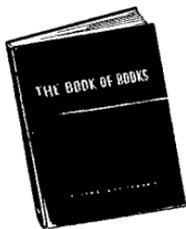


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VOLUME XXXIX

NUMBER 8

AUGUST 1971

CONTENTS

Second-class postage paid at Rutherford, N.J. Published monthly by the Dawn Bible Students Association, Triangle, East Rutherford, N.J. 07073

Subscription Rate: English and foreign languages. \$1.00 a year.



British Address: 70, Station Road, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex RM2 6DA, England.

Australian Address: Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 3101.

French Address: Publications Aurore, Boite Postale 3066, Boulevard de l'Europe, 68 Mulhouse, France.

Greek Address: He Haravgi (The Dawn) Odos K. Eslin 4 Ampelokipol T.T. 602. Athens, Greece.

German Address: Tagesanbruch Bibelstudien-Vereinigung, 78 Freiburg i. Br., Sachsenstrasse 12, Germany.

Italian Address: Pubblicazione mensile della Associazione Studenti della Bibbia "Aurora," Caselle Postale 447 00100 Roma, Italy.

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



HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN	
The Times of the Gentiles	2
THE BIBLE ANSWERS TV SCHEDULE	12
"FRANK & ERNEST" RADIO SCHEDULE	14
BIBLE STUDY	
Relationships Within the Family	16
The Family Finding Reconciliation	18
Alcohol and the Family	20
Alcohol and Society	22
Alcohol and the Christian Community	24
CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE	
What God Has Given	26
Jesus' Hope of Glory	39
Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts	61
YOUR QUESTIONS	
No Remembrance in Death	42
A Bondslave of Christ	42
Broken Branches	43
THE BRITISH SECTION	
Oneness With Christ	46
VINEYARD ECHOES	
Portrush Convention, 1971	52
ENCOURAGING LETTERS	60
SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS	
Great Britain	51
United States	62
CONVENTIONS	64

Highlights of **Dawn**

PART I

The Times of the Gentiles

SCRIPTURALLY speaking, the world of mankind is made up of two groups of people; namely, Jews and Gentiles. True, there are many racial divisions. There are the black, the white, yellow, and red races. But it is not color that makes a distinction between Jews and Gentiles; it is heredity. The Jewish people are the descendants of Abraham, through his son Isaac; all the remainder of mankind are Gentiles because they are not descended from Abraham through Isaac. It is true that the Arabs are descendants of Abraham, but not through Isaac; they are descended through Ishmael, Isaac's brother, and Esau, the grandson of Abraham. These are Semitic in order, but not Jewish, or Israelites.

God dealt in a very special way with those who were the descendants of Abraham through Isaac. As a people he delivered them from bondage in Egypt, and entered into a special covenant with them, Moses serving as their mediator. While because of their lack of faith they were permitted to wander in the Wilderness for forty years, he finally, under the leadership of Joshua, brought them into the Promised Land of Canaan; and, by helping them to drive out the Canaanites, delivered the land to them to be an everlasting possession.

Joshua was their last national leader, and following his death they were governed by judges whom from time to time the Lord raised up to deliver them from their enemies, who were constantly threatening them. The Prophet Samuel was the last of these judges. Toward the end of his faithful tenure of office, the Israelites clamored for a king to rule over them instead of a new judge. They wanted to be like the other nations of earth. The Lord granted this request, and directed Samuel to anoint their first king, who was Saul.

Saul did not remain faithful to the Lord so was cast off from being the Lord's representative in ruling Israel, and David was anointed in his place, although David did not assume the rulership of the nation until after the death of Saul. David was a faithful servant of the Lord, who referred to David as being a man after his own heart. One of the things David wanted to do was to build a "house" for the Lord, a temple in which the Israelites could meet with the Lord, instead of the tent or tabernacle which was constructed in the days of Moses.

David told the Prophet Nathan about this desire, and Nathan gave him the authority to proceed. But the Lord intervened, and through the prophet said to David, "Now therefore so shalt thou say, . . . Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime. And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine

enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an [ruling] house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He [Solomon] shall build an house for my name [Solomon's temple], and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever."—II Sam. 7:8-16

David's Ruling House Everlasting

Many of David's successors on the throne of Israel were unfaithful. Even Solomon, his son, who was the first to succeed him, did not continue faithful to the Lord, and following his death the nation was divided into two kingdoms. The smaller one, with headquarters at Jerusalem, was ruled over by David's grandson, and the other kingdom, sometimes known as the ten-tribe kingdom, with headquarters at Bethel, was ruled over by a man named Jeroboam, who, when his life was threatened by Solomon, fled to Egypt for safety, (I Kings 11:40) When Solomon died, Jeroboam returned and became the ruler over ten of the tribes of Israel, while Solomon's son Rehoboam ruled over the remainder. Neither Jeroboam nor any of his successors were faithful to the Lord, and in due course the Lord permitted this ten-tribe kingdom to be overthrown by the Assyrians, and many of its people went into captivity in Assyria.

Some of the descendants of Rehoboam, on the other hand, endeavored as best they could to serve the Lord and to rule the people in harmony with his precepts. But the

majority of these kings were also unfaithful, and in due course this southern kingdom of Judah came into subjection to the Babylonians, and most of the people, including the remnant of the ten-tribe kingdom which did not go to Assyria, were taken captive to Babylon.

The climax of this event occurred in 606 B.C., although the people of this small nation had already lost their independence several years before—nineteen years, to be exact—when Jehoiakim was made king by the king of Egypt. The Egyptian government began to tax the people, and while Nebuchadnezzar wrested power from the king of Egypt and took control of the situation, the Israelites never did regain their independence. In 606 B.C. Zedekiah was dethroned, and the people went into captivity in Babylon for seventy years.

“Whose Right It Is”

Through the Prophet Ezekiel the Lord uttered a prophecy concerning the overthrow of Israel's last king, which reads: “And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.”—Ezek. 21:25-27

As we read in II Samuel 7:16, the Lord promised David that his throne would be established forever, so when that rulership was discontinued with the overthrow of King Zedekiah, it was to be for a period of time only, or, as the Lord said, “Until he come whose right it is.” And who is this great One to whom the throne of David was promised and really belongs? He will not be found among the rulers in the State of Israel today. He is none other than the crucified, resurrected, and glorified Christ Jesus.

This fact is clearly established by the angel Gabriel, who announced to Mary that she would be the mother of the Messiah. The angel said to her, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."—Luke 1:30-33

Isaiah records a prophecy concerning Jesus' birth and points up the same fact concerning the throne of David. We quote: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to [re] establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9:6, 7

Israel's Hope

This and other promises of God assuring Israel that he would send them a great Ruler to sit on the throne of David inspired the devout of the nation with hope—a hope that carried over from one generation to another of these chosen people of God even through the trials of being a subject people, for, beginning with their captivity in Babylon they never again enjoyed national independence. After Babylon, they were subjects of the Medo-Persian Empire; then of the Grecian Empire, and then of the Roman Empire. They were vassals to Rome when Jesus was born, and during the time he preached the kingdom of God to them up and down throughout their Promised Land.

Due to the opposition of the religious leaders of Israel, the majority of the Israelites rejected Jesus as the Messiah of promise; but a few did accept and follow him. However, even these did not clearly understand the full import of his ministry. They believed that he was the great King of promise; that he had come to deliver them. But their concept of deliverance was limited, as indicated by a question which his disciples asked Jesus after he was raised from the dead. They asked, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"—Acts 1:6

This question indicates that these disciples had in mind the immediate situation of the Jewish nation in their bondage to Rome. They knew that Israel had not been a free nation since the Babylonian captivity. While they were released from that captivity, they continued to be a vassal nation under Medo-Persia, Greece, and at the time, Rome. By their question they were asking Jesus when they would have their own government again, and run their own affairs as they had done prior to the overthrow of King Zedekiah in 606 B.C.

Wonderful Promises

True, God had caused his prophets to foretell many wonderful things on behalf of Israel and the world which the Messiah would accomplish. He was to give his life to redeem mankind from death. This he had already done, and while the apostles were beginning to understand this to some extent, the full meaning of the plan of God concerning this basic feature of his grand design for the rescue of the adamic race from sin and death was not discerned until the coming of the Holy Spirit, at Pentecost.

God had promised that during the Master's second visit to earth, universal and lasting peace would be established, and that all nations would rejoice in the security which the messianic kingdom would assure to all who obeyed its

righteous laws. As we have read, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." This will mean peace among nations and within nations. It will mean community peace and family peace. And best of all, it will mean peace between God and men, without which mankind would continue in chaos, suffering, and death.

God had promised that in his kingdom he would "swallow up death in victory," and "wipe away tears from off all faces." Probably the disciples had these and other wonderful messianic promises dimly in mind, but they were unaware of how and when they would be fulfilled. Their concern for the moment was to know when Jesus would deliver their nation from the Roman yoke, and restore their lost kingdom to them. Having accepted Jesus as their Messiah, they believed he would be the King of this restored kingdom, and from various promises he made to them they entertained the hope of sharing in some official capacity in that government.

