

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

"WALK WORTHY OF
GOD, WHO HATH
CALLED YOU UNTO
HIS KINGDOM AND
GLORY."

--I Thessalonians 2:12

April 1963

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HE IS RISEN

THERE were no newspapers to announce our Lord's resurrection. Transmission of news by radio and television was unknown. There were none of our twentieth century media of spreading news nearly two thousand years ago when Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. And even if there had been, in all probability the story would have been circulated that it was merely the friends of this Jesus of Nazareth who fantastically claimed that their Leader had been resurrected, and the report would probably then insist that this claim was false; merely the imaginings of deluded zealots who had refused to accept the views and practices of the orthodox religious leaders of that day.

Even the faithful disciples of Jesus themselves were not too hasty in their acceptance of the news that he had been raised from the dead. Two of them whom the resurrected Jesus met on the road to Emmaus reported to him that certain women had found the tomb empty, and that some of them had investigated and found it so, but Jesus they saw not, implying some doubt that he had actually been raised from the dead.—Luke 24:22-24

Thomas refused to believe that Jesus was alive again unless he could see the nail prints in his hands and feet, and the spear wound in his side. (Ps. 22:16, 18; John 20:25) Jesus was kind to Thomas, giving him the demonstration for which he asked. In the days between Jesus' resurrection and his ascension he appeared a number of times to his disciples; on one occasion to as many as five hundred. (I Cor. 15:6) It is likely that this might well have been almost the total number prior to Pentecost who actually believed the report that Jesus had been raised from the dead, although doubtless others had heard the story which had been circulated.

It is to be remembered that the religious rulers arranged to

have the story go out that Jesus' body had been stolen from the tomb by his followers, and to the extent that both versions of what had happened could circulate prior to Pentecost, probably most people believed the false one. The true story of the resurrection was too remarkable to be believed by others than those who had real faith in the God of Israel, and who believed that Jesus was the Messiah whom he had promised to send.

Its Importance

IF THE disciples were to continue believing that Jesus was the foretold Messiah it was essential that they be convinced he was raised from the dead. When, prior to his crucifixion, Jesus had asked his disciples who they thought he was, Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:16) Peter doubtless made this statement under inspiration, and would not fully comprehend that this meant that Jesus was that foretold "Seed" of the woman which was to bruise the "serpent's" head. (Gen. 3:15) It meant also that he was the foretold "Seed" of Abraham who would "bless all families of the earth."—Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Gal. 3:16

As the promised Messiah, whom the disciples believed Jesus to be, he would also be the "Lion" of the tribe of Judah unto whom the gathering of the people would be, that wonderful "Shiloh" of promise. (Gen. 49:9, 10; Rev. 5:5) As the Messiah, Jesus would also be the antitypical David, the One who would sit upon the throne of David, free Israel from her bondage to the Gentiles, and extend the peaceful and righteous influences of his kingdom world-wide.—Luke 1:31-33

As the promised Messiah, whom the disciples believed Jesus to be, he would also be that foretold "Son" whose name was to be called "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa. 9:6) These titles imply that the Messiah would be a "Mediator between God and men" to establish reconciliation between the estranged human creation and the Creator; that he would be worshiped, as God is worshiped; that he would give everlasting life to the people; and that through him the people and nations of the earth would find peace among themselves, and peace with God.—I Tim. 2:3-6

If Jesus was the Messiah, then he was destined to fulfil that

wonderful promise recorded in the 72nd Psalm—"Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."—Ps. 72:1-8

A dead king, rotting in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea, could not fulfil all these wonderful prophecies. The disciples knew this. That is why they were so confused and discouraged when Jesus was put to death. True, they had heard him say that he would give his flesh for the life of the world. (John 6:51) He had told them plainly that he expected to suffer and die at Jerusalem. But seemingly the reality of these statements was not grasped. Their high expectations that Jesus would fulfil all the wonderful prophecies pertaining to the glory of the Messiah, and the accomplishments of his kingdom, seemed to obscure the meaning of what he had foretold concerning his death.

Growing Understanding

DURING the days between Jesus' resurrection and Pentecost the disciples became convinced that their beloved Master had been raised from the dead. This conviction was brought about by what Luke refers to as the "infallible proofs" which Jesus gave to them in connection with his many appearances. (Acts 1:3) While the record of those appearances is brief, Luke indicates that Jesus spoke to the disciples about the kingdom of God, and they became convinced again that he was to be the great king in this kingdom.

In addition to this Jesus also revealed to his disciples, in part at least, why it had been necessary for him to die. The record of his discussion with the two on the way to Emmaus indicates this. Here Jesus began with Moses, and quoting from all the

prophets, pointed out to his hearers that it was necessary for him to suffer and to die before entering into the foretold glory of the Messiah, and of the messianic kingdom.—Luke 24:25-27

We can well imagine some of the things which Jesus made clear to those two disciples on that memorable occasion. Since he began his discourse with Moses, he might well have called their attention to the sacrifice of the passover lamb, and its connection with the deliverance of Israel's firstborn from death, and later the entire nation from Egyptian bondage. Then there was the bullock that was slain on Israel's day of atonement, and its blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat in the most holy of the tabernacle. Jesus may have mentioned this to the disciples, indicating that it foreshadowed his own death.

Certainly Jesus must have reminded those two disciples, as he walked to Emmaus with them, of the prophecy of Isaiah which describes so graphically the suffering and death of the great One who, in this prophecy, is described as "the Arm of the Lord." Isaiah wrote, "Who hath believed our report?"—the report, that is, that the "Arm of the Lord" would be revealed "in the eyes of all the nations," and that "all the ends of the earth" would see "the salvation of our God." (ch. 52:10; 53:1) Isaiah's question and answer were:

"To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."—Isa. 53:1-7

After Jesus had finished his discourse to the two disciples on the Emmaus road, and vanished from their sight, they said to each other, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked

with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" (Luke 24:32) How they must have rejoiced that now they could see that the death of Jesus was not a mistake, not a miscarriage of the divine plan, and that he truly was the Messiah of promise who had come, first to die for the people, and later to establish his kingdom.

Clearer Light

WE ARE not to understand that from the one discourse by Jesus the disciples grasped with complete clarity all that his death as man's Redeemer really meant for them and for mankind in general. This clearer understanding had to wait until the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It was then that the apostles had the ransom feature of the divine plan revealed to them in all its beauty and fulness. Paul, of course, received his illumination of mind and heart later; but when he did, how beautifully he summed up the great truths concerning the necessity of Jesus' death!

"As in Adam all die," Paul wrote, "even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." (I Cor. 15:21, 22) Again, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."—I Tim. 2:3-6

Only by virtue of the fact that Jesus gave his life as a ransom, or corresponding price, for the sins of Adam and his race, is he, as King of earth during the thousand years of the kingdom, able to give his obedient subjects eternal life. Otherwise his reign, at best, would be over a suffering and dying race. In speaking of Jesus' role as judge during the kingdom period, Paul said that God had given assurance unto all men, in that he had raised Jesus from the dead. (Acts 17:31) This brings us face to face with the necessity that Jesus be raised from the dead, and that our belief now be in the risen Christ.

"If Christ Be Not Risen"

THE Apostle Paul wrote:

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how

say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."—
II Cor. 15:12-18

Those first disciples had built their faith in Jesus as the Messiah upon the foundation of God's promises. They came to understand that it was necessary for him to die; that otherwise neither they nor mankind in general could have any hope of life after death. They rejoiced to accept Jesus as their Redeemer from death, and with bright anticipation they looked forward to the time when he would reveal his glory, and exercise his power for the blessing of the people through the agencies of his kingdom. They believed that when that time came, they would be exalted to live and reign with him. (Rev. 20:4, 6) It was a glorious and comprehensive hope which inspired the Early Church as they went forth to witness for Jesus, and for the Word of God.

But the validity of the faith of those early disciples depended upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The same is true of our faith. Their faith was vain, and our faith is vain, "if Christ be not risen." It would be as though he had never come in fulfilment of God's promises. The head of the "serpent" could never be bruised by a dead Christ. The "Seed" of Abraham could not bless all the families of the earth if he remained lifeless in the tomb.

How could the Messiah fulfil the various roles assigned to him in prophecy if he remained dead? Could he then be a "Wonderful Counselor," a "mighty God," an "everlasting Father," a "Prince of Peace"? How could there be no end to the increase of his government and peace, since it could not even have a beginning unless the King was raised from the dead?

How could a dead Messiah rule from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth? (Ps. 72:8) How could this "Arm" of the Lord be revealed in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth see his salvation, if he himself was

not saved from death by the power of his Heavenly Father?

It was essential that the disciples come to realize that it was necessary for Jesus to die, that according to the prophecies the promised Messiah must also, and first, be the Redeemer of mankind from sin and death. But this information would be of little or no value if he who died to redeem the world from death remained dead.

Paul carries this chilling thought still further. The disciples learned through the revealing power of the Holy Spirit that they were invited to suffer and to die with Jesus, to be planted together in the likeness of his death. (Rom. 6:5-8) They learned that those who faithfully suffer and die with Jesus will live and reign with him. (II Tim. 2: 11, 12) They learned by experience that this meant the ostracism of the world, and at times imprisonments, scourgings, and other physical punishments, sometimes being thrown to wild beasts. They rejoiced in these experiences, for they were accepted as evidence that God was preparing them to live and to reign with Christ.

But what would be the use of all this if Christ had not been raised from the dead? Paul presents it this way: "What shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? . . . If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die."—I Cor. 15:29-32

"If the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised." (I Cor. 15:16) The two thoughts go together. If Christ was not raised, then we have no basis for a hope of resurrection, and all the joys we can expect are those experienced in our present short span of life. The more we think of this the greater the importance we must attach to the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead.

Yes, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead—the report that went out from those who found his tomb empty was true. The "infallible proofs" which convinced those early disciples of this glorious development in the plan of God have also convinced us, and we accept the fact with rejoicing. Paul wrote that after his resurrection Jesus was "seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. . . . After that, he was seen of James; then of all the

apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."—I Cor. 15:5-8

The eloquent eyewitness testimony of these sincere men and women convinced believers in the Early Church, and has convinced all true believers since, that "now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." (vs. 20) The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, in fulfilment of Jesus' promise, was another proof of his resurrection, and of the fact that he had appeared in the presence of God for the purpose of presenting the merit of his sacrifice on behalf of his people of the Gospel Age, and that later he will appear on behalf of the whole world, when, as a result, the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh.—Joel 2:28-31; Acts 2:16-20

The power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers throughout the age has been confirming evidence of the resurrection of Jesus; and with this has been the realization that his redeeming blood covers the imperfections of his people. In this they rejoice, and remember, with deep appreciation, that this is another of the blessings which accrue from the fact that he "is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."

And how blessed is the hope, made valid by the death and resurrection of Jesus, of being associated with Jesus as a part of the firstfruits class! (James 1:18; Rev. 14:4) It is a hope of being with the Lamb on Mt. Zion, to live and reign with him. (Rev. 14:1; 20:4, 6) Now, thank God, Jesus is the Lamb which HAD been slain, but is now exalted on Mt. Zion, where, as the firstfruits of the resurrection, we expect to join him in God's due time.—Rev. 5:6

The afterfruits of the resurrection will eventually include, in addition to the Great Company and the Ancient Worthies, the whole dead world of mankind. These latter will be awakened from the sleep of death, enlightened, and given an opportunity to enjoy the blessings of eternal life in a state of happiness and peace here on earth. This also will be true because Jesus Christ was raised from the dead.

Yes, because the mighty power of God raised Jesus from the dead, he will, in God's due time, as the "Seed" of the woman, bruise the "serpent's" head. As the "Seed" of Abraham he will bless all the families of the earth. As the Lion of the tribe of Judah he will exercise his authority and power in the earth

through the agencies of a powerful government which will establish and maintain universal peace, and make available all those rich blessings of life which God has promised by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:19-21

It was startling news, although unbelieved by the majority, that Jesus had been raised from the dead. It is equally startling news now that the risen Christ, as a powerful divine being, has returned to earth to establish his kingdom, and will soon begin to fulfil all the promises which God made concerning the blessing of the world with peace, health, and life. In those days, means of communication were limited. The women at the tomb were bidden to go and tell the disciples, and gradually the information was passed on from one to another. This was the best they could do, but they did it faithfully, and to the glory of the Lord.

Today we can still witness by word of mouth, passing on the information concerning his second presence and kingdom from one to the other, even as the first disciples circulated the news of the Master's resurrection. In addition we now have the radio, television, films, the printed page, and rapid means of travel, which all help to make more effective the efforts of the faithful heralds of the kingdom.

It is a marvelous time in which we are living! Things which are well-nigh miraculous are being accomplished every day in the fields of science and invention. However, these things would be of little value to the world were man left to his own selfish devices. But we know that God has a plan for the blessing of the people, and that the very center of that plan is Jesus.

