my backlog of books, studying subjects bordering religion, feeding and clothing the LORD's needy sheep; trying to help in doing what my Holy Father wants me to. The hospital reading room apparently enjoys your books as much as the people I freely give them to, so please accept my donation toward continuing the good work. God bless you.—CO

Never Too Young

Dear Sir: You might be interested to know that Jassen is a nine year old boy who has taken an interest in read-

ing. His dad gets **The Dawn**, and I am told that Jassen is always anxious for it to arrive and reads it completely through. Anything he doesn't understand, he asks. I think this is one reason he is getting 'A's in reading. In fact I think this is helping him as all his marks have risen to 'A's and 'B's'. Keep up the good work.—MI

Inspired

I was inspired with the magazine you sent entitled "**God and Reason.**" I would like to order **The Dawn** magazine for one year, also I would like to have "**The Divine Plan of the Ages**" and "**The Creator's Grand Design.**" Thanks.—AR

Bible Is True

Please send me the booklet, "**Archeology Proves the Bible.**" I know God's Bible is true. Thank you.—OH

Reaching Out To The Lost

Dear Brother: Greetings in the name of Jesus. I am indeed glad to write you because your are doing a wonderful thing reaching out to the lost men and women, boys and girls burdened deep in sin. I listen to your

programme all the time on Radio Becan. Oh it is thrilling! I pray that God will give you more faith to go on. Remember all in your offices. I pray for them in the name of Jesus and want you to keep praying for me. I am yet young in the faith and Christian life; I depend on your prayers. I would like one of your video tapes on "**How God Answers Prayer**". I will indeed be glad. So keep good and may God richly bless you.—*BWI*

A Thank-You

Dear Dawn: I want to thank you ever and ever so much for such wonderful Christian literature in such awful, troublous times such as they are now. One thing that especially helps is that your prices and cost of these precious Bible quotations are so reasonable. Would it be asking too much for the favor of renewing "**The Dawn**" magazine for another year?—*IN*

Understandable

Dear Brethren: I love your simple, understandable, and important teachings. I have always felt that since Pentecost, the second coming of

Christ has been awaited. Your message of today tells me that this is true. Organized Christian theologians are placing a stumbling block before good people. A grandson of mine is a theologian and our opinions are in part, not compatible. Am enclosing a small contribution to your efforts in Christ Jesus name.—*NJ*

A Friend In Panama

Dear loved ones: Thank you so much for your broadcast over "**Radio Newspaper**." I listen every week. I'm a lonely old lady but I praise God I have my radio I can turn on every day. God bless you as you speak to the people of Panama. Will you please send me a copy of your programs or books. God bless you all.—*Panama*

Best Literature

To Dawn Publications: I have already received your publications, "**The Creator's Grand Design**" and "**God and Reason**." I have to say they are the very best literature on God's plan for us. I want to thank you for having this material available to us. Thanks again.—*IA*

Thirty Year Reader

Dear Dawn: Attached is my check for renewal of **The Dawn** magazine, which I have been reading for over thirty years. I never read any satisfactory interpretations of the Scriptures until I read **The Dawn**. I am enclosing a check for this year's cost. Thank you.—KY

Divine Assistance

Dawn Publishers: May I add a word of praise to the publishers foreword in the reading of the book "**The Divine Plan of the Ages.**" The clarity of expression and argument are greatly enjoyed and lead me to believe there was divine assistance in the writing and work involved. May all your publications be so blessed. Faithfully.—CA

Hungry For Religion

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I just happened to hear you on the radio station today. I've been so hungry for religion like the old time religion was, and I have been very unhappy and mixed up about death and my loved ones, and I felt so much better after hearing you. I'm sending for the booklet "**When a Man Dies.**" I hope it will tell me if we will

know each other in heaven. Thank you sincerely.—MI

Thoroughly Enjoyed

To Dawn Publications: I am writing to you in an attempt to thank you for the "**Archeology Proves the Bible**" booklet that I received. I have thoroughly enjoyed my readings. Sincerely.—SC

