

THE DAWN



A HERALD OF
CHRIST'S PRESENCE

FEBRUARY
1949

Jehovah

JEHOVAH, our God, is the great Emperor of the whole universe, and his wisdom, power, goodness, and benevolence are abundantly equal to all the responsibilities of so exalted an office. The human mind staggers in its efforts to comprehend the mental resources of a Being who is able to assume and to bear such responsibility. Think for a moment of the memory that never fails; of the judgment that never errs; of the wisdom that plans for eternity without the possibility of failure; of the power and skill that can harness even every opposing element, animate and inanimate, and make them all work together for the accomplishment of his grand designs; of the tireless vigilance which never ceases, nor seeks relief from the pressing cares of universal dominion; whose eye never sleeps, whose ear is ever open; and who is ever cognizant of all the necessities and active in all the interests of his broad domain.

—C. T. RUSSELL

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Our Cover Picture

DAWN IN ALASKA: In this rare photograph made on the Yukon River, the Midnight Sun, having disappeared for a brief half-hour behind mountains, returns to bring the dawn. There had been no real night as we know it for it had been possible to read newspapers and to see for great distances even during the time the sun was not visible. The photographer suggests that the "dawn of Creation" could not have been more pleasing to the senses. Even grander, will be the rising of the "Sun of Righteousness" for His enlightening and healing rays will bless all mankind throughout an endless day of peace and joy and life. Photo by Adelbert Bartlett.

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THE 1949 MEMORIAL DATE—The 14th of Nisan this year falls on Wednesday, April 13. As the Jewish day begins at sundown the night before, the proper time for celebrating the Memorial Supper will be after sundown Tuesday, April 12.

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Human Rights for All

THE new year is now one month old, and that's not old enough to determine what sort of year it will turn out to be. There are things which occurred during 1948 that we can look back upon with some degree of satisfaction. One of these was the adoption of a declaration of human rights by the General Assembly of the United Nations. This is a historic document, and while no provision was made to enforce its various articles, its statement of ideals is bound to have a beneficial effect upon human thinking and behavior. And certainly the fact that such high ideals were put into definite form, and approved by the representatives of so many nations, indicates that deep down in the hearts of men and women there is a longing desire for a world that is controlled by forces other than selfishness, prejudice, and hatred. Article one of this important document reads,

"All human beings are born free and equal, in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience, and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

Here is a statement on human rights which one would suppose to be acceptable to all Americans, that it would find opponents only in certain backward countries of the earth. In India, for example, where they have had the caste system and the untouchables, it will be difficult for those of the higher castes to reconcile their viewpoint with the statement that all men are born equal in dignity and rights. However, even in India the new constitution calls for the abolition of the caste system, and while it takes much longer for the viewpoints and prejudices of people to change than it does to draw up a new constitution, it still remains that the new India is keeping pace with the progress of the world in this respect.

That the people are not immediately changed by new constitutions, or by bills of rights, is evidenced by the attitude of millions of Americans in the southern states. They do not yet accept, nor do they practice, the idea that all men are born equal in dignity and

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rights. This was brought forcibly to our attention during 1948 in connection with the presidential election.

This first article in the new Bill of Human Rights is quite in harmony with the teachings of the Bible. Its declaration concerning human conscience is in keeping with the Genesis statement that man was created in the image of God, and the Apostle Paul affirms that God has made all nations of one blood. (Acts 17:26) Had these fundamental truths thus so clearly stated in the Bible been followed, the caste system in India; slavery in the United States; and the aristocracy of Europe, would never have existed.

It is encouraging, however, that even at this late date mankind is coming to recognize this fundamental truth, and beginning to move toward a world-wide adoption of it. This again is in keeping with the prophecies of the Bible—prophecies which indicate that we stand today on the very threshold of a new age, an age of emancipation for all people, a liberation foreshadowed by the jubilee system which God instituted in the ancient nation of Israel. Now the great year of jubilee for all mankind is about to dawn. That will be a “happy new year” indeed, and it will last forever.

Article six of the declaration of human rights is a most interesting one. It reads,

“No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

This article is apparently intended to correct the evils of the concentration camps, and it recalls also the slightly more remote and disgraceful practices of the so-called “Holy Inquisition.” Between the era of the Inquisition and the modern concentration camps there seemed to be progress in getting away from the torture of human beings for political and religious reasons. As a matter of fact, there are laws against such practice in many countries, and even the torture of the lower animals is forbidden. Witness the great fight against vivisection, even when practiced in the interest of medical science. Our societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals are another evidence of progress along this line.

Some years ago a noted pastor observed that “roasting at the stake is no longer popular, but roasting in the public press and by public and private conversation, is still practiced.” Perhaps the fact that roasting in the public press still continues explains why human beings, when they had the opportunity, and thought there

was a need for it, did not hesitate to introduce the concentration camp. In other words, perhaps the degree to which certain human beings will inflict punishment upon their enemies is limited only by opportunity. But even so, it is real progress when the United Nations adopts a Bill of Human Rights which forbids the torture of human beings in any form.

And then, there is cause for serious reflection along another line in this forthright condemnation of torture as a means of punishment, for it reveals that the people of the world are in viewpoint beyond what millions of them believe concerning God. The so-called "Holy Inquisition," for example, was a natural consequence of what the torturers of the Dark Ages believed concerning their God. They believed that all heretics would be tormented by God beginning the moment they died, so they considered themselves god-like when they tortured these heretics before they died. But the thinking people of the world no longer believe in a god of torment. No one could consistently believe in such a god without trailing far behind the awakening conscience of a world that is gradually breaking the shackles of Dark Age superstition.

Another article in the new Bill of Human Rights deals with the subject of religious liberty. It reads,

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion, either alone or in community with others, and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

This is a very clear and comprehensive statement on the subject of religious liberty, but like other declarations of human rights, it is far in advance of what many professedly enlightened people of the world are ready to practice. Take the point, for example, of the right to change one's religion, and together with that the one on the right to teach. It was only a few years ago that the State of New York refused to grant a charter to a group of converted Jews who wanted to form an organization the purpose of which would be the conversion of Jews to Christianity. The officials who refused to grant the charter offered the explanation that in their opinion the American principle of religious liberty did not include the right to persuade people to change their religion. So again the United Nations' statement of human rights goes beyond what some, even

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in America, are willing to practice.

Basically, of course, every freedom, whether of religion or otherwise, must have its limitations. When Adam and Eve were given their garden home in Eden they were granted full liberty except for one thing—they were not to partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This was a restriction of their liberty imposed by God; and, fundamentally, divine law should be regarded always as an outline of true and profitable liberty.

Jesus authorized his followers to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, and it is the exercise of true Christian liberty to prosecute this calling. Until now the devil has been allowed to spread his various religions throughout the earth, but the Scriptures indicate that this will not always be the case. His liberty is to be restrained—he is to be bound for a thousand years, the Bible tells us, and then destroyed.

With the devil bound, and his false religious systems destroyed, the truth concerning God and Jesus, and the divine provision for life and happiness as human beings on earth, will become known to all mankind. It will become so thoroughly known, declares the prophet, that it will no longer be necessary for one to ask another if he knows the Lord, for all will know him from the least, even unto the greatest. (Jer. 31:34) Such a glorious outcome of the divine plan will mean that practically the entire human race will need to change their religion. Even those of the professed Christian world will have a great deal to learn, and much to change in their way of life.

Reds Snub Pope

AN ARTICLE in the New York *Herald Tribune* by Barrett McGurn, relates the manner in which the citizens of Castle Gandolfo snubbed the Pope when he left there to return to the Vatican for the winter. The incident was typical, he explains, of the hostile attitude communism is taking toward Catholicism in that country, which was formerly nearly one hundred percent in support of the Catholic Church.

Castle Gandolfo is the village where the Pope has his summer residence, and the *Herald Tribune* article explains that this year

the Communists have been busy calling attention to the expensive automobiles parked in front of the Pope's residence—and other evidences of luxury—contrasting these with the poverty of the people in general. The *Herald Tribune* quotes Mr. De Bernardino, chief communist of the village, and a member of the village council, as saying,

“You would think that having the papal palace here would make things wonderful, but far from it. Things are getting worse all the time. We have more than 100 unemployed. It's true that the Vatican gave all the children of the village, including my two, two months at the seashore this summer, but what we need is more direct help. The people around here see those limousines parked in front of the papal palace, and they go home and can't even give food to their children.”

This, of course, is the communist viewpoint. There are millions of Catholics and Protestants alike who see nothing inconsistent in the fact that servants of the churches are usually better off economically than those they serve, although this is far from being universally true. For a time the early church practiced pure communism and had all things in common. That was before the division between clergy and laity was established. They were all servants of one another, some in spiritual matters, others along material lines.

But this did not continue. As the great church systems of Europe grew they became more and more like “big business” enterprises. The land holdings of the church throughout Europe were tremendous, and still are in some countries. Where the communists get control this is being changed. Church property is being confiscated. But this isn't the pure communist program such as was practiced by the early church. Communists of today have no such viewpoint as that held by the early Christians.

It is doubtful if pure communism could be made to work even among Christians today, and there is probably nothing the churches can do about the extremes of wealth and poverty. It remains an individual responsibility of every follower of the Master to determine how much of his abundance he can share with the less fortunate. And it is well in this connection for every Christian to remember that Jesus declared that while the birds of the air had nests and the foxes of the fields had holes, the Son of man had “not where to lay his head.” (Matt. 8:20) The Scriptures also state that for our sakes he became poor.—II Cor. 8:9

Hirohito Rebuked

WE ARE certainly living in a changing world. This is evidenced all around us, and further corroborated by an item from Japan. It seems that recently the emperor, Hirohito, sent a message to President Truman, assuring him of the desire of Japan to cooperate in every way with the United States. This seemed harmless enough, and, as for sentiment, it certainly was ideal. But the newly formed Japanese Parliament didn't like it. This august body of lawmakers, now in a position for the first time to exercise real authority in the affairs of Japan, rebuked the emperor for thus dealing with outside nations without consulting them. They wanted him to know that he was no longer the real head of the nation, and had no authority to act for the nation, that at the most, he was merely a symbol of national unity. How are the mighty fallen! This leveling process in society continues, not in one country, but in all countries. The trend is in the same direction in every part of the world. The day for kings and dukes and privileged classes of all kinds is past. A new power is on the march, a power that eventually will liberate all people.

One of the Bible's symbols of this was the jubilee system which God inaugurated with the nation of Israel. Every fiftieth year there was to be a general equalization of wealth. Those who had become slaves were to be released. This jubilee year was introduced by the blowing of trumpets—the jubilee trumpets. Symbolically speaking, jubilee trumpets are now sounding throughout the earth. Human rights are the key note of the proclamation. The trumpet tones are not always clear and harmonious, but the people are hearing them, and gradually awakening to their privileges.

The old order of things will be completely destroyed before this is over, and then, the real jubilee blessings will be given to the people through the kingdom of Christ. And those blessings will be much more far-reaching than man has ever dared to hope for, they will include even the restoration of the dead. The entire human race will be restored, and the lost inheritance, even the dominion of earth, will be given back to the people. It is, indeed, a glorious prospect.

In every country, and by many groups, this cry of human rights is being echoed. The Federal Council of Churches has recently denounced racial segregation as "unnecessary and undesirable, and a violation of the Gospel of love and human brotherhood." In its statement of human rights the Federal Council of Churches called for equal, non-segregated participation of all races in all phases of the social and public life of the community—a report in *Time* magazine declares—including housing, education, recreation, transportation, and businesses serving the public such as stores, theatres, hotels and restaurants.

The Federal Council is to be congratulated on this straightforward declaration of its stand on this important issue that is facing the nation and the world today. No Christian can scripturally take any other stand. The Apostle Paul declared that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." (Acts 17:26) One of the early converts to Christianity was an Ethiopian, and God specially directed the evangelist Philip to ride with him in his chariot and preach the Gospel to him. We can be certain that there was no requirement that the Ethiopian sit on one seat in that chariot and Philip on another.

All realize, of course, what a difficult task it is to remove prejudices from the hearts of people. And probably this and the many other baffling problems confronting the human race today will be solved only when the Kingdom of Christ becomes operative throughout the earth. Then the people will be taught the true way of love, and will rejoice in it.

Communism and Religion

THE communism vs. religion issue continues prominently in the news. The report on the manner in which the communist influence is working its way into various Protestant groups of America, as given out by the Washington Committee investigating un-American activities, has come in for sharp criticism, particularly by the Methodist Church. A Council of Methodist Bishops has challenged the accuracy of the report. Bishop Oxnam of the Methodist Church has given the impression that the report is anti-Protestant. In doing this, he raised a number of embarrassing questions concern-

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ing Catholicism's association with fascist elements in government, and particularly the church's sponsorship of Dictator Franco in Spain. In a later statement, Bishop Oxnam branded the committee for investigating un-American activities as itself un-American.

To say that communism is anti-religious is not wholly correct. It does have a religion, a religion which, to state it briefly, finds expression in the worship of the state—the idea that the individual is nothing and the state everything. This viewpoint represents a flareback of the ancient pagan ideology—that philosophy of government which ruled the old Roman world prior to the setting up of the so-called Holy, or Papal Roman Empire.

But the pagan rulers were more open with what they stood for. They assumed for themselves the title, Pontifex Maximus, which means "Chief Religious Ruler." And it's an interesting sidelight on conditions in the world two thousand years ago, that then the confidence of the people in their various gods of superstition made it possible for the Roman Emperors to divert their worship to themselves.

Human beings talk a great deal about freedom, but when it comes right down to actual experience they don't want to be too free, because the exercise of true freedom calls for the shouldering of responsibility, and most people would rather that some one else do this for them. So it is that the temptation to let the other fellow do our worrying leads many to incline toward an ideology in which the individual becomes a cog in the wheel, and the government runs the machine.

When this principle is followed through to a conclusion it means the worship of the state, that is, that the state is looked upon as the supreme authority in one's life. This was the old pagan philosophy of government which headed up in the title Pontifex Maximus as assumed by the Roman Emperors. When Papal Rome came into ascendancy, the popes took this title. Perhaps this is one reason Stalin, although adopting pagan ideas in most other ways, does not proclaim himself as Pontifex Maximus, for his aversion to the Vatican would naturally cause him to avoid that which might seem like copying the Church's methods.