There is no more important news in any month of the year! Millions will commemorate this great event, but for the most part without any clear understanding of what it really implies so far as their future happiness is concerned. May we be on the alert to furnish that information whenever and wherever there is an opportunity—not only during this particular season, but all the time, as the Lord gives us grace and wisdom to do it. Let us go and tell this glad message, even though few now will believe it, even as few believed it when those faithful women were the first to bear the message. May the assurance that "He is risen" continue to be our consolation and our rejoicing!

THE BIBLE ANSWERS TV SCHEDULE

ALABAMA

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

ALASKA

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

ARIZONA

Phoenix KPHO-TV Channel 5
Saturdays, 11:30 a.m.

ARKANSAS

Hot Springs KFOY-TV Channel 9
Sundays, 4:30 p.m.

AUSTRALIA

Perth TWV
Sunday, Jan. 13, Feb. 17, Mar. 24

CALIFORNIA

Kingsburg KDAS-TV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)
Salinas KSBW-TV Channel 8
Sundays, 2:00 p.m.
San Luis Obispo KSBY-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 2:00 p.m.

COLORADO

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

CONNECTICUT

Waterbury WATR-TV Channel 53
Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m.

FLORIDA

Palm Beach WPTV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)
Tampa WFLA-TV Channel 8
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

INDIANA

Lafayette WFAM-TV Channel 18
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.
Marion WTAF-TV
Sundays, 2:30 p.m.
Muncie WLBC-TV Channel 49
Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

KANSAS

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

KENTUCKY

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

LOUISIANA

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

MANITOBA

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

MASSACHUSETTS

Springfield WHYN-TV Channel 40
Sundays, 12:00 noon

MICHIGAN

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

MINNESOTA

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

TV BROADCAST

MISSISSIPPI

Laurel WDAM-TV
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.
Meridian WTOK-TV Channel 11
Sundays, 10:30 a.m.

MISSOURI

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

NEBRASKA

Hastings KHAS-TV Channel 5
Sundays, 2:00 p.m.

NEVADA

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

NEW YORK

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

OHIO

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

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City KOCO-TV Channel 5
Sundays, 9:00 a.m.
Tulsa KVOO-TV Channel 2
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

ONTARIO

Peterborough CHEX-TV
Sundays, 12:00 noon.

OREGON

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

PENNSYLVANIA

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

SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia WCCA-TV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)
Greenville WFBC-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

TEXAS

El Paso KELP-TV Channel 13
Sundays, 12:00 noon.
San Antonio KWEK-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 12:00 noon
Temple KCEN-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.
Waco KWTX-TV Channel 10
Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

UTAH

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

VIRGINIA

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

WASHINGTON

Seattle KIRO-TV Channel 7
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

WEST VIRGINIA

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

WISCONSIN

Eau Claire WEAU-TV Channel 13
Sundays, 7:00 a.m.
Milwaukee WITI-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 8:30 a.m.

"Frank and Ernest"

BROADCAST SCHEDULE

Sundays Unless Otherwise Noted

ALABAMA

Decatur WMSL 1400 11:15 a.m.
Haleyville WJBB 1230 11:05 a.m.

ARIZONA

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

ARKANSAS

Jonesboro KBTM 1230 12:05 p.m.

CALIFORNIA

Chico KPAY 1060 10:30 a.m.
El Centro KICO 1490 10:30 a.m.
Los Angeles KHJ 930 6:00 p.m.
Marysville KMYC 1410 10:30 a.m.
Napa KVON 1440 10:30 a.m.
Redding KVCV 600 7:45 a.m.
San Diego XERB 1090 9:30 p.m.
San Francisco KGO 810 2:00 p.m.
Tulare-Visalia KCOK 1270 10:30 a.m.

COLORADO

Ft. Collins KZIK 600 11:05 a.m.
Pueblo KDZA 1230 10:05 a.m.

DELAWARE

Wilmington WTUX 1290 10:15 a.m.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington WOL 1450 11:00 a.m.

FLORIDA

Palatka WSUZ 800 11:05 a.m.

IDAHO

Lewiston KRLC 1350 9:35 a.m.

ILLINOIS

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

INDIANA

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

IOWA

Clinton KROS 1340 7:15 p.m.

KANSAS

Goodland KLOE 730 12:45 p.m.

KENTUCKY

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

MASSACHUSETTS

New Bedford WBSM 1420 11:00 p.m.
Orange WCAT 1390 9:15 a.m.

MICHIGAN

Detroit WQTE 560 10:00 a.m.
Grand Rapids WMAX 1490 9:00 a.m.
Saginaw WSGW 790 10:30 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Duluth-Superior WQMN 1480 12:00 noon

MISSISSIPPI

Biloxi WLOX 1490 12:05 p.m.
Waynesboro WABO 990 2:00 p.m.

MISSOURI

Farmington KREI 800 9:00 a.m.
Joplin WMBH 1450 11:45 a.m.
Kansas City KCMO 810 9:35 a.m.

MONTANA

Miles City KATL 1340 9:15 a.m.

NEW JERSEY

Newark WJRZ 970 10:00 a.m.

BROADCAST SCHEDULE

NEW MEXICO

Silver City KSIL 1340 10:05 a.m.

NEW YORK

Buffalo CHML 900 9:45 a.m.

New York WJRZ 970 10:00 a.m.

Rochester WHEC 1460 11:15 a.m.

NORTH CAROLINA

Beaufort WBMA 1400 9:00 a.m.

Belmont-Charlotte

WCGC 1270 12:30 p.m.

Elizabeth City WGAJ 560 12:05 p.m.

Leaksville WLOE 1490 12:05 p.m.

OHIO

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

Cincinnati WNOP 740 9:00 a.m.

Columbus WBNS 1460 8:00 a.m.

Piqua WPTW 1570 11:30 p.m.

Zanesville WHIZ 1240 11:45 a.m.

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City KLPR 1140 12:05 p.m.

OREGON

Astoria KAST 1280 10:30 a.m.

Lebanon KGAL 920 9:00 a.m.

Portland KGON 1520 10:00 a.m.

The Dalles KODL 1230 9:15 a.m.

PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown WHOL 1600 10:45 a.m.

Connellsville WCVI 1340 12:05 p.m.

Pittsburgh WWVA 1170 9:30 a.m.

Pottstown WPAZ 1370 8:30 a.m.

PUERTO RICO

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

SOUTH DAKOTA

Yankton KYNT 1450 11:05 a.m.

TEXAS

Livingston KVIL 1220 8:45 a.m.

Lubbock KDAV 580 9:45 a.m.

Pampa KPDN 1340 12:00 noon

San Antonio KBOP 1380 6:45 a.m.

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

Wichita Falls KWFT 620 10:15 a.m.

UTAH

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

VIRGINIA

Richmond WLEE 1480 10:10 a.m.

WASHINGTON

Bellingham KPUG 1170 11:15 a.m.

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

Olympia KGY 1240 10:30 a.m.

Seattle KAYO 1150 9:45 a.m.

Tacoma KTNT 1400 10:00 a.m.

WEST VIRGINIA

Wheeling WWVA 1170 9:30 a.m.

WISCONSIN

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

Janesville WCLO 1230 11:05 a.m.

WYOMING

Cheyenne KVWO 1370 10:05 a.m.

CANADA

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

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

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

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

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

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

SPANISH BROADCASTS

San Diego XERB 1090 9:00 p.m.

RADIO TOPICS FOR APRIL

7—"The Voice of God"

14—"The Bread and the Cup"

21—"Are the Dead Alive?"

28—"Increasing Faith"

THE PEOPLE IN GOD'S PLAN

Article XXI

The Minor Prophets

Part 2

The Prophet Nahum

LITTLE is known of Nahum as a person. It is the opinion of many scholars that he served God as a prophet between the time when the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians and when the two-tribe kingdom of Judah was destroyed and the people taken into captivity to Babylon.

The opening verses of Nahum's prophecy set forth the virtues of Jehovah, the great God of Israel.¹ He portrays God as "slow to anger," yet not clearing the guilty, but seeing to it that they are ultimately and properly punished. Nahum also portrays Jehovah as abundant in power, capable of accomplishing all his good purposes, and states that nothing can interfere with his plans.

Nahum assures us in this portrayal of God that he knoweth them that are his, "that trust in him," and that he is to them "a stronghold in the day of trouble." The prophet seems to apply these

principles of God's dealings with his people, not merely to local situations which then existed, but to his plan as a whole. He promises that "affliction shall not rise up the second time," as though he were speaking of the permission of evil in general, indicating that this will not occur again once the people have learned their lesson from it.

The kingdom of Judah and its people were typical. Its kings sat upon the throne of the Lord.² The victories God gave them over their enemies would illustrate the victories the Lord will give the people over sin and death during the reign of Christ. Nahum assured the people of Judah that Sennacherib would be destroyed, and King Hezekiah delivered from this Assyrian menace.³ This was "good tidings" to Judah, even as the establishment of the messianic kingdom is now good tidings to all who have an ear to hear.⁴

Nahum foretold a time, which he speaks of as the day of God's

preparation, when chariots would rage in the streets.⁸ This has been taken to be a description of railway trains and of automobiles. Perhaps it applies to both. In any event, it seems to refer to some of our modern means of rapid travel, which, as seen by Nahum in vision, must have been rather terrifying. Then follows a vivid description of the ultimate utter destruction of Nineveh and Assyria; perhaps descriptive of the time of trouble upon all nations now progressing in this end of the age.

The Prophet Habakkuk

HABAKKUK was another prophet who served during the period just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the taking of the people captive to Babylon. At that time the people of Israel were living far from the Lord. The law of God was being broken by them, and Habakkuk was greatly distressed.⁶ The prophet was apparently disturbed that the Lord was seemingly paying no heed to this deplorable situation.

Then the Lord revealed to Habakkuk that he intended to punish the people at the hands of the Chaldeans, or Babylonians.⁷ The prophet did not understand this, and wondered why the Lord would use those who were even more unrighteous than the Israelites to punish them.⁸ After expressing himself to the

Lord along this line Habakkuk said that he would stand upon his watch to see what the Lord's answer would be.⁹

The Lord's answer is that well-known prophecy of a vision which was to be written upon tables and made plain for all his people to understand.¹⁰ The Prophet Habakkuk was inquiring concerning a local situation, but the Lord in his reply lifted the subject out of that restricted scene and gave assurance of a future time when his people would understand his plan as it pertained to the permission of evil in general, and throughout the ages.

We know that the "vision" which Habakkuk was instructed to write, and to make plain upon tables, pertains to the time of our Lord's second advent and presence because the Apostle Paul refers to it and makes this application.¹¹ It is reasonable to conclude that this "vision" concerns the plan of God as a whole, which has been so clearly illustrated for us on "The Chart of the Ages." The truths of this plan of God were brought together in an orderly arrangement for the first time as "meat in due season" in fulfillment of Jesus' own promise.¹²

The time of Habakkuk's service as prophet was a very precarious one, and the Lord gave him no assurance that the troubles coming upon his people would be averted, the main reason being

that the people showed no inclination to repent and seek the Lord and his ways of righteousness. Nevertheless the prophet was resolute in his faith, and determined that he would put his full trust in the Lord regardless of the hardships which might come upon him. In the closing verses of his book he gives beautiful expression to his faith.¹³

The Prophet Zephaniah

ZEPHANIAH served as prophet during the reign of Josiah, King of Judah. Much of his book is devoted to denunciations of the people of his own nation, as well as various heathen nations surrounding Palestine. However, as is common in many of the Old Testament prophecies, there is a blending of forecasts of troubles which were to come soon and locally upon Israel and her neighbors, with long-range prophecies pertaining to the day of the Lord's wrath upon all nations at the close of this present world, and during the early years of our Lord's second presence.¹⁴ Zephaniah describes in symbolic language what the Prophet Daniel mentions simply as a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."¹⁵

Zephaniah gives another description of the great time of trouble with which this present age ends, and points out that it will involve a gathering of the

nations.¹⁶ Never before in the history of mankind have the nations been "gathered" as they are today. Essentially every nation on earth, small and great, is lined up with one side or the other of two opposing groups, hoping to avert war by this mass display of strength; but if not, ready to battle it out with each other, although realizing that it will result in the destruction of countless millions of the human race.

Jesus said that this would be a time of "great tribulation," so great, indeed, that unless these days were shortened all flesh would be destroyed.¹⁷ However, Jesus assured us the days of tribulation would be shortened, and in Zephaniah's prophecy we find that after the symbolic earth is destroyed by the fire of God's "zeal," as is stated in the Hebrew, the Lord will turn to the people a pure language, that they might all call upon him to serve him with one consent.¹⁸ This shows that all flesh will not be destroyed; that there will be people here after the trouble, and that God, through the agencies of Christ's kingdom, will enlighten them and give them an opportunity to call upon and serve him. The prophecy ends with a promise to end natural Israel's subjection to her enemies and regather them and make them "a name and a praise among all people of the earth."

