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WHEN THERE IS NO PEACE

*"Peace, peace; when there is no peace."
Jeremiah 6:14*

AS THE YEAR 1997 was coming to a close, the Christian world again observed the birth of Jesus, it being nearly the two thousandth anniversary of his birth. We had been reminded again of the message brought by the angel to the Judean shepherds watching their flocks by night, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." (Luke 2:10) After the angel completed his message, "Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (vss. 13,14) This may well have been the inspiration for the cover story that appeared on the last day of 1997 in "USA Today," a nationwide newspaper.

THE BLOODY CENTURY

The title of the article was, "*Global Peace Unlikely Prospect in 1998.*" We quote in part from the article:

"Peace on earth. Not really. There is a cautious truce in Bosnia and a shaky cease-fire in Northern Ireland. There are no full-scale wars across borders. But this season of 'peace on earth' nears its end with two dozen conflicts around the world. Experts expect that number to increase, maybe double, in 1998."

It has been said, "There are 30 to 35 areas where there could be major conflicts (in 1998). Most are internal battles. Afghanistan. Algeria. Bangladesh. Burundi. Cambodia. Colombia. East Timor. Kashmir. Kurdistan. Myrama (Burma). Northern Ireland. Rwanda. Sierra Leone. Somalia. Sri Lanka. Sudan. Turkmenistan. And the Palestinian conflict with Israel continues.

"Few of the wars involve the United States or other industrialized nations directly, leaving today's fighting to smaller nations or newly emerging regional powers.

"But regional wars can become global, as they have often during a bloody 20th century. World War I began when the archduke of Austria was assassinated in Sarajevo in 1914. By the time the war ended in 1918, 13 million had died. World War II saw 14.9 million casualties in battle as well as the Nazi massacre of 12 million civilians. Another 20 million were killed in wars fought after World War II. Soviet dictator Josef Stalin and Cambodia's Pol Pot slaughtered millions." This century was characterized as "the most killing century in history."

"Analysts in the Pentagon are trying to determine just where and why the battles of 1998 will be fought. Unlike past conflicts fought over geography and ideology, analysts say likely triggers for the coming conflicts are disputes over clean air, water,

oil, diamonds, gold, minerals, hardwoods, pollution, electricity and, as always, power. And those kind of issues can easily embroil the United States in what would otherwise be a regional fray."

Wars have long plagued the human race. The history of the world has been written in human blood. Wars increase, both in the number of people involved, and in their power to destroy. In this space age there is real cause to fear the destruction through another World War. Will there ever be peace?

THE HOPE FOR PEACE

Universal and lasting peace ultimately will be established in the earth, but it will not come by human efforts, nor will it be induced by mutual fear of destruction, nor by armament races. It will be established by the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of Christ will be a worldwide government which will exercise actual control in the affairs of men. Those who believe the promises of the Bible pertaining to the coming of Christ's kingdom can look into the future with a great deal of optimism.

The Bible says that "the desire of all nations shall come," and we know that fundamentally all nations of the earth desire peace. (Hag. 2:7) However, even in connection with the prophecies of the Bible there is a difference of opinion. Some quote Jesus' statement that there shall be "wars and rumors of wars," and add to it his words, "then shall the end come," as proof that wars will continue on this earth until the world comes to an end, which to these students means the destruction of the earth and the end of all human experience.—Matt. 24:6.14

SIGNS FOR THE END OF THE AGE

When Jesus spoke of 'wars and rumors of wars', it was in answer to questions asked him by his disciples pertaining to the time of his return and the end of the age. "What shall be the sign of thy coming," they asked, "and of the end of the world?" (Matt. 24:3) The *Common Version* translation of the disciples' questions is misleading, for it mistranslated the Greek words *parousia* and *aion* used in the text. With these words properly translated the questions are, "What shall be the sign of thy presence, and of the end of the age?"

When Jesus said that there would be wars and rumors of wars, after which the end would come, he simply meant that the interim between his first and second advents would be characterized by intermittent wars, and that this would continue right down to the end of the age. But he did not mean that the end of the age would mean the destruction of the earth, nor the end of all human experience on the earth; for, as the prophecies of the Bible point out, the end of the age of wars and rumors of wars marks the beginning of a new age, the age during which Christ's kingdom will be the controlling factor in the affairs of men. And, as Isaiah 9:7 declares, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."

HUMAN EFFORTS FAIL

While the whole world longs for peace, most people, even Christians, think that the only peace which will ever be realized will come as the result of human efforts. And, many efforts are being made to bring peace to the world. There are various peace 'fronts', we might call them, and the hope of those

promoting each of these is that the 'uneasy peace' of today will tomorrow be transformed into a permanent peace.

Sir Winston Churchill once used the expression, 'peace by mutual fear'. His idea was that we should build up a great stockpile of munitions, and that the other great nations should do the same. Thus with all the nations realizing the terrible destruction that would be wrought by war, there would be a stalemate of fear resulting in peace. This was Churchill's theory of 'peace by mutual fear'.

Actually, of course, 'peace by mutual fear' is not a new idea. This idea is a 'front' that has been utilized throughout the centuries. It is merely that Churchill dressed it in different phraseology. Peace through mutual fear is merely another way of saying peace through a 'balance of power'. Many will remember the Munich Crisis of 1938, when the Four Power Pact was formed, and Neville Chamberlain, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, flew back to England from Munich and, waving a peace document in the air as he alighted from his plane, announced that 'peace had been saved for our time'. This new pact was but a new balancing of power with the age-old belief that one would be afraid to attack the other.

But this 'fear pact' did not save the peace for our time, as Chamberlain so enthusiastically announced. Within a year the much feared Second World War broke out in all its fury, which led to the destruction of cities and a terrible bloodletting throughout Europe and much of Asia and the Orient. The fear of war did not prevent the outbreak of war. It never has and it never will!

WHAT IS NEEDED FOR PEACE?

At best, the world can only hope that the promise made by God of permanent peace will be fulfilled. It will be brought into being in his own due time. Meanwhile, the world, its leaders and people, have to endure war because many are hard of heart, selfish, and prone to sin. This sinful nature of man must be converted to one of righteousness, tenderness of heart, and generosity. (Jer. 31:33) This is only one step in the direction of assuring peace.

Another need is the establishment of a strong government of great power and might, not affected or swayed by sin. (Micah 4:1,2) Such a government is the kingdom of God that Christians pray for when offering up the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." —Matt. 6:10

If you desire to read more about this kingdom, send for a free copy of the booklet, "*Armageddon, then World Peace.*" ■

PEACE

UNTO US A child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

—Isaiah 9:6,7

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

LESSON FOR APRIL 5

REDEFINING LEADERSHIP

KEY VERSE: *“They that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD.”—Mark 11:9*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Mark 11:9*

ISRAEL CLUNG TENACIOUSLY to the hope that some day God would send a Messiah to release them from their oppressors who had dominated them for nearly two centuries. Since they had long been stripped of their political sovereignty, the people had great expectations that their long-awaited Messiah would be a great leader.

Messiah came to save his people but hardly in a way they could have expected, for obviously an oppressed people would seek a leader highly trained in

the art of armed conflict. (Luke 3:15) At the close of Jesus' ministry, the Jewish nation could have accepted Jesus as their Messiah, but did not.

Today's lesson tells of this offer of the kingdom by Jesus and of the neglect of the Jews as a people, to accept it, for, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11) Jesus knew, however, that a prophecy had already declared he would be despised and rejected, and that his own people would hide their faces from him in shame. (Isa. 53:3) Jesus

told his apostles what to expect, but they did not fully understand that their Master must first be crucified and then depart to a 'far country'—heaven itself. There he would be invested with authority to return later and establish the kingdom which would bless the world.

The Prophet Zechariah portrays the humble messianic king, the prince of peace, expected by Jesus' followers: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." (Zech. 9:9) In fulfillment of this prophecy, Jesus, at the mount of Olives instructed two of his disciples to bring a colt to him. They found the colt where Jesus said it would be; they loosed it, brought it to Jesus, and after they had placed their garments on it Jesus sat upon the colt.