Monsignor Sheen, radio voice of Catholicism in America, describes this particular ideology as the absolute in government, and points out that the great struggle of today is between these two

absolutes—that is, the absolutism of communism and the absolutism of the church. Actually, however, there is a third absolutism, and that is the worship of the true God, the Creator of heaven and earth. It is this that will be established in the earth through the administrative powers of the kingdom of Christ.

Why Communists Become Catholics

REPORTS indicate that a number of outstanding communists have left the red ranks and become Catholics. A prominent communist was asked why these seemed to prefer the Catholic Church rather than one of the Protestant churches. The answer was that communists are trained to accept two particular points of doctrine which find a parallel in the Catholic Church. One of these is the universality of outlook which both communism and catholicism offer. Communism has a world outlook. It is an international ideology. The word catholic means universal, and the church which has its headquarters at Rome claims to be universal. It recognizes no national boundary lines.

The other point of similarity is the ideology of totalitarianism. The word of the church is law to every Catholic, coming before everything else in his life. And this is also true of communism. Both are totalitarian in the control of their subjects. So, this report explains, when a communist decides to become religious he usually chooses the religion nearest to the ideology which had formerly appealed to him in the communist camp.

All communists, and the countless millions of others in the world who are losing faith in human efforts to bring peace and happiness, will find in the kingdom of Christ that which will satisfy their longings. This kingdom is described in the prophecies as the "desire of all nations." (Haggai 2:7) It will be universal, for "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end," the prophet declares. (Isaiah 9:7) It will also be totalitarian, for the righteous laws of God will be rigidly imposed, and no compromise with the unrighteous desires and laws of men will be allowed. In that kingdom will be found the answer to the Christian's prayer, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. 6:10

LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 6—

Jesus' Early Teaching and Healing

MATTHEW gives us a very comprehensive summary of Jesus' activity, saying that he "went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." (Matt. 4:23) One cannot read a statement of this kind without being impressed with the fact that Jesus conducted a very vigorous ministry, allowing little time for rest, and no time at all for things other than those which pertained directly or indirectly to the kingdom of God.

Regardless of the standpoint from which we view the Master; we find in him those traits of character which reveal the closeness of his walk with God, and the whole-hearted manner in which he endeavored to do the will of God. His activity in preaching the Gospel and in healing the sick is no exception to this.

Paul tells us that the Gospel was preached beforehand unto Abraham when the Lord said to him that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. (Gal. 3:8, 16) This theme song of good news was very prominent in the messages God gave through his holy prophets of the Old Testament. And Jesus was so thoroughly in accord with the divine plan

expressed through this Gospel that it was his meat and drink to proclaim it to all who had a hearing ear.

Nor should we, as followers of the Master, overlook this important element of his character, for we cannot be truly like him unless we too are actively interested in making known the glad tidings. We should not assume that it is our privilege to select those traits of the Master's character which we would like to copy and emulate him merely in these things. Paul speaks of growing up into Christ in "all things," and these all things include his self-sacrificing zeal in bearing witness to the truth.—Eph. 4:15

MARK 1:14, 15—This passage indicates that Jesus centered his activity in Galilee when he learned that John the Baptist had been put in prison. He preached "the Gospel of the kingdom of God," and stressed the fact that the "time" was "fulfilled," and that the "kingdom of God" was "at hand." Prof. Wilson translates this expression, "God's royal majesty has approached." This seems to be the correct thought for it indicates, not that the kingdom of God was established at that time, but rather that the One who was to be King in that kingdom was present among the people.

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For centuries God had been promising to send the Messiah and King, and now he had come. Even so, he had not then come to establish a kingdom in power and great glory, but to die as the Redeemer of the people. It is at the second coming of Christ that the long-promised kingdom of God is established.

MARK 1:32-39—"They brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils." Higher critics of the Bible would like to have us believe that the New Testament references to those who were possessed with devils indicate that the people merely thought these unfortunate ones were possessed with devils, while actually they were only mentally sick. However, in this passage a clear distinction is made between those who were sick, and those who "were possessed with devils."

Granting that it might have been possible for the general public of that day to believe superstitiously that those who were merely mentally unbalanced were in reality possessed with devils, we cannot concede that Jesus' viewpoint was based on superstition. Our lesson tells us that Jesus "suffered not the devils to speak." This indicates that in his mind these "devils" were real beings who could take possession of men's minds.

The account also indicates that these "devils" were acquainted with Jesus. This is quite in harmony with the testimony given us by Peter and Jude (I Pet. 3:19, 20; II Pet. 2:4, 5; Jude 6) which re-

veals that the "devils" of Jesus' day were none other than the "angels which kept not their first estate" at the time of the flood. On account of their sin at that time they were restrained from the free intercourse with the human race which was theirs before the flood, but were, and still are able to take possession of the minds of those who will surrender to them. It is these same "devils" who constitute the background of spiritualism today.

The experience recorded in this lesson seemed to have occurred in the home of Simon's wife's mother. It was after the sun went down that they began to bring many to Jesus who were sick and possessed with devils. It would appear that he had a long evening of tiring service, yet we read that he arose early the next morning and "departed into a solitary place" to pray. Jesus realized that if he was to continue his active ministry, he needed strength from his Heavenly Father—strength which was available through the privilege of prayer. Jesus did not make prayer the end of his association with God, but a means to the end.

When his disciples found him where he had retreated for prayer, he said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth." "For therefore came I forth"—this expression is very much in harmony with a statement Jesus made to Pilate when he said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." (John 18:37) It

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was not merely that he had gone into Galilee to preach the Gospel, but rather that this was one of the main purposes of his coming into the world.

It was because of Jesus' faithfulness in bearing witness to the truth that he was "the light of the world." (John 9:5) Not only did he preach the Gospel—the good news—by word of mouth, but by his miracles as well. God's promised blessing of all the families of the earth will mean the destruction of sickness and death. The good news of the Kingdom would lose its real meaning if it were robbed of this comforting fact. So, in order to give more weight to his oral message of glad tidings, Jesus used the power of God granted to him for this purpose to give practical demonstrations of what the "Gospel" really meant. True, he healed only a few of the people, but we know that when the promises of God are fulfilled all the families of the earth are thus to be blessed.

LUKE 4:16-21—The main point of this passage of Scripture is that it reveals the source of the Master's authority for preaching the Gospel. It was shortly after his baptism, when the Holy Spirit had come upon him, and here the Master is explaining the practical meaning of the Spirit's anointing, that it was his commission to lay down his life proclaiming the glad tidings. And here it is well to remember that every Spirit-filled life will be one that is devoted to bearing witness to the truth. Any Christian who is not thus impelled to lay down his life for the witness of Jesus may seriously question

whether or not he is actuated by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit's commission for service, as quoted by Jesus, is that of Isaiah 61:1-3. There is a slight variation in the New Testament wording of this commission from that of the Old Testament account, but the meaning is the same. The account in Isaiah states, "The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek." Jesus speaks of this as preaching the Gospel to the poor. Both renderings indicate that the Gospel is not for the self-satisfied of this world, but only for those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Jesus was not commissioned to convert the world by preaching the Gospel, nor are his followers; but we are to sow the seeds of truth beside all waters, knowing that the Lord will direct that those who are "meek," will hear and be blessed by it.

It is the sweet and consoling influence of the Gospel that serves to bind up the brokenhearted. No words could have been more potent to comfort the heart of Martha than those spoken by Jesus when he said to her, "Thy brother shall rise again." (John 11:23) And no message we can give to the brokenhearted of today will do more to dry their tears than to assure them that all in their graves are to come forth.

The Holy Spirit's commission for service speaks of setting captives free and of opening prisons to them who are bound. It seems reasonable to suppose that one of these expressions refers to those who are bound by chains of dark-

ness and superstition, and that we set them free through the power of the truth; while the other is a reference to those who are held prisoners in the great prison house of death.

Jesus was able literally to set some of these free, and we can all, even as Jesus did, proclaim to the people that the power of God is yet to be used for setting free all the captives of death—that Jesus has the “keys of hell” and will unlock its gates and set its prisoners free. What a glorious message, and what a blessed privilege is ours of proclaiming it, of telling the whole world these wondrous tidings of great joy!

Jesus added a point to the Holy Spirit’s commission which does not appear in Isaiah’s outline of it—the recovering of sight to the blind. While the prophet Isaiah in chapter 35 forecasts this, and our Lord carried it out literally, here it might well be merely an elaboration on the thought of preaching deliverance to the captives, that is, those who are bound by ignorance and superstition. To give these the light of truth and thus free them from the enslaving cords of darkness has much the same thought, symbolically speaking, as giving sight to the blind.

The whole world is blinded by Satan’s deceptions, and while the Gospel does not open many blind eyes today, the time is coming when, through the ministration of Jesus and his church in glory, all the blind eyes will be open and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. It is well to remember in this connection, that in some respects this

commission for service embraces the work of the millennial age as well as that of the Gospel age.

“To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord”—here is a dispensational truth, a reference to the plan of God for the present Gospel age. It is a reference to the work of sacrifice which began with Jesus and will be completed with the full end of the Gospel age, showing that this is the “acceptable year” or time, for those sacrifices to be made.

This particular part of the Gospel which Jesus was commissioned to preach, and which we too, as members of his body are commissioned to preach, has to do with the chief work of the Gospel age; namely, the sacrificial work of The Christ. And it is still our privilege today to “proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,” for the privilege of sacrifice is still open for all who hear the call to follow in the footsteps of the Master.

Jesus did not quote the entire commission of the Holy Spirit as it is recorded in Isaiah 61:1-3. He omitted that part which speaks of the “day of vengeance of our God.” He recognized that the commission to proclaim a message of this kind could not apply until this end of the age, when the day of God’s vengeance would be upon the world, so he did not apply this to himself. As the “feet” members of his body, however, this part of the divine commission for service has a special application to us.

And how should the “day of vengeance” be proclaimed? Does it mean that we are commissioned to pronounce vengeance upon the

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people? Certainly not! God's vengeance is already upon the world, and we stand merely as the interpreters of what it means. The expression, "To comfort all that mourn," is associated with proclaiming the day of vengeance, and the thought we get from it is that by properly explaining to those who have an ear to hear the meaning of present world distress, we comfort them.

This seems to be the thought of Isaiah 35:4, where we are admonished to "say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." How sweet is the privilege to assure all who will listen, that

just beyond this day of vengeance, the salvation of God, even life forevermore, will be given to the people. Let us seek more diligently to emulate Christ by being faithful to this commission of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom.

QUESTIONS:

Quote the words of Matthew by which he sums up the activity of Jesus in Galilee.

How do we know that the "devils" which possessed people in Jesus' day were real beings? Who were they?

Did Jesus consider preaching the Gospel an incidental part of his mission to earth?

What Old Testament scripture did Jesus use as authority for his ministry? Does this commission apply to his followers?

LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 13—

Jesus Faces Opposition

JESUS came to be the light of the world, and as we learned from last week's lesson, the light of divine truth radiated from him both through the Gospel message which he proclaimed and by the miracles which he performed—miracles which bore eloquent testimony to the fact that the power of God would be abundantly able to fulfil all his good promises when his due time arrives. The perfection of the Master's character, and his charming manner, pleased the people. The Gospel of the kingdom was also appreciated by many, but the leaders of the people were aroused

in opposition against the message and against him who proclaimed it.

In this we have evidence that the darkness hateth the light, that those who sit in darkness are ready to persecute those who are faithful in proclaiming the truth. It is well to remember this, for as Jesus told his disciples, if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household—the household of faith. In this connection it is also well to realize that Jesus was persecuted only when he began to let his light shine—the light of the Gospel, the light of the knowledge

of the glory of God.

MARK 2:3-8—This is a well-known story in the life of Jesus. It is cited as a part of today's lesson in order to call attention to the rising tide of opposition which developed against Jesus by the religious rulers. It is the account of that marvelous miracle by which the Master healed a man afflicted with palsy. It is not difficult to imagine the excitement which must have been manifested by the people in connection with the many miracles which Jesus performed. On this occasion the crowd forced its way into the home, preventing those who were carrying the sick man from entering and it became necessary to break a hole in the roof through which he could be let down into the presence of the Master.

Jesus was impressed with the faith which they thus manifested, and "said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." It was this statement which gave the scribes present an opportunity to find fault with the Master. They reasoned in their hearts, the account says, and concluded that a statement of this sort should be construed as blasphemy, and blasphemy was a serious offense in Israel. They were simply plotting against the life of the Master.

The scribes were taken quite off guard when they discovered that Jesus knew what they were thinking about. "Why reason ye these things in your hearts?" he asked. And then, before they had a chance to accuse him of blasphemy before the assembled crowd, he silenced them with a question, asking if it

were easier to say to a sick man that his sins were forgiven, or to tell him to rise from his bed of sickness.

Up to this point, although Jesus had said to the man sick of the palsy that his sins were forgiven, apparently there was no evidence that he had been healed, so to demonstrate his authority, Jesus said, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." He arose immediately, and Jesus' authority was proved before all those present, including the scribes. Naturally they realized that it would be useless to raise the issue of blasphemy under such circumstances.

In this account Jesus indicates that the forgiveness of sin and the healing of the sick are very closely related, and this is in harmony with what the Scriptures elsewhere reveal. Death entered into the world as a result of sin. "The sting of death is sin," states the Apostle Paul. (I Cor. 15:56) This does not mean, of course, that extreme forms of sickness are due to special sins on the part of the sufferers. It does mean that sickness of all kinds is due to the fact that we are members of a sinful and dying race. This means, in turn, that when the sins of all mankind are blotted out the result will be "times of restitution of all things." (Acts 3:19-21) See also Isaiah 33:24

MARK 2:16, 17—Here we have another evidence of how the scribes and Pharisees were endeavoring to prejudice the minds of the people against Jesus. Apparently to them it was a serious offense for one who claimed to be righteous to eat

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with publicans and sinners. But Jesus quickly pointed out to them the weakness of their position. "They that are whole," he said, "have no need of a physician."

Actually, of course, there were none that could be considered "whole" in the full sense of the word. This may have been a reference to the claims of holiness made by the scribes and Pharisees. In any case, Jesus explained that he had come to call sinners to repentance, and doubtless he felt that among the publicans and sinners he would be more likely to find those ready to repent than among those who were self-righteous.

MARK 3:1-6—Once again we find the Pharisees on the alert to find an opportunity to charge Jesus with breaking the Law. This time it had to do with the law of the sabbath. Would they find the Master guilty of working on this rest day provided by God? The occasion was in a synagogue on the sabbath day. A man was present who was afflicted with a withered hand, and Jesus' enemies "watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him."