The Prophet Haggai

HAGGAI, the tenth of the minor prophets, was born while the nation of Israel was in captivity in Babylon. He accompanied the exiles in their return to Palestine under the decree issued by Cyrus. This decree authorized the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem.¹⁹ Upon their return, work on the rebuilding of the temple was started, apparently with enthusiasm. But then there was opposition, and it was suspended for a number of years. It would seem that the chief role of Haggai as a servant of God was to stir up the people to get on with the work of rebuilding the temple, and by the Lord's grace, his efforts were successful.²⁰ Through Haggai the Lord pointed out to the people that their lack of prosperity after returning from Babylon was due in no small measure to the fact that they had neglected this important work of rebuilding the temple.

As is often the case with the other prophets of the Lord, ostensibly their messages are directed to immediate conditions, and are quite local in their setting, yet they expand to include important aspects of the divine plan for the world as a whole, as that plan is carried out through the promised Messiah. So Haggai's prophecy goes beyond encouraging his compatriots to get on with the work of rebuilding

God's typical temple, to a prophecy concerning the glory of the antitypical temple.²¹

The Israelites were in captivity in Babylon for seventy years, but seemingly there were some of the older ones remaining who remembered the glory of the former temple built by Solomon. These were asked to make a comparison between the glory of that first temple and the temple which was then being built. Their reply is not noted by Haggai. Actually, however, it is the general opinion of historians that the rebuilt temple came far short of Solomon's Temple in its grandeur; yet we read that the glory of this "latter house shall be greater than of the former." This gives us the clue that the "latter house" here mentioned is not the building erected by the Israelites under the encouragement of Haggai, but God's antitypical temple composed of Christ and his church.²²

Haggai's reference to a time when the Lord would shake the heavens and the earth, and also shake "all nations," is a prophecy pertaining to the great time of trouble with which the Gospel Age comes to an end. Following that trouble will come the full establishment of the kingdom of Christ, and its functioning for the blessing of all the families of the earth. It will be this kingdom of the Messiah that will cause the desire of all nations to come.²³

The Prophet Zechariah

ZECHARIAH served the Lord as prophet at the same time Haggai served. Like Haggai, he also had been an exile in Babylon. One of the services rendered by Zechariah, even as by Haggai, was to stir up the people to resume the work of rebuilding the temple. He had close contact with Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, a prince of Judah, who directed the rebuilding project.²⁴

Since the Israelites had just returned from their captivity in Babylon it was a fitting time to prophesy concerning a period when they would return from a far more widespread captivity, a captivity among all nations, which, as we know, was to last for more than eighteen centuries. Since this latter returning was to take place in connection with the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, its implications in connection with Israel's blessings, and the blessing of the Gentile nations, were more profound.²⁵

The prophecies show that at the time of the final returning of Israel to the Promised Land there would be great opposition against them, but through Zechariah the Lord promised ultimate deliverance.²⁶

It is made clear in the prophecies that in order for the returned people of Israel to receive permanent blessings from the Lord it will be necessary for them

to recognize their sin in rejecting Jesus at his first advent; and Zechariah foretold that they would do this.²⁷ But once established in their land, and receiving kingdom blessings from the Lord through their co-operation with kingdom agencies, the happy lot of the people of Israel will be noted by the people of other nations, and they will seek similar blessings, and from the same source.²⁸

Zechariah was used by the Lord to foretell the occasion when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an ass and he was proclaimed by the multitude the King of the Jews.²⁹ Zechariah also identifies this date as the time when a "double" period of national punishment would begin upon Israel. Jesus confirmed this, when at that time he said their house would be left unto them "desolate."³⁰ That there was to be such a "double" period of punishment upon Israel is mentioned by Jeremiah in one of his prophecies pertaining to their regathering at this end of the Gospel Age.³¹ Isaiah foretold the time when this "double" would be accomplished.³²

Zechariah foretold that in the kingdom the Lord's feet would stand upon the Mount of Olives, and that the mountain would part, forming a valley between from which there would flow living waters. This, of course, is symbolic language.³³ This will be

the time when the Lord will be King over all the earth. It will be a day, the prophet wrote, that will be partly light and partly dark, but at the evening it shall be wholly light.³³ This suggests that the enlightenment and blessing of the people will require the entire thousand years of the kingdom. Not until that work is complete, including the awakening and enlightenment of all the dead, will it be complete.

It will be essential at that time for all nations to recognize the authority of the kingdom, mentioned in this prophecy as being centered in Jerusalem.³⁴ There will also be a "new Jerusalem," which will be the real governing city over the affairs of men. This authority will also have to be recognized.

The Prophet Malachi

MALACHI was the last of the Old Testament prophets. Nothing is known of Malachi as a man. It is believed by some that he served as a prophet during the time that Nehemiah was the second time governor of the Jews. In any event, it was some hundreds of years prior to the first advent of Jesus. The nation of Israel, although the people had so recently passed through a serious chastisement as exiles in Babylon, was not faithful to the Lord, and not therefore enjoying his blessings. In a well-known passage of Scripture the prophet calls on them

to render the obedience they had covenanted, and thus to prove the Lord to see if he would not open the windows of heaven and pour them out rich blessings such as they could not fully contain.³⁵

Appropriately Malachi, as the last of the Old Testament prophets, forecast the coming of John the Baptist, who, as the messenger of the Lord, introduced Jesus, and thus the work of the Gospel Age.³⁶

In chapter 3, verse 1, Malachi mentions two messengers. First there is the messenger which was to prepare the way for Jesus. This was John the Baptist.³⁷ Then he refers to the "messenger of the covenant." This refers to Jesus, who, as the messenger or mediator of the New Covenant, will bring about a reconciliation between God and men. This work will be consummated during the Millennium, but he prepared the way for it at the first advent by giving his human life as a ransom for all.

The coming of Jesus at the first advent was a great test upon the natural house of Israel.³⁸ The same is true of spiritual Israel at this time of his second presence. The fact of the Messiah's presence tested the faith of the Lord's professed people at the beginning of the age, and it is doing so again during this harvest period at the close of the age.

Malachi calls attention to the fact that during the present evil

world evil prospers, and that this is often a test of faith upon the righteous.³⁹ However, those who fear the Lord, and who speak often one to the other about him and his glorious purposes toward the children of men, are the recipients of his rich blessings. The Lord remembers these, loves and spares them, overruling in their experiences so that no harm can come to them as new creatures in Christ Jesus.⁴⁰

Malachi foretold the time of Messiah's kingdom, when the "Sun of Righteousness" would arise and bring blessings of healing to the people.⁴¹ This will be in contrast to the present time when darkness covers the earth and when the wicked prosper. During the time of Christ's reign the wicked will be trodden down.⁴²

Malachi foretold the coming of the antitypical Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord.⁴³ This servant of the Lord was to do a work of reformation, turning the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. John the Baptist, in so far as he was

able to accomplish such a work of reformation in Israel, preparing the people to receive the Messiah, fulfilled this prophecy.⁴⁴ But John's work as a whole failed. Israel as a nation did not repent of her sins, and the "curse" foretold in Malachi's prophecy came upon that nation in A. D. 70-73, destroying it, and scattering the people far and wide throughout the earth.

During the Gospel Age the church of Christ in the flesh has similarly been carrying on an Elijah work; but again the world has not repented, and again the foretold curse comes upon the nations in the greatest "time of trouble" the world has ever known. But the world will be converted during the Millennial Age. It will be then that the glorified antitypical Elijah—Christ and his church exalted to reign with him—will enlighten the whole world. Satan will then be bound, and the prospects are that the vast majority of mankind will respond to the light in terms of obedience to the laws of the kingdom, and thus secure everlasting life.

QUESTIONS

When did Nahum serve God as a prophet?

What is the great truth set forth in the opening verses of the Book of Nahum?

What may Nahum be speaking

of when he declares that "affliction shall not rise up the second time"?

What was illustrated by the victories God gave his people Israel over their enemies?

How did Nahum describe the various methods of rapid travel that are being employed in the world today?

What was the moral situation in Israel when Habakkuk served as a prophet, and what particularly distressed the prophet about this?

What did the Lord reveal to Habakkuk as to the action against Israel which he proposed to take? How did Habakkuk react to this?

How does the vision that was to be made plain on tables answer Habakkuk relative to the permission of evil? To what period in the divine plan was this vision to speak?

Quote Habakkuk's expression of confidence in the Lord, and his determination to wait upon and serve him.

When did Zephaniah serve the Lord as prophet, and to what does much of his book pertain?

When is the day of the Lord's wrath foretold by Zephaniah?

Explain Zephaniah's prophecy concerning the gathering of the nations in the day of the Lord's wrath, and what is to be the final outcome of this?

What did Jesus say about the time of great tribulation foretold by the Prophet Zephaniah?

What was one of the important roles filled by the Prophet Haggai?

What temple did Haggai refer to as having greater glory than the glory of Solomon's temple?

When will the "desire of all nations come" as foretold by Haggai?

What was one of the important services rendered by the Prophet Zechariah?

Relate Zechariah's prophecy concerning the returning of the Israelites to God's favor at this time? Was there to be opposition to this return on the part of Gentile nations?

What is one of the conditions upon which the Israelites may receive permanent blessings from the Lord? Quote the prophecy concerning this.

How will Gentile nations react to the blessings which the Lord will pour upon the Israelites in the kingdom?

Quote Zechariah's prophecy concerning the time when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an ass and was hailed as king.

What important development occurred at the time Jesus offered himself as king to the Israelites?

What did the prophets Jeremiah and Isaiah say about the double period of punishment which was to come upon the Israelites?

Explain Zechariah's prophecy concerning the Lord's feet standing on the Mount of Olives.

Why will the day of Christ's kingdom be one that is partly light and partly dark?

What will be essential on the part of all nations in order to receive the messianic kingdom blessings?

About when did Malachi serve the Lord as a prophet, and what was one of the chief burdens of his message to the people?

What two messengers of the Lord did Malachi prophesy would come? What effect did the coming of these messengers have upon the people of Israel at the beginning of the age?

Does the fact that evil prospers at the present time imply that God does not love and care for his people? How did Malachi indicate God's blessing upon his own people?

What is the "Sun of Righteousness," and when will it rise?

Who is the foretold Elijah? Explain Malachi's prophecy concerning the coming of this great One, and when will the prophecy ultimately be completely fulfilled?

REFERENCE MATERIAL

⁴"The Battle of Armageddon," pages 649-656.

SCRIPTURAL PROOF

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ¹ Nahum 1:1-9 | ²³ Zech. 8:6-8; |
| ² 1 Chron. 29:23 | 13-17 |
| ³ Nahum 1:13-15 | ²⁶ Zech. 12:9; |
| ⁴ Isa. 52:7 | 14:1-9 |
| ⁵ Nahum 2:3, 4 | ²⁷ Zech. 12:10 |
| ⁶ Hab. 1:1-4 | ²⁸ Zech. 8:21-23 |
| ⁷ Hab. 1:5-11 | ²⁹ Zech. 9:9, 10; |
| ⁸ Hab. 1:12-17 | Matt. 21:4, 5 |
| ⁹ Hab. 2:1 | ³⁰ Zech. 9:12; |
| ¹⁰ Hab. 2:2-4 | Matt. 23:37, 38 |
| ¹¹ Heb. 10:37-39 | ³¹ Jer. 16:14-18 |
| ¹² Luke 12:37, 42 | ³² Isa. 40:1, 2 |
| ¹³ Hab. 3:17-19 | ³³ Zech. 14:4-9 |
| ¹⁴ Zeph. 1:7, 8, | ³⁴ Zech. 14:16, 17 |
| 14-18 | ³⁵ Mal. 3:7-10 |
| ¹⁵ Dan. 12:1 | ³⁶ Mal. 3:1 |
| ¹⁶ Zeph. 3:8 | ³⁷ Mark 1:2, 3 |
| ¹⁷ Matt. 24:21, 22 | ³⁸ Mal. 3:2, 3 |
| ¹⁸ Zeph. 3:9 | ³⁹ Mal. 3:14, 15 |
| ¹⁹ Ezra 1:1-4 | ⁴⁰ Mal. 3:16, 17 |
| ²⁰ Hag. 1:2, 8 | ⁴¹ Mal. 4:2 |
| ²¹ Hag. 2:3, 6-9 | ⁴² Mal. 4:3 |
| ²² 1 Pet. 2:5 | ⁴³ Mal. 4:5 |
| ²³ Isa. 25:6-9 | ⁴⁴ Matt. 11:14 |
| ²⁴ Zech. 4:8-10 | |

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT THOUGHTS

Much that the last six minor prophets wrote pertained to the sins of Israel and the Lord's displeasure with his people because of their waywardness. In their long-range prophecies they foretold some of our present methods of rapid travel; that the vision of truth would be made plain upon tables; the present warlike gathering of the nations, and a time of world-wide enlightenment to follow; that the desire of all nations will come; that living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, and that the Israelites will be restored to their land; and that the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings; and many other interesting facts with respect to the out-working of the Lord's great plan of the ages.