In the procession to Jerusalem that followed, "many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off

the trees. . . . They that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the LORD: Hosanna in the highest."—Mark 11:8-10

Not all were enthusiastic in acclaiming Jesus, especially the scribes and Pharisees, leaders of Israel. They wanted him to rebuke the disciples, but he said, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke 19:39, 40) Earlier Jesus had rejected them with the lament, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD."—Luke 13:34,35 ■

THE MYSTERY OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION

KEY VERSE: *"He saith unto them, Be not af-
frighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was
crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the
place where they laid him."*—Mark 16:6

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-8*

THE RESURRECTION OF the dead promised in the Bible is to bring back billions of humanity who have died; all who have gone to dust under the Divine sentence, "dying thou shalt die" (Gen. 2:17, Margin), and "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3:19) There could be no resurrection, no escape from that Divine sentence, except through God's gracious plan whereby the perfect man Jesus would give his perfect human life a ransom for all, a price correspond-

ing to the original sinner, Adam. Purchasing Adam from the death sentence meant the purchase of all who died in him. Concerning this, the Apostle Paul said, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—I Cor. 15:22

Jesus had foretold his death on the cross in saying, "As Moses lifted up the [brazen] serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up"—be crucified. (John 3:14; Num. 21:8,9) The brazen serpent on a pole was a type

of Jesus taking the sinner's place and though he was holy, harmless and undefiled he was treated as a sinner. Suddenly, on the cross Jesus felt utterly abandoned. The people and the rulers derided him, taunting him to come down from the cross. (Luke 23:35) His dying cry, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" (Ps. 22:1) confirms how Jesus endured to the very limit the penalty of the sinner. He was not only to die, but also to experience loneliness, to be filled with despair and cut off from fellowship with God. For a brief moment he endured the sinner's full alienation from God. Finally, "With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. . . . And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, Surely this man was the Son of God!"—Mark 15:37-39, *NIV*

Commenting on Jesus' death, the Apostle Paul said, "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Where-

fore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name."—Phil. 2:8,9

For forty days before ascending to the Father, Jesus was with the disciples a number of times, during which he showed his followers that he was no longer dead, but a risen spirit being. There could be no Gospel message of hope through a dead Savior. The Apostle said, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. . . . But now is Christ risen from the dead. . . . For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—I Cor. 15:14-22

How does Jesus' death and resurrection give meaning to our faith? Paul assures us that death is not the end. We know the Apostle understands the mysteries of death and resurrection, for he says in II Timothy 1:10, Jesus Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." ■

THE COST OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

KEY VERSE: *"Have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the LORD's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"—Mark 12:10,11*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Mark 12:1-12*

RESPONDING TO THE religious authorities who opposed him, Jesus quoted the parable of the vineyard, which is also a prophecy spoken by Isaiah in Chapter 5:1-7. This is a lesson which taught the Jews they had not faithfully lived up to the covenant which God made with them. Jesus said a man (representing God) planted a vineyard—"The vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel" (Isa. 5:7)—fenced it (with the Law) and built a watchtower (the prophets) and winepress. He then leased the vineyard to tenants (leaders of the people) and left the country.

God had done much for his vineyard in the way of planting, care and cultivation, so he inquires in Isaiah 5:4, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" At various seasons, the man sent servants and faithful prophets, to collect fruits of righteousness, compensation that was due him from the tenants, and they "beat him, and sent him away empty."—Mark 12:3

"He sent another; and him they killed, and many others: beating some, and

killing some.” (vs. 5) Lastly, the vineyard’s owner [God] sent his Son, Jesus, in the end of the Jewish Age, sure that they would respect him.

But those tenants, in their selfish ambition to retain their stewardship, said among themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.” (vss. 6-8) Jesus ends the parable, asking, “What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.” —vs. 9

Elaborating on his question, Jesus quotes the prophecy in Psalm 118:22, 23, saying: “Have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the LORD’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.” (Mark 12:10-12) Jesus was the ‘stone’ that the builders re-

fused and in his triumph he will become the headstone of the corner, the building of God.

Although this stone was indeed rejected by the nation of Israel at Jesus’ First Advent, that would not hinder its exaltation in God’s due time as the chief stone in the glorious spiritual Temple of God. The LORD appointed new ‘tenants’—the twelve apostles—and also started a new vineyard, putting in only the true vine to bring forth “the fruits thereof.” (Matt. 21:43) Those faithful servants, although having long ago fallen asleep, continue through their word and teachings to care for the true vineyard of the LORD, the church, the body of Christ. Jesus said, “I am the [true] vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”

There was improper fruitage in the first vineyard—the grapes were wild. There was much desirable fruitage in the second!—John 15:5,8 ■

SADNESS DURING CELEBRATION

KEY VERSE: *"As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."*—Mark 14:22-24

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Mark 14:12-25

ON THE NIGHT before Jesus was crucified, he gathered with his apostles in the upper room to partake of the Passover supper with them. This was a yearly commemoration of the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egyptian bondage. (Exod. 12:17,18) The firstborn in Egypt died, while the firstborn of Israel were saved from death under the protection of the blood of the Passover lamb, which had been sprinkled on the doorposts and lintels of their houses. The

blood of the lamb is a picture of the blood of Jesus, who was about to be slain as the antitypical Passover Lamb. (I Cor. 5:7) Through Jesus' ransom sacrifice, deliverance will come to both his church and all mankind.

On the first day of unleavened bread, when the Passover lamb was killed, Jesus sent two of his disciples into the city to make arrangements for the supper. As they partook of the evening meal, Jesus said, "One of you which eateth

with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? And another said, Is it I? And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born.”—Mark 14:18-21

Jesus then said, “He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. . . . He then having received the sop went immediately out.”—John 13:26-30

After the Passover meal Judas left and, as our Key Verse relates, Jesus took unleavened bread and wine and made them emblems of his perfect humanity and life. This was

now to be the memorial of his death, or as Jesus said, “This do in remembrance of me.”—Luke 22:19

Thus, as Jesus and his disciples assembled on that night and partook of the emblems, so also do we. Jesus said, in conclusion, “Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.”—Mark 14:22-26

Our glorified Lord will drink of that new wine with his church, the faithful ones who will be with him and share his glory. Those who will take lightly and joyfully the trials and sacrifices of this present time, and are glad to suffer with the Master so that they also may be glorified together, have this hope of drinking the new wine in the kingdom.

They will participate with their Master in those glories and honors and blessed opportunities for uplifting the entire world of mankind to a perfect nature. ■

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

THE PLAN OF GOD IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS— PART 10

THE PROMISED SEED COMES

CHAPTER TWENTY

VERSES 1-18 “And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar.

“And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.

“But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man’s wife.

“But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?

“Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this.

“And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thv

heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

"Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.

"Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid.

"Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.

"And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

"And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake.

"And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

"And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother.

"And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife.

"And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee.

"And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver: behold, he

is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all other: thus she was re-proved.

“So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid-servants; and they bare children.

“For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham’s wife.”

In this chapter we have another interesting narrative revealing the LORD’s interest in preventing anything from happening that would interfere with his purpose that Sarah should be the mother of Isaac, the typical seed of promise. The chapter also emphasizes what we have previously mentioned; namely, that codes of honor in those days seem to have greatly favored the men.

It is said that Eastern princes claimed the right to gather all the beautiful women of their domain into their harems. It was apparently in keeping with this ‘right’ that Abimelech ‘sent and took Sarah’. Sarah must have been a remarkable woman, especially in appearance, for at this time she was getting well along in years, yet her beauty was such that she appealed to this heathen king as desirable for his harem.

The ethical code of the time was quite different from ours in many respects. Apparently the only ‘legitimate’ way a king or prince could requisition another man’s wife was to have the husband killed. Abraham was aware of this, hence his partial deception in representing Sarah to be his sister. This tended to serve as a protection for him, but could have ended in serious consequences for Sarah.

Had Abimelech learned through the ordinary course of events that Sarah was Abraham's wife instead of merely his half sister, he might well have sought the death of the patriarch in order lawfully to keep Sarah in his harem. But something extraordinary occurred—"God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife."