Jesus, as always, was ready for the attack, and asked them, "Is it

lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" Apparently the Master gave his opposers no opportunity to answer this question, and probably they had no answer. His question made it clear to those whose hearts were right that healing the sick on the sabbath day was by no means breaking God's law.

But the Pharisees, foiled again in their effort to trump up a charge against Jesus with which the people generally would agree, began to work along other lines. The account states that they "went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him." But it was not yet "due time" for him to be sacrificed for the sins of the world, so he "withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea," where he continued his ministry of love. No harm could come to Jesus, and so it is with all those who put their trust in the Lord.

QUESTIONS:

Why did the religious leaders of Israel oppose Jesus and finally put him to death?

Is all sickness due to sin?

Did Jesus manifest unfaithfulness by withdrawing from the scene of opposition in Galilee?

LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 20—

Jesus Chooses the Twelve

YE HAVE not chosen me, but I have chosen you," said Jesus to his apostles with reference to the special place provided for them in

the church. (John 15:16) It is the prerogative of all who hear the Gospel of Christ to make a choice as to whether or not they will ac-

cept the provisions of God's grace through Christ, and through full consecration become his disciples. This is as far as our choice goes. In the matter of the place each individual occupies in the body of Christ, that choice is made by the Lord. "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him," writes Paul.—I Cor. 12:18

"I have . . . ordained you," Jesus further said. The twelve apostles ordained by Jesus (with Paul later taking the place of Judas Iscariot) are the only genuine apostles in the church of Christ. The theory of apostolic succession is not supported by any statement in the Word of God. The twelve apostles were not only specially ordained by the Lord, but were inspired by the Holy Spirit, in the sense that they were made infallible in what they said and wrote. No other servants of the church have had this authority bestowed upon them by the Lord, although many have claimed it.

MARK 1:16-20—Here is outlined briefly the manner in which Jesus chose four of his apostles—Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John. These were all fishermen, but when this is said about them we should not conclude that they were poor or unintelligent. We get a better picture of their standing in life by noting—in the case of James and John—that they had "hired servants." This would indicate that they were in the fishing business, rather than being merely fishermen.

In calling Peter and Andrew, Jesus said that he desired to make

them fishers of men. Thus he spoke to them in a way that they would especially appreciate. As we would express it today, Jesus talked to them in their own language, thus assuring them that he understood their position in life, and could utilize whatever natural talents they possessed.

There are certain things which a successful fisherman must know, and certain things which he must do. So it is with those who are "fishers of men," and the Lord wants his people to use wisdom in their efforts to influence others by the truth. Perhaps one of the most important considerations in this respect is to let others know that we are genuinely interested in them, and that we have some knowledge of their problems.

There can be no change in the fundamental doctrines of the truth, but the application of the truth should vary according to the viewpoint of those to whom it is presented. A different approach, for example, should be used when presenting the truth to a Jew from what would be best employed in presenting the message to a professed Christian who still believes the God-dishonoring doctrine of eternal torment. The presentation and application of prophetic truth must, of necessity, also vary from what would have been effective fifty years ago.

LUKE 6:12-16—The choosing of the twelve apostles was considered by Jesus as a matter of great responsibility and he therefore took the matter to his Heavenly Father in prayer. The King James translation gives the thought that he

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prayed all night, but the Greek text indicates that what he really did was to spend the night in a place of prayer. The **Diaglott** rendering is that he "remained through the night in the oratory of God." One of these special places of prayer is referred to in Acts 16:13. No doubt Jesus spent a great deal of time that night in communion with his Heavenly Father, but there is nothing in the text to prove that he prayed all night continuously.

Shortly before his death, Jesus referred to his apostles as those whom his Father had given to him. (John 17:6) Evidently his communion with his Father the night before he made the selections was so vital and so satisfactory that he knew his God was guiding him, hence that the apostles were not actually chosen by him, but by his Father. This was Jesus' experience throughout the entire period of his ministry, for he said to his God, "I knew that thou hearest me

always."—John 11:42

Doubtless each of the apostles were given important services in connection with the affairs of the church, although the services of Matthew, Peter, James, and John stand out more prominently than that of the others. Peter, James, and John seemed to be taken into the confidence of the Master more than the others, and perhaps this was because they were being prepared for the vital service they were later to render to the church through their epistles and otherwise. It is often true with the Lord's people that their experiences of today are in preparation for the privileges of service they will enjoy tomorrow.

QUESTIONS:

Are all the followers of Jesus called to be fishers of men?

In what way did Jesus prepare himself for the responsibility of selecting those who were to serve as apostles?

Were all the apostles used equally in the service of the church?

LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 27—

The Standards of the Kingdom

THE standards of the kingdom set forth in the Scriptures cited for today's lesson appertain more particularly to the Lord's requirements of those who are seeking to qualify for joint-heirship with Jesus in his kingdom reign. True, God's standards of righteousness are in principle the same for all. Even those who gain life as subjects of the kingdom during the

thousand years of Christ's reign will have to possess the same qualities of heart and mind which the Scriptures outline as necessary for those who will live and reign with Christ. The subjects of the kingdom will not be required to lay down their lives in sacrifice for others, but they will have to possess the heart qualities which would make them glad to do this

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were it the Lord's will for them.

One of the principles of righteousness essential for all to possess who would be pleasing to God is expressed in Jesus words: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." (Matt. 6:33) In brief, this means that God must come first in the life of everyone who would be pleasing to him. The Lord will not share the dominion of our hearts with another, or with other interests. If we want him to come into our lives, we must give him first place. There can be no exception to this. Not until we can say to him, "None of self and all of thee," will he enthrone himself in our lives and be to us a never-failing source of grace and wisdom and strength, supplying all our needs, both temporal and spiritual.

MATTHEW 5:1-12—In this passage is listed what is commonly referred to as the Beatitudes—the blessings. They constitute the opening remarks of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, and in many respects are an epitome of the thoughts expressed more in detail throughout the sermon. This sermon was not addressed to the general public—although some of them may have heard it—but to Jesus' own disciples. The multitude was close by, but Jesus' "disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them."

In verse fourteen of the chapter, Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world," and to understand the meaning of the Beatitudes it is important to realize that they are setting forth the high standards of righteousness required of those whom the Lord honors as

his ambassadors. The whole Jewish nation, and particularly the religious leaders of the nation, were at that time nominally God's representatives in the earth, but they were about to lose this honored position because they had failed to bring forth the proper fruitage of righteousness. Jesus warned that the kingdom was to be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. This new nation, which was to be so highly honored, is mentioned by the Apostle Peter. See I Peter 2:9, 10.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit"—many who are extremely poor in material possessions are very haughty and proud in spirit, hence not usable as servants of God. To be poor in spirit means that one recognizes his own undone condition and his great need of God's grace. Often the Lord permits severe trials to come into the lives of those whom he calls into kingdom service in order to impress upon them their great need of him. Many earnest Christians can look back in their lives and recognize that certain experiences through which they passed were essential means employed by the Lord to bring them to him.

Of those who are poor in spirit the Master said, "theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This expression means more than merely being citizens of the kingdom. It has to do more particularly with the privilege of being a part of the governing body in the kingdom, for every true follower of the Master is called to share this rulership with him. Besides, there is the

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preparatory work which precedes the full establishment of the kingdom. In this work also the followers of Jesus have a share. All the privileges of the kingdom belong to those who are "poor in spirit."

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." It is manifest that this second Beatitude is not true if we take merely its surface meaning, for there have been almost countless millions throughout the ages who have mourned yet have not been comforted. In seeking the deeper and truer meaning of this statement it is well to remember that it is addressed to those who were to serve as Christ's ambassadors in the earth, and that all such must become copies of him.

This means that we are to be mourners in the same sense that Jesus was a mourner. Of him it is written that he was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." (Isa. 53:3) When Jesus was at the tomb of Lazarus, he wept. (John 11:35) Jesus' sorrow, however, was not because of his own suffering, but rather a sympathetic sorrow for others. He was a genuine mourner for the ills of the fallen and dying race, and this was one of the motives which encouraged him to lay down his life for the world, and we are to be like him.

This is a very heart-searching thought for all who profess to be followers of the Master. Are we genuinely sympathetic toward the suffering world of mankind? If we are, we will be trying to give them a crumb of comfort, a ray of hope, by telling them the glad tidings of the kingdom. We know

that if faithful we will have the great privilege later of helping to wipe away the tears from the faces of all mankind; but a faithfulness which will make us worthy of that high honor in the future will lead to a self-sacrificing effort to do what we can to comfort the people now.

Such sacrifice becomes the evidence of our real interest in those for whom Christ died. And if we take this sacrificing interest in others, we are bound to be comforted ourselves. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself," is a divine principle certain to operate for the great joy of all who seek to comfort others by proclaiming the truth. (Prov. 11:25) Paul quoted Jesus as saying that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." If we are genuine mourners, we will be putting ourselves in line for this greater blessing.—Acts 20:35

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Meekness is teachableness, and the Lord can use those only who are willing to be taught by him, through his Word. The professed representatives of the Lord in Jesus' day—those who sat in Moses' seat—were losing their honored position because they were not meek. When Jesus came to them as the Messiah of promise they rejected his teachings and put him to death on the cross. Because of this they lost their privilege of inheriting the earth.

The inheritance of the earth, as mentioned in this passage, does not have reference to receiving restitution blessings. The inheritance

in this instance is rather one of rulership, and the reference is to the honored privilege of sharing with Jesus as the promised seed of Abraham in the work of blessing all the families of the earth. The Revelator says of those who receive this inheritance that they shall reign on the earth. (Rev. 5:10) Only those who are truly meek, teachable—willing to learn and do the Lord's will—can hope to enter into such a glorious inheritance.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." There is a great deal of meaning in the simplicity of this statement, because hunger and thirst are very real when the system craves food and drink. The illustration very forcefully describes a genuine desire to know God and to live in harmony with him. And it is only those who are truly sincere in this respect who are "filled." If our study of God's Word is prompted by any selfish desire it will not yield to us its treasures of knowledge and grace. The promise that to those who knock it shall be opened is fulfilled only to those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." Jesus set forth the principle involved in this Beatitude when he explained that unless we forgive men their trespasses against us, neither shall the Heavenly Father forgive our trespasses. The importance of this lesson is further impressed by the fact that it is made the basis of our prayers for forgiveness—"forgive

us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." Surely those who represent a merciful God as light-bearers in the world, must themselves learn to appreciate and practice the quality of mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Here it is essential to put the emphasis on heart purity. The scribes and Pharisees were very meticulous in keeping the "outside of the platter" clean, but gave little attention to that which could not be seen of men. But the Lord is looking for heart purity, a purity of intention that is deep-rooted, sincere, and enduring.

The reward of the pure in heart is that they shall see God. They rejoice in the vision of God which is given to them through his Word, even while they are still in the flesh. They behold his wisdom, his justice, his love, and his power. In all of these attributes they see his glory displayed, and by this vision of divine glory, they are led to prostrate themselves before him and offer themselves for his service. Blessed indeed is the lot of the pure in heart! And it will be thrice blessed when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and we are able to enter into the actual presence of the Heavenly Father. What a blessed hope!

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." The Lord's true people—those who are filled with his Spirit—will be an influence for peace wherever they go. They will not put peace above purity, but, consistent with the truth of

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God's Word, they will endeavor to live peaceably with all men.

In addition to this, the followers of Jesus—those who are the light of the world—are commissioned to be ministers of reconciliation, and in this capacity, through the ministry of the Gospel, they endeavor to make peace between God and men. They are authorized to say, "Be ye reconciled to God."—II Cor. 5:20

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The "blessing" of this final beatitude is the same as mentioned in the first—"the kingdom of heaven." This high reward goes to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Millions of the human race have been persecuted for one reason or another, so the mere fact of being persecuted is not the important consideration here. "For righteousness' sake" is the main point to be noticed. To be persecuted for righteousness' sake means that the powers of darkness are arrayed against us because of our faithfulness as light-bearers in the world.

The standards of righteousness set forth in all of these Beatitudes are required of each one whom the Lord uses to represent him, and those whom he will exalt to joint-heirship with him in the kingdom. All the promised blessings will also be enjoyed by each one who is thus faithful. Surely, then, it behooves us to humble ourselves before the Lord and to strive earnestly every

day to make the kingdom of God and its righteousness the first consideration of our lives.

MATTHEW 7:24-27—In this passage—the closing words of the Sermon on the Mount—Jesus stresses the importance of "doing" the things which he outlined. He said that he would consider the one who did so a wise man, and the one who heard and did not, a foolish man. Jesus said that the doer of the Word would be wise, and like the man who built his house upon a rock where it would not be destroyed by the winds and storms which might beat upon it.

On the other hand, the one who does not live up to the principles of the truth will not be able to withstand the storms of life because the high standards of righteousness set forth in the Word have not become a part of his life. James emphasizes the importance of this when he says that we should be doers of the word, and not hearers only.—James 1:22

QUESTIONS:

What does it mean to seek first the kingdom of heaven?

Was the Sermon on the Mount preached to the world or only to Jesus' disciples?

Name the Beatitudes, and explain briefly the application of each one to the Christian life.

Quote a statement by James in which he sets forth a thought similar to the one contained in the closing words of the Sermon on the Mount.



Man's Fall and Condemnation

GOD'S PLAN IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS

CHAPTER THREE

3:1 THERE has been a great deal of speculation concerning the identity of the "serpent" mentioned for the first time in the opening verse of this chapter. The term is a translation of the Hebrew word *nachash*, meaning to hiss, mutter, or whisper, as do enchanters. The explanation that the "serpent" was more subtle than any beast of the field is not altogether true of serpents as we know them today. The Hebrew word here translated beast could as well be rendered living creature, and some contend that the "serpent" was in reality the fallen Lucifer, and is so referred to in Revelation 20:2.

There is perhaps something to be said in favor of this view, for it would mean that Eve was confronted with the enticing influence of a glorious, though fallen, spirit being, rather than the repelling presence of a snake, hence the difficulty she experienced in resisting his suggestions. But regardless of the medium by which the temptation was presented to mother Eve, the Scriptures are explicit on the point that Satan was, indeed, the real tempter—and this is the important consideration.

Satan's method of attack in the case of Eve was the same as it has been throughout the ages; namely, an attempt to cast doubt upon the

Word of God—"hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Satan was acquainted with the Word of God then, even as he displayed familiarity with it 4,000 years later when tempting Jesus. While Satan is doubtless agreeable to the immorality and crime that have resulted from the fall of man, his principal activity is that of attacking the confidence of God's people in the veracity of his Word.