Signs of His Coming

On different occasions Jesus had indicated to his apostles that he would leave them for a time, and return at a later date. Because of events shortly before his crucifixion the apostles became concerned about his leaving them, and they went to him to find out, if they could, how they might know of his return and second presence. On the Mount of Olives they said to Jesus, "Tell us, when these things shall be—and what the sign of thy presence and the conclusion of the age."—Matt. 24:3, Rotherham

The disciples had not recognized Jesus at his first advent by his appearance, but by the signs which accompanied his presence. And they concluded correctly that if he were going away, to later return, the same situation would be true, hence their desire to know what sign, or signs, to look for in order to know that he had returned.

In reply to this question Jesus gave his disciples a number of signs. One of them was that there would be upon the earth "distress of nations, with perplexity," resulting in men's hearts failing them for fear. (Luke 21:25, 26) Matthew's description of this sign, as given by Jesus, is that there would be a time of great tribulation, so severe that unless it was shortened no flesh would survive. (Matt. 24: 21, 22) It has been given to the present generation to witness the fulfilment of this prophecy; for today the tribulation among the nations is so acute that the very existence of the human race is threatened.

Another Sign

As noted, Jesus gave a number of signs by which his people could know the time of his second presence. Among them is one pertaining to the position of the Jewish people. He said: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24) The "times of the Gentiles" in the prophecies is that period of time during which the Jewish people would have no independent government of their own, and indeed, for a greater part of this period would have no government at all.

The word "Jerusalem" in the expression "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles," refers to the Jewish polity, the nation as a whole, just as the word "Washington" is often used to denote the United States Government, and "London" the British government. Thus, when Jesus said that "Jerusalem" would be trodden down of the Gentiles, he really meant that the entire nation would be subject to Gentile domination, and that this would continue "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

As we have noted, the Lord had made many promises to the Jewish people. According to these promises they were to be restored to their own land—the Promised Land. God's Spirit was to be poured out upon them. In Messiah's

kingdom their dead were to be raised, and they were to be given health and life. But Jesus did not say that all these blessings would come to them before the Gentile Times ended. All he said was that when Jerusalem was no longer trodden down of the Gentiles it would mean that the times of the Gentiles had ended, and that this could be taken as one of the outstanding signs of his second presence on earth.

The prophecies indicate that the period Jesus referred to as "the times of the Gentiles" was to be 2,520 years in length. We learn this from a prophecy recorded in Leviticus 26:17, 18, which reads: "I will set my face against you [Israel], and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth." This is a reference to chastisements which the Lord inflicted upon his people prior to their captivity in Babylon. Then the prophecy continues, "And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins."

This "seven times more" is in reality a time prophecy. It is based on the ancient Jewish year of 360 days, in which, according to symbolic time measurement, each day is counted for a year. This, then, would be a period of 2,520 years. It began when the Jews were taken captive to Babylon in 606 B.C. Its termination would therefore be in A.D. 1914. That was the year when World War I began, and out of that war there came for the first time the opportunity for the Jewish people to return to their own land, and to build it up for their own use as a people.

In 1918 came the Balfour Declaration to this effect, and later this was confirmed by a mandate from the League of Nations. Thus the Jewish people were set on the return road to liberty, and while many hard experiences intervened, these developments which arose from the first World War led to the establishment of the State of Israel

in 1948, and this marked the end of their being trodden down of the Gentiles.

Today Israel is a free nation among nations. The State of Israel is not beholden to any nation in the sense of being required to pay tribute. Just as are all the other nations of earth, Israel is passing through a period of chaos, fear, and distress. Though she is ringed by enemies, she is not subject to any nation, but is a member of the greatest body of nations which ever attempted to co-operate in the common cause of peace; namely, the United Nations. In other words, instead of being trodden down by the Gentiles, Israel is now a nation among the nations, or governments, of this world.

To occupy this position among the nations, in fulfilment of Jesus' prophecy, implies the existence of Gentile nations, even though it means that the Gentile Times have ended, for it was this that Jesus said would be involved in the working out of the divine plan when Jerusalem was no longer trodden down by the Gentiles. The free state of Israel is not the messianic kingdom, for Jesus will be the Head of that government, and the restored Ancient Worthies will be his human representatives.

Jesus did not say that the times of the Gentiles would be ended when the messianic kingdom began to function through the resurrection of the Ancient Worthies. To repeat, all he said was that Jerusalem would no longer be trodden down of the Gentiles, and this wonderful prophecy has now come to its fulfilment. Israel is free to chart her own destiny as best she can, and this should strengthen our faith in the prophecies and in their accuracy.

In our next article on this subject we will deal with the position the Gentile nations have occupied through "the times of the Gentiles," and here we will find further confirmation that "the Gentile times" have ended. This, in turn, means that the long-promised and much prayed for kingdom of Christ is near. □

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Bible Study

LESSON FOR AUGUST 1

Relationships Within the Family

MEMORY VERSE: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."—Ephesians 5:21

EXODUS 20:12

THIS text of Scripture contains the commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother," with the promise that those who do will enjoy a long life. It is well to remember in this connection that this promise of a material reward for obedience to the Law was made to children born under the Law, and subject to its requirements. The Law promised life to any and all who were able to live up to its terms perfectly, but none gained life in this way, for none was able, due to inherited imperfections, to measure up fully to the Law.

On the other hand, the Ten Commandments is a wonderful code of ethics for all in every age. Even unbelievers in Christ would find that observance of the Ten Commandments would make for better family and community life. How much better off the world would be today

if children gave more honor to their parents, and if young people in general would give more heed and respect to their elders.

EPHESIANS 5:21-6:4

The first verse of this scripture is important—"submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." This is one of the basic requirements to good Christian fellowship, and to true Christian unity. Christ is the Head of the church, and all his followers are brethren. As Head, Jesus is not subject to the members of his body, but as body members we are subject to him. Sometimes this is overlooked by various ones in the church and they conduct themselves as though they thought other brethren should be subject exclusively to them. This makes for human headship within the church, and often leads to disappointments and heartaches.

Paul's statement means that all the brethren should be subject one to another. This implies that each member of the church will seek to please his fellow members, and will humbly recognize the rights of all to be heard, and to do what is possible for the general welfare of the entire congregation.

This applies also within the family; and while Paul enjoins that wives should be subject to their husbands, it is not with the thought that wives are inferior to their husbands, nor does it mean that husbands should be domineering and unkind in dealing with their wives. It is a beautiful relationship, based on love and the mutual best interests of both.

Paul draws a beautiful lesson from this proper family arrangement. We quote: "For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be

holy and without blemish."—Eph. 5:23-27

Paul presents a further lesson: "Because we are members of his body. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one." (vss. 30, 31, ASV) Paul continues, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."—vs. 32

This "mystery" of Christ and the church is set forth in detail in I Corinthians, chapter 12. One aspect of it is stated by Paul in Colossians 1:27, which reads, "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

The hope of glory enjoyed by the dedicated members of the church is based upon faithfulness in suffering with Christ, for it is only if we are faithful in suffering with him that we will, in the resurrection, be exalted to his glory, and share in his messianic reign for a thousand years, for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

QUESTIONS

Will obedience to the Ten Commandments result now in long life?

What is pictured in the divine plan by the relationship of husband and wife?

The Family Finding Reconciliation

MEMORY VERSE: "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Ephesians 4:32

GENESIS 27:43-45

JACOB and Esau were grandsons of Abraham to whom God had promised that his seed, or offspring, would bless all the families of the earth. This promise, which God afterward confirmed by his oath, was the chief consideration in connection with the birthright which Esau, being the older of the two sons by a few moments, and therefore the rightful heir, sold to his brother Jacob for a mess of pottage.

Apparently the father, Isaac, had not been aware of this transaction between his two sons, and when the time came to confirm the heirship of the birthright, he supposed that this particular blessing properly belonged to Esau. Seemingly, however, the mother knew that Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob, so she took what steps she thought were proper to make sure that Jacob received that which he had purchased; and this, we know, involved deceiving her husband into be-

lieving that Jacob really was Esau.

Most commentators on this bit of biblical history take the position that Esau was largely above reproach in what took place, and that Jacob and his mother took unjust advantage of him. But we think that another viewpoint of this incident is possible. In the first place, the Apostle Paul refers to Esau as a "profane" person (Heb. 12:16) "who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." Genesis 25:34 states that "Esau despised his birthright."

However, he had relinquished his birthright to Jacob, and the honorable thing to have done under the circumstances would have been to acquaint his father, Isaac, with this fact, so that when the time came to confirm the passing on of the birthright it would have automatically been bestowed upon Jacob. This was not done, so the mother, working with Jacob, deceived Isaac into bestowing the birthright upon the one to whom it belonged.

Probably the mother felt justified in doing this because before the twins were born "the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." (Gen. 25:23) This doubtless clearly indicated to Rebecca which of her boys would be the Lord's choice, and she co-operated to this end.

When the birthright blessing was properly bestowed upon Jacob, Esau became very angry and threatened to kill his brother. Upon advice from the mother, Jacob then fled from the homestead, and went to live with Laban, his mother's brother, who lived in Haran.

GENESIS 33:4-11

Jacob, on his way to Haran, was blessed with that wonderful dream of a ladder stretched from heaven to earth, with angels ascending and descending upon it. This assured Jacob of the Lord's blessing, and he went on to Haran.

Laban, on account of the circumstances, was glad to see Jacob and his family and possessions move away from his ranch. But now Jacob faced a real problem. Esau, with a contingent of men, started out to

meet him, and what would happen when these two "enemies," after so many years, came together face to face?