"When prayer delights thee least,
Then learn to say,
Now is the greatest need
That I should pray."

Ransom and Sin Offering

"For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."—I Peter 3:17, 18

GOD'S plan for the deliverance of mankind from sin and death is based upon sacrifice. Soon after the Lord said in the Garden of Eden that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, the idea of sacrifice was introduced by the offerings which were brought by Cain and Abel. Paul refers to Abel's offering as "more excellent" than Cain's, and it was accepted by God. (Heb. 11:4) It seems evident the Lord had revealed that offerings to him would be acceptable, if they were of the right sort, and motivated by the proper spirit.

From the time Abel offered his sacrifice to the Lord until the first advent of Jesus, sacrifices continued to be offered to the Lord, many of these on altars specially built for the purpose. Noah offered a sacrifice after leaving the ark. (Gen. 8:20, 21) Abraham was called upon by God to offer his son Isaac as a burnt offering, and when he proved his willingness to do this, a ram was substituted. (Gen. 22:6-13) There was the sacrifice of the passover lamb, and later all the various sacrifices associated with the services of Israel's tabernacle, and later the temple.

These sacrifices were identified in various ways, depending on their purpose and the circumstances under which they were offered. Some were called sin offerings, others burnt offerings; and there were trespass offerings, peace offerings, wave offer-

ings. Bulls and goats were used for these offerings, as well as lambs, birds, grain, and wine. Whatever the nature of the offerings might be, the Lord demanded that the offerer present his best. Nothing blemished was acceptable to the Lord.

For the want of a better word to describe them, we could say that all these sacrifices of the Lord's ancient people were merely typical. They did not effect actual reconciliation with God. They did not remove the guilt of sin and the condemnation to death resulting therefrom. However, to the extent that the offerers were sincere of heart in presenting their sacrifices to the Lord, they were blessed, and God was pleased.

Speaking particularly of the sacrifices offered in connection with the tabernacle services under the Law, Paul wrote, "For the Law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comer thereunto perfect; for then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshipers once purged should have no remembrance again made of sins every year."—Heb. 10:1-3

The Situation Changed

WITH the first advent of Jesus a fundamental change came. Paul refers to this, saying, "Wherefore when he [Christ] cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the Law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."—Heb. 10:5-10

Thus we see that with the coming and sacrifice of Jesus, God no longer accepted typical sacrifices. It is also apparent that those sacrifices of the past pointed forward to the sacrificial work of Jesus, and as we shall later see, in a lesser sense to

the sacrifices of his footstep followers. The primary difference between the typical sacrifices and the antitypical is that the first consisted of things which the offerer brought to the Lord—lambs, goats, etc.—while the latter is the sacrifice of human life, and human bodies; not those of others, but of one's own.

"A body hast thou prepared me," Paul quotes Jesus as saying. (Heb. 10:5) This was his human body, his flesh, which he gave for the life of the world. (John 6:51) We, too, in filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ, are admonished to present our bodies "a living sacrifice," with the assurance that they will be acceptable to the Lord. (Rom. 12:1) The combined sacrifices of Jesus' body and the bodies of his true followers are described by Paul as the "better sacrifices"—better, that is, than the typical sacrifices of the past.—Heb. 9:23

Different Purposes

THE divine plan for the redemption of the human race from sin and death indicates that different purposes are accomplished by the better sacrifices of this Gospel Age. Fundamental to all these is, of course, the ransoming of Adam and his progeny from death. This could be accomplished by none other than Jesus himself. Being born into the world perfect, he was holy, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and therefore was not under condemnation to death. (Heb. 7:26) Thus Jesus, in sacrificing his uncondemned life, was able to "ransom them [the world of mankind] from the power of the grave, and to "redeem them from death."—Hos. 13:14

This basic feature of the "better sacrifices" is clearly seen when we comprehend the meaning of the Greek word from which the word "ransom" is translated in I Timothy 2:5, 6. According to Prof. Young this word means "a corresponding price." The thought is amplified by the statement in the Law; "life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." (Deut. 19:21) In the case of Jesus and the "ransom" he provided, it was his perfect human life as a substitute for the perfect life of Adam, forfeited through disobedience to the divine law.

Having provided a ransom which in due time would lead to the release of Adam from death's condemnation, it meant that

the unborn race in his loins at the time of his sin would also be redeemed. Thus Paul states it, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:22) Obviously no one but Jesus could thus give his life as a corresponding price, and it was for this purpose that he "poured out his soul unto death." (Isa. 53:12) Nothing more than the sacrificed life of the perfect man Jesus was needed to bring about the release of the entire human race from adamic condemnation.

Other Sacrifices

WHILE Jesus alone, by his "once for all" sacrifice, provided the opportunity for release from condemnation to death because of sin, the Scriptures make it abundantly clear that his followers are also invited to, and do, lay down their lives in sacrifice which is acceptable to God. We have already noted Romans 12:1, which exhorts us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, with the assurance that such a sacrifice would be "holy," and acceptable to God. This language, and the idea which it conveys, is clearly based upon the typical sacrifices of the past in which the bodies of beasts were offered in sacrifice; and it reveals that as followers of Jesus we do have a part in the antitype of those sacrifices.

The Apostle Peter is equally specific in this matter. He wrote, "Ye also . . . are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up . . . sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (I Pet. 2:5) Here the apostle not only assures us that we can offer sacrifices acceptable to God, but associates our position with the typical priesthood. One of the main functions of Israel's priests was to offer sacrifice; and now, as antitypical priests, we are to offer sacrifice.

These sacrifices are acceptable to God "by" or through Jesus Christ, Peter explains. By nature we are members of the condemned and dying race, and would have nothing to offer which would be acceptable to God. But, upon the basis of faith in Jesus Christ and his atoning work on our behalf, we are released from original condemnation—"unto justification of life," as Paul explains it. (Rom. 5:18; 4:25) Paul wrote, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith

of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20) This is simply another way of saying that we are now reckoned as being alive, or having life, because the merit of Christ's perfect sacrifice, symbolized by his shed blood, is imputed to us. Thus we can present our bodies a "living" sacrifice.

The Purpose

EVERY aspect of God's plan of salvation has a purpose. What, then, is the purpose of Christian sacrifice and suffering? Broadly speaking, it is that others might be blessed. Colossians 1:24 reads, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." Here we learn that our sacrifices and sufferings are for the sake of our fellow-members in the body of Christ—for their benefit, that is.

This is in keeping with the admonition to lay down our lives for the brethren. But what is accomplished by this? The Scriptures explain that we build one another up in our most holy faith, and thus help to prepare them for glory, honor, and immortality in the kingdom. In II Corinthians 4:12 Paul puts it another way. He says, "Death worketh in us, but life in you," the brethren. As we lay down our lives for the brethren, it contributes to their receiving life through Christ. While the life-giving merit is in the blood of Christ, our sacrifice is the means used whereby that merit becomes vital in the lives of our fellow-members of the body of Christ. We pass on to them the "word of reconciliation" by our daily sacrifices in ministering the Gospel of Christ.—II Cor. 5:19

By these co-operative sacrifices, made acceptable to God through the merit of the ransom, the "bride" of Christ is made ready for her association with the Bridegroom in the kingdom work of dispensing life to all who will accept it upon the terms of belief and obedience during Christ's meditorial reign. It will be then that "the Spirit and the bride" will say, "Come, . . . and . . . take of the water of life freely."—Rev. 22:17

It is thus that the merit of Christ's shed blood will be made available in the next age for the world of mankind. Thus the followers of Jesus, who are suffering and dying with him, could

properly be said to be laying down their lives for the world of mankind. These are spoken of by Paul as being "planted together" in the likeness of Jesus' death, which, of course, was a sacrificial death. Paul describes this as a baptism into Christ's death—that is, a death baptism.—Rom. 6:3-5

In I Corinthians 15:29-32 Paul discusses the suffering and death of the Christian, using the expression, "baptized for the dead." In the context Paul argues that if there is not to be a resurrection of the dead, then this death baptism for the dead would accomplish nothing. This shows clearly that our sacrifices are designed in the great plan of God to accrue to the benefit of mankind during the "times of restitution of all things."—Acts 3:19-21

A Sin Offering

THE reason Jesus died, and the reason we have the privilege of dying with him, is that God has designed these sacrifices as a part of his plan to rid the world of sin. Hence these anti-typical "better sacrifices" of the Gospel Age are properly called sin offerings, even as were the typical sacrifices of the Jewish Age. Sin offerings accomplish different things. The Scriptures declare that Jesus' soul, his life, was made "an offering for sin." (Isa. 53:10) This offering provided redemption from sin and death. The offerings of his body members, however, are related only to the administering of the life-giving blessings made available by the ransom, but this also pertains to the stamping out of sin, hence is spoken of by Paul as a dying unto, or for sin.

This is shown in Romans 6:10, 11. We quote, "For in that he [Christ] died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Jesus did not die "unto sin" in the sense that he was once a sinner and then ceased from sin. The only way Jesus could die "unto sin" was as a sin offering. And Paul says that we should "likewise," or in the same manner, reckon ourselves to be dead "unto sin."

There are two key words in this statement by Paul. The one, as we have noted, is "likewise," which indicates that we die as

a sin offering even as Jesus did. The other key word is "reckon." Jesus did not reckon that he was dying "unto sin," for he actually gave a perfect life as an acceptable sacrifice, an offering for sin which provided redemption for Adam and his race. We can only "reckon" that we are dying "unto sin"; but since the Lord, through the inspired Apostle Paul, authorizes us so to reckon, it makes it bona fide, and we know that our offering is accepted on this basis.

The reason we are authorized to "reckon" that we are dying "unto sin" is that the merit of the ransom is imputed to make our sacrifice acceptable. To suggest that our imperfect sacrifices could not be accepted by God for this purpose after the imputation of Christ's merit, would be to question, by implication, the efficacy of the ransom. Yes, brethren, the imputation of the merit of the ransom does make it possible for us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, with the assurance that they have been made holy in God's sight, and will be acceptable for the purpose designed by him.

"For Christ Also"

OUR text presents further confirmation of our share in the great sin offering feature of the divine plan. "It is better," Peter states, "if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust." Here the key word is "also."—"Christ **also** hath once suffered for sins." This means that if we are suffering because of well-doing, and in keeping with the Heavenly Father's will, we are suffering for sins, that our sacrifices are considered as a sin offering.

And note the further revealing statement in this text—"the Just for the unjust." Jesus was "just," or justified, by virtue of his own inherent perfection. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. (Heb. 7:26) We are "just," or justified before the Lord because our imperfections are covered by the blood. The merit of Jesus' perfect sacrifice is imputed to us. Thus we too, even as Jesus, when we are laying down our lives following in his steps, are suffering and dying, the just for the unjust. Actually, this is but another way of saying that we are being "baptized for the dead."

Foreshadowed

THIS wonderful partnership we enjoy with our Lord Jesus in the work of reconciling estranged humanity to the Heavenly Father is clearly foreshadowed in the atonement day services as conducted in the ancient tabernacle in the wilderness. On that typical day of atonement two animals were offered for sins. One of these was a bullock, and the other a goat. Both animals were sacrificed in the same manner. They were slain at the door of the tabernacle. Their fat and life-producing organs were burned on the brazen altar in the court. Their carcasses were burned outside the camp of Israel; and their blood sprinkled on the mercy seat within the most holy.

Paul refers to this in Hebrews 13:10-13. Verse 10 reads, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." The altar referred to here is the brazen altar in the court of the tabernacle, when sin offerings were burned on it. The law governing the use of the altar for this purpose reads, "No sin offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into . . . the holy, . . . shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire."—Lev. 6:30

Thus Paul is saying that the altar which we have, or which typifies our sacrifice, is the brazen altar in the court when used for sin offerings. It is because of this, or "for," as Paul puts it, "the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."—vss. 11-13

There is no escaping the conclusion from this clear statement by the Apostle Paul that the animals offered for the sins of Israel on their typical atonement day foreshadowed the sacrifices of Jesus and his church; the bullock, offered first, representing Jesus, and the goat the church, his followers. This is the significance of our sacrifice as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus. This is the "altar," the opportunity of sacrifice and suffering which we have and which is acceptable to God through the merit of Jesus.