3:2, 3 IN ANSWERING the "serpent," Eve revealed that she had a thorough knowledge of God's requirements. This information was obviously communicated to her by Adam, as she was created after the law was given to him. The clause, "neither shall ye touch it," was added by Eve, and may be expressive of her desire to comply with God's law even to the finest detail—that she would not so much as go near the tree which had been forbidden.

3:4 HAVING succeeded in engaging Eve in conversation, in having her state the law of God and the penalty for violating it, that "old serpent" was quick to follow up with a flat denial that God meant what he said when he declared that the penalty for disobeying God's law would be death. God had said, "Thou shalt surely die," but in denying this Satan in-

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sisted, "Ye shall not surely die." Stemming from this denial of the Word of God have come all the false doctrines that have deceived the dying world throughout all the ages.

Satan's lie, "Ye shall not surely die," finds expression today in the unscriptural theory that "there is no death." All philosophies tending to show that death is not a reality have their origin in this lie of Satan's. Among these are the claims of inherent immortality; the immortality of the soul; the transmigration of souls; reincarnation, and others.

3:5 IN THIS text we have an example of Satan's method of deceiving by the admixture of truth and error. It was true that partaking of the forbidden fruit would result in the human race obtaining a knowledge of good and evil, but it was not true that human beings would become gods. We cannot be sure what Satan meant by his use of the term "gods," or mighty ones, but this is probably the origin of the idea that at death human beings enter a higher existence similar to the angels. It was essential that Satan introduce some such view as this into the minds of the people in order to divert their attention from the reality of death.

3:6, 7 FROM the reading of this passage it is apparent that Satan had presented a most desirable picture of the advantages that would accrue from disobeying God's law. Eve was assured that the tree was "good for food," "pleasant to the eyes," and "to be desired to make one wise." With

all these reasons for breaking God's law, plus the doubt as to whether death would actually follow as a result, Eve succumbed to the temptation, and Adam joined her in the transgression.

Eve was deceived, but the Apostle Paul informs us that Adam was not. (1 Tim. 2:14) It was to Adam that the Creator gave his law directly, and his communion with his God had evidently resulted in giving him confidence in his Word. He knew that death would result from his disobedience, but he chose to go along with his wife in a course which he knew would lead to certain disaster. He may have recalled his loneliness prior to her creation and felt that life would not be worth-while without her.

The sudden realization that they were naked is in keeping with the symbolism which is used throughout the Scriptures indicating that those who are guilty before God are represented as being in need of a covering. This symbolism finds its most important application in connection with the robe of Christ's righteousness which covers the imperfections of all who come to God through him.

3:8-10 "AND they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden." While Adam and Eve had transgressed God's law they were still mentally and physically perfect, and apparently God created them in such a manner that they could communicate with him more directly than is possible for imperfect human beings. It is not necessary to suppose of course

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that the Creator himself spoke personally and audibly to them; but whatever method he used, it must have been with a directness and definiteness that there could be no mistaking the meaning of the message.

They were afraid. Fear is one of the inevitable results of sin. This principle has been borne out in the experiences of the entire human race. Because the race has continued in sin, all mankind continues to be blighted with fear.

A knowledge of both good and evil was to result from partaking of the forbidden tree. They began to acquire their knowledge of evil almost immediately; but their full knowledge of both good and evil will not be attained until the close of the millennial age. The entire human race will then possess that knowledge through experience, and thus equipped, will be able to decide whether or not they will obey God and live, or disobey him and die.

3:11-13 ONE of the traits of fallen human nature is that of blaming others for our own wrong doing. This tendency manifested itself very early in human experience, and we find Adam blaming Eve—and implying that the Creator himself was somewhat to blame, for he had given Eve to him—and Eve blaming the “old serpent.” When one does wrong, the most satisfactory thing to do is to accept the blame, and as far as possible, make amends.

3:14, 15 IN THIS condemnation of the “serpent” is clear evidence that more than a snake was

involved in the temptation of our first parents. The “seed” of the serpent referred to here is the seed of Satan, made up of all who come under his influence and lend themselves to the furthering of his sinful purposes. The “enmity” placed between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman has been manifested throughout the ages in the persecution of those upon whom God has manifested his favor.

The assertion that the seed of the serpent would bruise the “heel” of the seed of the woman suggests opposition, but not of a sort that would prove fatal. The bruising of the serpent’s head by the seed of the woman indicates the destruction of that great enemy of God and men represented by the serpent; namely, Satan, the devil. The seed of the woman is The Christ, made up of Jesus, the Head, and the church, his body; and one of the New Testament promises is that Satan shall be bruised under the feet of the church. We are also told that all the wicked will God destroy.—Psalm 145:20

3:16 IN THIS text we have important evidences of the inspiration of the Bible. From a physical standpoint there is no reason why human mothers should suffer in giving birth to their children more than do the lower animals, but they do. No scientific reason has ever been advanced for this, and no explanation given, except this one which we find in the Book of Genesis. It is a part of the curse which resulted from Eve’s transgression of God’s law.

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3:17-19 THE punishment upon Adam—and upon the entire human race of which he was the representative head—was twofold. He was to die—dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return—and the earth was cursed, making it difficult to obtain the necessary food.

There seems to be special significance in the expression, “cursed is the ground for thy sake.” In the Creator’s wisdom, the earth was left in an unfinished state, making it necessary for fallen man to subsist by hard toil. This was for the benefit of man since it has prevented the human race from sinking even deeper into debauchery and sin.

3:20 THE meaning of names plays an important part in the revelation of God’s plan. Mary, for example, was told that she should call her son “Jesus”—meaning “savior”—because he would save his people from their sins. The name “Eve,” is from a Hebrew word meaning “life-giver.” While the life principle originates with the father it could not develop into maturity without the aid of the mother, hence the importance of this fact is emphasized by the name that was given to the original mother of the human race.

3:21 IN GOD’S provision of clothing for our first parents which required the sacrifice of life, there is a pointing forward to the provision of Christ’s righteousness to cover the imperfections of those who return to God’s favor through him. While God did not reveal his plan of salvation with much detail in his dealing with

Adam and Eve, he did not leave them altogether without hope. His statement concerning the “seed” of the woman is very significant in the light of subsequent promises, and in the coats provided for the sinful pair there is a picture of a future provision of divine love.

3:22-24 GOD said, “Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.” Adam and Eve did not become “gods” in any other sense than in their knowledge of good and evil, and now they were to experience both. They had experienced a great deal of “good” before they transgressed the divine law, and life was not to be entirely void of blessings even now. However, beginning with the fall, the experiences which stand out most prominently in the lives of all are those which come under the general heading of “evil.”

The Lord said that man had become as “one of us.” The “us” in this statement is evidently a reference to himself and the Logos, who co-operated with him in the great creative work. (John 1:1-3) God’s knowledge of good and evil was intuitive, and the Logos had received it by information from his Heavenly Father. But now man was in the way to obtain it by experience. Although a deep sense of guilt came over our first parents because of their sin, and they immediately suffered from the loss of sweet communion with their Creator, the knowledge of the terrible consequences of their disobedience was to be a growing one.

In carrying out the death sentence, God expelled Adam and

CHAPTER FOUR

Eve from their paradise home—"lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." In a sense, all the trees in the garden which were "good for food" were trees of life, but one is mentioned especially as being the "tree of life." (ch. 2:9) It is not necessary to suppose that a single meal from this particular tree, or group of trees, would have had some magic effect upon our first parents making it impossible for them to die. The thought is, rather, that if they could have remained in the garden and have daily access to this perfect food, the "curse" upon the earth outside of the garden would not have affected them—they would not have died.

Cherubim and a flaming sword were placed at the east of the garden to prevent our first parents from returning to their paradise home. It is quite possible that this is symbolic language. Prof Strong defines the Hebrew word here translated cherubim as an "imaginary figure." It is reasonable to conclude that both the cherubim and the "flaming sword" are symbolic of divine providences which made it impossible for fallen man to continue enjoying the blessings of the garden which God had planted for him. Possibly a great upheaval of nature, such as an earthquake, made the garden uninhabitable. Being deprived of the life-sustaining food of their paradise home, this first human pair began to die—began to realize from actual experience that Satan had lied when he said, "Ye shall not surely die."

4:1, 2 THIS passage indicates that Adam and Eve did not exercise their powers of procreation until after they were expelled from Eden, which proves that this was not the "forbidden fruit." God had commanded them to multiply and fill the earth, but, in his providence, this commission did not begin to be carried out until after they sinned. Now they were under condemnation to death. They had lost a measure of their original perfection, and of necessity their children would inherit their imperfections. Thus it was that original sin resulted in the entire human race losing life. Paul expresses the thought clearly, saying "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. 5:12

4:3-8 LITTLE detail is furnished concerning the domestic life of the earth's first family. Cain and Abel had by now grown to young manhood. One became a tiller of the soil and the other a keeper of sheep. Doubtless much occurred during their childhood and maturing years which would have been well worth recording, but for the Lord's purpose he selected just this one incident. True, it was a tragic incident, ending in the murder of Abel, but it is not recorded in the sacred Word simply as a murder story, nor even because it was the first murder—and probably the first death. It is used, rather, because in it is an illustration of a fundamental feature of God's plan of salvation.

We doubt if all the details even

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of this experience of these two young men are given. What is written simply tells us that God had respect unto the sacrifice brought to him by Abel, and that he did not so view Cain's offering. The account gives us no special reason for this seeming partiality. In verse seven the Lord says to Cain, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." This, however, seems to refer to what Cain's attitude might be subsequent to the acceptance of Abel's sacrifice, meaning that if he took this experience in the proper spirit, the Lord would compensate him in some way later.

The Apostle Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, throws important light on this narrative, saying that "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (Heb. 11:4) This would indicate that Abel brought his offering to the Lord as a work of faith, knowing that it was the kind of sacrifice that would be acceptable to him.

Previously God had said that the "seed" of the woman would bruise the "serpent's" head. This implied a deliverance from the result of the tragedy which occurred in Eden. Sin there entered into the world, and for the human race to be delivered from its result there would have to be a remission of sin. The apostle informs us that without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin. (Heb. 9:22) Thus, having made this promise of future deliverance, God began to illustrate the manner in which it would be fulfilled, in-

dicating that it would be upon the basis of a sacrifice involving the shedding of blood. As the plan of God for human redemption and deliverance unfolds through the Word, we learn that Jesus is the "Lamb" that is "slain," and that it is his blood that atones for the sin of Adam and the entire human race.

4:9, 10 SELFISHNESS, manifesting itself in the form of jealousy, had taken a firm hold upon Cain, and his attitude was well expressed in his question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Selfishness ultimately leads to a viewpoint of this sort, whereas love prompts in the opposite direction. Those in whose hearts the love of God reigns, feel a genuine concern for the well-being of others, particularly those who are near—and should be dear—to them according to the flesh.

Adam was a son of God (Luke 3:38), and from this standpoint the entire human race is God's family although, since the fall, alienated from him. But God loves this family, and has made a plan, through Jesus, for the recovery of all who will accept the provision of his love. If we appreciate what God has done for us and for the world, and are endeavoring to be like him, we too will take a self-sacrificing interest in all whom he loves. Unlike Cain's attitude of selfishness, we will gladly assume whatever responsibility we can toward others, and will seek to do them good.

The Hebrew word translated "blood" in verse ten is plural, and should be rendered "bloods." This

may denote that God considered the murder of Abel as a figure of the experiences which would come to all those throughout the ages who, through their works, would manifest their faith in him and in his Word. From this standpoint all the righteous blood that was shed would be like the righteous blood of Abel. See Matthew. 23:35

4:11-15 CAIN'S punishment was severe. The word "punishment" in verse thirteen, however, should be translated iniquity, or sin. The Septuagint, Vulgate, and other versions render this passage, "Is my iniquity too great to be forgiven?" This translation harmonizes well with the Lord's reply, which assured Cain that although he would be a marked man, he could expect a certain amount of protection. While this was no indication that God had forgiven him, it was a partial answer to his question, and one from which he could obtain a certain degree of comfort.

4:16, 17 CAIN'S going out from the presence of the Lord means that no longer did the Lord deal with him, and that from thenceforth he no longer looked to the Lord for favors. He dwelt in the land of Nod, which is mentioned as being east of Eden. The exact geographical setting of Nod cannot be determined today.

The mention of Cain's wife has raised that age-old question, Where did Cain get his wife? Up to this point in the narrative, no mention is made of members of the race other than Cain and Abel. However, this does not mean that there were no other children. In chapter

five, verse four, we learn that Adam begat sons and daughters throughout his long lifetime, and it is reasonable to conclude that daughters had been born and had become mature by the time Cain was ready for marriage. As the race had not deteriorated physically by then, as it has since, intermarrying would not result disastrously to their offspring as is liable to be the case today.

4:18-24 ENOCH, the son of Cain, should not be confused with Enoch, "the seventh from Adam" and a descendant of Seth. The geneology of Cain's descendants indicates quite clearly the nature of their social life. Cain founded the first city; Lamech instituted polygamy; Jabal instituted the nomadic life; Jubal invented musical instruments; and Tubalcain was the first blacksmith.

4:25, 26 THE name "Seth" means appointed, or placed. Eve gave the name to this particular boy because she believed that God had given him to her to take the place of Abel. Evidently she had great respect for the promise of a coming "seed," and noting, in God's providences, that his favor had been upon Abel, she felt there must be someone especially appointed by the Lord to take his place if that original promise was to be fulfilled.

We cannot be too certain of the meaning of the expression, "then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." It does not mean that worship of God first began in the days of Enos, for as we have seen, years before this both Cain and Abel worshiped Jehovah and

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brought offerings to him. The marginal translation states, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord." There are a number of Hebrew scholars who take the view that this text is giving us the origin of the worship of false gods, and

of taking the name of the true God in vain. It seems reasonable that since these chapters tell us of the fall of man into sin, they should complete the story by informing us that man's worship also became corrupted.

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Week of February 13 (Pacific Time Zone)—"Evolution Versus the Bible"; literature offer: "Creation"; all other Time Zones—"Palestine in Prophecy"; literature offer: "Chosen People."

Week of February 20 (Pacific Time Zone)—"Science and Evolution"; literature offer: "Creation"; all other Time Zone—"Jehovah, Creator, and Father"; literature offer: Gift Book No. 4.