Now the tables were turned. It was Abimelech's life that was in danger, and he was very willing to return Sarah to Abraham. God had intervened before Sarah had been defiled, and this was the important consideration. But Abimelech was concerned, nevertheless, and asked if the LORD would slay "innocent people."—vs. 4, RSV

His claim of innocence, and the acknowledgment of that claim by God, must be understood as pertaining to the general heading of what God "winked at" (Acts 17:30) because of the ignorance of the people. It was not his time to enlighten the world. What he was chiefly concerned about in this instance was the protection of Sarah in order that his purpose pertaining to the seed of promise should not be hindered. It was not the time to regulate the moral codes of the heathen.

While Abimelech's standards were quite unlike those of Christianity, he was apparently sincere in his efforts to live up to that which he believed to be right—either this, or else he was thoroughly frightened by the threat of death which came to him from the LORD in his dream. In any case, he accused Abraham of causing him to bring a great sin upon his kingdom.

The whole affair turned out to the satisfaction of all concerned, but meanwhile the LORD employed harsh measures to make sure that Abimelech lived up to his professions. The account says that 'Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children: for the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife'.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

VERSES 1-5 "And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

"For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

"And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

"And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

"And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him."

'And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said'. One of the great lessons the LORD taught in connection with the birth of Isaac was that he was a child of promise, and born as a result of a special dispensation of Divine grace. He was not born by the will of the flesh, in the ordinary sense of the word; for Sarah, in addition to being barren all her life, was now well past the normal age when she could expect to become a mother.

It is important to take into account the fact that Isaac was a miracle child, for the circumstance was a token from the LORD that all his promises toward the human race will be fulfilled because of his infinite wisdom, grace, and power. Throughout all the ages man has failed to rescue himself from the result of his own sin, and would continue to be impotent in his efforts to save himself; but this does not hinder the outworking of God's loving purposes toward the dying race.

It seems appropriate, therefore, that in fulfilling his promise concerning the seed of blessing, the LORD should make it plain that he alone was responsible for making it possible. God asks his people to cooperate with him in his work, but it is always well to remember that their efforts are quite fruitless except as he bestows his blessing upon them.

Abraham had great confidence in the promises of God, and a great deal of respect for his instructions in connection with their fulfillment. When this child of promise was born, he was named Isaac, in keeping with the LORD's instructions. (Gen. 17:19) Isaac was also circumcised in obedience to the LORD's command.

'Abraham was an hundred years old' when Isaac was born. He had waited a long time for the birth of this "seed" of promise, and during that long waiting period his faith was severely tested many times. (Heb. 11:11) But now his faith was at least partially rewarded—not wholly so, for the Apostle explains that, even as with the remainder of the faithful of Old Testament times, Abraham 'died in faith, not having received the promise'; that is, the fulfillment of the promise —vs. 13 39 40

Many of the LORD's people have been tested by their long wait for the fulfillment of God's promises. The vision has seemed to tarry; the Bridegroom tarried; and many have been disposed to cry out, 'How long, O LORD, how long?'

But the LORD has a due time for the accomplishment of all his purposes. And while he does not reveal all the time features of his plan, we can take comfort in the thought that there is never actually any delay. There was a 'due time' for Isaac to be born, but because Abraham did not know it far in advance, his faith was tested.

VERSES 6-8 "And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.

"And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.

"And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned."

Sarah also exercised a great deal of faith in connection with the birth of Isaac. (Heb. 11:11) Evidently God's 'visit' to her in this connection brought about a renewal of her youth; for she not only gave birth to Isaac, but nursed him as well, indicating that her whole system had undergone a change which was contrary to nature for one of her age.

VERSES 9,10 "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

"Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac "

Evidently Sarah possessed a sensitive disposition, for when Ishmael was born she was somewhat disturbed by the attitude of Hagar, his mother. And now that she had a son of her own and Ishmael was mocking him, or 'persecuting him' (Gal. 4:29), it was more than she could endure, so she directed Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away from the household. It would be unfair, though, to blame Sarah's attitude entirely upon her sensitive nature. Doubtless the promises of God pertaining to her seed had much to do with it, and probably she was merely acting in a manner which she believed would be pleasing to the LORD—"the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac".

VERSES 11-21 "And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

"And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

"And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

"And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

"And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she

sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept.

“And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

“Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.

“And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

“And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.

“And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.”

Sarah's directive to Abraham concerning the casting out of Hagar and Ishmael was 'grievous in his sight because of his son'. Ishmael was Abraham's own son, and because of his fatherly love for his boy, it was not an easy thing for him to comply with the insistence of his wife. Perhaps he hesitated to do it, wondering if the demand might be merely an emotional outburst of Sarah, and not expressive of what would be the proper thing to do under the circumstances.

But Abraham was not left long in doubt, for the LORD spoke to him and told him that he should obey Sarah's demand—'hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called'. The LORD never causes any unnecessary anxiety, or grief. While he made it plain to Abraham that Isaac was the one in whom his seed should be called, nevertheless he revealed that Ishmael was to become the father of a great nation. or people.

Abraham made what provision he could to preserve the lives of mother and child as he sent them away. While Sarah had lost interest in them, the same could not be said of Abraham; for Ishmael was his own son, and Hagar, for a time, had been to him a wife. Their lot for a while was a difficult one, and seemingly hopeless. Hagar gave up in despair, and then the LORD intervened; for although Ishmael was not the promised seed, there was a certain typical purpose he was carrying out through him.

This is brought to our attention in Galatians 4:21-31. Here the apostle speaks of two great covenants, and of a "seed" that is produced by each. God's original covenant with Abraham called for a "seed" for the blessing of mankind through that seed. Paul explains that Sarah pictures that part of the Abrahamic Covenant which brings forth the seed of promise.

Four hundred and thirty years after this original covenant was made, God entered into a covenant with the natural descendants of Abraham at Mount Sinai—the Law Covenant. Because of the inability of the Israelites to keep this perfect Law of God, they were brought into bondage by its requirements. This covenant, Paul explains, was prefigured by Hagar, the bondmaid, and the Israelites in bondage under that covenant, by Ishmael.

Paul speaks of this as an allegory. Actually, of course, Ishmael was not the father of the Israelitish nation, for they were and are the natural descendants of Abraham through Isaac. Ishmael, on the other hand, is accredited as being the father of a goodly portion of the Arab race. Ishmael however is used by Paul as a type of Israel under the Law Covenant.

VERSES 22-34 “And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest:

“Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son’s son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast so-journed.

“And Abraham said, I will swear.

“And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech’s servants had violently taken away.

“And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but to day.

“And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant.

“And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

“And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

“And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.

“Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they sware both of them.

“Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines

“And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.

“And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines’ land many days.”

Abraham reproved Abimelech in connection with a well of water which he supposed Abimelech had taken away, but the latter’s explanation was satisfactory and the covenant was made. The presenting of a token of covenants made, seemed to be the custom of the time, and that part of the covenant which Abraham wished particularly to be made secure pertained to a certain well which he had digged. Apparently water was not too plentiful, and Abraham wisely safeguarded this much of a supply. Abraham did not lose sight of the source of all his blessings, and his faith in God was now stronger than it had ever been. ■

FAITH

NOW FAITH IS the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. . . . By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

—Hebrews 11:1,8-10

JESUS, THE CENTER OF UNITY

ABOUT 3,600 YEARS ago Israel was instructed to take the blood of the Passover lamb, and to place it on the doorposts of their houses—then to go inside and abide there for the remainder of the night. They may have spent fifteen minutes to an hour at the most, to comply with these instructions.

This happened to us, too, when we accepted Jesus as our personal redeemer and applied the blood on the doorposts of our hearts. This was the beginning of our journey.

THE NIGHT OF THE PASSOVER

That night, after the Passover lamb was slain, and the blood applied on the doorposts of their houses, Israel went inside their homes and closed the door. They were now to partake of the Passover lamb after it was roasted, and all were united as a family in this undertaking. They were illustrating how the brethren in this nighttime of the Gospel Age are drawn together by the Lamb of God, and while under the blood partake of the lamb, appropriating to themselves the merit of his sacrifice. We are reminded of the 133rd Psalm that says: "Re-

hold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (vs. 1) Israel, in their families, were assembled that night in holy, happy, peaceful fellowship.