Jacob prayed earnestly about the matter, and it was in one of these prayers that an angel appeared to him and wrestled with him. It was on this occasion that Jacob's name was changed to Israel, the name meaning "prevailed with God." Through faith and action Jacob had prevailed with God, and eventually this name will apply to the people of all nations who likewise demonstrate their loyalty to God.

Finally the two brothers met. Time had largely healed the wound in Esau's heart, and Jacob was happy that the two could be friendly brothers again. However, they went their separate ways. Esau became the progenitor of the people later known as the Edomites, while Jacob became the head of twelve tribes, all being identified in the Scriptures as having taken the name Israel, which Jacob received from the angel of the Lord.

QUESTIONS

Relate the story of Jacob and Esau, and how it was that Jacob received the birthright instead of Esau.

Who were the descendants of Jacob, and who were the descendants of Esau?

Alcohol and the Family

MEMORY VERSE: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."—Ephesians 5:18

JEREMIAH 35:1-10, 18, 19

THE scriptural background of this lesson pertains to a group associated with the Israelites known as the Rechabites. Their founder was Jonadab the son of Rechab, from which the group got its name. According to Smith's Bible Dictionary the Rechabites were probably Arabs to whom the laws and customs of the Israelites appealed; and through circumcision they became qualified to be a part of the nation.

The history of the Rechabites is obscure, but it is certain from the commands given to them by their founder, Jonadab, not to build houses for themselves, nor to engage in farming, that they were not a settled group, and it is thought that they chiefly occupied themselves as coppersmiths, moving about the country as opportunity for plying their trade presented itself. They lived in tents. Jonadab, their founder, it might be added, associated himself with Jehu to do what they could to destroy the worship of Baal in Israel.

The scene of the lesson is in Jerusalem in the hectic days shortly before the destruction of the city and the beginning of the captivity of the Hebrews in Babylon. It is thought that the Rechabites had sought refuge in the city, not knowing, of course, that Jerusalem itself was soon to be destroyed. It was here that the Lord asked Jeremiah to put the Rechabites to the test to see how loyal they would be to the commands of Jonadab. Jeremiah was instructed by the Lord to take them into the temple and place wine before them, and ask them to drink. The prophet did this, and the Rechabites replied:

"We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons forever: neither shall ye build houses, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land wherein ye be strangers."—vss. 6, 7

Jonadab, who gave this com-

mandment to the tribe which he established, was not a law-giver in Israel. God had given the Israelites his Law through Moses, and he was pleased with the sincerity and definiteness with which the Rechabites refused to do that which their leader had commanded them not to do. Jeremiah said to them, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you: therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me forever."—vss. 18, 19

Our memory verse is very much to the point. The Revised Standard Version reads, "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery." How true! This, as it true of all Paul's epistles, was written to consecrated Christians, and these have a much better source of joy and fervency, even as Paul reminds us; which is, being filled with the Spirit—the Holy Spirit of God, that is. In the two verses following the memory verse Paul suggests the manner in which we may become filled with the Spirit. We quote:

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making

melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Eph. 5:19, 20

It would seem that Paul has in mind here a gathering of the Lord's people—perhaps something akin to a prayer and testimony meeting—where the brethren join in giving thanks to the Lord for all their experiences, and where they join in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." Certainly any dedicated Christian participating in such a gathering would come away feeling that he had indeed been close to the Lord.

But such experiences are not limited to gatherings of the Lord's people. Paul speaks of singing and making melody "in your heart" to the Lord. This is possible in the privacy of one's own room, as well as in a gathering of the Lord's people. David meditated upon the Lord in the night watches, and certainly those today who are acquainted with the great plan of the ages as revealed through the Lord's Word can enjoy seasons of joy alone with the Lord.

QUESTIONS

Who were the Rechabites?

Why was God pleased with their stand?

How can a Christian be filled with the Spirit?

Alcohol and Society

MEMORY VERSE: "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God."

—I Peter 2:16

AMOS 6:1-8

THE prophets sent to ancient Israel and Judah were uncompromising critics of the rulers and prominent men of the nation. They were fearlessly outspoken for God, and did not ask or expect praise, especially from the leaders whom they rightfully and frequently condemned. Amos was one of the most outspoken of these holy prophets. He was conscious that he had been called of God to speak for him to the influential rulers, priests, and social leaders of Israel.

Verse one of the lesson reads, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!" "Zion" is a reference to the two-tribe kingdom of Judah. The "mountain of Samaria" refers to the military advantage enjoyed by the ten-tribe kingdom—their principal territory being known as Samaria. Bethel was the religious headquarters of the ten-tribe kingdom.

Judgment from God was about to fall upon Israel, and later upon Judah. Calneh, Hamath, and Gath give three historical examples of such judgment, and the leaders of Israel were asked to take these into consideration as warnings to them and of what was to come if they did not change their selfish and sinful ways.—vs. 2

These were inclined to "put far away the evil day" while they continued on in their sins. Amos describes the way of living among the rulers and the rich of the land, referring to those who "lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall."—vss. 3, 4

These also, as Amos wrote, "chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David." They also "drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of

Joseph." (vs. 6) The gluttonous and luxurious living of these wealthy leaders and rulers was shameful enough, but what made it even more sinful and worthy of punishment in the eyes of the Lord was the fact that the needs of the ordinary people of Israel, especially the poor, were neglected. The "afflictions of Joseph" were ignored in favor of the ivory beds, the lamb, the veal, and the wine in the bowls.

The judgment of the Lord fell: "Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed. The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein."—vss. 7, 8

As verse 7 indicates, the people of the ten-tribe kingdom of Samaria, the northern kingdom, were the first to go into captivity, and this was in Assyria. There was never an official release from this captivity, and this segment of the nation has become historically known as "the ten lost tribes of Israel."

The southern, or two-tribe kingdom of Judah, was overthrown later and taken into captivity in Babylon. Seventy years later they were officially

released from this captivity by Cyrus, ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire. However, many of the ten-tribe kingdom escaped going into the first captivity in Assyria and these joined with those of the two-tribe kingdom and were taken captive to Babylon.

The memory verse expresses a true Christian principle. Those to whom Peter addressed this admonition had been made free from the bondage of the Law. They realized that they were no longer under command not to steal or murder, etc., but they were not to use this liberty "for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God."

As true servants of God under the leadership of Christ we should be on the alert to do good to others, not harm. We have liberty to lay down our lives in the service of God, and to do good unto all men, especially unto "the household of faith." If we thus use our liberty we will glorify God and be a blessing to all those with whom we come in contact, even our enemies.

QUESTIONS

What was the attitude of God's holy prophets toward evildoers?

What was the sin of Israel's rulers and leaders?

What punishment fell upon Israel for her sins?

Alcohol and the Christian Community

MEMORY VERSE: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

—Galatians 6:1

ROMANS 14:13-23

THE Scripture passage assigned for this lesson has largely to do with eating meat offered to idols, wine being referred to only in verse 21, and that incidentally. Whether or not it is proper to eat meat which has been offered to idols is, of course, no issue among Christians today, but it was in the Early Church, and probably largely because of instructions sent to Gentile believers by the apostles and elders gathered in conference at Jerusalem.—Acts 15:1-29

The chief subject discussed at this conference concerned the Gentiles who were accepting Jesus. Certain Jews from Jerusalem were insisting that these Gentiles should be circumcised before being accepted into the Christian fellowship, but Paul and others held that this was not the plan of God for them. At the conference they finally arrived at a mutual agreement of certain minimal

demands which they would communicate to the Gentile converts, and one of these was that they should not eat meat which had been offered in sacrifice to idols.—Acts 15:29

But whether to eat, or not to eat, was governed by a higher principle than whether or not the meat was polluted, and that was the injury of those who had not advanced in knowledge to the point where they could eat this meat without being conscience-stricken. In I Corinthians, chapter 8, Paul reasons this matter to a very logical conclusion, summing up with his own attitude in the matter, which reads: "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."—I Cor. 8:13

The matter of causing a brother to offend, as discussed in this context, is sometimes misunderstood to mean that a brother's feelings are hurt.

This is not the thought at all. Rather, the thought is that a brother who believes it is a sin to eat meat offered to idols becomes aware that others—as Paul in the Early Church—eat such meat; he joins in eating it simply because others do, but contrary to his own conscience.

This is an offense, because the brother is led to go contrary to his conscience and therefore has his will to do right to that extent undermined. The brother would be far from happy in taking such a course, and the one who led him into it would be violating the law of love. Paul writes in summing up this aspect of the lesson, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned [condemned] if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."—vss. 22, 23

Our memory verse is interesting and timely. In it those who are "spiritual" are admonished to restore those who are overtaken in a fault, "in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." The preceding context reads, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against

such there is no law."—Gal. 5:22, 23

The "spiritual" ones in the church would be those who give evidence of possessing these fruits of the Spirit, and certainly these would be well qualified to "restore" anyone who had been overtaken in a fault. They would have love in their hearts toward the erring one, and be merciful toward him, which would be quite necessary if the one at fault was to be helped by their example and counsel.

The verse following our memory verse reads, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Certainly a brother who has been overtaken in a fault is burdened, and we can help to bear such burdens by endeavoring to be understanding and sympathetic. We all need this sort of help from our brethren in Christ from time to time. None of us is so strong in the Lord that we do not need the help of our brethren.

QUESTIONS

Explain the problem in the Early Church with respect to eating meat offered to idols.