Week of February 27 (Pacific Time Zone)—"A Royal Nation"; literature offer: "A Royal Nation"; all other Time Zones—"Jesus, the Son of God"; literature offer: Gift Book No. 4.

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and Good Will Toward All

Our Refuge and Strength

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”—PSALM 46:1

GOD'S people have always been a people of trouble, and he has always been their refuge and strength. “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all,” the Scriptures declare. (Psalm 34:19) One of the fundamental reasons for the afflictions of the righteous is found in that statement by the Lord in the Book of Genesis where he explained that he would put enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. (Gen. 3:15) This has been manifested by Satan's persecution of all those upon whom God has shown his favor, the most outstanding example being the animosity that resulted in the crucifixion of Jesus.

The Lord's people have also suffered in common with the world of mankind, because they have been members of a fallen and dying race. God has not promised to spare his own from the trials which come through sickness and pain and death. The apostle wrote that there has not befallen us any temptation (or trial) but what “is common to man.”—I Cor. 10:13

Another reason the Lord's people suffer is that he chastens them—“Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” (Heb. 12:6) Lest we be discouraged by the experiences which fall into this category, it is well to remember that they are an evidence of God's love. They are disciplinary in nature, and calculated to train and direct us into a more whole-hearted service of God and a more resolute determination to do his will regardless of what the cost may be.

It is true—reassuringly true—that in every age, and under every circumstance, God has been a refuge and strength to his people. He was a source of strength to Abel, who by faith offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain; he sustained Enoch, who

walked with him. All the patriarchs and prophets—in fact, the entire ancient worthy class—found in their God an ever-present source of strength and comfort. In their every time of need they knew that they could flee to God and find in him a haven of refuge from the storms of opposition and persecution by which they otherwise would have been overwhelmed and destroyed.

The same was true of Jesus. It has been true, and continues to be true with all his footstep followers. Not only is it our privilege to suffer with him, but we can rejoice also in the blessed assurance that we will be given grace sufficient for our every time of need. God has not promised to deliver his spiritual Israel from trouble, but he has promised to sustain them as they suffer for righteousness' sake. What quietness and peace, therefore, should be ours when we take into our hearts his blessed promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."—Heb. 13: 5

The "Time of Trouble"

While the Lord's people throughout the age have rejoiced in the blessed assurance of our text, and have experienced in no uncertain way the Lord's sustaining grace, this promise seems to have a special application to the footstep followers of Jesus living at this end of the age. There are many promises which assure us of his love and care in every trial, in every trouble, but this opening verse of the forty-sixth Psalm is a promise of God's grace in a particular trouble (Verse 2, 3), also referred to by the Prophet Daniel as a "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."—Dan. 12: 1

"Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."—PSALM 46: 2, 3

Because God is our refuge and strength, we will not fear though the earth be removed. This language clearly identifies the application of the Psalm to the end of the age, the time of Christ's second presence; for it is during this time that the symbolic earth is removed and the symbolic mountains are carried into the midst of the sea. It would almost seem as though the Master had this very prophecy in mind when, in answering his disciples' questions concerning the signs of his second presence, he described the great

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“time of trouble” as “distress of nations, with perplexity,” and said that the sea and the waves would be roaring.—Luke 21:25

But we will not fear though “the waters thereof roar and be troubled,” wrote the Psalmist. Jesus said of this time that men’s hearts would fail them for fear as they looked forward to the things coming upon the earth; but we do not share this fear, for we have the promise that “God is our refuge and strength,” that he will care for us in this time of trouble that is upon the world—that even though the earth be removed (and it is even now in process of being removed), he will be our refuge, our sure retreat of safety, so that no evil can befall us. What a reassuring promise!

“Though the earth be removed”—it is the removal of the symbolic earth that is filling the hearts of the people with fear. It is not alone fear of the devastating trouble they see coming upon the nations in the form of atomic and bacterial warfare, but the fear also which is due to uncertainty of the future along economic lines that is now blighting the peace and happiness of the world. But we do not need to share this fear.

If our faith in the plan of God is strong and abiding, we will rejoice in every evidence which reveals the disintegration of the old and selfish order of things, even though it may work to our disadvantage so far as the material things of life are concerned. In another Psalm, quoting a corrected translation, the Psalmist inquired, “Shall I up lift mine eyes unto the hills? From whence cometh my help?” Then, answering his question, he states, “My help cometh from the Lord.”—Psalm 121:1, 2

And it is to God that we should look for help today. There is no point in putting our trust in the “hills,” or the “mountains,” for we know that they will be “carried into the midst of the sea.” But we can put our trust in the Lord, for in this time of trouble he is our refuge and strength. And how blessed it is to realize this! How it should contribute to our peace and quietness to know that despite the turmoil and fear with which we are surrounded no harm can come to us as new creatures, that soon there is to be a new heavens and a new earth, and that, if we are faithful in laying down our lives in divine service during these trying times, we will have a part in the “mountain of the Lord”—that glorious Mount Zion which is to take the place of the mountains which even now are beginning to be carried into midst of the sea.

“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.”—PSALM 46: 4

In Hebrews 6:18 we read about fleeing for refuge and laying hold upon the hope set before us, a hope that is based upon two immutable things—God’s promise, and his oath by which that promise was ratified. The apostle’s reference here is to the promise made to Abraham—that oathbound promise, or covenant, which guarantees the blessing of all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham. It is, in a general way, this same refuge, or source of strength, that the Psalmist refers to when he writes, “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.”

The “river” is undoubtedly the same symbolic river referred to in Ezekiel’s prophecy, and also in Revelation. (Ezek. 47:1-9; Rev. 22:1) This river is not flowing as yet for the blessing of all nations. When we examine the text carefully, we discover that the Psalmist makes a distinction between the “river” and the “stream” which converge to form the river. These streams of the river in the illustration, are all the many tributaries which, by emptying into the main stream, form the river—a very meaningful symbolism of the preparatory work of God throughout the ages which finally results in the “river of life” flowing with its abundant blessings of life for all mankind.

And what has God been doing? Throughout this Gospel age he has been calling and preparing the church to live and reign with Christ. During previous ages he was selecting and training those who are to be “princes in all the earth.” (Psalm 45:16) Nineteen centuries ago he sent his Son to be the Redeemer of the world, thus providing an opportunity of life for all mankind. His method of dealing with his people and of preparing them for the place designed for them in his kingdom arrangements has been to a large extent through his Word.

God has made promises—revealing and heart-cheering promises. To these promises he has attached conditions of obedience. In their entirety these promises outline the divine plan of the ages. But not all of God’s people have been blessed with a knowledge of that plan. God promised Abraham that his seed would be the channel of blessing for all mankind, but Abraham comprehended very little of how this would be brought about. We might think

of the promise to Abraham, however, as one of the "streams" which helped to contribute to the great river of life yet to flow for the blessing of all. It had a powerful effect in the life of Abraham, and in the lives of all the ancient worthy class from Abraham's day to the coming of Christ. It helped, in other words, to prepare for the river.

Throughout the Old Testament there are hundreds of other promises, all in full harmony with the Abrahamic promise, and all helping to make plain the plan of God. In the New Testament there is a further revealing of the divine plan. It is here that the heavenly phase of the kingdom is stressed. And we know, too, that the death and resurrection of Jesus ratified all the glorious promises of God, making them workable and real in the lives of God's spiritual Israelites.

As we have seen, Abraham was blessed by one of the "streams," while others of the Lord's people have rejoiced in the knowledge of perhaps many; but not until the end of the age—the time of Christ's presence—have the people of God been blessed by the refreshing waters of all the "streams" of the river, for not until now has the divine plan been understood in so full a manner as it is today. And why is this? It is because the Lord knew that in these trying times incident to the ending of a world, when the symbolic earth would be removed and when the "mountains" would be carried into the midst of the sea, his people would need the whole truth of his plan in order to withstand the fiery ordeals of these trying times.

This is a time when the fulfilment of the promises and prophecies of the Word of God are so manifest that it is almost as though we were walking by sight, yet never has the faith of the saints been tested so severely. One reason for this is our very human viewpoint of time. We are impatient in our waiting for the kingdom, and in our impatience become easy targets for the adversary's arrows of doubt. How great, then, is our need for the truth, the whole truth—all the "streams" of the river—in this day of trial, this "time of trouble."

"The City of God"

The Psalmist writes that the streams of the river make glad the city of God. The city of God is the kingdom of God. But here the

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reference is not to God's kingdom established in power and great glory, but rather, as the text declares, the city that is represented in the "holy of the tabernacles of the most High." The word "place" is not in the original Hebrew text, and the reference is therefore to the first compartment of the typical tabernacle, called the "holy."

Students of the tabernacle will recall that the "holy" symbolizes, among other things, the condition of full consecration to God. The church as a whole is represented in the holy from three standpoints—by the table of shewbread, the lampstand, and the golden altar. The Lord's consecrated people partake of the spiritual food represented by the shewbread; they are enlightened by the truth as represented by the lights of the lampstand; and they offer sacrifice, as shown by the golden altar.

And they also hold forth the Word of life, as symbolized by the table which bore the shewbread; and they let their light shine for the guidance of one another, as a part of the antitypical lampstand. God's provision that they lay down their lives for one another provides the opportunity of sacrifice that is symbolized by the golden altar. •

Briefly, this is the manner in which the "holy of the tabernacles" pictures the consecrated life of every true Christian. It is in this condition—this blessed haven of separation from the world—that we find refuge and strength. It is referred to in Psalm ninety-one as the "secret place of the most High," and here we are told that those who dwell in this secret place "shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." What a beautiful symbol of God's protection and care, of his loving interest in his consecrated people!

But how can we be sure that we can claim this provision for ourselves? The answer to this question is in our own hands. God has made every necessary provision for our care, and it remains only for us to take the necessary steps which make those provisions available for our own individual needs. Primarily they are the steps of repentance, the acceptance of Christ and his atoning work, and full consecration to do God's will. The latter is undoubtedly the crucial test of our faith and devotion. It is so easy to say that we have made a consecration, and in a limited way, live a consecrated life. But are we really consecrated in the full and absolute sense of the word—consecrated to sacrifice all in the serv-

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ice of the Lord, not merely to righteous living, as is the case with so many.

It is important also to note well the Psalmist's statement to the effect that it is those who "dwell" in the secret place of the most High who shall abide under the shadow of his protection. It is one thing to enter the holy through consecration, but quite another thing to remain there, to make that our home. It is here that the test of "patient continuance in well doing" enters into our relationship to the Lord. In many respects this is the real test of our consecration. It has been true throughout the entire age that some have run well for a time, and then have become weary and have faltered by the wayside.

But beloved, let us resolve to be permanent dwellers in the holy, in the "secret place of the most High." There are times, no doubt, when all of us tend to become weary of holding forth the Word of life, and when we wonder if it is necessary to continue letting our light shine. When the fires of sacrifice become more than ordinarily hot we might feel like removing ourselves from the altar. But at such times let us remember the Lord's many assurances of help in our every time of need. Let us also realize that the joy of the Lord is our strength, as surely it is. Let us remember that these light afflictions which are but for a moment are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are very temporal, while those which are unseen, are eternal.—II Cor. 4:17, 18.

If when we examine our own hearts we find that the greatest desire of our lives is still to carry out the terms of our consecration to God; and if in turn the Lord is continuing to bless us with a knowledge of his truth and a desire to make it known to others; and if we are rejoicing in those blessed spiritual opportunities which are symbolized in the "holy," then we may know that God is for us, that he is our refuge and strength; for the streams of the river have made glad our hearts and have inspired us to present our all in devotion to him and his cause. Happy Zion, what a favored lot is thine!

"God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early."—PSALM 46: 5

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In this verse we are told of help that goes beyond that which is provided through the truth and the overruling providences of God. "She shall not be moved," writes the Psalmist. As the Psalm has its principal application in this end of the age, the reference here is similar to that found in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews where the apostle tells that at this time everything will be shaken that can be shaken. (Heb. 12:27, 28) In the Psalm itself we notice the result of this shaking. The earth is "removed," and the "mountains . . . carried into the midst of the sea." The waters thereof "roar" and are "troubled," writes the Psalmist. Yes, all earthly things that are associated with this present evil world are being "moved."

But there is one thing in the Psalm that is not moved—"she" shall not be moved. The reference here is to the Lord's people as a class—the Zion class, the city of God, the last remaining members in the flesh, represented in the "holy of the tabernacles of the most High." "*She shall not be moved.*" Blessed promise! She will be tried and tested. Her goods will be spoiled. As human beings, each member of this class will seemingly go down in defeat. Like Jesus, they will be "despised and rejected of men," and the world will know them not as ones who will be the future kings of earth.—Isa. 53:3; I John 3:1

But God will know them. (II Tim. 2:19) He will care for them. (I Pet. 5:7) Being the last members of the new kingdom to prove their faithfulness, they will not be removed from their place in that kingdom, but finishing their course in joy by being faithful unto death, they will be given "a crown of life that fadeth not away." (Jas. 1:12; I Pet. 5:4) As overcomers it will be their glorious privilege to sit with the Master in his throne to live and reign with him a thousand years.—Rev. 3:21; 20:4, 6

"God shall help her, and that right early." The marginal translation reads, "When the morning appeareth." The morning of the Lord's new day is already appearing. The Day Star has arisen in our hearts, and we know that the time is near, very near, when this further "help" will be given to the Lord's faithful people. (II Pet. 1:19) Indeed, it has already been vouchsafed to many. This is the help which results in the deliverance of the church in the first resurrection. When Jesus answered the disciples' questions pertaining to the time of his second presence, after mentioning

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many of the signs he said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28

We are now seeing these things. We see the earth being removed, and the mountains being carried into the midst of the seas. We hear the roaring of the sea and the waves. We note the fear that is blighting the lives of the people, and the manner in which they are madly seeking pleasure as a retreat from the grim reality of the times in which we live.

But instead of fearing, we are rejoicing. Instead of seeking happiness in the pleasures of this crumbling world, we have fled to the Lord for refuge, and he has covered us in the secret of his pavilion. (Psalm 27:15) Instead of leaving us in doubt and uncertainty, he has enlightened us with his truth, and the streams of the future river of life have made glad our hearts. Surely, then, we should "lift up our heads" with confidence, and keep our eyes and our hearts fixed upon the fruition of our glorious hope of soon being with the Lord, of experiencing his "help" in exalting us to glory, honor, and immortality to be a part of the glorified city of God.