The most important part of this ceremony was the sprinkling of the blood on the doorposts of the houses. It pictured being saved by the blood, which is the foundation for all Christian life. Jesus, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (I Pet. 2:24), is that Paschal Lamb whose blood was shed to redeem us. (I Pet. 1:19) Jesus was made "to be sin [a sin offering] for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Cor. 5:21) While Jesus was on earth he was especially attentive to the afflicted, the poor, the blind, the halt, the maimed, and the lepers. All mankind are recipients of the ransom benefits regardless of their station in life. The blood of the lamb makes possible our connection to God and to one another. He is the center of unity.

THE NEED FOR ASSEMBLING

Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matt. 18:20) We are assembled by the Holy Spirit, and Christ is the reason for our meeting. Such gatherings are characterized by holiness. The Holy Spirit can only gather us to Christ. It cannot assemble to a name, an ordinance, a system, or an association, but only to the glorified Christ in heaven. It is a 'little flock' that is being gathered. Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." (John 14:23) The proof of our love for Jesus and for God is in doing those things he commands us to do in his Word. Those who give themselves to God and to follow after Christ still want to do their

own will, which interferes in the work that God is doing in us.

On the original Passover night when all the families of Israel were assembled in their homes, they gathered around a roasted lamb—a lamb that had undergone the action of fire. The instructions in Exodus 12:8,9 are very explicit: “They shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.”

The roasted lamb illustrates how Jesus, the true Passover Lamb, submitted himself to the action of fire—‘fiery trials’—for the three and one-half years of his ministry. This was such an important part of the illustration, that Israel was told not to eat of it raw or sodden with water.

REMOVAL OF LEAVEN

The instructions for eating the Passover lamb apply to our partaking of the antitypical Passover Lamb, too. The Israelites were to eat it with unleavened bread. Leaven is a symbol of evil and sin. Never is it used in God’s Word to symbolize that which is pure, holy, or good. The feast that Israel was to keep in conjunction with the Passover was called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As Exodus 12:15 instructed Israel: “Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses.”

This was intended to illustrate Israel’s separation from sin. We are told by the Apostle Paul, “Purge out therefore the old leaven.” (I Cor. 5:7) Paul does not say, ‘Try to purge out the old leaven’. Rather, he is positive about it and says, ‘Do it’. Our

flesh may interfere with such a program. This was recognized by the apostle when he wrote, "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." (Rom. 7:19-21) However, we must put forth every effort to remove sin and evil.

Israel was to do this for seven days. Seven represents completeness. The Christian is to put away evil and live in holiness. God cannot tolerate evil in thought, word, or deed. As the Apostle John reminds us, speaking of God, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." (I John 1:6) Later he said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (vs. 8) The flesh continues to assert itself, but by God's assisting grace we can keep it subdued. John continues, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—vs. 9

Many times we are caught off guard and may say or do something that is wrong. On such occasions we must seek our Advocate immediately, even as reminded by John: "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (I John 2:1) The new mind that is being developed is seeking perfection. Yet the individual Christian cannot be perfect until he or she receives a perfect new body. As John says, "We know that whosoever is born [begotten] of God sinneth not." (I John 5:18) John is telling us that those who

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NOTICE:

The listing of Dawn publications, five-cent booklets and ten-cent booklets, usually printed on pages 32 and 33 of *The Dawn* magazine will be omitted every other month including this month.

Listing of the "*Frank and Ernest*" worldwide broadcasts and of "*The Bible Answers*" TV programs, generally given on pages 33-39, likewise will be omitted every other month including this month. These pages will be devoted to articles on the Christian life and doctrine.

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(Continued from Page 31)

have been begotten of God do not sin willfully. They have no sympathy with sin. They purge out the old leaven.

EATING THE PASSOVER LAMB

The Israelites were not saved by eating unleavened bread, but by the blood of the Passover lamb. So also, the Christian is not saved by practical holiness, but by the blood of Jesus. However, anyone who continues in evil and sin, by practice or by principle, will not have true communion with Jesus, and will not enjoy his salvation. Those who receive the benefits of the ransom and belong to God's assembly must be holy, but they should recognize that their salvation is by grace, and not by their holiness.

THE BITTER HERBS

The Paschal Lamb was to be eaten with bitter herbs. These represent the bitter experiences of the LORD's people which are related to the experiences of Jesus as represented in the roasted lamb. "If we suffer [with him], we shall also reign with him." (II Tim. 2:12) "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) It was prophesied of Jesus: "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" (Isa. 53:5), and not by our holiness.

The Apostle Paul, in speaking of the Tabernacle sacrifices, tell us: "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."

(Heb. 13:12,13) We must eat of the roasted lamb with bitter herbs.

With God's help we are able to crucify our flesh. (Gal. 5:24) Like the Apostle Paul we are trying to keep our bodies under. (I Cor. 9:27) This we must do to be able to hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."—Matt. 24:21

As Israel fed upon the lamb, they were prepared for a journey. They were ready to leave Egypt. Never again would they associate with the Egyptians. They were to eat in haste, with staff in hand. All this pictured how our life is to be characterized by our future destiny as joint-heirs with Christ in his future kingdom. The staff pictured our dependence, our leaning on God for the journey. All of this was made possible by the blood of the lamb. As God has brought us together in unity through Christ, so also he will guide us in our journey to the Promised Land, the heavenly Canaan. ■

OBITUARIES

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

Brother Donavan Hipp, Pass Christian/New Orleans, LA—December 31, 1997. Age, 87

Brother Charles Jackson, Pass Christian/New Orleans, LA—January 12.

Sister Hettie Finley, Pass Christian/New Orleans, LA—January 24. Age, 95.

Sister Anna Mae (Machel) Richardson, Northglenn, CO—February 1. Age, 66.

Ed Dargurz. Detroit. MI—February 12. Age. 85.

“IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME”

IT IS THE custom of the world to commemorate the birthdays of its heroes and great ones, while the time and circumstances of their death are, as a rule, measurably forgotten. Probably the main reason for this is that the accomplishments which make them great are limited to the time when they are alive, while death brings their careers to an end. But with Jesus this order of things is reversed. True, his birth is favorably remembered each year by millions, but his specific directions were that his followers were to commemorate his death. He left no instructions concerning the celebration of his birth.

Naturally it was essential that Jesus be born into the world as a human being in order to be the Redeemer of the fallen race, but it was his death that provided redemption. The main objective of the Master's First Advent was accomplished by his death. His life was inspiring; his teachings far-reaching in their effects upon human behavior; his miracles a blessed boon to those who benefited from

them; his prophecies furnished an accurate preview of many of the outstanding events of the age; but his mission to earth would have been largely in vain but for the fact of his death. The accomplishments of all other men have been cut short by death, but the Master's service expanded into its greatest effectiveness through death.

This doubtless is the reason why it is God's will for his people to commemorate the death of Jesus. It is vitally important, that we keep ever before us the necessity of Jesus' death, and the fact that only by reason thereof are we privileged now to enjoy the hope of life through him. It is important that we, as the followers of the Master, remember his death, because the Scriptures invite us to die with him. As with Jesus, so with Christians, their ministry is victoriously consummated only when they have completed their work of sacrifice faithfully even unto death.—Rev. 2:10

MOMENTOUS DAYS

The last few days of Jesus' earthly life were momentous ones. While he understood the meaning of events as they followed one another in quick succession, his disciples were in large measure unable to comprehend their meaning. Israel as a whole was utterly blind to the fact that the most important history of all the ages was then being made in Judea. It was during those dramatic days that Jesus rode through the gates of the city of Jerusalem, presenting himself to Israel as their foretold King and Messiah.

Following that, he drove out the money changers from the Temple. His disciples interviewed him on the Mount of Olives, inquiring concerning the signs of his Second "Presence (*parousia*), and of the

consummation of the age." (Matt. 24:2,3, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*) He celebrated the Passover supper with his disciples in the upper room. Judas bargained to betray him into the wicked hands of his enemies. There was that agonizing scene in the Garden of Gethsemane; the betrayal that followed; the trial before the high priest; Peter's denial; the trial before Pilate and Herod; the scourging; mocking; and finally the crucifixion.

These were the events which marked the closing days of humanity's most noble benefactor. To the disciples they spelled, first, high hope, then bewilderment, and finally bitter disappointment. To many of the Jews these events were but the natural consequences of the misguided efforts of a false pretender who tried to get himself accepted as the promised Messiah of Israel, and who was properly dealt with by the 'legitimate' rulers of his day. Jesus alone understood what was occurring, and his knowledge contributed to his ability to bear up under the trial and to finish the work his Heavenly Father had given him to do.