How could a Christian in those days exemplify the spirit of love toward his weaker brethren?

Explain the meaning of our memory verse.

Christian Life and Doctrine

What God Has Given

THE Bible identifies various gifts of God, the chief among them being his beloved Son. (John 3:16) There is also the gift of the Holy Spirit, a blessing which Jesus said the Heavenly Father was more willing to give to his children than earthly fathers are to give good gifts to their children. In II Timothy 1:7 Paul assures us that God has not given us the "spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." The spirit of "power," "love," and a "sound mind" is the Holy Spirit in these three aspects of its operation in the life of the Christian.

All careful students of the Bible realize that any of its individual statements are best understood in relation to the context in which they appear, and we think that this is particularly true with respect to Paul's observation of what God has not given and what he has given.

There is much in the epistle which throws light on this text. It reveals that Paul was nearing the end of his Christian way. He was incarcerated in a Roman prison, and condemned to death. But he was not at all disturbed by this, for he wrote, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which

the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”—II Tim. 4:6-8

Paul was ready to be “offered” but he longed for some fellowship and comfort, and urged Timothy to visit him as soon as possible. After affirming that he was ready to be offered, Paul continued, “Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.”—vss. 9-11

Paul refers to Alexander the coppersmith who did him much evil. (vs. 14) Continuing, Paul wrote, “At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.”—vss. 16, 17

In verse 15 of the 1st chapter Paul says, “All they which are in Asia be turned away from me.” Taking this together with what he reveals in the 4th chapter concerning those who had forsaken him, and in some instances turned against him, we can understand why Paul felt that he needed Timothy and Mark to visit him. At the same time, though, Paul knew that a certain risk was involved in this requested visit. His statement that no man had stood with him on the occasion of his first trial might well suggest the reason for their forsaking him. They may have been fearful of being identified as his friends, imprisoned, and possibly condemned to death.

Paul did not endeavor to hide this situation from Timothy. Instead, he reminded his beloved spiritual son that

any fear he might have in connection with the proposed visit was not from the Lord. Just because a proposed service was dangerous, and would naturally entail a certain amount of risk, should not be used as a criterion as to whether or not it was the Lord's will. So Paul wrote, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God."—ch. 1:8

The Power of God

Fear should have no part in directing the Lord's people as they seek to determine the will of the Lord in any given circumstance. Paul asked Timothy to visit him in his Roman prison realizing that a certain danger was involved, and Timothy must have also known this. We may not understand the full reason Paul considered this visit so important, but we do not need to know this in order to get the lesson which the situation presents to us; and that lesson is that if a situation arises in our lives which calls for action, the mere fact that it involves danger does not necessarily indicate that it is contrary to the Lord's will. The total situation must be taken into consideration.

On the other hand, the Lord's people are not needlessly to expose themselves to danger simply to display their courage, because this might well be tempting the Lord, as Jesus indicated his jumping from the pinnacle of the temple would be. (Matt. 4:5, 6) While the Lord has not given us the spirit of fear, he has given us "the spirit of power" which enables us to be partakers "of the afflictions of the Gospel." If we are faithful to the Gospel, bearing witness to the good news of the kingdom with zeal and courage, we will partake of the "afflictions of the Gospel."

These afflictions of the Gospel may be in the form of persecution, or they might well be simply in the mental

and physical weariness which often is involved in faithfully bearing witness to the truth. The point is that we should be willing and glad to endure these "afflictions," knowing that at all times the Lord will give us the necessary strength. Paul assured Timothy that the Lord would give him "the spirit of power" and we can be sure that he will do the same for us.

God's Promises

An important source of strength for the Christian is found in the promises of God. By faith we lay hold upon these promises and receive strength to continue on in the difficult way of the cross. We hear the Lord saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and we take courage in the assurance that the Lord is always at our side to guide us by his spirit and to overrule all our experiences for our good as new creatures.

And then there is that wonderful promise, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Ps. 34:7) By faith we see these invisible messengers of God as they go about their assignment of ministering to the needs of those who are "heirs of salvation," that "great salvation which began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."—Heb. 1:14; 2:3

Paul assures us that the mighty power which raised Jesus from the dead is operative on our behalf. (Eph. 1:19, 20) In order to experience the operation of this power Paul was willing to suffer the loss of all things. (Phil. 3:8-11) He knew that this involved fellowship in the sufferings of Christ—a partnership which led to death. When Paul was first called into the ministry the Lord revealed to him the course of suffering which lay ahead. (Acts 9:16) This did not deter him, because he also knew that the divine "spirit of power" would sustain him through all the diffi-

cult experiences he would encounter. And now from his prison home in Rome he assured Timothy of this same glorious reality of the Christian's way of life which leads to death.

Yes, the Lord gives strength to his people: "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isa. 40:28-31

The Spirit of Love

Paul informs us that the Lord also gives his people the spirit "of love." It is through the divine plan that God's love is revealed to us, and through this glorious truth of the Word the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. (Rom. 5:5) But for this to be true we must empty our hearts of selfishness. Divine love cannot operate in the lives of the self-seeking.

And how important it is that the spirit of love does find expression in our lives, and become the motive for all that we think, say, and do. Paul wrote, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."—I Cor. 13:1-3

Paul requested that Timothy visit him in prison, which from the human standpoint involved a great risk. If this visit, in the Lord's providence, had led to a complete sacrifice of life on Timothy's part—the giving of his "body to be burned,"—the sacrifice would have been without profit from the Lord's standpoint, had it not been motivated by love. It is a privilege to suffer and to die with Jesus, and those who are called to thus walk in his steps are assured of the future privilege of living and reigning with him, but only if we have been emptied of self and have wholeheartedly embraced God's gift "of love."

The Spirit of a Sound Mind

In addition to the spirit of "power, and of love," the Lord also gives his people the spirit "of a sound mind." What is a sound mind? From the human standpoint a sound mind is a mind which can properly assess and evaluate the various facts, ideas, and circumstances of life and make rational decisions based upon them. To the mentally unsound almost nothing is seen and understood in its true light. Everything becomes distorted.

The present is not the time in the divine plan when God is giving soundness of mind to the mentally ill; although we rejoice in the assurance that in "the times of restitution of all things" this will be true; that then, all who are mentally and physically ill will be restored to soundness of mind and of body.

We think that the spirit of "a sound mind" referred to by Paul is something which goes beyond the ability of the human mind to think rationally and reach logical conclusions. It is, we believe, a reference to the manner in which the new creature is guided by the Holy Spirit to do the Lord's will. It is quite possible, in fact almost certain, that one who is thus directed by the Spirit of God will do

(Continued on page 34)

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WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN

(Continued from page 31)

things, even take a course in life, which from the standpoint of worldly wisdom would seem quite irrational.

We have a good example of this in the Apostle Paul. At the point in his Christian walk when he appeared before Festus, and bore witness to him, this Gentile ruler said, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." (Acts 26:24) The "learning" referred to by Festus is what Paul had received in the school of Christ; it gave him the spirit of "a sound mind" which to an outsider seemed sheer folly, or worse.

Timothy's Visit

From the human standpoint it would probably not have seemed wise for Timothy to visit Paul in the Roman prison. The mind of the flesh would reason that nothing could be accomplished by such a visit, and that perhaps he would lose his life. But in his letter to Timothy Paul expressed a different view. Should this beloved young soldier of the cross be fearful, Paul reminded him that the spirit of fear is not from the Lord; that instead God gives strength unto his people to do what he calls upon them to do, and Paul, the mouthpiece of the Lord, evidently believed there was an important reason why Timothy should visit him in Rome.

Paul's second letter to Timothy contains much instruction for this young teacher in the church, instruction which would help him to continue on successfully in the ministry after Paul's departure. He wrote, for example, "My son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou has heard of me among many

witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (ch. 2:1,2) Probably Paul felt there were many more instructions and admonitions he would like to impart to Timothy than would be possible by letter, and this may well have been one of the reasons he wanted to see him.

A Reasonable Service

In any case, Paul certainly felt that Timothy would be exercising the spirit of a sound mind to visit him in Rome, even though it would entail hardship and a certain degree of danger. After all, this is what they both believed was involved in following the Master. Paul wrote, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) A sound mind is a mind capable of reasoning, and the new creature knows that it is a reasonable thing to present one's body a living service. Having thus presented oneself to the Lord it would be unreasonable, or the exercise of an unsound mind, to hold back from the way of sacrifice.

We have in Jesus an excellent illustration of this. After all, he is our Exemplar, and we are walking in his steps. Jesus poured out his soul unto death, and was led as a lamb to the slaughter. In the beginning of his ministry Jesus avoided exposing himself to danger. Realizing that he had bitter enemies in Judea he moved north to Galilee, not because he was fearful, but because he knew that the Father's time for the consummation of his sacrifice had not yet come. But when the "due time" did approach, Jesus unhesitatingly returned to Judea, and announced to his disciples "that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed."—Matt. 16:21

Peter Objects

Peter seemed certain that his beloved Master was making a serious mistake in thus exposing himself to danger. He rebuked Jesus, and said, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." (vs. 22) Jesus replied to Peter, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." (vs. 23) The Revised English Translation renders this last phrase, "You think as man thinks, not as God thinks."