How blessed the promise that God will help "her" early in the morning. We may not be able to determine just when the last member of the church will be glorified, and it is better that the Lord has not given us this information; but we do know that the time is short—too short to settle down as though we had the rest of our natural lives to live under normal conditions. For some of us the time may be shorter than we even dare to hope; but it cannot be very long for any of us. So let us see to it that our consecration is up-to-date, and as real as when we said to the Lord that we were giving him our all. Let us make sure that no earth-born cloud—either of worldly hopes, or ambitions, or opportunities for fame or wealth—is permitted to come in between us and the Lord, to hide from us the smile of his countenance and to weaken our assurance of his grace to help in times of need.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (I John 5:4) How strong is our faith? Do we really believe what we profess to believe. Are we really convinced that the world—this present evil world—is coming to an end, and that all forms of earthly security and riches can no longer be depended upon? Are

we really assured that if faithful to our consecration vows we will be blessed with the high honor of living and reigning with Christ in his kingdom which we believe is now so near?

If we really have faith in these things, we will act in harmony with our faith, and will permit nothing to hinder us from devoting our all to the Lord, even as we covenanted to do. And what a blessed thought it is to realize that if we thus dwell in "the secret place of the most High," we will have his protection, his care, and by his power will be exalted to the place in the heavenly kingdom which he has prepared for us. Truly, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." May we appreciate this glorious refuge, and through faithfulness to him avail ourselves of the protection which it offers.

"The Lord Knoweth How"

I will trust, and not be afraid.—Isaiah 12:2

"The storm-clouds are rolling across the horizon,
And peal upon peal of the thunder is heard:
The flashes of lightning are vivid and awful:
Yet never a fear in this bosom is stirred,
For is it not written, and everywhere shown,
"The Lord knoweth how to deliver His own!"

"The foe we contend with is artful and cunning,
And many indeed are the snares he has laid:
We are not unmindful of Satan's devices,
Though of his temptations we are not afraid;
For is it not written, and everywhere shown,
"The Lord knoweth how to deliver His own!"

"'The Lord knoweth how,' is our strength in our weakness,
The promise of sunshine, though storm-clouds appear;
A peaceful assurance amid every battle,
The way of escape from each trial and fear;
For is it not written, and everywhere shown,
"The Lord knoweth how to deliver His own!"

The Temple of the Living God

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"—I CORINTHIANS 3:16

IN THE scriptural use of the term temple as applied to the church of Christ we have a very meaningful symbolism which helps us to understand more clearly than otherwise would be possible the divine purpose to bless all mankind through the church. The symbolism takes its meaning from God's dealings with typical Israel, first, in connection with the tabernacle in the wilderness—a temporary arrangement—and later, through the temple erected by Solomon. Concerning the tabernacle which Moses was instructed to build, the Lord said, "There I will meet with the children of Israel." (Exod. 29:43) This also was true later in connection with the temple—it was the meeting place between God and Israel.

In speaking of this typical lesson of the temple, the Scriptures give us two applications—one to individual members of the church now, and the other to the glorified church beyond the veil. Both of these applications are based upon the type, for there was the preparation of the individual stones of the temple as well as the completed temple which was made from the assembling of these stones.

As is true of all material things when used as symbols or types of spiritual truths, the application is

not perfect in every respect. In the case of the antitypical stones, for example, now being prepared to form that glorious antitypical temple of God, the Lord is dealing with each one of these as a "temple," even while being prepared for a part in the great temple of the future. This, of course, was not true of the stones which formed the typical temple.

It is the individual application of the temple symbolism which Paul used when he wrote, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body." (I Cor. 6:19, 20) Notice the emphasis the apostle puts on the reason for our being considered the "temple" of God—"Therefore glorify God." God is not dwelling in his people in order to glorify them, but rather that through them he might be glorified.

Notice also the apostle's words, "Ye are not your own." If we have been brought to God through Christ, and have presented ourselves to him through full consecration, and he has given us his Spirit, we should realize that we belong to God, and should therefore be fully devoted to his service—the service of his temple.

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

That the church is "the temple of the living God"—peculiarly "his workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

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

That the basis of hope for the church and the world lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God tasted death for every

man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be a partaker of the divine nature and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 11 Pet. 1:4

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

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

Judging from observation and experience, this seems to be one of the most difficult lessons for the Lord's truth-enlightened people to fully grasp.

Just to know the Lord as he reveals himself to us through the divine plan of the ages is so wonderful that there is an inclination to feel that this ecstasy of joy which comes through a knowledge

of the truth is the end of our being called by God, but this is not so. We have been called for a purpose, and that purpose is to be used by God as his channel of blessing to others—ultimately to the whole world—and the temple-symbolism is one of the Lord's ways of impressing this truth upon our hearts and minds.

Every faithful, consecrated child

of God is a temple for him, a royal residence, as it were, where he can meet with and bestow his blessings upon others—a habitation of God through the Spirit. How precious is the thought, how great the condescension of our God in thus honoring his chosen ones who believe and trust in him and are fully consecrated to his will and service!

Much Polishing

While God is pleased to use each fully consecrated follower of the Master as a temple, even now, it is well to remember that we are also in process of preparation as stones to be used in the glorious temple of the future. We are being chiseled and polished in God's great stoneyard, and the surroundings are far from glorious. The church in the present life, like her Lord, is disesteemed in the world, and persecuted. But these surroundings are best suited to accomplish the divine purpose in us.

The cutting and polishing of a stone in preparation for its place in a building suggests the trials—the hard, cutting experiences—of a Christian, which, by God's providence are shaping him for the special place in the temple for which he was called. If we keep this in mind it will help us to "bear whate'er may come of joy or sorrow." And all of us need much shaping and much polishing.

It is well to remember this in our association with one another. As we look upon other stones which the Lord is shaping for a place in his future temple, it may be difficult to see any beauty in

them; and as they look upon us, the same is true of us. But the important thing is that all have been chosen by the Lord, and are being worked upon by him. Let us then endeavor to see in one another something of what the Lord sees. Thus we will be able to work with the Lord in helping one another rather than against him by accusing and condemning our brethren.

The Chief Cornerstone

As it is with the various members of the body of Christ, so it is with the "stones" in the antitypical temple—God sets each one in whatever position his wisdom decrees to be best. (I Cor. 12:18) Nor has he revealed what that position will be—at least, not for very many of the "stones." To the overcomers in one of the seven churches of Revelation the Lord said, "I will make [you] a pillar in the temple of my God," but we doubt if this promise is meant to identify the exact position of any of the Lord's people in that glorious future temple.—Rev. 3:12

However, the Apostle Paul tells us that Jesus is the "chief corner stone" in this spiritual temple now in process of being built. (Eph. 2:20-22) Jesus is also referred to as the "headstone" which was refused by the builders. (Psalm 118:22) It would be difficult to determine which stone in the foundation of an ordinary building should be considered the "chief corner stone." And it would be even more difficult to understand how a foundation stone could also be a headstone.

The blending of these two thoughts suggests that probably the symbolism intended is that of a pyramid-shaped building. In such a case we can readily see why the head-stone would be rejected by the builders, for it would not fit anywhere else in the structure. Only the master builder would know the place it was to occupy. Jesus was thus rejected because those whom the Lord was using to prepare and test him did not know the plan of the building as designed by the divine architect. But what great rejoicing there will be when he is recognized as the "head of the corner."—Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Acts 4:11

The fact that the headstone in this glorious antitypical temple is also referred to as the "chief corner stone" suggests that this building is being erected in heaven, not on earth, and that we as living stones are being "built up in him." (Phil. 3:20, R. V.; Col. 2:7) This means, too, that the influences by which we are being shaped to conform to the headstone are of heavenly origin.

While the tools that do the actual shaping of our characters for the place designed for us in the temple of God are the various experiences of life—the bitter and the sweet—they are all being directed by the Master Builder, who is shaping us to be a part of that wonderful temple of which Jesus is both the chief foundation stone and the headstone. May we co-operate faithfully with the Master Builder by continuing to set our affections on things above.—Col. 3:1, 2

Without Sound of Hammer

In connection with the typical temple the record tells us that the stones and timbers were all prepared in advance—some distance apparently from where the temple was built—and brought to the building site, where they were put together without sound of a hammer. (I Kings 6:7) The antitype of this is that the chiseling and polishing of the individual "stones" of the temple are all done while the saints are still this side the veil. It is also during this preparatory age that the place each one is to occupy in the temple is determined by the Master Builder.

This, as shown in the type, leaves the work of the first resurrection and the glorification of the church with her Lord a very quiet one—a work that goes on unnoticed and unknown by all except those immediately concerned with it. This is one reason that the world is not aware of what is even now going on.

But the Lord's people themselves are not in darkness. They know the significance of the time in which they are living. They know that already the sleeping saints have been raised and have joined the heavenly ranks. They know too that the work of preparing the last of the stones is not yet complete, and are thankful that there is still an opportunity to be one of those stones, and to be placed in that great spiritual temple in the particular niche for which, under divine guidance, the Lord is preparing us.

Surely this is a blessed hope, and while we longingly look forward to

occupying such a glorious place in the divine arrangements for blessing all nations, let us remember that in order to attain such a high station we must be submissive to every trial which the Lord permits, and must be faithful to every opportunity afforded us of co-operating with him, of working together with him to will and to do of his good pleasure. Let us, then, be on the alert, fearing lest a promise having been left us of entering into his rest, any of us "should seem to come short of it."—Heb. 4:1

The Dedication of the Temple

When the typical temple was erected, there followed a very impressive ceremony of dedication. (I Kings 8; II Chron. 5-7) There were great demonstrations of joy in connection with this service, for the people of Israel rejoiced in this evidence that Jehovah, their God, had deigned to dwell with them. One feature of the ceremony was the bearing of the ark from Mt. Zion by the priests and placing it in the position in the temple prepared for it. As the ark was brought forth, the Levites sang, or chanted—probably some of David's psalms which, by inspiration, seem to have been written for the occasion.

One of these is believed to be Psalm 136, the theme of which is the oft repeated expression, "His mercy endureth for ever." In this remarkable psalm we learn that the slaying of Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea, as well as the destruction of others who opposed God in ancient times, was an expression of divine mercy—

that it was better for them to die then, rather than to continue their sinful course, and to be partakers of God's mercy during the "time of restitution of all things."

That this theme song of God's mercy should be used at the dedication of the typical temple further confirms the fact that the antitypical temple of God is being prepared especially to be a channel of God's mercy to the whole world of mankind—that house of God in which he will meet and bless all the families of the earth. Failure to recognize this divine purpose through the church, leaves the nominal church in almost total darkness concerning the real plan of God.

Let us then rejoice in the blessed truth that the church is the temple of the living God, peculiarly his workmanship.

Meantime, of course, "the chiseling, shaping, and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these 'living stones, elect and precious,' shall have been made ready, the Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection."

Surely this is a glorious hope, a hope that should give us strength to endure all the pain and difficulties which may be necessary to prepare us for its fruition. And this hope is made the more blessed because it not only pertains to our own reward of joint-heirship with Jesus, but also to the privilege which will be ours as parts of that glorious future temple, to "be the meeting place of God and men throughout the millennium."

BEHEADED

“And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God.” —Rev. 20:4

This text is difficult for me to understand. I have never heard of anyone being beheaded for his loyalty to God during my lifetime. Is this an evidence that we are unfaithful, or does this text apply to another age than ours?

WHILE some have no doubt been killed during the last few decades because of their loyalty to God and his Word; this text has a deeper significance than appears on the surface.

It is our opinion that we have all seen those who have been “beheaded” within the meaning of our text. First Corinthians 11:3 says, “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” Ephesians 5:23 adds, “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the Savior of the body.”

Here it is explained that the church is subject to Christ, and each consecrated Christian must accept Christ as his Head; thus each member of the true church comes into relationship with the Lord as a member of his body. Everyone who is consecrated to God has given up the right to direct his own life; he has been be-

headed and has accepted Christ as his Head and the One who will teach him the way in which he shall go. This same thought is expressed again in Colossians 3:3 in this manner: “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

While there is much unfaithfulness today, there is also a little flock of faithful ones who recognize that Christ is their life, and are loyal to him. These have given up their wills (they have been beheaded), and as members of the body of Christ recognize him as their Lord and Head. Eventually, when faithful unto death, these will “live and reign” with Christ during the thousand years in which his kingdom will be fully established in the earth.

A NEW WORLD ORDER

Based upon your understanding of the prophecies, what in your opinion is the pattern for future society?

SPACE does not permit a detailed reply to this question. In each issue of *The Dawn* we endeavor to point to the plan of God as the pattern or blueprint that he has set down in the Bible. For greater detail we recommend also the **Studies in the Scriptures**, for they give in remarkable detail the future of society as it pertains to the church of God and to the world of mankind in general.

We will mention just one prophecy here (Haggai 2:7), “And I will

shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." This prophecy should cheer all who look into the future with faith in the promises of God; for he is faithful who promised and will fulfil every assurance of blessing which he has given. (Heb. 10:23; 11:11) He has committed the whole future of society to his Son, who bought the race and who therefore has earned the right to be its Master. In harmony with the Father's plan, he is arranging to identify with himself the elect church of the Gospel age for the great work of enlightening the world, and restoring to human perfection all the willing and obedient, granting to them the blessings of life and happiness, the desire of all nations.

MANY WINNERS

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." (I Cor. 9:24) Does this text mean that we are competing with our brethren for the one prize, and that if we are successful we will deprive someone else of the blessing?

NO CHRISTIAN competes with his brother for the blessing of the Lord, nor for the prize of his calling. The Olympic games were prominent in apostolic days as they are today, and Paul used them to teach certain lessons. Here he referred to the foot race. Not all who start, the race receive the prize. The one who receives the prize is the one who complies with certain recognized conditions and

who runs "not as uncertainly," but diligently; then he adds the admonition to each of us, "so run that ye may obtain."

As with an athlete who seeks a prize, so with us. As consecrated Christians we have entered the race for the prize of eternal life and of joint-heirship with Christ in his everlasting kingdom. Some, after repenting of their sins, never devote themselves fully to God and his ways. These run aimlessly, outside the track, never having complied fully with the conditions of discipleship. Some start the race with consecrated diligence, but somewhere along the way they become "weary in well doing" and thus fail to receive the "full reward" promised to the faithful.—Gal. 6:9; II Thess. 3:13; II John 8

The lesson the apostle would have us receive from the text is that those who receive the prize are those who "deny themselves," and in the spirit of sacrifice diligently carry out their consecration vows. (Psalm 50:5, 14; 116:14) According to the Scriptures it is not one prize for all who run, but rather one prize for each who has complied with the conditions and who runs faithfully until the course is completed. The prize at the end of the race for each of these is his "well done, thou good and faithful servant," and the glory of joint-heirship with him.