THE MASTER DESPISED

Jesus had never been popular with the scribes and Pharisees. Individuals among them had been impressed with his demeanor and teachings, but as a group they had been antagonistic toward him from the beginning of his unselfish ministry, and never lost an opportunity to do what they could to prejudice the people against him. But the people did some thinking for themselves. They liked the gracious words which the Master spoke, and agreed that "never man spake like this man."—John 7:46

Even more convincing to the general Jewish public were the many miracles which the Master

performed. These benefactions created a process of reasoning reflected by the words of the blind man who had been healed. He intimated that he did not understand everything involved in the great blessings he had received, but he did know that whereas once he was blind, now he could see. (John 9:25) Many others had been blind, and now they too could see. Besides, there were lepers who had been cleansed; cripples who had been made to walk; maniacs who had been freed from evil spirits; and dead who had been raised to life again.

Perhaps very few of these were able to grasp a great deal of what the Master taught, but they did know that he had blessed them, and their relatives and friends knew it. Hence, quite a considerable number in Israel were favorably disposed toward Jesus, and would not be too easily influenced by the scribes and Pharisees to join in an effort to take his life. Above all, he was overshadowed by the providential care of his Heavenly Father, which prevented his enemies from accomplishing their evil designs against him until it was the "due time" for his sacrifice to be consummated.—I Tim. 2:6

DISCIPLES CONVINCED

Meanwhile, as Jesus went about doing good and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, his disciples became more and more convinced of his messiahship. When he first called them to follow him and to become 'fishers of men', they believed him to be the Messiah of promise. But as they witnessed his miracles, listened as he discoursed to the people, and sat at his feet imbibing more fully the spirit and depth of his gracious words, their confidence must have been crystallized. It was no wonder that Peter expressed his willingness to die for his Master.

But the disciples were natural men, not yet begotten of the Holy Spirit, hence they were unprepared for the manner in which the ministry of their Messiah, their Lord, was to be so suddenly concluded. Even the suggestion from Jesus which might have at least warned them to some extent of what to expect, brought forth that vigorous protest from Peter, "Be it far from thee, Lord." (Matt. 16:22) Jesus' reply to Peter on this occasion contained a depth of meaning which can only be grasped and appreciated by the Spirit-begotten. He said, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."—Matt. 16:25

How strange this must have sounded to the disciples! It still sounds strange to those who have not been initiated by the Holy Spirit into the secrets of the Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. How could anyone possibly save his life by losing it? Jesus did by losing, or giving up, his earthly life in sacrifice. In the resurrection he was rewarded with Divine life. His sacrifice was a voluntary one, but once having entered voluntarily into this covenant of sacrifice, his withdrawal would have meant eternal death. Thus he saved his life by faithfully completing his sacrifice even unto death.

By losing his life in sacrifice, Jesus also provided an opportunity of salvation for all of Adam's race. No wonder that a feature of the Divine plan so outstandingly important as this, and so different from the course of fallen human wisdom, should be commemorated by God's people! The practical and inspirational aspects of the Master's death are in themselves sufficient grounds for commemorating the event. In this respect his death was a practical

outworking of the principle of Divine love, an illustration of what love should and will do in our lives if, like Jesus, we are governed by it. If we are to be like him we must also lay down our lives—motivated by the same love which prompted him to lose his life for others. However, we should never lose sight of the more important substitutional aspect of the Master's death as man's Redeemer.

ACCLAIMED AS KING

Later, after the Holy Spirit had come upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost, they understood these things which they were utterly unable to grasp prior thereto. But even though they did not understand everything the Master told them, they continued to follow him. Obeying his instructions by contacting one of his friends, they secured a young ass, and on it Jesus rode triumphantly into the city of Jerusalem as Israel's King.

The disciples believed Jesus to be Israel's king, and they would expect that at some appropriate time such a presentation of himself would certainly be necessary. The question raised in their minds by their Master's talk of death would now, temporarily at least, be forgotten. Here was the way things ought to be. Jesus was a King, and it was time the people knew it and had the opportunity to acclaim him as such. Now he was giving them this opportunity and they were rising to the occasion. The disciples must have thought that surely the Messianic kingdom was now at hand!

Then Jesus went to the Temple, healed the sick whom he found there, and drove out the money changers. This harmonized well with his kingly entry into the city. The disciples' spirits mounted still higher. They manifested their enthusiasm by

calling Jesus' attention to the beautiful stones with which the Temple had been built. They may have had visions of Israel's new ruler soon taking over that magnificent edifice. But their enthusiasm was quickly dampened by Jesus, who remarked that the time would come when not one stone would be left upon another in that glorious Temple.—Matt. 24:2

What a shock this must have been! Evidently, however, it caused the disciples to realize that there was much yet which they needed to learn concerning their Messiah and the plans for the Messianic kingdom, for later we find them with Jesus on the Mount of Olives, where they are questioning him concerning the time and evidences of his Second Presence and the establishment of his kingdom.

They had no clear picture of what their questions really implied, but to a degree at least they had sensed from Jesus' remarks that the kingdom was not as near as they had supposed. They may now have remembered other things he previously had said, such as the parable of the nobleman who went into a far country to receive a kingdom and then returned. In any event, they wanted to know more about that of which they realized they knew so little.

So they said to Jesus, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming [Greek, *parousia*—'presence'] and of the end of the world [Greek, *aion*—'age']." (Matt. 24:3) From these questions it is obvious that the disciples sensed, at least vaguely, that Jesus might be separated from them for a while, and would return later to establish his kingdom.

The Master's lengthy reply to their query is a marvelous prophecy not only concerning the end of

the age, but also of general conditions throughout the age, beginning with the downfall of the Jewish polity. But, there is no reason to suppose that it enlightened the disciples and prepared them for the events which were immediately before them and before their Master. It was not that they did not want to know, or did not try to learn. It was simply a case of the natural man not being able to understand the things of the Spirit of God.—I Cor. 2:10-14

THE UPPER ROOM

The minds of the disciples were by now greatly unsettled. As they assembled in the upper room which had been prepared in advance for their use in partaking of the Passover, it was as though the very air had been impregnated with a sense of impending tragedy. Jesus let it be known that one of the number was plotting to betray him. Then came that pleadingly pitiful inquiry, "Master, is it I?" (Matt. 26:25) The noble dignity of the Master is seen in this connection. He knew, of course, that Judas was the traitor, yet he did not tirade against him, but instead addressed him still as "friend" [*Greek*, 'comrade'; *Diaglott*, 'companion'].—vs. 50

The disciples had much to learn concerning the true spirit and outlook of the Master. Their viewpoint was wholly human, and largely one of self-interest. They delighted to think of the glory which would be theirs when associated with Jesus in his kingdom. They were thinking of this in that upper room, and were contentious with each other as to who would be the greatest. This afforded Jesus a further opportunity to exemplify his humility as well as his great passion for service. He washed

their feet and explained that he who would be greatest among them would be servant of all.

Then there was that strange question concerning the possession of swords. Jesus wanted to know how many his disciples possessed. Being assured that there were two swords in the company, Jesus explained that these were sufficient. (Luke 22:38) Perhaps this question was not so strange to Jesus' disciples at that time as it might be to us now. We have learned to think of him as the Prince of peace, and a pacifist. And, indeed he was that, for it developed later that he would not permit those swords to be used in his defense.

Why, then, should he have inquired of his disciples concerning the possession of swords? We now know that he was planning a demonstration of his nonresistance to arrest. Peter possessed one of the two swords and later tried to use it in an effort to prevent his Master's arrest. This gave Jesus a wonderful opportunity to prove that he was voluntarily giving himself up to be crucified. Not only that, but by healing the ear of the High Priest's servant, whom Peter had slashed by the ill-advised use of his sword, Jesus demonstrated that he did not wish anyone to suffer on his account even though he was about to suffer and die for all mankind.