Peter meant well, but he was using human reasoning as a guide. Anyone not guided by the Holy Spirit would reason the same way, but from the standpoint of the divine will for those who have covenanted to lay down their lives in the divine cause, such reasoning is not sound; and Jesus explained why, and included his followers in the explanation. We quote, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"—vss. 24-26

In this explanation Jesus assured the disciples that he was not actually throwing away his life, but taking the only possible course that would lead to life—divine, immortal life, that is. Jesus had entered into a covenant with the Heavenly Father which called for the sacrifice of his life as the world's Redeemer. In return, the Father had given the Master many assurances of life in the resurrection. These promises were a great joy to Jesus, a joy that enabled him to endure the cross and to despise the shame entailed in the laying down of his life as a blasphemer in the eyes of his enemies.—Heb. 12:2

Jesus knew that the only way to enter into that future life in the resurrection, and to be with his Heavenly Father in glory, was faithfully to consummate the sacrifice of his earthly life. If he failed in this he would lose everything. Thus, to him, the only way to "find" his life in the resurrection was first to lose it through obedient and loving sacrifice.

We Follow Him

Jesus invited his disciples to take up their cross and follow him into death, and when we take this step of full dedication to the Lord's will we are obligated to walk in the way that he walked. The Lord's mind becomes our guide, and thus we are given the spirit of a sound mind. This is not a mind that holds us back from sacrifice, but a mind that urges us to take advantage of every opportunity to lay down our lives. Having devoted ourselves to this course of sacrifice, let us not allow human reasoning to turn us aside from the pathway of faithfulness, whether it be our own or someone else's.

Paul was well acquainted with the fact of Jesus' life and would know how courageously he took that final journey to Jerusalem, knowing that death awaited him in that Holy City. It is quite possible that Paul had this experience in mind when he found himself confronted with the question as to whether or not he would go up to Jerusalem where bonds—and possibly death—awaited him. Paul was warned by the Holy Spirit, through Agabus, that he would be bound in Jerusalem, and delivered to the Gentiles.—Acts 21:10, 11

Paul's friends, as Peter did with Jesus, endeavored to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem. Although not realizing it, they were using human reasoning, which from Paul's standpoint, and the Lord's, was unsound. "Then

Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."—vss. 12, 13

Our "Jeruselems"

Our "Jeruselems" consist largely of little ways of laying down our lives. Is our earliest thought each morning a re-affirmation of our consecration vow to lay down our lives in divine service? Each evening, as we look back upon the experiences of the day, can we say to the Lord that we have done as faithfully as possible all that he gave us to do? Can we say that we did not turn down any opportunity simply because it seemed too difficult?

As day by day we face our little "Jeruselems" may it be without fear, knowing that fear is not of the Lord. Let it be with courage, knowing that the Lord will give us the spirit of power—all the power we need to do the things he gives us the opportunity of doing. And may we daily cleanse ourselves of the spirit of selfishness. Having denied self, let us seek to do the Lord's will, and in his way, which is the way of love. For he has given us, and will continue to give us, the spirit of love.

And if we are ridiculed by the world and our worldly friends for being too onesided, too radical in the way we serve the Lord, let us ever remember that presenting our bodies daily as a living sacrifice is our "reasonable" service; that only by the sacrifice of our earthly life can we hope to gain heavenly life and live and reign with Jesus. Let us be like Paul who, in referring to experiences which awaited him in Jerusalem, said, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."—Acts 20:24 □

Jesus' Hope of Glory

IN PROPHECY Jesus said, "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—Ps. 16:8-11

Here is an expression of Jesus' full confidence in his Heavenly Father in whom he had put his complete trust. Jesus knew that his devotion to his Heavenly Father would lead him in the path of self-sacrifice, even unto death; but from this prophecy it is clear also that Jesus had confidence that his Father would restore him to life in the resurrection, and exalt him to his own right hand where there are pleasures forevermore.

There can be no mistake about this application of the prophecy, because in the New Testament the Apostle Paul quotes from it and applies it to Jesus. In an admonition to us Paul wrote, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."—Heb. 12:2

Jesus had said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; . . . thou wilt show me the path of life," and for Jesus that "path of life" led right to the presence of his Heavenly Father, where he knew there was fulness of joy. This is the joy which, as Paul observed, was set before Jesus, and it was this joy set before Jesus that enabled him to endure the cross and despise the shame which he experienced in giving his life as the Redeemer and Savior of the world.

Jesus said that at the end of the path of life which the Heavenly Father would unfold to him there would be "fulness of joy," and a position at the right hand of God. Paul confirms this, explaining that it was this joy set before Jesus that enabled him to endure the cross, and that Jesus' path of life led to "the right hand of the throne of God." Thus again we have an outstanding example of the manner in which the New Testament interprets the Old Testament.

One of the joys of being at the right hand of God is that which results from participating in the great work of restoring the world of mankind to life. It was Jesus' faithfulness even unto death as the world's Redeemer that made him worthy of this great joy of being at the right hand of God and sharing in this work. The prophet wrote, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."—Isa. 53:10

The "pleasure of the Lord" here referred to is undoubtedly the great joy of seeing the human race redeemed and restored to its lost inheritance. The prospect of restitution for the human race was such a pleasure to the Creator that he caused all his holy prophets to write about it; and it is this "pleasure," this "joy," which will prosper in the

hands of the One who gave his life to prepare the way for this great blessing which the Heavenly Father has planned for his human creatures.

Isaiah continues, "He shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." (Isa. 53:11) In the preceding verse we read concerning Jesus that he "shall see his seed." Much "travail" was involved on the part of Jesus in order to be worthy to produce the "seed" here referred to; that is, the restored human race. But when this work is complete he shall "see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." And this great satisfaction, this great joy, will be his because of being at the right hand of God where there are pleasures forevermore.

The Heavenly Father promised Jesus, "I will divide him a portion with the great." (Isa. 53:12) The "great" referred to here is none other than our great and loving Heavenly Father. He gave Jesus a portion with himself, at his own right hand of authority and power. And the prophet explains that Jesus would divide this "spoil" or reward with the strong. (Isa. 53: 12) Here is one of God's precious promises to the true followers of Jesus—a promise that they will share Jesus' future glory with him, and, of course, this includes the work of blessing all the families of the earth.

Jesus himself sums up this thought for us, saying, "To him that overcometh [the "strong"] will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." May this great joy that is set before us enable us, as it did Jesus, to endure the cross and despise the shame, and through it all to be faithful, even unto death. □



Your Questions

No Remembrance In Death

Ecclesiastes 12:7 reads: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." When the spirit returns unto God, does it remember the past life?

No, it does not! The "spirit" which returns to God is merely the breath, or power of life. It has no consciousness apart from the body which it animates. It requires the union of the spirit, or breath of life, with the body in order for there to be a living, conscious being, or soul. (Gen. 2:7) The thinking part of the body is the brain, and when the brain is no longer alive there are no thoughts, no remembrance. This is confirmed by Psalm 146:4, which reads, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

The word "return" in the text under consideration is

very significant. The body is said to return to the dust. This is because it came from the dust, or the elements of the earth. The "spirit" returns to God, because the breath of life, the animating power of life, came from God. "In him we live, and move, and have our being," said Paul. (Acts 17:28) When the body returns to its original elements of the earth, and the power of life returns to the Lifegiver, the person is as though he never existed, except for the fact that God has promised to restore him to life in the resurrection.—Acts 24:14, 15; I Cor. 15:15-18, 20-22

A Bondslave of Christ

Galatians 6:17 reads, "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Please explain what Paul means in this text.

Paul is here likening himself to a slave, and his owner as being the Lord Jesus. The "marks" he mentions would be the brand by which slave owners of that day identified their slaves, and protected them against interference or trouble from other owners. So Paul was simply saying that since he bore the branding marks of his owner, the Lord Jesus, no one could properly interfere with him in carrying out the missions of his beloved Master.

Broken Branches

The general belief in our church is that God cast the Israelites off from his favor because of their refusal to accept Christ, but I find the Apostle Paul saying, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." (Rom. 11:2) Should we accept this statement by the Apostle Paul at face value?

Certainly all true Christians will accept the plain statements of the Word of God at face value, and there doesn't seem to be anything symbolic in what Paul says concerning the Israelites not being cast

away. However, this statement should be understood in the light of the context in which it appears, which is a very interesting one, consisting of the entire 11th chapter of Romans.

In this chapter Paul likens the Israelites to an olive tree, which, of course, has its roots in the great oathbound promise which God made to Abraham, the promise that through his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed. Paul likens the unbelieving Israelites to branches of this olive tree which are broken off because of their unbelief. So when Paul says that God had not cast away his people which he foreknew he meant that this symbolic olive tree had not been cut down, or destroyed, but merely that the unbelieving branches were broken off.

In the first verse of the chapter Paul states, "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." What Paul is saying here is that if the Israelites as a whole had been cast off from God's favor he himself would not be enjoying the

rich blessings of the Lord, which was so true of him.

In verses 2-4 Paul explains that just as there was a remnant of faithful Israelites in the days of Elijah, so then there was also a faithful remnant which was enjoying the blessing of the Lord, and Paul was one of these. These were the branches in the olive tree which were not broken off, and the great plan of God as it centered in that "tree" continued to go forward.