We are not running against one another, nor are we running uncertainly, doubtfully. The winner of a foot race is the one who has striven from start to finish. Let us so run that we may obtain the prize. If the complete consecra-

YOUR QUESTIONS

tion to the Lord which we had at the beginning of our course is maintained all along the way, we shall win the prize of eternal life. Paul ends his exhortation with these words: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—Vss. 26, 27

A DESIRE FOR THE RETURNING

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." (Phil. 1:23) Does this text not prove that the Apostle Paul expected to go immediately to heaven after his death?

THIS text has been the source of much discussion among Bible students. Like you, our only desire is to know the truth, for certainly God will not change his plan to suit our prejudices. On the other hand, we know that truth does not always lie on the surface; it has to be sought after with an open mind and a humble spirit. Divine truth is revealed by God's Spirit, and when found we may be assured it will be in harmony with all revelation and will not contradict other portions of the divine Word.

Philippians 1:21-23 in the **Emphatic Diaglott** translation, which is accepted by many as an authoritative translation of the New Testament, reads as follows: "Therefore, for me to live is for

Christ, and to die gain. But if to live in the flesh, this is to me a fruit of labor; and what I should choose I do not exactly know. I am indeed, hard pressed by the two things; (I have an earnest desire for the returning, and being with Christ, since it is very much to be preferred."

The use of the word "returning" instead of the word "depart" changes this translation from that of the common English version. The question arises, Is this change justified, seeing that it makes such a great change in meaning? The Greek word here used by Paul is "analuō." It occurs in one other place in the Bible—Luke 12:36—where it is also translated "return" in the common English Bible.

An analysis of the text seems to show that not two, but three things are mentioned by the apostle. Two of them were of about equal consequence and presented merely a problem of choice. The third was "far better" and "much to be preferred," but not then within the realm of possibility. The apostle wrote to the Philippians from Rome, while a prisoner there. His trial was near at hand, but he was not worried. He was full of faith and set "for the defense of the Gospel." He knew that he would either be set free or put to death. It was hard for him to choose between the two.

He reasoned upon the matter by saying, and we paraphrase: "If I live I will live for Christ, and courageously endure the attendant sufferings; but if I die I will gain rest from toil, and be at peace; it is a matter of indifference to me

which is my lot." Besides this, there was a third thing which he "desired," which was "far better" than life or death. Upon this he did not hesitate to express a choice. The **Emphatic Diaglott** says concerning this for which he longed, "I have an earnest desire for the returning, and being with Christ, since IT is very much to be preferred." The return of Christ was the center of his hopes; this is emphasized in first Thessalonians 4:13-18.

The apostle did not expect to go to heaven immediately after he died, for he knew that the resurrection would not take place until the "last day," as our Master had declared. (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54) It did not matter to Paul whether Nero set him free or cut off his head, but the returning of the Lord did matter: he desired it, to him it was "far better" than either of the other two, for then he would be resurrected from the dead and so be forever with the Lord.

SECURITY IN THE NEW WORLD

Is it your opinion that the workmen of all nations will properly share the profits of industry in that Golden Age you speak of where all men will have reached maturity?

THE struggle between Capital and Labor has been a long one, and it is natural that some sores exist on both sides. In America as never before, labor is "sharing

the profits of industry." Many living in less favored lands would rejoice to gain admittance to this country. This is a favored land, but even here in America millions of the citizens live without economic security, many of them in real poverty, some of them in actual want. The kingdom will change all this. The kingdom will establish the condition where "God's will" is done on earth as in heaven.

One cannot think of poverty or want among the angels of God in heaven, nor that economic injustices are practiced there; but the kingdom will bring more to the people of earth than economic justice and security. All men will then obey the Golden Rule: "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Matt. 7:12; Luke 6:31); but the kingdom will bring more than that. As long as pain and suffering and death beset mankind, they cannot be truly happy.

The kingdom is to remove these, and "wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are [shall have] passed away." (Rev. 21:4) Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. The beauty of Eden and the perfection of our first parents were lost through Adam's transgression; these will be restored through Jesus Christ and his kingdom. Please read Isaiah, chapter 35.

Are We Willing?

WE ARE already well into the new year—1949. As Christians, however, it is appropriate always to reflect on the matter of our standing before the Lord, and to rejoice in the blessings he so richly bestows upon us from day to day. Thoughts of this sort should be uppermost in our minds at all times, and not merely at the beginning of a year, although these milestones do afford an excellent opportunity for every follower of the Master to take stock of his spiritual assets and resolve to be more faithful in learning and doing the Lord's will. We have recently received a letter reminding us of this, which we would like to share with our readers. We quote it in part:

"Another year has passed, and as our Pastor comments in today's [Jan. 1] Manna text, 'It should surely call forth our thanks to God that the opening of another year finds us still standing fast, appreciating the truth, and in full accord with the divine appointments by which he has kept us from falling.' How appropriate it is for all of us to check back over the past year and see if the above has been true in our own experience!

"Do we really love the Lord, the truth, and the brethren, more than a year ago?

"Are we willing—for the love of the truth—to sacrifice the flesh and its interests more fully than in the past?

"Are we willing to take humbly the chastenings which our Heavenly Father, in his wisdom and love, sees fit to permit?

"Are we willing, in every way, to suffer humbly for righteousness' sake when our efforts to serve seem to be misunderstood?"

In closing his letter the brother reminds us that we can say "Yes" to these questions only because of our confidence in the Lord and in his sustaining grace to help in our every time of need, for it is only the Lord who is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless "before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 24) What wonderful peace of heart and mind we can enjoy as we lay hold upon this reassuring thought! Just as the apostle

could say (Phil. 4:13), "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me," so we too can go forward in the narrow way, knowing that no matter how difficult the journey, the Lord will go with us and help us over all the rough places.

"Are we willing—for the love of the truth—to sacrifice the flesh and its interests more fully than in the past?" This is indeed a heart-searching question. As new creatures we are—or should be—quite willing to sacrifice the flesh, but the flesh rebels against the idea of being sacrificed; so we have a conflict on our hands. Christian sacrifice was pictured in the type by the burning of animals, and we present our bodies a "living sacrifice." (Rom. 12:1) We should expect, therefore, that if we are faithful in sacrificing our flesh there will be suffering involved, but to the new creature this should be a cause for rejoicing—rejoicing that we have this privilege of helping to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24

"Are we willing to take humbly the chastenings which our Heavenly Father, in his wisdom and love, sees fit to permit?" It is well if we can recognize when the Lord is chastening us and endeavor to learn the needed lessons. The fact that the Lord does discipline us should be a great encouragement, for as the apostle explains, it is an evidence of his love. (Heb. 12:6) Yes, to be chastened by the Lord is an evidence that he is caring for us. It is one of the divine appointments by which we are kept from falling.

How favored are the Lord's people! The world has little or nothing upon which to build hopes for 1949, or any other year. We do not, of course, know much about the details of the experiences which will be ours in the weeks and months ahead, but we do know that it will be a year of victory for each one of us in proportion to our faith in the Lord, and our faithfulness in doing his will. It will be a wonderful year for sacrificing our flesh if we want to have it so. It will be a happy year of rejoicing in the Lord if we keep ourselves in his love, and in harmony with all the appointments by which he keeps us from falling. If at the beginning of each day the question uppermost in our minds is, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" and apply the answer the Scriptures supply by fulfilling our vows of sacrifice, our joy in the Lord will be rich, and full, and glorious.



The 1949 General Convention

PROBABLY most of our readers have already seen the announcement in "Bible Students News" of the date and place for the 1949 General Convention—that it will be held in Bowling Green, Ohio, during the second week of August; that is, August 7 to 14. The convention committee has secured the rooming facilities, auditorium, etc., of the State University at Bowling Green, and all the reports indicate that it will be a very suitable place for the friends to gather for a week's convention.

There will be ample room for all at Bowling Green, and none will need to room outside of the grounds. This is an important feature of the arrangements for this year, so begin now making your plans to attend. Another important factor will be the reasonable rates for rooms and food. On the basis of two in a room, the cost for meals and room for the entire week for each person will be \$15.00. The rooms have single beds. Those who may prefer to have a room by themselves will be accommodated, at a slightly higher rate. There will be a lower rate for children—determined according to age. Full details concerning these arrangements will be announced later. The main thing now is, plan to come, there will be room for all, and the rates exceedingly low.

There are, we realize, many thousands of brethren who will not be able to attend the convention in Bowling Green, but we can all have a share in it, nevertheless, through the medium of prayer. There is no doubt about it that throughout the harvest period conventions—and particularly general conventions—have been important landmarks in the experiences of the Lord's people as a whole. The blessings of these gatherings have overflowed to all the consecrated. We are confident that this will be true again in 1949. Let us all make this convention a matter of special prayer.

The convention committee is hoping that this will be an international convention, and will work to this end in making up the program. It will, of course, be a present truth convention, and every aspect of the Christian way of life will be given proper consideration. George M. Wilson, 241 Rochelle Street, Pittsburgh 10, Pennsylvania, is the convention secretary. Any information desired may be obtained from him. Do not write to Bowling Green.

Opportunities Opening

PROBABLY many Dawn readers heard the announcements that were made in connection with the Frank and Ernest program on January 2 and January 23 stating that arrangements could be made for clubs, churches, etc., to have illustrated dialogs presented to them. The response to these announcements has been very encouraging, indicating that many opportunities will open up, for those who have the necessary equipment, to use it in furthering the witness in their territories. We quote two of these requests, as follows—one from Tennessee, and one from Michigan:

“Dear Sirs: I am writing you with reference to an announcement you made over the radio concerning free illustrated dialogs. I am pastor of the Community Baptist Church, located in a community Baptist Church located in a community that needs intelligent leadership. My vocation is teaching, but I serve them as pastor because I see the possibilities of making a worthy contribution to the community. Will you kindly place the Community Baptist Church on your list of churches wishing the free illustrated dialogs. Thanking you in advance. I remain, yours truly. Rev. J. I. W.”

“Gentlemen: Our organization is interested in using one of your programs. Will you please forward to me the necessary information to secure same for one of our meetings. Mrs. R. T., Chairman of Publicity for W. C. T. U.”

These samples of requests reaching us speak for themselves. It is our plan to continue announcing the availability of the illustrated presentations, and this will undoubtedly result in a sizeable waiting list. Those in charge of making arrangements of this kind for the groups they represent understand from experience that schedules are made up far in advance, and it is our hope that eventually we will get around to all of them. When the requests come from districts where ecclesias or individuals have secured the necessary equipment, they will of course be referred to them. We will try to find other means of filling the requests reaching us from isolated territories.

While there have been many unexpected delays in getting all things ready for this added opportunity of service, everything is about in readiness now, and several units are already in the hands

of the brethren. In this, as in all our endeavors to know and do the Lord's will, we need his guidance and help in order that his name may be glorified. Let us all, then, make the visual presentation of the kingdom message a matter of special prayer.

Encouraging Letters

Recordings Arouse Interest

The following excerpt from a letter will, we believe, be of interest for it indicates that the home recordings are being used by the Lord to arouse interest in the truth:

"On October 23 she was asked into the room to hear Frank and Ernest records. She left the room with a copy of *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. . . . She has now read it, as well as much of the second volume, and *Tabernacle Shadows* and other literature. She attends meetings on Wednesday, Fridays, and Sundays—and has consecrated."

Wants Others to Know

Dear Brethren: I am writing to thank you for what *The Dawn* has been to me during the past year in the upward look, and the inspiration and encouragement to press on to the high goal in Christ Jesus our Savior. I have loved it from the beautiful front cover—and especially the ones with the photos of scenes in the Holy Land—to the back cover on which has been printed the simple and concise plan of God. I think, as so few people really know what we believe, that everyone of us should commit "To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach"

to memory, that we might intelligently reply to those who inquire what we really do believe. In itself it is a real sermon. Every feature of *The Dawn* has been a blessing to me, and often when reading some spiritual or doctrinal article my heart yearned that others might know the truth. Yours in Christ, A. K. H., Wash.

Appreciation from Greece

Dear Brethren: The Lord be with you! You cannot imagine the joy of my family when the postman comes bringing *The Dawn*. For us this is the greatest comfort. *The Dawn* has greatly blessed our family, which during the terrible war suffered greatly. I lost two of my sons. *The Dawn* has been truly a comforting angel. Now, with the four of my children and my beloved mother having *The Dawn* regularly, we are passing our days giving thanks and glory to God for the terrible trials, and saying, "Thy will be done." We greet you with Christian love. A. T., Greece.

Doubts Have Vanished

Dear Brother: Loving, sincere greetings in the Master's name! I wish to thank you for the book you sent me, "Behold Your King." I wanted to read it before writing

you, hence the delay. I really have enjoyed it, and it has helped me so much with regard to the presence of our Lord that all doubt in my mind has gone, completely. Chapter seven has been a great blessing to me. Yours in Christian service. E. and G., England.

Appreciation from Germany

Dear Brethren: It is our desire to write you, for it is wonderful that we can get pure food from the Lord's table. We here in Manheim are very thankful to the Lord that after this long period of trial the truth goes forth once more unadulterated. The Lord knew that many hearts hungered and thirsted after his precious truth. The Dawn gives us joy and strength and comfort. J. and F. G., Germany

Program Is "Grand"

Frank and Ernest: I am a regular listener to your program and think it is grand. Indeed I'll be candid with you—there is nothing else on the air like it! Thank God for men like you. Please mail me a couple of the books—your "Hope" book that you were offering. Thank you very much, and may God bless you both. Very sincerely, H. G., Ala.

Wants to Do More

Dear Friends of The Dawn: Greetings in the dear Lord's name! I received the several cards you sent—the ones I have been distributing, and which were returned to you requesting literature. I am not able to get about as I once did. I am past seventy-five, and have a

bad heart. I become excited when I get close to traffic, but it is a pleasure to help advertise the great King and his kingdom. The truth becomes more precious to me as time passes. I wish I could do more than I am able to do. May the dear Lord continue to bless you all, and prosper you in the good work you are carrying on. And may his blessing rest upon all his servants everywhere. We who are not in darkness know that times are becoming more perilous with the passing years, yet we can rejoice because our deliverance draws near. Continue to pray for me, dear friends, that I may be faithful unto death. I am one of the isolated ones, but I have the assurance that the Lord's grace is sufficient. Your brother in his love, O. W. C., Ala.