THE BREAD AND THE CUP

Jesus and his disciples were in the upper room to eat the Passover supper on the fourteenth day of Israel's first month, Nisan. It was a yearly memorial of that eventful night in Egypt when the blood of the first Passover lamb was sprinkled upon the lintels and doorposts of the houses, and when the Israelites ate the Passover in safety, while the first-born of Egypt died — Exod. 12:1-14

God wanted his people to remember the great deliverance that was wrought in connection with that first Passover, so he commanded the Israelites to commemorate it each year. But even more important than its object lesson to Israel, that typical Passover lamb pointed forward to the far more important sacrifice of the "Lamb of God" (John 1:29) who would take away the sin of the world. Jesus was that Lamb, and with his disciples commemorated for the last time the sacrifice of the typical Passover lamb of which he was to be the reality.

It was at the conclusion of this last typical feast of the Passover that Jesus instituted a new ceremonial for his followers. He explained that the bread represented his broken body and that the wine pictured his shed blood. Then he asked his disciples to partake of them with the explanation that as long as they continued to do so they would show forth his death. It was a simple service which the Master thus instituted—merely a communal drinking of the wine, and a breaking and eating together of unleavened bread. It was not intended as a continuation of the Passover supper in a new form; but a memorial of the sacrifice of the real Passover Lamb, even Jesus, the Savior of the world.

It is doubtful if the disciples at that time understood very much of what Jesus said to them concerning the bread and the wine. They did not then realize that it was necessary for Jesus to die in order that they might have life and enjoy the privilege of reigning with him. They did not understand that his kingdom would come far short of providing the blessings promised by God unless a way was

found of annulling the death sentence which was sending all mankind into the tomb.

They were even more ignorant of the fact that if they were to live and reign with Christ it would be necessary for them to suffer and die with him. The bread and wine, however, represented a further privilege of all Christ's true followers. We receive the blessings of life provided by his broken body and shed blood, and we are also privileged to share in his suffering and death. What a blessed communion, or participation.—I Cor. 10:16,17

THEY SANG A HYMN AND WENT OUT

The account indicates that after Jesus instituted the memorial of his death they immediately left the upper room and made their way to Gethsemane. The Master's heart was too full and the disciples were too tired to remain for further discussion. There was some conversation as they walked slowly out of the city to the Garden. It was then that Peter affirmed his willingness to die for his Master, and said that he would do this even though all others should forsake him. And Peter meant this with his whole heart as he later demonstrated.

Entering the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus invited Peter, James and John to come apart and watch with him. He thought that these might be disposed to pray with him, but they could not. He went further into retreat to pray. "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," was his plea to the Father, "nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matt. 26:39) We are not to suppose that Jesus even for a moment entertained a desire to violate his covenant of sacrifice. He knew it was the

Father's will for him to die, and he was determined to carry out that will.

Perhaps the Master did not realize fully until now that his death was to be brought about in such an ignominious manner, that he was to be charged with blasphemy and treason. For one who had done naught but good; who had honored his Heavenly Father in his every thought, word and deed, these were heartbreaking charges. He was glad to die as the world's Redeemer, but was it the Father's will that he also suffer in these other ways? It was, and, assured of it, Jesus was calm and content.

We are told that Jesus was concerned and was heard for his devotion. (Heb. 5:7, *WED*) We are not to suppose that he feared dying. But it should be remembered that the Master had hazarded his very existence when he entered into the covenant of sacrifice with his Father. (Ps. 50:5) If he had not been faithful, there would be no resurrection for him. It was, therefore, eternal death which he feared, and it was concerning this, no doubt, that he was comforted, being assured that his Father was still "well pleased" with him. (Matt. 3:17; John 12:27,32) Blessed with this assurance, Jesus thereafter was resigned to all the ignominy and shame that was so undeservedly heaped upon him.

So far as human aid was concerned, the Master had but little during the last hours of his earthly life. This was not because his disciples were unsympathetic. Peter, James and John seemed to be closest to him, and Peter certainly proved his willingness to help. But these natural-minded men were utterly unable to enter into and understand the trial through which their Master was passing. However, where the arm of flesh failed, the Heav-

only Father sustained and gave comfort. So confident did Jesus feel that his Father was ever near and ready to help that he said to Peter that if he so desired he could ask him for the protection of twelve legions of angels and the request would be granted.—Matt. 26:53

THE SON OF GOD

Leaving Gethsemane, Jesus and the disciples met the mob which had come out from the city to arrest him who was destined to be King of kings. The Master gave himself up voluntarily, telling the leaders of the mob that he was the one whom they were seeking. There was the betraying kiss of Judas, the brave—though ill-advised effort of Peter to rescue his Master from his enemies—and then he was hurried off to the judgment hall to be questioned by the High Priest.

The High Priest, Caiaphas, inquired of Jesus, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" (Matt. 26:57,63; Mark 14:61) Jesus replied, "Thou hast said" (Matt. 26:64), knowing that this answer in the eyes of the High Priest would make him subject to the death penalty. Right from the beginning of his ministry, the Master was challenged on the issue of his being the Son of God. Satan said to him, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down" from the pinnacle of the Temple. (Matt. 4:5,6) Jesus knew that he was the Son of God. To him there was no 'if' to be removed by any such spectacular demonstration as Satan suggested. When he was baptized he was given the assurance of his Sonship when the voice of God was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Matt. 3:17

Shortly before the High Priest raised this question again on that eventful last night of the Master's earthly ministry, he had received a similar assurance of his Sonship. This was on the Mount of Transfiguration when there came again those heart-cheering words, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matt. 17:5) The Heavenly Father has wonderful means of preparing his people for trials, and what fortitude this fresh assurance must have given Jesus when he was before that jealous and prejudiced High Priest who asked whether he was the Son of God. In Jesus' mind there was no doubt about his Sonship, and, knowing what the result would be, he affirmed the truth. It is not easy to stand firm for the truth when it means death to do so; but Jesus did, and in this he left us an example that we should walk in his steps.

JESUS THE KING

Finally, the Master was brought before Pilate. As representative of Caesar, Pilate was not interested in the religious charges that the Jews had made against Jesus. They very well knew this, so to him they charged that the Master claimed to be a king. If this were true, it would mean to Pilate that Jesus was a potential rival of Caesar, and for that reason would have to be put to death.

Religious prejudice blinds people to the truth, and hinders them from making a proper appraisal of the virtues and sins of others. Pilate had no religious prejudice against the Master, hence upon examination discovered that the charges brought against him had no foundation in fact. As he viewed the matter, even if Jesus did claim to be a king, it was merely a religious conceit which did not in any

real sense constitute him a contender for the Roman throne. Pilate therefore desired to free the Master; but the angry, prejudice-blinded mob would not permit him to do so.

Jesus had acknowledged to Pilate that the Jews were right in saying that he was a king. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world," was his reply to Rome's representative, when the question was put to him. (John 18:37) And what a king! He had three and one-half years to enlist the services of those who might be willing to fight his battles for him, but he had made no effort to create an army. Jesus had prevented even his faithful servant, Peter, from using a sword in his defense. Instead, this King of kings was voluntarily dying for his future subjects. No wonder that such a death should be commemorated!

They crowned this King of love with thorns. They spat upon him and mocked him. They made him carry his own cross, and finally they nailed him upon it to die. Over his head, by the instruction of Pilate, they placed the inscription, "This is the King of the Jews." (Luke 23:38) Pilate wanted the world to know that this outstanding man was dying because the Jews hated him and had rejected him as their King. But from Jesus' standpoint, he was dying as the Savior of the world. To him the circumstances which brought about his death were unimportant.

While he hung upon the cross, those standing nearby shouted, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." (Matt. 27:40) Here was that same challenging 'if' that was flung at the Master more than three years previously by Satan. He had refused then to do anything to prove to others that he

truly was the Son of God, nor did he yield to the temptation to do this now while hanging upon the cross. There was no more reason to do this than there was to allow Peter to use the sword to defend him.

The chief priests and scribes mockingly said among themselves, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." (Mark 15:31; Matt. 27:41,42) Ah, how little did they realize that by the Master's refusal to save himself he was providing salvation for them and for all the families of the earth! This is the great lesson which all who gain eternal life must learn. This is why Jesus wants us to commemorate his death. It is important for us to be thus reminded of the source of our salvation in order that we may remain humble before God, and realize the full measure of our need—the need that is supplied through his death.