In the chapter, Paul further explains that Gentile believers were being grafted into the Israelitish olive tree to take the places of the branches which were broken off. Biblical history indicates that Cornelius and his family were the first of these Gentile "branches" to be grafted into this symbolic olive tree. Paul explains that this grafting was "contrary to nature." In the regular practice of grafting the ingrafted branch continues to bear the same type of fruit as it always had, but not so in this symbolic grafting into the Israelitish olive tree, for the wild, or Gentile branches, when grafted in because of their belief, take on the character of the tree to

which they are grafted; that is, in God's sight, they become Israelites. Thus we see that the olive tree arrangement continues to function as originally designed, with its full quota of branches. God did not cast away his people, but merely broke off the unbelieving "branches," referred to in the 15th verse of the chapter as their "casting away."

And what does this mean in the total experience of the unbelieving Israelites? Shortly before his crucifixion Jesus said to the Israelitish people, "Your house is left unto you desolate." But this does not imply the loss of an opportunity to gain salvation through Christ, because Jesus continued, and said, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. 23:38, 39) This, of course, will be when they are awakened from the dead.

Jesus also said to the Israelites who rejected him as Messiah and King, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof"—the fruits, that is, of faith and obedience to di-

vine law. (Matt. 21:43) It was the removal of this opportunity as a nation to be associated with Jesus in his messianic kingdom that left the nation "desolate."

Jesus said that this "kingdom" opportunity would be given to a nation "bringing forth the fruits thereof." Peter identifies this nation in his statement to the church: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God."—I Pet. 2:9, 10

Here, then, are the believing Gentiles, grafted into the Israelitish olive tree to take the places of the unbelieving Israelites who were broken off as branches because of unbelief. Thus Paul explains, "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11:7) As we have seen, there was a remnant of Israel who did believe, and they made their election sure through belief and obedi-

ence; and these, together with the Gentile branches grafted into the olive tree, will constitute the complete messianic company, the "Seed" which will bless "all families of the earth."—Gal. 3:16, 27-29

And the unbelieving Israelites are remembered by God, who has promised to make a new covenant with them, and through this New Covenant to take away their sin. "And so," Paul concludes, "all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."—Rom. 11:26, 27

Paul indicates the possibility that some of the broken-off branches of the olive tree might be reingrafted; and throughout the age some have. God has not discriminated against the Jew in this matter. They have had the same opportunity to accept Christ and follow in his steps as have Gentiles. And how wonderful it is that in God's due time they will have their blindness removed and be saved under the terms of the New Covenant. □

The British Section

Oneness

With Christ

ONENESS with Christ is somewhat of a mystery, or secret, but is revealed to those who are in the condition of sanctification. Figuratively speaking, those who are in the "secret place of the Most High," typified by the holy apartment of the tabernacle, are in Christ, and can therefore understand and appreciate something of this oneness.

To be introduced into this oneness with Christ it is necessary to have entered in at the "strait" gate of consecration; to have become footstep followers of Jesus along the narrow way of self-denial and self-sacrifice. And having entered this way, it is necessary to continue walking therein unto the end of our earthly course.

There are various figures given in the Scriptures to convey to our minds this oneness with Christ, and the illustration which is, perhaps, used more than any other, is that which compares "The Christ" to a human being, of which Jesus is the Head and the church the body. Paul wrote, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (I Cor. 12:27) Ephesians 4:15 and 5:23 describe Jesus as the Head. Just as the human head is the controlling power of the human body, and all the members of the body serve one another in obedience to the head, so it is with Jesus and the church.

This figure teaches us very convincingly that the true church is a part of "The Christ." It also shows that its relationship to our Lord Jesus is a very intimate one, just as intimate as the relationship of the human body to the human head, and reveals that the relationship of its mem-

bers one to another and to the Head is that of servants.

Just as the various members of the human body serve one another in obedience to the head, so the various members of the true church serve one another in love and obedience to their Head, Christ Jesus. One is our Master, even Christ, and we are to ever remember that our "Head," or controlling power, is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is from Ephesians 1:22, 23 that we learn that God "gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body." And in harmony with Colossians 2:19, we should hold firmly the Head, Christ Jesus, "from which all the body by joints and bands [ligaments], having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."

Our identification and oneness with Christ, together with all that this involves, should be our constant theme in life. And as we feed daily upon the inspired Word, we are to lose our natural minds, and get the mind of Christ. We should definitely yearn for Christ to be formed in us,

also in all others whom God is still drawing to his beloved Son for that purpose.

To have "Christ" formed in us now is to have a Christlike character distinctly developed as a result of the begetting power of the truth. Just as a genius expresses himself through his work, whether it be painting, music, or literature, so Jesus desires to express himself through his followers; and we are to let his Spirit work in us. We are to speak as Jesus would speak, and act as he would act.

Our oneness with Christ will include a drinking of the cup that he drank of, and being baptised with the baptism with which he was baptised. This will involve our being "dead with Christ" to earthly hopes, aims, and ambitions, and being risen with him by faith to heavenly hopes and ambitions, walking in newness of life, doing our Father's will. It will also mean hoping and longing for the future glorious heavenly inheritance, with its stupendous kingdom work. It also means to partake so thoroughly of the Holy Spirit that, as intimated in Romans 8:11, our mortal body will, here and

now, be alive and active in God's service, and delighting to do his will.

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Rom. 6:5) If we are faithful, the consummation will be wonderful. Partakers of the divine nature, joint-inheritors with Jesus in glory, outworking a oneness of purpose with our Lord, including the raising of earth's dead millions, the bringing in of blessing and benefit to all the families of the earth, and establishing fully and completely the glorious kingdom of God in the earth—a kingdom of life, joy, and peace which shall never pass away.

To all the Lord's people this side of the veil, there is the exhortation, "Be thou faithful unto death." (Rev. 2: 10) Seeing that we are still in the flesh, there is the vital necessity here and now for each one of us to maintain and develop our oneness with Christ. "There should be no schism, [or, division, margin] in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." —I Cor. 12:25

We can surely visualize that if the new mind in each of the Lord's followers could be appealed to, apart from the frailty and weaknesses of the flesh, much harmony and oneness would result. How very sympathetic we should be with each other, "for by one Spirit" all the members of the true church are "baptised into one body."—I Cor. 12:13

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." (Rom. 12:5) How very comforting to realize this oneness between Jesus and the members of his body. It is with loving solicitude that he marks the progress of his body members as they develop in character-likeness to himself.

Our Lord and Head desires that all the church have a oneness of purpose, a oneness of will with his will. And we can see that this can be obtained only after fully surrendering our own human will. Full consecration is required. We are to be dead respecting our own will, and alive towards the risen Lord Jesus Christ. "For you died, and your life has been hidden

with the Anointed one by God."—Col. 3:3, Diaglott

All who undergo this process are new creatures in Christ Jesus. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17) It is the Holy Spirit that has begotten us as new creatures, and in proportion as we allow God to develop and quicken our new mind, in that same proportion will the oneness with Christ and with one another exist.

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10) "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." (Eph. 4:4) The following verse reads: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," and verses 11 to 16 (Diaglott) beautifully describe the important work of building up the body of the Anointed.

In the second chapter of Philippians, we again find the Apostle Paul stressing this oneness. He exhorts us to be of the same mind, having the

same love, being of one accord, of one mind, doing nothing "through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves."—Phil. 2:2, 3

There seems to be an implication here that pride is a cause of discord, and that by humility, harmony may be restored. And to enforce this appeal, the apostle sets before the Philippians, and us, the supreme example of humility, of self-abnegation, of sacrifice, and exhorts, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2:5) The setting, found in Philippians, second chapter, is made up of two sections. Verses 6-8 set forth the humiliation of God's only begotten Son, and verses 9-11, his high exaltation.

We are made to see the beloved Son of God at the beginning in glory with his Heavenly Father, and at the end in glory. Between is the story of his amazing condescension and sublime sacrifice. The mighty Logos, existing in the form of God, did not count this a means of highhanded self-enrichment,

but emptied himself. He divested himself of the insignia of spiritual majesty, and was made in the likeness of man. He who was rich, for our sakes became poor. Jesus said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38) And at the end of his earthly pilgrimage he submitted to death, even the death of the cross, none having the power to take his life from him.

"He that shall humble himself," said Jesus, "shall be exalted." (Matt. 23:12) In this connection, the disciples of Old questioned Jesus as to who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and in reply, in Matthew 18:2-4 a wonderful lesson is recorded. Having called a little child, Jesus placed him in the midst of them, and said, "Indeed I say to you, unless you be changed, and become as little children, you will never enter the kingdom of the heavens; whoever, therefore, may humble himself like this little child, he will be the greatest in the kingdom of the heavens."—Diaglott

It was also Jesus who said, "Learn of me; for I am meek

and lowly in heart." (Matt. 11:29) And our joy and privilege has been to learn of him. As we bring our own heart and mind into closer sympathy, likeness, and oneness with him, fully submitting ourselves to the transforming influences of the Spirit of the Lord, we are changed daily, more and more fully, into his glorious likeness. Complying with Colossians 3:16, we let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly, and we see in the divine Word the model for our imitation. And in contemplation of all that is lovely, as embodied in him, and of all that is pure and holy and beautiful, we are changed, little by little, to the same blessed likeness—"from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."—II Cor. 3:18

In doing this, we shall continue to be faithful ambassadors of Jesus Christ, in a most wonderful ministry. In describing this marvelous and joyful service, II Corinthians 5:18-20 (Diaglott) reads: "But all things are from that God who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of the reconciliation; namely, that God was by Christ recon-

ciling the world to himself, not counting to them their offenses; and has deposited with us the Word of the reconciliation. On behalf of Christ, therefore, we are ambassadors; as if God were inviting through us, we entreat, on behalf of Christ—be you reconciled to God!”