"Telling the Truth"

Dear Sirs: We heard your program yesterday and my husband has requested that I send for your booklet, "God and Reason." If you have any previous ones we would like them too. I have heard your program for a year now, but yesterday is the first time that my husband has been able to hear it, and having read the Bible quite a lot, both of us know you are telling the truth and we enjoy listening to you very much. We are not called Christians by the majority as we both have found that there are a lot of untruths told in the churches of today and so stay away. Thanking you, I remain, Mrs. W. F. W., Mont.

"After Many Days"

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."—Ecclesiastes 11:1

NUMEROUS are the scriptures showing that at this time as wide a witness as possible should be given to the good news of the coming kingdom. Here are a few, the context of which shows that they apply to the close of the Gospel age:

"Say among the nations that the Lord reigneth."—Psalm 96:10

"Declare his glory among the nations, his wonders among all people."—Psalm 96:3

"All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power."—Psalm 145:10, 11

"O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people."—Psalm 105:1

"Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is [to be] known in all the earth."—Isaiah 12:4, 5

To assure us that these and all similar scriptures will have a fulfilment, the Master gave as one of the signs that would mark the closing days of the present dispensation—the prophetic assurance,

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."—Matt. 24:14

In connection with arguments against a world-wide proclamation of the glad-tidings, either by word of mouth or through the printed page, we sometimes hear the questions: What results do we get from these efforts? How many are brought into the truth? And, of those who manifest interest, How many continue to stand?

The raising of queries of this kind is quite irrelevant. In all such matters Jesus, our Master, is our great Exemplar. It is admitted by all enlightened by present truth that his ministry was located in the harvest of the Jewish age. One of the most prominent features was his preaching to the multitudes on the mountain side, along the sea shore, from a boat on the water, etc. (Matt. 13:2, 3; 15:10; 23:1; Mark 2:13; 4:1, 2; Luke 5:3, 15; 6:17) Did Jesus expect large numbers fully to embrace his message? In many places in the Gospels it is recorded that he did not.—Matt. 13:10, 11; 11:25; John 6:66-68

On at least one occasion Jesus told the multitudes that they were seeking him, not on account of what he had to tell them, but because he had fed them with the loaves and fishes. (John 6:26) In spite of this, our Lord made as wide a proclamation as possible of the good news of the kingdom—throughout "all the cities and vil-

THE DAWN

lages" of Israel—because he had learned through the Old Testament that it was his Father's will that he should do so.—Matt. 9:35

Among those becoming interested in the truth today, some appear only to grasp the simpler features of the divine plan, and do not even come to the point of full consecration. Should these be discouraged and told they are outside the pale of divine favour? The Master's example must again be the example for us to follow. It is written of him prophetically, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." (Isa. 42:3) If the reed which the Israelitish boy had selected for his whistle-pipe was in some way defective, he would just throw it away and choose another. But our Master is very patient with the reeds he selects; and however imperfect the music of the Gospel sounds when expressed through them, their defects are made up for by the music supplied by the great Master, the Chief Musician of God's temple.

The Heavenly Father also is very patient and long-suffering toward those attracted to his Word, that they might be brought, through faith and consecration, to the point where their imperfections are covered by the merits of Christ's sacrifice, and are begotten by his Holy Spirit. His kindly providences then build them up as new creatures, and ere long these imperfect ones—and such were all of us—will "shine forth as the sun" in the kingdom of our Father.—Matt. 13:43

In the same way, the "smoking

flax" that at first manifests but small response to the influence of the Lord's Spirit and his truth, may eventually be fanned into a living flame of devotion and zeal in his service and the interests of his kingdom. Hence, the scriptural rule for the consecrated people of God is that suggested by the wise man, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening [when the day's labour has apparently come to a close] withhold not thy hand."—Eccles. 11:6

Again, in the words of our text, "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." (Eccles. 11:1) This illustration seems to be taken from a custom of enveloping the seeds of the water-lily in little clay pellets, and casting them into the water. These would sink to the bottom and become embedded in the mud; and after many days there appeared above the water line the lily plant bearing its beautiful white flowers.

In the Revelator's visions it is intimated that the Apostle John—after eating the "little book" or roll that was in his mouth as sweet as honey, but which made his belly bitter—began to think that his service for the truth was about finished. But the angel said to him, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."—Rev. 10:11

We too have partaken of the message that has been as sweet as honey to our hearts and minds; but which, after it had become a part of ourselves, caused us to experience something of the bitter-

THE BRITISH SECTION

ness of unpopularity and persecution. Let our ears be attentive to the voice of the great Messenger of the covenant, our Lord Jesus, perchance he says to us, "Thou shalt prophesy again"—pointing us to further service of his truth, his people, and the interests of his coming Kingdom.

SPECIAL NOTICE: Items which are available for the British friends will be published in the British Section, under the heading "Available in Great Britain."

KINGDOM CARDS: These will shortly be in stock, so will the friends who have sent orders please note. As soon as they are received they will be dispatched in strict rotation.

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Eastleigh Feb. 20
Ipswich Mar. 13

J. E. HUMPHREY

Portsmouth Mar. 20

H. R. KIPPS

Anerley Feb. 27

F. LINTER

Liverpool Feb. 13
Leigh (Afternoon) Mar. 20
Warrington (Evening) 20

J. H. MURRAY

West Wickham Feb. 27
Gateshead Mar. 6
Luton 27

W. E. PAMPLING

Leigh (Afternoon) Feb. 20
Warrington (Evening) 20
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Oxford Mar. 27

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THE DAWN

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W. T. BAKER

New Brunswick, N. J. Feb. 4
 Paterson, N. J. 6
 Scarsdale, N. Y. 7
 Newark, N. J. 10
 York, Pa. (Evening) 12
 York, Pa. (Morning) 13
 Lancaster, Pa. (Afternoon) 13
 Reading, Pa. 14
 Mahanoy City, Pa. 15
 Hazleton, Pa. 16, 17
 Wilkes Barre, Pa. 18
 Lehigh, Pa. 19, 20
 Easton, Pa. 21
 Allentown, Pa. 22
 Brooklyn, N. Y. 27

J. BEDNARZ

New Bedford, Mass. Feb. 27

F. A. BRIGHT

Easton, Pa. Feb. 13

O. D. DEIFER

Wilkes Barre, Pa. Feb. 6

H. E. DEITRICH

Rutherford, N. J. Feb. 1
 Paterson, N. J. 2
 New Haven, Conn. (Morning) 6
 Waterbury, Conn. (Afternoon) .. 6
 Hartford, Conn. 7
 North Brookfield, Mass. 8, 9
 Worcester, Mass. 10, 11
 Boston, Mass. 12, 13
 Lynn, Mass. 14, 15
 Providence, R. I. 16
 New Bedford, Mass. 17, 18
 Groton, Conn. (Evening) 19
 Groton, Conn. (Morning) 20
 New London, Conn. (Afternoon) 20
 Syracuse, N. Y. 23
 Rochester, N. Y. 24
 Tonawanda, N. Y. 25
 Toronto, Ont., Can. 27
 Orillia, Ont., Can. .. Feb. 28-Mar. 2

I. C. FOSS

Santa Ana, Calif. Feb. 6

P. KOLLIMAN

Baltimore, Md. Feb. 13

R. A. KREBS

Champaign, Ill. Feb. 8
 Indianapolis, Ind. 9
 Richmond, Ind. 10
 Dayton, Ohio 11
 Piqua, Ohio 12, 13
 Columbus, Ohio 14-16, 20
 Newark, Ohio 17
 Nelsonville, Ohio 18
 Cincinnati, Ohio 21
 Knoxville, Tenn. 23, 24
 Atlanta, Ga. 25
 Jacksonville, Fla. 27
 Riverhills, Fla. 28
 Orlando, Fla. Mar. 1
 Melbourne, Fla. 2
 Miami, Fla. 4-6

R. J. KRUPA

Jackson, Mich. Feb. 13

L. P. LOOMIS

Allentown, Pa. Feb. 13

E. LORENZ

Riverside, Calif. (Morning) . Feb. 20
 Pomona, Calif. (Afternoon) 20

A. A. LUTZ

Paterson, N. J. Feb. 13

J. Y. MAC AULAY

Little Rock, Ark. Feb. 1, 2
 Monroe, Ark. 3
 Marianna, Ark. 4
 Jonesboro, Ark. 5-7
 Paragould, Ark. 8
 St. Louis, Mo. 10
 Salem, Ind. 11
 Madisonville, Ky. 12, 13
 Owensboro, Ky. 14
 New Albany, Ind. 15, 16
 Indianapolis, Ind. 17, 18
 Muncie, Ind. 19, 20
 Richmond, Ind. 21
 Piqua, Ohio 22, 23
 Dayton, Ohio 24
 Columbus, Ohio 25-27
 Nelsonville, Ohio ... Feb. 28-Mar. 1

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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 East Liverpool, Ohio Feb. 13

E. MAURER
 Duquesne, Pa. Feb. 6
 Monessen, Pa. 27

N. M. MOLENAAR
 Whittier, Calif. Feb. 20

J. H. MOORE
 Minneapolis, Minn. Feb. 1, 2
 Aurora, Ill. 3
 Batavia, Ill. 4
 Rockford, Ill. 5, 6
 LaSalle, Ill. 7
 Chicago, Ill. Feb. 8, 13
 Cicero, Ill. 9
 Gary, Ind. 10, 11
 South Bend, Ind. 14
 Kalamazoo, Mich. 15
 Grand Rapids, Mich. 16, 17
 Saginaw, Mich. 18-20
 Flint, Mich. 21
 Jackson, Mich. 22, 23
 Ann Arbor, Mich. 24, 25
 Detroit, Mich. 26, 27
 Adrian, Mich. 28

E. MURRAY
 Columbus, Ohio Feb. 10
 Toledo, Ohio 11
 Saginaw, Mich. 12, 13
 Toledo, Ohio 14
 Nashville, Tenn. 26, 27
 Jacksonville, Fla. Mar. 2
 Miami, Fla. 4-6

L. H. NORBY
 Wallingford, Conn. Feb. 13
 Binghamton, N. Y. 20

HARRY PASSIOS
 Connellsville, Pa. Feb. 13

G. R. POLLOCK
 Santa Ana, Calif. Feb. 27

V. E. SAMUELS
 Reading, Pa. Feb. 6

J. I. VAN HORNE
 Washington, Pa. Feb. 20

F. S. WASSMANN
 Wilmington, Del. (Morning) Feb. 6
 Philadelphia, Pa. (Afternoon) ... 6

C. R. WEIDA
 Hazleton, Pa. Feb. 27

G. M. WILSON
 Miami, Fla. Feb. 27-Mar. 6

C. W. ZAHNOW
 Oakland, Calif. area Feb. 1, 2, 6
 San Francisco, Calif. 3
 Concord, Calif. 4
 Sacramento, Calif. 7
 Broadbent, Ore. Feb. 10-13
 Salem, Ore. 15, 17
 Lebanon, Ore. 16
 Portland, Ore. 18-20
 The Dalles, Ore. 21, 22
 Yakima, Wash. 24, 25
 Spokane, Wash. Feb. 27-Mar. 1

“Two or three items to his fault are attributed to Moses. Every saint has failed in some point at some time. There is no garden but what has some weeds. But the most unjust thing we can do is to measure its value by its weeds and not by its fruit. ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ Moses’ few faults are such as will never be noticed at all by a worldly man. They are like a broken limb on a tree loaded with magnificent fruit. All God’s works through men are done by imperfect instruments.”

“There’s a fleck of rust on a faultless blade—
 On the armor of price there is one.
 There’s a mole on the check of the lovely maid;
 There are spots upon thé sun.”

CONVENTIONS

SAGINAW, MICH., February 13—Woman's Club, 311 N. Jefferson Street.

CHICAGO, ILL., February 27—910 N. LaSalle Street. Convention opens 10:00 A. M.

DETROIT, MICH., Feb. 27—Maccabees Bldg., Woodward Avenue at Putnam.

MIAMI, FLA., March 4-6—For details,

write the secretary, Mrs. Don Roark, 1107 Alhambra Circle, Coral Gables, 34, Fla.

GARY, IND., April 16, 17.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF., July 2-4.

GENERAL CONVENTION—Bowling Green, Ohio, August 7-14.

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FEBRUARY 10—"Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."—I Timothy 4:12 (Z. '95-251. Hymn 196)

FEBRUARY 17—"Take My yoke upon

you, . . . for My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."—Matthew 11:29, 30 (Z. '00-137. Hymn 284)

FEBRUARY 24—"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans 8:3, 4 (Z. '02-248. Hymn 192)

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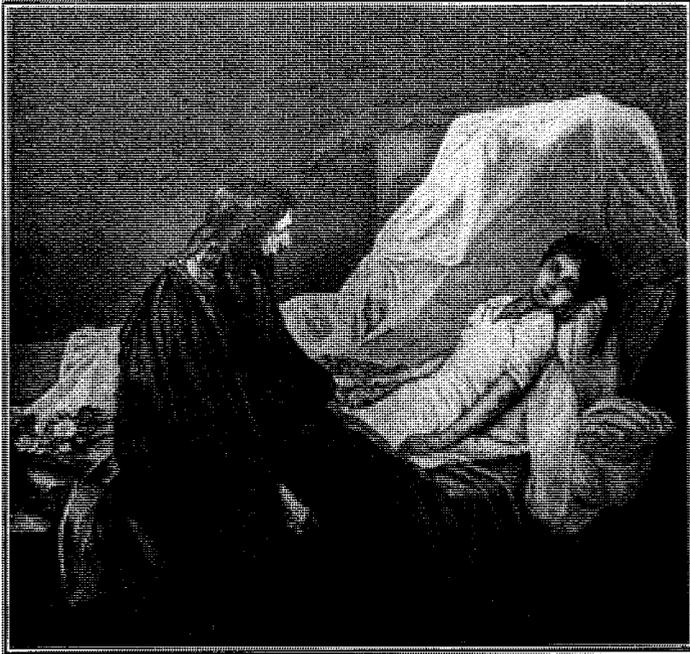
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THE DAWN

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"And He took the damsel by the hand,
and said unto her. . . . Damsel, I
say unto thee, arise!"