The Practical Lesson

WHILE the Scriptures make clear that the followers of the Master do share with him in the work of reconciling fallen humanity to God, we should not overlook the practical application of this great truth which Paul suggests. We quote: "By him therefore [that is, through the merit of Christ] let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."—Heb. 13:15, 16

"To do good and to communicate." This is the life endeavor of every true follower of the Master. And it is with such sacrifices that God is well pleased. Paul again wrote, "Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all, . . . especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal. 6:9, 10) This is what our share in the "better sacrifices" means to us in terms of everyday living. It would be of little value to know of this feature of the divine plan unless it influences us actually to lay down our lives in divine service, doing as much good as we can now, and looking forward to that glorious future opportunity of sharing with Jesus in the blessing of all the families of the earth.

It takes great love to stir a human heart

To live beyond the others, and apart;

A love that is not shallow—is not small;

Is not for one or two, but for them all.

Love that can wound love, for its highest need;

Love that can leave love, though the heart may bleed;

Love that can lose love, family and friends,

Yet steadfastly live, loving to the end.

A love that asks no answer, that can live,

Moved by one burning, deathless force—to give!

Love, strength and courage—courage, strength and love—

The heroes of all time are built thereof.

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THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

A Consideration of Catholic Doctrine—Section V

Interpreting the Bible

HERE is a subject which lies at the very heart of most Catholic-Protestant differences. In focusing his attention upon the teachings of the Bible and the divine message portrayed therein, how can the sincere student understand what he reads?

Unlike other books, the Bible is unique in treating vast fields of knowledge and conduct, including history, prophecy, revelation, and moral guidance, all as the inspired Word of God. There are hundreds of details in the form of parables, maxims, symbolisms, types, and figurative sayings. To make the matter more difficult, there are peculiarities and special idioms of the original languages in which the Bible was written, which complicate its translation and interpretation. And many expressions and allusions found in the Scriptures belong to ages and countries vastly different from our own.

Admittedly, there are many passages of Scripture which are straightforwardly written and their lesson relatively obvious to all. Yet there are many others, such as parts of Paul's epistles, which Peter says are "hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."—II Pet. 3:16

Here, then, is a paradoxical situation which confronts the earnest inquirer for truth. On the one hand he is admonished to study the Bible (II Tim. 2:15), and yet on the other he finds he needs help to gain a true understanding of it. How shall he proceed? Where shall he turn to obtain the correct interpretation?

Who Can Understand?

THE Catholic Church states that it is the only authoritative interpreter of the Bible. Here, we are told, is where the individual may turn with confidence and accept its interpretation

of Scripture without reservation. It alleges it has a divine appointment to this position of final authority in matters pertaining to the truths revealed in the Bible. It proposes to dispel the confusion found in the religious world by inviting all others to accept the Catholic Church as the sole existing and divinely empowered interpreter of the Bible.

"This is what we have in the Catholic Church—an authority to decide finally and forever all questions concerning the correct meaning, the exact force and value of the Bible which Christ committed to her keeping. The church interprets the law of God much as the Supreme Court interprets the law of the nation."¹²

This, however, is a premise that is all too familiar to many honest inquirers for truth, and one that has had to be dismissed in the past. One group, one organization, one church, is laying claim to a exclusive access to the Holy Spirit of God, and believes that it alone may function as the divine channel of blessing and salvation. It is difficult to see how a view such as this, tenaciously clung to even in our day of great enlightenment and advanced Bible study, can be regarded other than as a very narrow and selfish one.

Can the great Creator of the universe be limited by man-made denominational ties and human creeds? We believe not. We believe that the Bible teaches that God deals directly with his people through the true channel—the Holy Scriptures—and grants them the guidance of his Holy Spirit to lead them into all truth.

But who are God's people to whom he is pleased to give an understanding of the deep spiritual truths contained in the Bible, and just how is this accomplished? We believe it is they who are of a pure and honest heart, who are diligently seeking to know more of their Creator and the mysteries of their own existence and future life. Purity of heart and the desire to know God are fundamental requirements to being drawn closer to God by the operation of the Holy Spirit:

¹²Knights of Columbus Religious Information Bureau, **The Bible is a Catholic Book**, p. 24.

“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, 4) “I dwell . . . with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.” (Isa. 57:15) “My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.”—Prov. 23:26

As the sincere and earnest inquirer for truth searches along the various avenues of life, God will eventually bring him in contact with the divine revelation to mankind contained in the Holy Scriptures. The means may be a book, a sermon, a tract, or the Bible itself. As the truth seeker examines and studies further, it will soon become evident that he is in need of assistance to understand the deep things of God. It was so with the Ethiopian eunuch to whom Philip preached the Word: “And Philip ran thither to him [the Ethiopian], and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? and he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.”—Acts 8:30, 31

Yes, God will arrange the circumstances to bring one who has already been enlightened by the Holy Spirit into the pathway of the sincere inquirer. And thus God himself will be speaking to such a one through this human, but divinely anointed, instrumentality, who is competent in interpreting the Bible and presenting the truths of the divine plan. “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”—Rom. 10: 13, 14

As the inquirer receives the Word of God, which is now made understandable, and accepts for himself the gracious provisions for forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ, he is drawn yet closer to the Father and will grow in grace and in knowledge. God’s divine plan for the salvation and blessing of the human race will unfold before him and he will manifest an intense desire to dedicate his life to the doing of the Father’s will. When this step is taken by the believer, accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as his own Redeemer and consecrating his all to God, a vital turning point in his life is reached.

Now the believer has become a new creature, and will be

endeavoring to walk closely in the footsteps of his Master. A new life has been opened up, one of dedication to God and sacrifice in his service. All such become recipients of the promise to be led into all truth by the Holy Spirit of God: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." (John 16:13) Now even the deep things of God will be revealed and the Scriptures made very plain: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."—Ps. 25:14

To this class of consecrated believers, another very special promise of spiritual understanding will be fulfilled: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. . . . We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."—I Cor. 2:9-12

Yes, this is the special class of people to whom God is pleased to reveal his truth. Those who compose it are not limited to any single human organization or religious denomination. However, the knowledge they receive is not gained without concerted efforts and diligent study on their part. Let us now glance briefly at the methods which are employed by the modern student of the Bible in his endeavors to comprehend the plans and purposes of God.

A Suggested Method of Study

THE very first step is in recognizing God as the source of all wisdom and in asking him to enlighten our minds through the guidance of his Holy Spirit. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, . . . and it shall be given him." (James 1:5) Through such an attitude of meditation and prayer, we may enjoy the confident expectation that the Heavenly Father will grant this wish. "Trust in the Lord . . . and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."—Ps. 37:3, 4

As the Word of God is approached, it is well to keep in mind several rules of study brought to our attention in the Scriptures.

In II Timothy 2:15 Paul wrote: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." His first thought emphasizes the need for making a concentrated study of the Bible, rather than a mere surface reading; his second, the need for classifying Scriptures according to appropriate divisions.

One of the most important of these divisions is the element of time—recognizing the great dispensational features in the plan of God. Sometimes Scriptures may appear conflicting or contradictory when considered applicable in the same time period. Quite frequently it is possible to harmonize these by doing no more than "rightly dividing" them according to the time features of God's plan; that is, separating them into their appropriate dispensations, such as the Jewish Age, the Gospel Age or dispensation, and the Millennial Age. As each age has been appointed for accomplishing particular purposes, it is only to be expected that God's dealings with the people of those ages will vary accordingly.

Another important way of "rightly dividing the Word of truth" is to pursue Bible study along topical lines. In this approach the various scriptures from the Old and New Testaments on a particular subject are brought together. The words of the prophets and the teachings of Jesus and the apostles are analyzed and compared. The point is to limit the study to the one subject under consideration, and to bring together all possible Scripture texts to bear upon it. This method is based upon the assumption that, when properly understood, all Scriptures will harmonize with each other, though taken from sixty-six different books written at various times and by different hands, in the knowledge that God is their true Author.

In relation to this subject of studying the Scriptures, some of our readers may instinctively recall a text which is supposed to teach that none but a particular church has the right to interpret the Bible. If this understanding were correct, then it would become a fearful and forbidden act to attempt any interpretation of Scripture on an independent basis apart from that church. The text in question is found in II Peter 1:20, 21: "No prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."—R. V.

The Greek word in this text which is usually rendered "interpretation" actually means "unloosing,"¹³ which could change the thought of the entire verse. Thus, instead of speaking of interpreting or understanding Scripture, Peter here evidently refers to the origin of these prophecies. The simplest thought would then be that no prophecy of Scripture is of human unloosing or origin, but rather of divine.

Nonetheless, even if this text were made applicable to the interpretation of Scripture, there is yet a beautiful and simple way that it may be understood. It is that no interpretation of Scripture should be held that is not consistent with the original intent of God who is the true Author, working through the instrumentality of men. What better way to determine this true meaning of a text than to gather together for comparison the utterances of various of the prophets (and, indeed, the New Testament writers as well) relating to the subject at hand? Only thus may we be assured that we have the counsel of the Lord on the matter, rather than merely a private interpretation or thought suggested by an isolated text.

In analyzing those portions of Scripture that contain difficult and obscure passages, in addition to private study, it may be necessary to turn to those teachers and leaders who have been appointed by God to minister to his people. The symbolisms, types, parables, and prophecies which will be encountered in studying the Bible may require the helpful explanation of those especially chosen by God for this service. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."—Eph. 4:11, 12

In pursuing this deeper study, there are various Bible helps which have become available in our day. There are exhaustive concordances, which may be used to locate instantly a Scripture or group of Scriptures under a particular heading. The more complete concordances include the original meanings of the Greek and Hebrew words used in the Bible text. Then, too, there

¹³Dr. Robert Young, "Interpretation," **Analytical Concordance to the Bible**, p. 519.

are Bible dictionaries, encyclopedias, commentaries, a variety of modern translations, and even interlineary word-for-word translations of the Greek and Hebrew texts. Readings from many of the ancient manuscripts which were more recently discovered in Bible lands are now also available and very helpful in clarifying the meaning of certain passages.

Many of these valuable helps to Bible study have become available only in relatively recent years. Apparently this has been permitted by God as an encouragement to stimulate profitable Bible study at a time when the forces of error and outright unbelief are assailing the Christian believer as never before. May all of us demonstrate our appreciation for these helps by making use of them to enrich our knowledge of God and to learn more of his plans and purposes.

Fervency Necessary

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."—Romans 12:11

THE great business in life of those who would honor and serve the Lord is to serve the brethren and the truth. Everything that represents the truth these soldiers of the cross are to uphold—everything that is right, just, true. They will give their approval to such things and their disapproval to other things. This is what causes the opposition of the flesh, the world, and the Adversary. Christians have become dead to the world and alive toward God. Having thus been received and counted in as a member of Christ, every such one has as his special business the service of the Lord, the brethren, and the truth. And according to his abilities and opportunities is he to engage in this business. And this is to be his mind or disposition—to serve the Lord. And he is to be fervent in spirit, not indifferent, not lukewarm. As the Lord Jesus was fervent in spirit, even so are we to be. The fervency of his spirit for God and his arrangements consumed his life. So it must be with all those who serve God—those who walk in the Master's footsteps.

"Finally, Brethren"

Philippians, Chapter 4

THIS is the last chapter of Paul's letter to the Philippians. This epistle is an interesting and profitable study for Bible students. Much truth is expressed in the words, "Search we may for many years, still some new, rich gem appears," and the "new, rich gems" of truth which we find through our continued study of God's Word increase our joy and understanding of God's will concerning us.

This epistle of Paul from his prison in Rome is, we discover, one of the most affectionate of the apostle's letters. It is friendly and filled with words of approval and commendation to the brethren at Philippi; and, while they were not reproved, the Philippians were exhorted against pride and against accepting false leadership. They were instructed to develop the qualities of joy, contentment, and holiness, and in our present study the apostle mentions the gift sent to him from the church at Philippi through Epaphroditus, and he commends them for having a part in his ministry. The epistle is as a love letter from the great Apostle Paul to those close to his heart.

Verses 1-3 read: "Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which labored with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-laborers, whose names are in the Book of Life."

"I long to see you" would be the modern expression for Paul's words, "longed for." This expression of Paul's is fragrant with the very essence of Christian love and fellowship, and certainly must have been deserved and appreciated by the church at Philippi. Paul describes the Philippians as "my joy and crown" because they were an evidence to the apostle that he had not run, neither labored in vain. "Stand fast in the Lord," is his exhortation. Stand firm; not in the power of self but in the Lord's power, in his grace.

In verse 2 we are introduced to two of the ecclesias who were not fellowshiping in harmony. The position of women in Greece and Macedonia was exceptional

for those days. The Greeks had many goddesses, among them Diana and Athena. So also in the early churches of that area there were prominent women held in high esteem, such as Lydia. Euodias and Syntyche had their differences, and the apostle knew that differences in individuals could hinder growth and spiritual development and could lead to trouble in the church; so he beseeches both of them. Evidently both were somewhat in the wrong. That would be natural, wouldn't it? It is generally the same today. Wrong on both sides is a common thing when differences exist. At any rate Paul exhorts, "Be of the same mind in the Lord."