In order for Jesus to take the sinner's place fully, it was essential that the Heavenly Father withdraw favor from him for a brief moment. It was then that the Master cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34) But when he finally died, it was with full confidence. "Into thy hands I commend my spirit," were his final words, and his earthly ministry was finished—completed triumphantly in death. (Luke 23:46) As followers of the Master and as members of the body of Christ it is our privilege to suffer and die with him. And when we commemorate his death, we also reaffirm our determination to follow faithfully in his footsteps, because the "cup" also represents our suffering, and the "bread" the breaking of our bodies, as we suffer and die with him.—I Cor. 10:16

Many, including professed Christians, do not realize that the suffering of the Christ continues in

the daily sacrifices made by his followers, as they are "planted together in the likeness of his death." (Rom. 6:5) But this has been the manner in which the plan of God has operated during the Gospel Age. Those sufferings continue.

This year, the Memorial date of our Lord's death is after sundown, Thursday evening, April 9. Many of the LORD's people throughout the world will meet together in their respective localities that night, and will remember anew the wondrous gift of God's love, even Jesus, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8) At the same time they will rededicate their own lives to follow more faithfully in the Redeemer's footsteps, rejoicing in the privilege of suffering and dying with him, in order that they may live and reign with him.—Rom. 6:5,8; 8:17 ■



NOW this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

I CORINTHIANS 15:50-52

THEIR DELIVERANCE AND OURS

THERE WERE NO radio or television stations to broadcast the news, and no newspapers to headline the tragic fact of what was taking place that evening of the fourteenth of Nisan more than a millennium and a half before the First Advent of Christ—that fateful night in Egypt when the first-born of every Egyptian family died. Nor is it likely that the dissemination of such news would have been of any particular value, for every family in the land was so preoccupied with its own sorrow that it is doubtful if very much consideration would have been given to the plight of others. The death angel was no respecter of persons, for the firstborn of the king as well as of the most humble Egyptian in the land was struck down that night of the 14th of Nisan so many centuries ago.

It is an old story, but its meaning to the people of God becomes more vital with every passing year. (Exod. 12:1-14) It is not so much the fact that the firstborn of Egypt died that concerns us, but that

the firstborn of Israel were saved from the destroying hand that passed through the land that fateful night. To them, it was a night of deliverance—the deliverance of the firstborn from death, and the deliverance of all Israel from Egyptian bondage the next day.

And so it is that on the fourteenth of Nisan again this year (after sundown Thursday, April 9th) thousands of the LORD's people throughout the earth will recall in a very special way their hope of deliverance as the antitypical "church of the firstborn" (Heb. 12:23), and will rejoice in their prospect for the deliverance of the world of mankind from slavery to sin and death beginning early in the morning of that glorious new day of the LORD.

THE PASCHAL LAMB

This is the background of thought that helps to emphasize the meaning of the Lord's Memorial Supper to those who are rejoicing in present truth. We all remember the thrilling story of how the firstborn of Israel were saved on that original Passover night. It was because they had obeyed the instructions of the LORD, given to them through Moses—instructions which called for the shedding of the blood of the Passover lamb. Each family of the Hebrews had to demonstrate its faith in the saving power of that blood by applying it to the doorposts and lintels of their houses. Any family that failed to do this suffered together with the Egyptians.

We know now, of course, that there was no inherent saving power in the blood of that typical Passover lamb, but rather that the LORD was merely providing an illustration of the wondrous provision for salvation through the gift of his be-

loved Son. With this thought in mind, how stirring are the words of John the Baptist concerning Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) The sting of death began to blight the human race in the Garden of Eden, and the only way this blight could be removed was through the shedding of blood—not the blood of a lamb, neither of bulls and goats, but the precious blood of Jesus, the one who became the perfect substitute for the forfeited life of father Adam.—Heb. 9:11,12

OUR LORD'S MEMORIAL

For more than three years following John's identification of him as the "Lamb of God," Jesus had labored and served as he laid down his life for the people. And now the time had come when his sacrifice was to be consummated, when he was to be slain as the antitypical Passover Lamb, a sacrifice that was necessary to provide deliverance for both the church and the world. So, on the night before he was actually slain he arranged to meet with his disciples in an "upper room," there to partake with them, for the last time, of the annual feast which commemorated the circumstances of that original Passover night in Egypt.—Matt. 26:17-30

Finished with this, Jesus took some bread and some wine and instituted a new ordinance—one of only two that are enjoined upon his followers, the other being water immersion, but both of them merely symbols. He gave the bread to his disciples and invited them to partake of it, explaining that it represented his body and the fact that it would be broken for them. Likewise the wine explaining

that it represented his blood, and that his blood was to be shed for them.

This was not intended to be a new form of the Passover. So far as Jesus and his followers were concerned, the yearly commemoration of the Passover came to an end that night. It was merely a type which pointed to Jesus and to the shedding of his blood, and now that he had come and was about to be slain for the sins of the world, there would be no point in continuing the Passover ceremony. What Jesus enjoined upon his disciples was intended as a commemoration of his death, and for the purpose of keeping before his followers what it meant to them, and the share they were to have with him as the 'church of the firstborn'.

When we think of Jesus' shed blood and his broken body, as represented by the "bread" and the "cup" (Matt. 26:26-28), it helps us to realize the blessed fact that he gave his life for us—that he poured out his soul unto death. How thankful we should be for this! Indeed, one thought we should endeavor to have in mind at the Memorial Supper, and at all times, is that of thankfulness—thankfulness for God's love in giving his Son to die for us, and thankfulness for Jesus' faithfulness in laying down his life as our Redeemer.

The only way to show our appreciation for any gift is to accept and use it; and this we should do with God's gift. We should accept Jesus, and use the merit of his sacrificed life as intended in the Divine plan. The full acceptance of Jesus, as represented in partaking of the Memorial emblems, implies the complete surrender of our wills to do his will, the acceptance of him as our Head. Then we learn that

his will for us is that we lay down our lives in sacrifice, just as he did.

COMMUNION

In keeping with this thought, the Apostle Paul explains that our partaking of the bread and the cup represents a common participation, a communion, in the sacrificial work of Christ—that we are partners with him in suffering and dying. It is a sobering thought, yet one which should inspire us to great diligence in serving the Lord, for it is upon the basis of suffering and dying with the Master that we will have the privilege of living and reigning with him.—Rom. 8:17,18

When we partake of the Memorial emblems this year let us keep these thoughts in mind. Let us think of the great deliverance it represents for us and for the world of mankind, as foreshadowed by the type in Egypt. Let us rejoice in the protection the 'blood' affords us as members of the antitypical firstborn class, and of the share we will have with Jesus in delivering all mankind from sin and death in that great day that follows the antitypical Pass-over night—the Gospel Age. What a blessed prospect!

As we think of the suffering through which Jesus passed in order to purchase this deliverance—the great contradiction of sinners that was heaped upon him, the mocking, the scourging, the cruelty of the cross—may our hearts respond with a more resolute determination to be faithful to him no matter what the cost may be. It is necessary to set our faces, as the Scriptures declare, "like a flint" (Isa. 50:7), to follow in his footsteps of sacrifice and suffering even unto death, knowing that the LORD will help us in our every time of need.

All of us should live each day as though it were the last. If we do this, we will endeavor, as the saints of God, to fulfill our consecration vows, sacrificing the flesh and its interests, setting our affections on things above.

May the Memorial Supper this year find us nearer to the Lord than ever before, and more appreciative of all that his blood means to us, and will yet mean to all mankind. ■

1998 Memorial Supper Date

THE PROPER TIME for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after 6:00 p.m., on Thursday, April 9th, 1998.

We have a complete Memorial Service available for isolated brethren, or for any who care to have it, on both audio and video cassettes. The audio cassette can be purchased for \$3.00 per copy, or is available free of charge on loan from:

***Dawn Recorded Lecture Service
199 Railroad Avenue
East Rutherford, NJ 07073***

The video cassette can be purchased for \$6.00. It is available free on loan. Send your request to:

***Dawn Video Cassette Service
P.O. Box 4355
North Hollywood, CA 91617***

Note: Cutoff date for ordering tapes is March 20th.