Has God deposited with us the Word of reconciliation? Yes! Therefore, our ambassadorship on behalf of our Lord and Head must continue throughout our earthly course. We are to be faithful unto

death, and then, passing over into the glorious heavenly phase of the kingdom, and being actually partakers of the divine nature with our glorified Lord Jesus, how true and beautiful, as indicated by the Revelator (14:13) that we will rest from our labours (previously made difficult because of the frailty of human nature), yet our works will follow with us. Our works will not cease with our change of nature. Then our union or oneness with our beloved Bridegroom will be complete for all eternity. □



BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

C. A. CORNELL		E. T. NADAL	
Dewsbury	(Sat.) Aug. 14	Dewsbury	(Sat.) Sept. 25
Latchford	15	Latchford	Sept. 12
		W. F. READER	

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LITERATURE AND SUBSCRIPTIONS—70, Station Road, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex. RM2 6DA.

Portrush Convention, 1971

ONCE again at the Whitsun season, with its deep spiritual significance of pentecostal blessing, a convention of the Lord's people was held in the attractive environs of Portrush, Northern Ireland, the meetings commencing on Saturday, 29th May, and continuing until Monday, 31st.

Despite the troubled conditions in parts of Northern Ireland, which may have deterred some from attending, the convention was well supported, and a most helpful season of fellowship and worship was enjoyed by between 50 and 60 brethren from many parts of the British Isles. The presence of Brother and Sister Wassmann, and Brother and Sister Homer Hamlin, from the United States, was a great joy and encouragement to us all. We had hoped to welcome Brother and Sister Charles Brooks from Florida, but travel difficulties prevented their attendance at Portrush, although they were able to meet and fellowship with some of the friends in London on their way to Europe.

Our Irish hosts welcomed us on the Saturday in their usual hospitable manner by providing what is here termed a "high tea," after which Brother T. Lang of Londonderry gave a warm welcome in the spiritual sense to all who had, as he put it, "come over to help us." The Lord had called

us together, and our covenant with him was to fulfil his will and purpose, hence we had come in glad response to the blessed invitation of Psalm 122:1, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." Many had come from long distances to serve and to fellowship in the convention, said Brother Lang, and it behoved us to give earnest heed to the messages of truth that the brethren had to impart.

Power of His Resurrection

Messages from brethren in many parts of Britain and abroad were then read before the first discourse of the convention was given under title, "The Power of His Resurrection and the Fellowship of His Sufferings." (Phil. 3:10) Paul's words were used to bring to mind the momentous events which centred around that wonderful first day of the week nearly 2,000 years ago when Mary Magdalene and the other women came "very early" to the tomb of their beloved Lord to anoint his body with their spices and their love.

Looking back, Paul saw the glory and the greatness of his Lord's death and resurrection, and his earnest desire was to know, even more intimately, the Lord himself, and to understand even more fully that power of love which had become the motivating influence in his own life of sacrifice and service. But it was not power alone that filled the apostle's mind; rather, he wanted above all things to **know** the Lord intimately, and to link that resurrection power with the fellowship of his sufferings, until finally he might be brought into complete conformity with his death. We, like Paul, must see and understand the deep implications, not only of the power of our dear Lord's resurrection, but also of our wonderful privilege of sharing in those sufferings which must of necessity precede the consummation of our sacrifice and the glory that is to follow.

The Battle We Fight

The Sunday sessions opened with a "manna" service in which the "manna" for the day was read and discussed, after which further greetings from individual brethren, and from classes at home and abroad were read. Then followed a discourse by one of our Irish brethren, bringing to mind the reality of "The Battle We Fight," and emphasising, with much earnestness, the source of our strength and the sureness of the protection we receive in these daily struggles. Psalm 103 was freely quoted in support of our confidence that just as the Adversary tempts us to bring us down, so our Heavenly Father tests us to build us up.

We may rest assured that no experience will be allowed to come upon us that could harm or injure us, provided of course, that we hold fast to our faith and put our trust completely in the precious promises of God's Word of truth. "Ye are the salt of the earth," our Lord said. Not only so, we are also lights in the world, lights that cannot be hid, a people for a purpose, a people for his name. Job's life presented a graphic picture of human experience, while at the same time teaching us the importance of our faith, trust, and hope in the daily battle against the world, the flesh, and the Devil.

A Study Meeting

After lunch we departed from our usual custom of prayer, praise, and testimony, and enjoyed a very profitable time of study, taking the words of II Peter 1:4-11 as a basis for consideration. The opening words, "Whereby," linked us with the preceding verse where we are told that we have been called to glory and virtue (excellence), and now, in verse 4, we are shown the wealth of grace God has provided whereby this glory can be attained—even the exceeding great and precious promises. We then saw, in

verse 5, that although God had made such lavish provision, we had to do our part by making use of that provision. "Beside all this," the apostle says, "giving all diligence, earnestly endeavour to add." He does not mean adding one grace or virtue to another, but rather, with faith as the basis, supplying or furnishing these qualities to that faith, as one might furnish a room with faith as the carpet or basis. Eventually our faith is fully furnished or equipped, all the graces being necessary to rounded, mature Christian development.

Two Evening Discourses

Sunday evening was given over to two discourses, the first, aptly entitled "The Butler," presenting a most interesting picture from the life of Joseph. The familiar story in Genesis 40 of Joseph in prison being joined by Pharaoh's butler and baker was used to point the lesson of God's overruling in the lives of those he chooses for his purposes. The readiness of Joseph to take advantage of the opportunity provided was also noted as an example to us to make full use of that which the Lord provides for our help and sustenance. Joseph's request was a very simple one—"Think on me when it shall be well with thee . . . and bring me out of this house." "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him." The happy ending to the Genesis story reminds us that although men may forget, yet we need never fear that we shall be forgotten by the One who has set his love upon us.

In complete contrast to the forgetful butler we were taken through a carefully reasoned outline of scriptural evidence relating to God's special dealings with his people throughout the ages. Under title, "This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made" (Ps. 118:24), we considered those great features of our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation which we, at this end of the age, are able to look back upon with re-

joicing, while we look forward in full assurance of faith and hope to even greater days to come. The days of Noah and Abraham, the days of Moses and Israel, the wonderful day of our Lord's first advent, these were days which "the Lord made," days in which his wisdom and power brought to light outstanding features of his great design for man's salvation. The day when our Lord girded himself and came forth to serve us with meat in due season was such a day, and the day in which our dear Brother Russell was used to present the harvest message—these were days the Lord made or ordained for special features of his wonderful work.

Now, in the "time of the end" we realise that we are living in that day "which the Lord hath made" when the prophecies of darkness and trouble upon mankind are in course of fulfilment. But we are not in darkness because we can see, through the clouds, the glorious light of our Lord's presence as we watch and wait for that deliverance which we are assured will come when the day of suffering and sorrow shall finally give place to that great day of righteousness and peace which "the Lord hath made." "We will rejoice and be glad in it."

The Last Day

Monday opened with a discourse by one of our American brethren—"There Shall Be a Resurrection of the Dead." (Acts 24:15) The Bible is full of promises of a resurrection, and so clear is the Word of God on this all-important subject that we marvel at the widespread acceptance of Satan's lie to the contrary. Paul's wonderful exposition of the resurrection in I Corinthians 15 gives a clear and perfect equation of the ransom sacrifice and its glorious outcome; namely, a resurrection from the dead. There is much to guide us in the prophecies, and in our Lord's own words relating to the time in which we are living. Events since

1914 have proved to the Lord's people that "the time of the end" is here, and that work preparatory to the establishing of the kingdom is even now in progress. An abundance of scriptural evidence was quoted to prove the sure basis of the resurrection promise, one scripture (Ps. 104: 29-30) being described as a "thumbnail" picture of this great doctrine. The familiar and beautiful words of Isaiah 65:17-25 stood out in prophetic promise of the resurrection for all mankind.

Just how this great work of resurrection and restitution is to be accomplished we are not told, but we do know that the church will have a great and glorious part in teaching mankind, and lifting them up to the full enjoyment of perfect human life in obedience to the Father's requirements.—Ps. 149:5-9

Lessons from Daniel

The second discourse on Monday drew for us a very descriptive picture from the experiences of Daniel. The title, chosen from Daniel 1:21, was brief and expressive: "Daniel Continued." An immense volume of meaning lies in these two words. Daniel served for many years in the royal households of Babylon, and he was 86 years of age when Cyrus came to the throne. Still he continued in the way of the Lord.

There are many exhortations in Scripture to the Lord's people that they should follow Daniel's example, and "continue." We must beware of false starts in the race for the prize of the high calling. These can arise from many causes, such as not counting the cost before commencing to run; not preparing the soil of the heart and thus receiving the seed into stony ground where quick growth does not continue. Speed at the end of a race is more important than at the start. Like Daniel, we must have the right view-

point in our experiences, viewing them as our Heavenly Father does. Faith is essential. Is the task too great? Then remember the One who gave the commission. If we feel that we never shall attain, then we are reckoning without God. We must press on. We must continue in prayer even as Daniel did when threatened by his enemies. We must continue in the study of the Word. ((II Tim. 3:14; I Cor. 15:2) Do not discard those precious truths which first brought us to the Lord. Continue to see fresh beauties and still increasing light.