What could differences between two sisters, 1,900 years ago, mean to us? It may be well to note the apostle's exhortation carefully. Certainly there is inspired wisdom in his words, from which we all may learn a lesson. The apostle did not exhort them to be of "the same mind" in everything. No doubt he knew of their differences in temperament, disposition, background, and education which would make it physically impossible to see "eye to eye" in all things, but he did want them to have unity of heart in the Lord; to be in concord with each other; to be at peace with each other, showing that they were both children of God and thus able to manifest the Spirit

of the Lord, each overlooking the shortcomings of the other. So in personal matters and in hurt feelings let us also follow the apostle's exhortation.

Evidently no fundamental doctrine was at stake, for then there could have been no compromise. So may we also extend liberty of opinion on nonfundamental doctrines, and thus have greater peace and fellowship in the "Spirit of the Lord."

And then again we, as children of God, have the privilege of endeavoring to help our brethren over the rough spots of misunderstanding as they occur, and thus to be true yokefellows—fellow-laborers—assisting our brethren to grow spiritually, that our names may indeed be in the "Book of Life." As true yokefellows may we help our brethren preserve "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," that they may "be of the same mind in the Lord," in tune with the Lord and with one another. (Eph. 4:3; vs. 2) The Master said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Peacemakers do not sow seeds of discord among brethren.

Verses 4-7: "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known

unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

This thought of being a rejoicing Christian is one of the golden themes of this epistle. Of course we know that human circumstances do not always call for rejoicing. One's finances may be low. One's health may be in poor condition. Those whom we love may be desperately sick. But verse 4 says, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." This means rejoice in the Lord in spite of these things; and that requires faith and hope. Our faith tells us that our every step is ordered of the Lord. So if he orders every step, then he orders the whole journey of life, because our life is made up of one step at a time. In Galatians 5:22 we read that "joy" is a fruit of the Spirit. Therefore, as a fruit it must be developed. Joy and contentment are closely related.

The Master said, "Your joy no man taketh from you." (John 16:22) And he also said that he has given us the truth that our "joy might be full." (John 15:11) And the Apostle James adds, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." (James 1:2) Why? We know that the Lord directs our providences, and all the experiences he permits to come into our lives are necessary for our Christian development. Each experience contains a lesson for us.

As Christians we know that "all things" which he permits are for the purpose of developing in us the "fruit of the Spirit," and that the sum total of all that he permits will result in ultimate blessing. (Rom. 8:28) This is why we rejoice in the Lord and in his providences.

Verse 5: "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." "Moderation" is a poor translation here. "Forbearance" is better. The origin of the word contains the thought of being merciful, lenient, gentle, not only to members of the church, but to everyone with whom we come in contact. The expression, "The Lord is at hand," refers to the time when he returns to bless all the families of the earth. At that time, as we reign with him, we will be exercising toward "all men," toward all the families of the earth, the qualities of forbearance, mercy, and leniency, even though enforcing the strong rule of the Shepherd's rod and staff. (Ps. 23:4) But even now, before the mediatorial reign begins, we are to learn to exercise these qualities in our daily lives.

Verse 6: "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." "Be careful for nothing" should be translated, "Be anxious about nothing," "Be not burdened." In another place the Master has told us,

Take no thought—no anxious thought—about the temporal circumstances of life. (Matt. 6:31-34) This exhortation does not give us an excuse to be careless about our thoughts, words, and actions. Rather, it is an exhortation to trust him who neither slumbers nor sleeps. He is caring for us; then why should we be burdened with care? As Peter says, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."—I Pet. 5:7

Continuing in verse 6, Paul says, "By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." And note I Timothy 2:1 which reads: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." In these two scriptures we have presented to us different types of prayers: general prayers—we might say "night and morning prayers"; supplications—petitionary prayers that contain requests within the Christian's privilege; intercessory prayers for others.

We should make a point to pray for others daily, to mention before the throne of grace, by name, those whom we know are being especially tried. It is a mark of unselfishness. It is a privilege to let our "requests be made known unto God." May we do it with thanksgiving!

And if we can overcome anxious care, if we are able to cast all our care upon him, and take

full advantage of the privilege of prayer, then verse 7 will be ours. It reads: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." We will have the "peace of God." This is the opposite of anxiety. It is the peace of God because only he can give it, and because it is the peace of quietness and tranquillity; the calmness which God possesses, and which he alone can share.

It passes "all understanding"; that is, it surpasses or escapes all human reason in its power to relieve from anxiety and care. It keeps our hearts—the center of our devotions—it keeps our minds, our thoughts, resting in the assurance of divine grace. It is this peace of God that says, "All is well," while the storms of life are raging. The peace of God assures us that in his care we have an impregnable fortress; our strong tower is he.—Ps. 61:3; Prov. 18:10

Verses 8 and 9: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest [margin, venerable], whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard,

and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

We are to center our thoughts on "whatsoever things are true," supported by the Word of God. We thus separate truth from error. We thus separate truth from tradition. We are established in the faith by those things which are true.

"Whatsoever things are honest," honorable, worthy of reverence, noble, are worthy of our meditation. "Whatsoever things are just," righteous, fair and equitable; and "whatsoever things are pure" should have a place in our minds and hearts, for "every man that has this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (I John 3:3) "Whatsoever things are lovable" and "whatsoever things are of good report"—kind things which we hear about others—let us think on these things. It is easy to remember unkind things.

"If there be any virtue"—any energy in the exercise of our faith, any vigorous action of faith; "if there be any praise"—anything in others which is praiseworthy, "think on these things"—fix your mind on these things, fill your thoughts with these things. "And the God of peace shall be with you." This is a Bible prescription for peace. It is a good "one-a-day," yes, every-day, tablet.

Verses 10 through 19: "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that

now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Here is a discussion of a subject not often even mentioned by Bible students—the subject of money and the Christian's use of it. Not that the subject of money is sinful. Paul spoke of it to the

Philippians, to the Corinthians, and to others. But money has been the cause of so much begging in the churches that in our fellowship we prefer to set a box at the rear of the meeting place and say nothing, or very little, about it.

The Philippian brethren had sent gifts of money to Paul on other occasions. Paul said these gifts made them "partners" in his ministry. For otherwise he would have had to work with his hands, with little time for the preaching of the Gospel. In another place, referring to money, he said, "God loveth a cheerful giver." But the gift had to be given cheerfully. The Apostle Paul refused to be burdensome to the church in Corinth because it was not alert to give with the cheerful spirit. (II Cor. 9:7; 11:9) But the gift of the Philippians was given in the proper spirit, and he gladly accepted it.

Not that he ever spoke of "want." That is where so many in churchianity have failed. Paul was content. He had been through it all: abased, made to abound; he had been hungry and full; he had suffered need and had possessed much. He said he could do all these things gladly, "through Christ which strengtheneth me."

The apostle's experience reminds us of the old village blacksmith shop and the heating of the metal horseshoe, the ham-

mering of it into shape and then the thrusting of it into water to temper it. Thus the horseshoe was made to stand the beating on the hard pavement. Paul went through it all and learned the lessons. He knew how to be content both in privation and in prosperity.

Which is the greater test? To abound, or to suffer need? There are temptations to our faith in both. To abound, on the one hand, brings temptations to feel self-sufficient, to permit self-indulgence. To suffer need, on the other hand, brings temptations to permit the spirit of envy, or self-pity, or jealousy to enter our hearts.

But Paul had learned to be content in the providences of God, and so should we. He said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." When we count our blessings we will only conclude that we will always be on the receiving end, and even our bitter experiences are blessings in disguise, shaping us for "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—II Cor. 4:17

Can we know both how to be abased and how to abound, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need, without anxious care? Paul did. His was a good example!

Nevertheless, he did not disparage the Philippian's gift. Note verse 14: "Notwithstanding ye

have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction." Thus he commended them. He reminded them of the other occasions also in which they had given liberally so that they would know he remembered. And then he adds (verse 15): "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only." This "giving and receiving" is an interesting expression, like "bills payable, bills receivable," a "debit and credit account."

Paul had given them the message at great cost to himself. They had given him of their means. That made them partners, remember? And we ask our selves, have we a "giving and receiving" account with the Lord? It will always be out of balance. We will always be on the receiving end. We receive so much, and are able to give so little. But are we cheerful givers? The harvest work is carried on by cheerful givers.

The apostle continues (in verses 17 and 18): "Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full,

having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." That was a nice way to put it! He didn't need the gift, but "it is more blessed to give than to receive," and their giving would result in their receiving and their blessing. (Acts 20:35) They gave money and would receive fruit, spiritual fruit. That was a good exchange. Besides, it was a sacrifice, a sweet-smelling odor, an acceptable gift that was well-pleasing to God.

And then in verse 19 he gave them an assurance of the Father's care: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." He "shall supply all your need." He is rich. He will perhaps not supply all your wants, but all your needs, and these needs will be supplied through our blessed Lord; and, if faithful, we shall be like him in glory.

That was quite a "thank you" letter, was it not? Concluding the epistle, the Apostle Paul said (verses 20 and 23): "Now unto God and our Father be glory forever and ever. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."

O for a heart more like my God,
From imperfection free:
A heart conformed unto thy Word,
And pleasing Lord, to thee.

"You Hath He Quickened"

Ephesians 2:1, 5

IT SEEMS very appropriate that the 119th Psalm should have for its main theme the grandeur and the preciousness of God's holy words. At the same time it indicates to us many of the ways in which God is using his sacred Word in the interests of his great eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. How truly can the fully consecrated followers of Jesus testify: "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." —Psalm 119:105

In one of the few recorded prayers of our Lord, he prayed thus for his followers: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth." (John 17:17) To "sanctify" is "to separate, to set apart" [Young], to make holy. And this condition is to be maintained and developed in each "new creature" in Christ Jesus. —II Cor. 5:17

The time of God's acceptance of our full consecration to him is the beginning of a new life. Through the power of the Holy

Spirit, operating through the Word of truth, we are begotten to the spirit nature. This quickening process is to continue; there is to be a growth of the "new creature" which, if persisted in, will result in our being born on the spirit plane in the first resurrection.

Quickened by His Word

IN CONNECTION with the calling and development of the Christian church during the Gospel Age, a very blessed experience of each member of that true church has been, and still is, a quickening into life and activity, brought about by the Word of God. We read in Psalm 119:25, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy Word." It is by means of that precious Word—the great divine plan that it reveals, and the surpassing hope it sets before us in the Gospel—that the Lord quickens his people into life and activity. Hence his Word needs to be our daily study and meditation that we may be guided aright as to what his Word teaches concerning his will in the varied experiences which come to us.

Thus our minds will be stirred by the many promises of his grace to help, that we may lay

firmer hold upon the glorious hope set before us in the Gospel. It is in all these ways that the Word of God is intended to have a quickening effect upon new creatures in Christ.

The Psalmist again prays: "I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy Word." (Ps. 119:107) Here it is suggested that affliction is intended to send us to the Word of God for comfort, strength, and inspiration. Through increasing appreciation of the joy set before us in the Gospel we are given strength to put forth continued efforts to endure the cross, and to think lightly of the shame attached thereto. We are quickened into greater efforts to prove faithful, the love of Christ constraining us to this end, enabling us to say: "I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me."—Ps. 119:93

Quickened by His Judgments

"QUICKEN me, O Lord, according to thy judgments." (Ps. 119:149, R. V.) God also quickens us by means of his judgments, his disciplines, and even his chastisements. Every child of God receives some of these judgments, even as it is written: "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"—Heb. 12:7

Some of these disciplinary experiences may overtake us even

before we come to the Lord. They are meant to help us realize the vanity of earthly aims, hopes, and ambitions. They urge us to seek a more excellent way, the way of the Lord, in which we find him a present Savior and Friend, as well as the One who wishes to receive us into the eternal blessedness of the future.

Thus God's gracious judgments and disciplines draw us to him, enabling us to see more clearly the steps of grace marked out for those he would call. These help them to come to the point where they can realize that "the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace."—Rom. 8:6, R. V.

After having responded to the Lord's call by a complete consecration, and having been begotten from above by his Holy Spirit through his Word of truth, we need patiently and humbly to submit to all the Lord's wonderful providences operating on our behalf, that we may be prepared for the birth of the "new creature" into the kingdom by means of the first resurrection. In the meantime, if we respond to these kindly judgments of the Father, they will quicken us more and more into the life of his Son.

Should there be a tendency to "slow down" in the Christian racecourse because of becoming weary in well-doing, we will need and receive discipline which, among other things, brings us a

clearer view of the Lord's will, his goodness, and his love, and the greatness of the prize for which we run, as well as the great cost by which our redemption from the curse has been secured.