MANKIND'S HOPE

—I Corinthians 15:22

QUESTION:

I have been greatly comforted by your message of the kingdom. I now daily pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," knowing that some day it will be answered. Because of ill health, my brother, who was an unbeliever, took his own life—suicide. What hope may I have for him in the kingdom?

ANSWER:

The theory that all suicides are eternally lost is not a scriptural one. If death ends all hope of salvation, those who die outside of fellowship with God—from whatever cause—would have no opportunity for future life.

An understanding of the Bible should make us sympathetic. Adam was disobedient and therefore sentenced to death and, as his children, all of us have been born mentally, morally, and physically imperfect in varying degrees. God's provision for the redemption of Adam through the death of his Son as the ransom price, also affects all of us, as it is written: "As in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive."—I Cor. 15:22

Life is a gift from God, and all should appreciate the privilege of living, even among imperfect conditions. Christians, especially those in the light of present truth, appreciate the privilege of living at a time when prophecy is being fulfilled, knowing that the time is near when the promise of the great gift of eternal life will be realized. These have found the complete antidote for all the hurtful vicissitudes of life. The promises of God's Word enlighten their darkest hours: "The Father himself loveth you." "Casting all your care upon him: for he careth for you." "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." These, and many other assurances of his love, are a constant source of comfort in days of sickness and discouragement.—John 16:27; I Pet. 5:7; Rom. 8:28

Those who are of the world do not have this source of comfort, "having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12) Sometimes unrealized ambitions and failure to attain the foolish aims of their pride—or perhaps after attainment of their goal, to find that it has not brought the happiness they sought—have led some to rash actions. Others who have suffered bodily or mental pain and anguish, which seem to them beyond human endurance, are led to suicide without learning of the kingdom nor the goodness of God.

But these will come back from death in that day when "*all* that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." (John 5:28,29) How differently they will feel then, when the 'little flock' of the Gospel Age will be complete, and will live and reign with their Lord for the purpose of establishing the earthly kingdom for the blessing of all

the families of the earth. (Luke 12:32; Rev. 20:4,6)
The thin line of demarcation between those who have died from physical ills, or from overindulgence in any one of a number of ways, or who have been killed by accidents of their own carelessness, or who have been suicides, will be forgotten, "because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts 17:31

Under the favorable conditions of Messiah's kingdom, by obedience to the Divine Law, the willing and obedient will be lifted above their physical, moral, and mental imperfections to enjoy the blessings of perfection of human existence. They will bow their knees and with their tongues will confess to the glory of God, and the blessings of everlasting life through Jesus Christ the Lord.

If your brother, under these favorable conditions, accepts our Lord as his Savior and does according to his will, you may have assurance from the Scriptures that he also will "obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isa. 35:10; Rev. 21:4 "Godliness with contentment is great gain."—I Tim. 6:6 ■

No one ever sought the Father
To find he was not there.
No burden is too heavy
To be lightened by a prayer.
No sorrow we must face
Is too deep to be softened by his
grace.

Poems of the Way

WRITTEN AFORETIME FOR OUR ADMONITION

OF THOSE THINGS written aforetime, none conveys a greater lesson than that of Kadesh Barnea, when, after hearing the report of the spies, the whole of the fighting men of the Hebrews refused to go forward and take the land that God had promised them. Yet, God had led and fed them through the wilderness, guaranteed their victory, and brought them to the moment of attaining the land. The record of this unbelieving disobedience is given in Numbers 13 and 14. This is referred to in Hebrews 3:8 as "the provocation." When David was about to take Jerusalem he reminded his followers of the sin of Kadesh Barnea. (Ps. 95:7-11) The apostle refers to these incidents, and admonishes us to hear the LORD's instruction and not to harden our hearts.

Failure is due to lack of faith. Without faith we lose confidence in the power of our Heavenly Father. The disobedient Israelites appeared in their own sight as grasshoppers compared to their ene-

mies (Num. 13:33), but to Joshua and Caleb those same enemies were as bread. "They are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not." (Num. 14:9) This incident has been a lesson to the church throughout the Gospel Age, but we today are almost through the wilderness, the millennial kingdom lies before us, and if faithful we shall soon reign with Christ.

It is inconceivable that we should let the truth slip now, but the apostle warns that we are made partakers of Christ if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.—Heb. 3:6 ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

APRIL 2—"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."—Galatians 6:10 (Z. '03-121 Hymn 277)

APRIL 9—"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain."—I Corinthians 9:24 (Z. '95-93 Hymn 183)

APRIL 16—"They shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."—Malachi 3:17 (Z. '03-223 Hymn 322)

APRIL 23—"On the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."—Luke 8:15 (Z. '03-408 Hymn 166)

APRIL 30—"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—I Peter 2:9 (Z. '03-165 Hymn 236)

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

S. Jones

Detroit, MI	April 3-5	Seattle, WA	29
Boise, ID	24-26	Gig Harbor, WA	30
Portland, OR	28		

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

M.J. Balko

Louisville, AL April 19

E. Blicharz

Atlanta, GA April 5

W. Blicharz

Milwaukee, WI April 26

J.B. Brown

Boise, ID April 24-26

B. Gorecki

Boise, ID April 24-26

D. Holliday

Paradise, CA April 1

San Francisco, CA 2

San Luis Obispo, CA 3

Los Angeles, CA 5

J. Panucci

Boise, ID April 24-26

G. Passios

Boise, ID April 24-26

L. Wesol

St. Petersburg, FL April 12

CONVENTIONS

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

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 3-5—Macomb Community College, Warren, MI. Contact: Frank Nemesh.

Phone: (248) 649-6588

ALBUQUERQUE, NM, CONVENTION, April 10-12—Contact: R. Buss. Phone: (505) 266-0450

BOISE, ID, April 24-26—Owyhee Plaza Hotel, 1109 Main St., Boise. Contact: Donna Allers, 2438 Bruins Circle, Boise 83704. Cutoff April 9th. Phone: (208) 375-6873

DELAWARE VALLEY, PA, CONVENTION, April 26—Masonic Hall, South Olds Blvd., Levitt-

town. Contact: Ruth Eldridge, 37 Falcon, Levittown, PA 19056

Phone: (215) 949-0652

LOS ANGELES, CA, CONVENTION, April

26—Auditorium, 248 E. Olive Ave., Burbank. Contact: Robert Wagoner, 901 N. Westwood, Santa Ana, CA 92703 (or e-mail RnRWagoner@aol.com)
Phone: (714) 542-8466

PITTSBURGH, PA, SPRING CONVENTION,

April 26—Parkway Center Inn, Mt. Washington Rm., 875 Greentree Rd., Pittsburgh. Contact: C. Martig, 94 S. Harrison Ave., Bellevue, PA 15202
Phone: (412) 734-9269

AGAWAM, MA, CONVENTION, May 16,17—

Harley Hotel, 1 Bright Meadow Blvd., Enfield, CT. Contact: Sophie Zielinski, 21 Silver St., Agawam, MA 01001

Phone: (413) 786-1216

GARY AREA, IN, CONVENTION, May 17—Spa

Banquet Center, 333 No. Mineral Springs Rd., Porter, IN. Contact: Tom Trzeciak, 5002 Kellee La., Valparaiso, IN 46383

Phone: (219) 464-1478

WEST NEWTON, PA, CONVENTION, May

17—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton. Contact: John Krasonic, Sr., 1106 State Route 136, Belle Vernon PA 15012

ASILOMAR CONVENTION, May 22-25—

Pacific Grove, CA. Registrar: Mark Blicharz, 1511 Cartagena Ave., Hayward, CA 94544

Phone: (510) 783-8831

WATERBURY, CT, CONVENTION, June 6,7—

New location. Write for information to: Mrs. Anthony Tsimonis, Secy. c/o Waterbury Bible Students, P.O. Box 1494, Waterbury, CT 06721-1494

ALLENTOWN, PA, CONVENTION, June 12,13,

14—New location: East Stroudsburg University, East Stroudsburg, PA. Contact: Mrs. Rachel Fawcett, Allentown Bible Students, P.O. Box 3214, Allentown, PA 18106

Phone: (610) 280-7538

1998 BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 25-30—

Johnstown, PA

1998 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August

9-14—Miskolc, Hungary