Daniel was always learning and seeking, and we too should continue to make progress in our knowledge of truth, continuing in the Word that we may be his disciples indeed. (John 8:31) Let us not be weary, but, like Daniel, continue to the end.

The Final Discourse

The final discourse of the convention was given by another of our American brethren, and was entitled, "The Robe of Righteousness," based on Isaiah 61:10. We were reminded of the basis of our standing before God, the great doctrine of justification by faith, whereby we are covered with the robe of righteousness bought and given by our Heavenly Father at the cost of Jesus' precious blood—a priceless robe indeed. It is essential not only that we keep this robe clean and unspotted from the world, but also that we enhance its beauty with the sweet perfume of our dear Lord's sacrificial life. (II Cor. 2:15-16) The bride of Christ is presented as "the King's daughter," adorning herself with a "meek and quiet spirit." (I Pet. 3: 4) Meekness is not weakness; it calls for patience, and that in turn helps to secure our standing as justified members of the body of Christ, covered with the robe of his righteousness, a robe gained and provided for us by the faithfulness and humility of our Lord.

“Let not mercy and truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck.” (Prov. 3:3) These various adornments of our Christian life must be continually fashioned and cultivated in order that we may be more like our Lord himself, until finally, if faithful, we shall become, in the words of Isaiah 62:3, “a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.”

The convention closed with a prayer, praise, and testimony meeting in which many of the brethren spoke feelingly of the blessings received, and of the joy of heart experienced in once again being privileged to participate in the fellowship and ministry so graciously provided by our Heavenly Father through the generous hospitality and loving service of our brethren in Ireland. □

—oOo—

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Encouraging Letters

A New Christian

Dear Brothers in Christ: I always turn the radio on for your program from California, but today it surprised me to hear you from Mexico, and I enjoyed it very much. I wish you would send me the book, "God's Plan," in order that I might know more about his plan, as I am just a new Christian. May the Lord bless you and use you to sow the precious seed.—Mexico

Helping Teenagers

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I have listened to your questions and answers so many Sundays while getting ready for Sunday School, and how it has helped to explain so many passages in the Bible. Also I have been able to carry the word on to my Sunday School class of teenagers. They still want the Word of God explained.—Missouri

Life Changed

My Dear Sirs: I recently received your wonderful publications which I requested. Enclosed find a small donation for your fine work which I am quite sure will be of great and lasting value to me. The books

and tracts I have received from you have both changed and helped my life during the past year and a half. Thanking you kindly, I remain respectfully and truly yours.—Kentucky

Desires Enlightenment

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Thank you for the wonderful message I had the pleasure of hearing this morning. I would very much appreciate receiving a copy, if this is available, with the Bible quotations you so plainly and logically explained as I've never heard before. Also I would very much love to receive and read the book you offered—"Plan Book"—for further enlightenment in knowing the truth that is in the Bible. Thank you very, very much.—California

Faith Back In Heart

Dear "Frank and Ernest": This morning I felt like reading my Bible, so I opened it and read John 11:1-27. I reached up to turn off my radio when you started talking, so I sat down and began to listen, because you were speaking on a message I've been curious about for years—life after death. You

talked about Lazarus, and I felt that God must be trying to reach me through you. I've been feeling very mixed up and upset lately, and I want to tell you that you put some faith back in my heart. Thank you so much—may God bless you both! At the end you offered a free book, "When a Man Dies." Please send me one so I'll understand things a little better. Your friend.—Washington

Smallest on Racks

The Dawn: Yesterday as I was looking over the periodicals in our public library my eye caught sight of the smallest magazine on the racks. As I looked it over, I came to the

conclusion that this is what I have been looking for for many years. If the future numbers are as excellent as the September issue, I will be so grateful, as we need to study more of prophecy and the truth of the Bible, which we are not getting in most of the modern literature.—Oregon

Program Meaningful

Dear Brother "Frank": Today I heard your program, and to me it was very meaningful, because I was always of the opinion that one's soul can never die, but today I saw my big error! Please send me the booklet, "Hope." Thank you. Your brother in Christ.—Virgin Islands



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

AUGUST 5—"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."—Romans 8:28 (Z. '00-22 Hymn 110)

AUGUST 12—"Cleanse Thou me from secret faults. Keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. . . . Let the words of my mouth, and the medita-

tion of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."—Psalm 19:12-14 (Z. '98-22 Hymn 198)

AUGUST 19—"Abstain from every form of evil." (Rev. Ver.)—I Thessalonians 5:22 (Z. '03-26 Hymn 130)

AUGUST 26—"Love . . . is kind."—I Corinthians 13:4 (Z. '03-153 Hymn 267)

Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

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

G. M. JEUCK		Spokane, Wash.	29
Catawissa, Pa.	Aug. 15	Wenatchee, Wash.	30
		Tacoma, Wash.	31
A. H. KRUMPOLT		GEORGE PASSIOS	
New Haven, Conn.	Aug. 22	Paterson, N. J.	Aug. 29
Waterbury, Conn.	22		
KENNETH M. NAIL		HARRY PASSIOS	
Bloomington, Ind.	Aug. 1-5	Serving brethren in Greece	
Cincinnati, Ohio	8	E. K. PENROSE	
Indianapolis, Ind.	9	Bloomington, Ind.	Aug. 1-5
Muncie, Ind.	10	Knoxville, Tenn.	11
Rockford, Ill.	11	Birmingham, Ala.	12
Milwaukee, Wis.	12	Shreveport, La.	15
Withee, Wis.	13	Lake Charles, La.	16
Minneapolis, Minn.	15	Mobile, Ala.	18
Clinton, Iowa	16	Orlando, Fla.	20
Silver Creek, Nebr.	17	Miami, Fla.	22
Denver, Colo.	18	St. Petersburg, Fla.	24, 25
Pueblo, Colo.	19	Louisville, Ala.	27
Laramie, Wyo.	22	Lynchburg, Va.	29
Bosler, Wyo.	23	Richmond, Va.	30
Ranchester, Wyo.	24, 25	Virginia Beach, Va.	31
Havre, Mont.	26	LEO POST	
Kalispell, Mont.	27	Hartford, Conn.	Aug. 22

H. W. PRICE			
Bloomington, Ind.	Aug. 1-5	London, Ont.	25
Muncie, Ind.	8	Toronto, Ont.	Aug. 26
Indianapolis, Ind.	9	Lockport, N. Y.	27
Cincinnati, Ohio	10	Buffalo, N. Y.	29
Columbus, Ohio	11	Rochester, N. Y.	30
West Newton, Pa.	12, 13		
Pittsburgh, Pa.	15	H. J. TIEMEYER	
Toledo, Ohio	16	Allentown, Pa.	Aug. 15
Saginaw, Mich.	17		
Grand Rapids, Mich.	18-20	F. S. WASSMANN	
Detroit, Mich.	22	Baltimore, Md.	Aug. 22
Essex, Ont.	23		
Chatham, Ont.	24	C. R. WEIDA	
		Pottstown, Pa.	Aug. 22

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

SEPTEMBER SPECIAL: On Sunday, September 19, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss the topic, "Can the Living Talk with the Dead?" Free circulars will be available advertising this interesting subject. Send for as many as you can use. Address: The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey 07073.

Conventions

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Aug. 15—Brotherhood of Railway Clerks Bldg., Court and Vine Sts. Mr. John Slavich, 126 S. 22nd St., Richmond, Ind.

CHICAGO, ILL., Aug. 22—Masonic Temple, 5352 W. Chicago Ave. Mr. Albert Sheffelbaum, 5739 S. Normandy Ave.

BUFFALO, N. Y., Aug. 29—Unity Temple Lodge, 1940 Niagara St. Mr. Stanley Koszka, 670 Union Rd., West Seneca, N. Y.

JACKSON, MICH., Sept. 4-6—North-east Junior High School, 1024 Fleming. Mrs. Ray Lumley, 2531 Ashton Rd.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 4-6—Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, 50th St. and Park Ave. Mr. G. M. Jeuck, 81 Blauvelt Rd., Nanuet, N. Y.

SAN DIEGO, CALIF., Sept. 4-6—Mrs. Gilbert L. Rice, 4005 Olympic St.

SEATTLE, WASH., Sept. 4-6—Norway Center, 300 Third Ave. W. Miss Mary Stevens, 6525 24th N. W., Apt. 1.

PITTSBURGH, PA., Sept. 18, 19

ST. LOUIS, MO., Sept. 18, 19

POTTSTOWN, PA., Sept. 19

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH., Oct. 2, 3

AGAWAM, MASS., Oct. 3

PIQUA, OHIO, Oct. 3

BUFFALO, N. Y., Oct. 9, 10

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIF., Oct. 9, 10

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Oct. 16, 17

MUNCIE, IND., Oct. 17

NEW LONDON, CONN., Oct. 17

PONTIAC, MICH., Oct. 17

MILWAUKEE, WIS., Oct. 30, 31

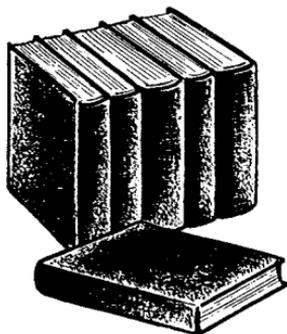
ORLANDO, FLA., Oct. 31

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

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

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

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

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

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