These judgments will also help us to get rid of any idol which might arise in our hearts or, if necessary, even bring about the breaking of the idol that it become not a stumbling block, or a cause for our going to sleep concerning our privileges and blessings. The Apostle Paul, in writing to the Corinthians concerning the slackness of consecration among them, said that "many sleep." (I Cor. 11:30) And to the brethren elsewhere he was prompted to write: "Let us not sleep, as do others."—I Thess. 5:6

And so we would pray in the sentiments of the Psalmist: "Quicken me according to thy judgments," that they may keep me awake and alive to the things of the Spirit. Thus by means of this quickening process, brought about by the gracious operations of his Spirit and his providences, we are enabled to walk still more carefully and circumspectly in the way of the Lord, the narrow way to life.

In the New Testament the consecrated saints are spoken of as those that were of "the way." (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23, R. V.) The "way" the Lord points out to his consecrated followers is a diffi-

cult one—an unpopular way; a way evilly spoken of. Hence those permitted to see something of the light of present truth with its call to come out of Babylon (Rev. 18:4) are tempted at times to continue in association with more popular companies of professed Christians who enjoy a more respectable standing in the eyes of the world, rather than to associate with a "way" that "everywhere . . . is spoken against." (Acts 24:14; 28:22) Whatever the cost, let us earnestly pray: "Quicken thou me in thy way." (Ps. 119:37) In this connection the first half of this verse is important, for the Psalmist says: "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity."

Unless we continue to be watchful and to walk circumspectly, there is often a tendency for the mind to be attracted by some of the vain, empty things of the present evil world. Hence the importance of seeking to fulfil the Apostle Paul's exhortation: "Set your affection [or, mind, margin] on things above, not on things on the earth."—Col. 3:2

Our eyes will then continue to be turned away from earthly hopes and ambitions, and will be centered upon the things that are above—the heavenly and eternal things. Then we will be able to say: "What things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ."—Phil. 3:7, R. V.

By His Loving Kindness

"QUICKEN me, O Lord, according to thy loving-kindness." (Ps. 119:159) One of the advanced experiences of the Lord's consecrated people is an ever increasing realization of the Lord's loving-kindness. The longer we are in the way in which we experience the Lord's dealings with us, the more fully we will realize that nothing comes to us but that which carries evidences of the Father's loving-kindness, which Paul describes as "his great love wherewith he loved us."—Eph. 2:4

Such realization surely prompts or quickens us to put forth great efforts to prove faithful. (Ps. 26:3; 40:10; 92:2; 103:4) Thus one of the advanced lessons in the school of Christ is to realize that all the dealings of the Heavenly Father with his children are evidences of his loving-kindness. "His tender mercies are over all his works."—Ps. 145:9

Even the experience with evil through which the human family has passed during the past six thousand years—although it has been for many an experience very hard to endure, and has brought much sorrow and suffering, and on this account has led many to feel that the great Creator is far from being a God of love—yet in the light now shining upon the divine plan we see that God's permission of the reign of evil, with all its suffer-

ings, is an evidence of his loving-kindness toward mankind when viewed from his standpoint of joyful, everlasting life for all the willing and obedient.

The very trying experiences during the reign of sin and death are but preparing humanity to appreciate and profit by the reign of righteousness to which all will come forth—"every man in his own order"—with a full opportunity, during that great day of judgment, or trial for life, of profiting by their past experiences under the reign of evil. (I Cor. 15:22, 23) These blessings of Messiah's kingdom in the earth will surely lead the vast majority of mankind, assisted by the lessons learned under the reign of evil, to love righteousness and hate iniquity, thus firmly establishing them in all the principles of God's righteous law for the ages to come.

The heartfelt sentiments of the Lord's fully consecrated children today are: "Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me after thy loving-kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth." (Ps. 119:88, 159) They realize that it is the Lord's loving-kindness which is intended to prompt them to an ever increasing desire to observe his precepts and to walk fully in the light of his Word.

How true it is that the Lord's kindly providences and drawing

power, operating through his Word, are now continuing to bring the called ones into the way of life and quickening them to walk therein. His "judgments" are dispensed to deter them from straying, and to encourage them to press on in the way of life. And ever increasing evidences of the Lord's loving-kindness inspires to continued endeavors to faithfulness, as expressed by the poet:

"Lord, thy goodness like a fetter
Binds my grateful heart to thee."

Thus we are helped to see the force of the Apostle Paul's words: "It is God which worketh in you both to will-and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13) And we are constrained to say: "I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us."—Isa. 63:7

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Things Above

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

—Colossians 3:1

THIS month the professed Christian world commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Our text reminds us that for the consecrated followers of the Master there is a further meaning to Jesus' resurrection; that, symbolically speaking, we are now, by faith, risen with him. Verse 3 explains that we are dead, and that our life is hid with Christ in God. The things of the flesh and of the world should no longer hold any attraction for us, for we have embarked on a new way of life which, if we are victorious, will end "where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." To be victorious we must continue to set our affections on things above, not on things of the earth.—vs. 2

What does it mean to set our affections on things above? What are these "things above"? We cannot define them, for they are spiritual, heavenly things. John wrote that it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that we shall be like him; that is, like our resurrected and glorified Head, Christ Jesus. (I John 3:2) The Bible tells us much about the "things above," but with the limitations of our finite minds we can grasp only dimly what they actually are like.

Take the expression, for instance, "where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." We know what this says, but we cannot grasp its full significance. We know that it means exaltation and glory far beyond anything the human race has ever known, so we realize the value of setting our affections on such a glorious reward. Jesus was exalted to this position because of his humility and faithfulness, and Paul admonishes that we should

have the same mind. "And being found in fashion as a man," Paul wrote concerning Jesus, "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:8-11

Writing again about Jesus' high exaltation by the power of God, Paul said, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. 1:18-23

A marvelous prospect indeed! And although we cannot grasp fully the meaning of these wonderful words, since they pertain to a heavenly realm, and we are earthly, we are inspired by them. But we do know something of their meaning. They mean that if we prove worthy we will be with Jesus. Jesus said so himself—"If I go, . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:3) We know also that it will mean being forever with all the faithful ones of the Gospel Age, beginning with the apostles. What a great joy this will be! It will mean the privilege of being associated with Jesus in the glorious work of blessing all the families of the earth, as the seed of Abraham.—Gal. 3:27-29

The Practical Side

WHILE it is inspirational to think of the exceeding great and precious promises by which we are assured of glory, honor, and

immortality—and we do need this inspiration as a joy set before us as encouragement to faithfulness—the practical aspect of the matter has to do with how we are setting our affections on things above. This is something which relates to the everyday manner in which we serve the Lord. We are admonished, for example, not to set our affections on the things of the earth. Is it true that we are really esteeming of little value the things of the earth, and instead are reaching out for those heavenly things which the Lord has promised?

But simply to ask ourselves this question does not in itself fully resolve the matter. What changes in our lives are being wrought by setting our affections on things above? How does it affect what we do today, tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow? It means, or should mean, that our chief concern is for the things of the Lord, for his people, for his work as ambassadors of Christ. To attend an assembly of the Lord's people rather than to remain at home or to mix with the world, would be setting our affection on things above. If we truly long to be with the Lord's people the other side of the veil, we will want to be with them now whenever we can make opportunities to do so.

During the spring and summer months there will be additional opportunities along this line through the many conventions, local and otherwise, which the brethren are arranging. To long to be with the Lord's people, in the regular meetings, or at conventions, is a spiritually healthy sign. It indicates that those with whom we hope to spend eternity are now more precious to us than those of the world.

This does not mean that we can prove worthy of being with Christ in the kingdom simply by going to meetings. There is more to following in Jesus's footsteps than simply going to meeting, precious though this privilege is. In addition, we should note our attitude toward the brethren. Do we truly love them to the extent of being willing to overlook their imperfections because the Lord does, and of being glad to lay down our lives for them just as he did? If we do not love the brethren, whom we see, how can we be sure that we love God, whom we do not see?—I John 4:20

Are we seeking every opportunity possible to serve the brethren, even in menial ways? Or are we seeking only those opportunities of service which might, perchance, bring us a little

honor or prestige in the eyes of the brethren? Remember, we are setting our affections on things above, hoping to be with Jesus; and, as an example, Jesus washed his disciples' feet.

Ambassadors

TO BE with Jesus on the throne means that we must be his ambassadors this side of the veil. Are we now being "beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God"? (Rev. 20:4) This does not imply great and wonderful works on our part, but it does call for faithfulness to every little opportunity that may come to us day by day of letting our light shine that others might be enlightened and blessed. It may not involve the preaching of a sermon to a large audience. The opportunity could be simply the speaking of a few timely words to a friend or neighbor, and giving such a kingdom card, or tract; or perhaps, an invitation to listen to a "Frank and Ernest" radio program, or "The Bible Answers" television program. These are little opportunities of service, yet they indicate that we are interested in the things of the Lord, in the proclamation of his truth, and in the outworking of his plan of the ages. And, if our hearts are in that plan, we are setting our affections on things above.

Transformed

AFTER admonishing us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, Paul added, "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Rom. 12:2) Our human minds naturally prefer the things of the flesh and of the world. But through consecration and Spirit begetting we have, by faith, been risen with Christ, and now we are to see to it that our habits of thought are transformed. To us, as Paul explains, "all things are become new," and these "all things" are the things of God—his will, his work, his people, and the glorious reward he has promised.—II Cor. 5:17

We have been given the Lord's work to do, which is the work of reconciling the lost world to him. Our part in it now is the dissemination of the "word of reconciliation." We do this as the "ambassadors for Christ." (II Cor. 5:18-20) Concerning this

Paul wrote: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy [publicly expound] according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business [Greek, "study"]; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."—Rom. 12:4-11

As faithfully we "wait on our ministering," we will be setting our hearts and our efforts on the things of the Lord—those things which, through faithfulness to them, we will be preparing for and proving worthy of the "things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." For a thousand years our work with Christ in the kingdom will be the reconciling of the world to God. To be worthy of that we must manifest our enthusiasm for it by doing what we can in the ministry at the present time. This is one of the ways in which we work out our own salvation, while God works in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. 2:12, 13

Paul considered the work of the ministry exceedingly important. He exhorted the brethren at Philippi to hold forth the Word of life "that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." (Phil. 2:16) Paul was not satisfied that he had proclaimed the Gospel to the brethren at Philippi and that they had accepted it. He wanted to see its full purpose manifested in their lives, that in the day of Christ, when he was exalted to be with his Lord and had entered into the "things above," he could look back and realize that his earthly ministry had been productive of at least some mature results, in that the brethren at Philippi had not only accepted the Gospel, but had devoted their lives to its dissemination.

As Paul explains, the faithfulness of the Philippian brethren would enable him the more to rejoice in the day of Christ, and

surely this same principle holds true with all the Lord's people. Indeed, it is only through faithfulness in every aspect of the Lord's will that we can expect to attain to those promised "things above." We cannot make the calling and election of others sure, but we can assist one another; and by laying down our lives for the brethren, witnessing for the truth, and putting on the fruits and graces of the Spirit, prove worthy of the promised "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:14

Trials

IF WE are setting our affections on things above we should expect to experience trials and difficulties. The condition upon which we may be exalted with Christ, and reign with him, is that we suffer and die with him. (II Tim. 2:11, 12) In keeping with this the Apostle Peter wrote, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—I Pet. 4:12, 13

If we do not understand clearly what is involved in setting our affections on things above, we might well wonder why the Lord allows us to have so many trials. We might suppose that since we are endeavoring to know and to do his will he would bless us, in the sense of not permitting afflictions to mar our everyday happiness and joy. But this is not God's way for the Christian. If faithful even unto death, our life with Jesus, in his position of high exaltation, will indeed be one of joy un-mixed with trials. But we must prove worthy of this by our willingness to endure at the present time whatever afflictions the Lord, in his wisdom and love, sees are best for us in preparation for the "things above."

Paul wrote, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—II Cor. 4:16-18

Paul makes two contrasts between our present state, while the outward man is perishing, and the inward man is being renewed. One is the "light affliction" of the present with the "weight of glory" which we will receive if we endure the afflictions in a manner pleasing to the Lord. The other is his contrast of the brevity of the affliction with the "eternal weight" of the glory. Our light afflictions are but for a "moment," he declares, but the future glory upon which we are setting our affection will have no end; it is eternal.

Paul also emphasizes the fact that we do not actually see the things upon which we are now setting our affections. While we look at them, they are unseen except by the eye of faith. It is the vision of faith that enables us to set our affections on the unseen things above. Let us look to the Lord to increase our faith, that we may be daily victorious in renouncing the things of the world and of the flesh, and finally attain to the things above upon which we are now setting our affections.

Resurrection

Is it "a thing incredible
That God should raise the dead?"
It is the Bible's teaching clear,
This resurrection hope.

And so though death still takes its toll,
The toll of the condemned,
It took the life of One as well
Who had the right to live.