Opened My Eyes

Dear Dawn Publications: I remember back in early March this year I saw an ad for some free booklets etc.. I was expecting some regular old stuff, but these opened my eyes to some things I had not discovered in the Scriptures. I am a fourteen-year-old Church of God and Episcopalian minister. Not going against some doctrines but some things have changed for me in my faith in a manner of speaking, I don't want to sound like some paragon of virtue, but I think the work you do is great and has helped me in my studies of theology. May you always be in God's eyes. May God hold you in the palm of his hand.—KY

Over and Over

Dawn Bible Students Association: At your convenience, kindly send me a copy of your booklet "**God and Reason**." I have retained a copy of "**Hope**" and read excerpts over and over. Thank you.—MA

Tonga Listener

I always listen to your program on Radio Tonga, and am impressed by the answers

you have given concerning some basic questions in life. Therefore I would like to ask you for copies of some of your little books such as "**Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**," and "**God and Reason**," so as to learn more about the answers of the puzzling questions that always bother me. I hope you can provide me with these.—
Tonga ■

OBITUARIES

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

Brother Irwin J. Wysocki, Charleroi, PA—May 7. Age, 74.

Sister Julia H. Spivey, Louisville AL—June 2. Age, 85.

Brother Felix S. Wassmann, New York, NY—June 9. Age, 93. Served as class elder and Dawn trustee for fifty years.

Sister Esther Ensley Branch, Washington State—June 5. Age, 71.

Sister Esther Edwards, St. Petersburg, FL—June 12. Age, 102.

Sister Anna Moyer, Allentown, PA—June 13. Age, 84.

Brother Harold Clyne, Auckland, NZ—June 17. Age, 83.

Sister Mabel Pyle Thompson, Brandywine, DE—Age, 96. ■

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed at the request of the classes who sponsor them. In order to ensure your convention being accurately placed in these columns, please make your request IN WRITING and mail it to this address at least two or three months before the date of the convention: The Dawn, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

DETROIT, MI, July 25—Radford YMCA, 25940 Grand River, Redford Township, MI. Please contact: Frank Nemesh, 2183 Babcock Drive, Troy, MI 48048, for information. Phone: (313) 649-6588

LOS ANGELES, CA, August 29—Masonic Temple, 248 East Olive, Burbank. Contact for information: J. Burton Brown, 12223 Addison St. North Hollywood, CA 91607. Phone: (818) 984-3221

NEW YORK LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 3-5—Ramada Inn, Two Bridges Rd. & Exit 52, Rte. 80, Fairfield, NJ 07006. Contact for information and reservations: L.B. Post, 24 Lexington Rd., New City, NY 10956. Please let him know **before August 25** what meals you will be eating, as an exact count is necessary before that date.

Phone: (914) 634-5876

SEATTLE LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 3-6—For information or reservations, contact: Michael Brann, 20B East Intercity Ave., Everett, WA 8208-2747

Phone: (206) 353-8983

BALTIMORE, MD, September 26—Burgraff Council No. 6021 Knights of Columbus, Columbian Club of Perry Hall, 4110^{1/2} Pine Hill Road, Baltimore, MD. For information, contact: Robert Wagner, 2753 Pelham Ave., Baltimore 21213. Phone: (410) 483-1394

LOS ANGELES, CA, September 26—Masonic Temple, 248 East Olive, Burbank. Contact: J. Burton Brown for information. 12223 Addison St., North Hollywood, 91607. Phone: (818) 984-3221

GRAND RAPIDS, MI, October 9,10—Kenowa Hills Jr. H.S., 4252 Three Mile Road, NW 49504. Contact: J. Highway, P.O. Box 1546, Grand Rapids 49501. (616) 897-4249

ORLANDO, FL, October 30,31—Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Dr, Corner of Hwy. 17-92, Sanford. For information and accommodations, contact: Mrs. S.W. Jeuck 587 Queens Mirror Circle, Casselberry 32707. Phone: (407) 699-8303 ■