Which right he sacrificed in death
That man might ransomed be.
That life Christ gave he took not back
His perfect human life.

And these life rights, to justice given
Shall lift from man the curse;
And though to some incredible,
God shall raise all the dead!

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

Thankful for Recorded Lectures

"I would at this time like to thank you for the many blessings I have received through the Recorded Lecture Service. This is just one more avenue opened up to the Lord's people, along with radio and television. How bountifully we have been blessed in the last few years by wonders of scientific invention! Our minds cannot imagine the wonders the Lord will unfold for mankind when all science is used for the betterment and happiness of the people. Certainly we should pray, 'Thy kingdom come,' and thank the Lord daily for the blessings we receive."—British Columbia

From Spanish Broadcasts

"I have enjoyed your booklets very much. I want to send some to my people, to announce God's kingdom to them. I know that their eyes will be opened to understand more."—California

Five Listening

"We are five working men in this place, and have listened to your [Spanish] program every Sunday. We want to receive the booklet, 'Hope.'"—California

Catholic Wants to Know

"I am a [Spanish] Catholic, but I am studying the Bible and I am interested in knowing more about it."—Mexico

Learned Much

"I feel that I have never understood the Bible until I got your wonderful books. As I read them I have my Bible with me all the time, and look up all the references. I am seventy-nine years old, and I am sure that I have received more understanding of the Bible than I had in all the preceding seventy-six years. I taught in the Sunday School for a great many years; and as I look back over those years I see that some of what I taught was very shallow. May God's blessing abide with you."—California

Saw Announcement in "Grit"

"I want to subscribe to The Dawn Magazine. I used to read your books many years ago. I remember one called 'The Atonement,' and others. I am ill and confined to my home at present, but you will be hearing from me from time to time. I am seventy-two years old, and my

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health is not too good. I need something to read, so why not start my subscription with a back number, and send it right away. I thank God that I have lived to see many signs of the coming kingdom fulfilled. Surely we cannot have much longer to wait. I saw your advertisement in 'Grit.'—Missouri

Believes God's Word

"Dear Brothers in Christ: I really do enjoy watching your television program, 'The Bible Answers.' In this age of chaos and confusion, doubt and insecurity, it is indeed encouraging to hear Christian gentlemen openly proclaim their unwavering faith in God, and the infallibility of his holy Word. I shall indeed be grateful if you will

kindly send me your discussion pertaining to life after death. May God bless you in this work."—Kentucky

Appreciates Volumes

"The Bible Answers, Dear Sirs: Thank you for the wonderful programs on Sunday mornings. May God bless you, and may the message reach many hearts in these last days. Please send me the book, 'God's Plan for Man,' and any others you may like to send. We have two sets of Pastor Russell's 'Studies in the Scriptures.' How wonderful to read the things he predicted would come to pass! Truly he was God's messenger. Sincerely.—Michigan

ARE THE DEAD ALIVE?

To be discussed by

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

WTUX—1290 kc.—10:15 A. M.

Sunday, April 21

Is there life after death? Will we ever again see our loved ones who have died? Hear these questions answered by "Frank and Ernest," and send for a free copy of the 96-page book, "Hope Beyond the Grave." Address:

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

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New York, N. Y.

For Your Newspaper

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

MAY TOPIC: On Sunday, May 19, the "Frank and Ernest" topic will be, "The Truth About Hell." There are many who still believe the God-dishonoring theory of eternal torture. Millions of professed Christians no longer believe it, but think that the doctrine is taught in the Bible. It is a timely subject for discussion and should be well advertised. Circulars will be available for advertising this special topic, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. There is no charge. Please mail your order as soon as possible to, The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey. Ask for the May radio circular.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

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

H. E. ANDERSON		Buffalo, N. Y.	10	Appleton, Wis.	Apr. 19
New Haven, Conn.	Apr. 28	Erie, Pa.	Apr. 11	Milwaukee, Wis.	20, 21
Waterbury, Conn.	28	Akron, Ohio	12	Rockford, Ill.	22
JENS COPELAND		Columbus, Ohio	14	Batavia, Ill.	23
Rochester, N. Y.	Apr. 28	Muncie, Ind.	15	Aurora, Ill.	24
Buffalo, N. Y.	29	Indianapolis, Ind.	16	LaSalle, Ill.	25
Erie, Pa.	30	Cincinnati, Ohio	17	Chicago, Ill.	26-28
		Steubenville, Ohio	18, 19	Mattoon, Ill.	29
		York, Pa.	21	Indianapolis, Ind.	30
		Lancaster, Pa.	21		
L. P. DAVIS		J. Y. MAC AULAY		C. A. SMITH	
Redding, Calif.	Apr. 16	Baltimore, Md.	Apr. 14	Reading, Pa.	Apr. 28
Bonanza, Ore.	18	Philadelphia, Pa.	14		
Salem, Ore.	20, 21			C. A. SUNDBOM	
Chico, Calif.	24	M. C. MITCHELL		Jacksonville, Fla.	Mar. 22
Antioch, Calif.	26	Sayville, N. Y.	Apr. 7	St. Petersburg, Fla.	23, 24
San Francisco, Calif.	28			Orlando, Fla.	25, 26
THOMAS HICKS				Miami, Fla.	27, 28
Wallingford, Conn.	14	EVERETT MURRAY		Buffalo, N. Y.	Apr. 17
Bridgeport, Conn.	14	Dayton, Ohio	Apr. 28	Flushing, N. Y.	19
G. M. JEUCK		H. W. PRICE		Paterson, N. J.	20, 21
Allentown, Pa.	Apr. 14	Calgary, Alta.	Apr. 1, 2	Gettysburg, Pa.	22
A. H. KRUMPOLT		Edmonton, Alta.	3	Steubenville, Ohio	23
Catawissa, Pa.	Apr. 14	Saskatoon, Sask.	5	Akron, Ohio	24
R. J. KRUPA		Prince Albert, Sask.	6, 7	F. S. WASSMANN	
Boston, Mass.	Apr. 28	Canora, Sask.	8	New London, Conn.	21
		Regina, Sask.	9	G. M. WILSON	
		Winnipeg, Man.	11	Chicago, Ill.	Apr. 21
L. P. LOOMIS		Minneapolis, Minn.	13-16	W. N. WOODWORTH	
Syracuse, N. Y.	Apr. 8	Withee, Wis.	17	Chicago, Ill.	Apr. 28
Rochester, N. Y.	9	Wausau, Wis.	18		

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

MIKE BALKO Steubenville, O. Apr. 28.	JOSEPH FENCHAK, JR. Connellsville, Pa. Apr. 14	HARRY PASSIOS Duquesne, Pa. Apr. 7
JOHN BARACOS Monessen, Pa. Apr. 28	IRVING C. FOSS Whittier, Calif. Apr. 7	G. R. POLLOCK Fullerton, Calif. Apr. 28
NICK BARACOS Washington, Pa. Apr. 21	LLOYD HAGENSIK Orlando, Calif. Apr. 21	RAYMOND RAWSON Flint, Mich. Apr. 7 Adrian, Mich. 21
WALTER BLICHARZ Chatham, Ont. Apr. 21	GEORGE O. JEUCK Miami, Fla. Apr. 14	GEORGE P. RIPPER Whittier, Calif. Apr. 21
J. BURTON BROWN Fresno, Calif. Apr. 14 Whittier, Calif. 28	LEONARD JEZUIT LaSalle, Ill. Apr. 14	THOMAS T. RYDE Whittier, Calif. Apr. 14
DAVID A. BRUCE Ventura, Calif. Apr. 21	DANIEL KAZIAK London, Ont. Apr. 7	R. S. SEKLEMIAN Stockton, Calif. Apr. 6 Sacramento, Calif. 7
C. M. CHUPA Toledo, Ohio Apr. 21	E. F. LANKFORD Antioch, Calif. Apr. 21	J. I. VAN HORNE East Liverpool, O. Apr. 14
FRED J. DARROW San Bernardino, Calif. 7	ADAM MISKAWITZ Milwaukee, Wis. Apr. 14	IRWIN WYSOCKI Steubenville, Ohio Apr. 14
THOMAS T. FAY Riverside, Calif. Apr. 21 Ontario, Calif. 21		



WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

APRIL 4—"Let us walk honestly, as in the day."—Romans 13:13 (Z. '03-122 Hymn 315)

APRIL 11—"Let us walk, . . . not in rioting and drunkenness."—Romans 13:13 (Z. '03-123 Hymn 145)

APRIL 18—"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are

partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—I Peter 4:12, 13 (Z. '96-31 Hymn 67)

APRIL 25—"Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Hebrews 11:6 (Z. '00-139 Hymn 35)

CONVENTIONS

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

LAKELAND, FLA., Mar. 30-Apr. 1—Civic Center Theater, Lake Mirror Drive. Room reservations: Mr. S. W. Jeuck, 1910 Hillcrest, Orlando, Fla. For any other information: Mr. Lloyd Hagensick, 518 81st Ave. North, St. Petersburg 2, Fla.

FRESNO, CALIF., Apr. 13, 14—Hotel Fresno, Broadway at Merced. Mrs. F. W. Becker, 1413 East Griffith Way, Fresno 4.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Apr. 13, 14—The Field House, 530 Mill Street, Columbia Heights, Minn. Mrs. C. R. Newham, 678 40th Avenue N. E.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, Apr. 14—Southern Hotel, South High and East Main Streets. Mrs. J. Ewing, 273 South Algonquin Ave.

SAGINAW, MICH., Apr. 14—The Woman's Club, 311 N. Jefferson St. Mrs. C. A. Sundbom, 207 Alice St.

PATERSON, N. J., Apr. 20, 21—YWCA, 185 Carroll St. Mr. Michael Koterba, 29 Mount Pleasant Ave., Wallington, N. J.

***SALEM, ORE., Apr. 20, 21**—Those desiring to be immersed may contact Mrs. Joy Blackman, 3754 Felton, South.

SAN ANTONIO, TEX., Apr. 20, 21—The Crockett Hotel, 301 E. Crockett, near the Alamo. Miss Ruth New, 122 Yale Ave.

CLEVELAND, OHIO, Apr. 21—YMCA Building, E. 22 St. and Prospect Ave. Mrs. Ian M. Cipperley, 1539 Genessee Rd., Cleveland 21.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., Apr. 21—YWCA Building, The Social Room, 329 N. Pennsylvania St. Mrs. Minnie F. Martin, 4620 Hinsley Ave., Indianapolis 8.

TOLEDO, OHIO, Apr. 21—Seventh Day Adventist School, 540 Independence Rd. Mr. R. C. Spielman, 812 Ambia St.

***FORT WORTH, TEX., Apr. 24-28**—Camp Ya-Wo-Chi-A (YWCA Camp), near Lake Worth on Ten Mile Bridge Rd., 3 miles N. W. of Farm Rd. 1220. Mrs. G. B.

Wilmott, 2406 Prairie, Fort Worth 6.

BOSTON, MASS., Apr. 27, 28—Sat., 2:30 p.m., Chapel of Arlington St. Church, 353 Boylston St. Sunday, Sheraton-Plazo Hotel, Copley Square. Miss Florence B. Child, 64 Thurston St., Somerville 45, Mass.

CHICAGO, ILL., Apr. 28—Central Masonic Temple, 912 N. LaSalle St. Mr. Adam Miskawitz, 2436 S. Grove Ave., Berwyn, Ill.

DAYTON, OHIO, Apr. 28—The Terrace, Fairgrounds, 1043 S. Main St. Mrs. Alvin Raffel, 6720 Mad River Rd.

DETROIT, MICH., Apr. 28—McGregor Memorial Building, Second Boulevard and West Ferry. Mr. C. M. Chupa, 5666 Belmont, Dearborn 6, Mich.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., Apr. 28—Todd Hall, 100 Gibbs St. Mrs. Edna Goff, 95 Landing Rd. North.

GARY, IND., May 4, 5

KANSAS CITY, MO., May 4, 5

MONESSEN-WEST NEWTON, PA., May 5

CATAWISSA, PA., May 12

WALLINGFORD, CONN., May 12

VANCOUVER, B. C., May 18-20—The Golden Horseshoe, 2786 E. Hastings St. Mrs. W. A. McNee, 6569 Argyle St., Vancouver 15.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., May 19

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA., May 25, 26

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., May 30-June 2—Asilomar Conference Grounds, Pacific Grove, Calif. Mrs. K. M. Nail, 3509 Branson Drive, San Mateo, Calif.

SAYVILLE, N. Y., May 30

AKRON - CLEVELAND, June 2

ALLENTOWN, PA., June 8, 9

CHARLOTTE, N. C., June 15, 16

STEBENVILLE, OHIO, June 16

PRINCE ALBERT, SASK., July 12-14

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to us the
SCRIPTURES
clearly teach

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

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

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

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

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

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