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CONTENTS

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HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

Signs in the Religious World 2

BIBLE STUDY

Justification by Faith 12

Heirs of God's Grace 14

Set Free! 16

Set Free to Serve 18

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

"By Faith . . . Not Knowing" 20

Unmovable and Abounding 38

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts 31

THE BIBLE ANSWERS

Television Schedule 34

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

Radio Schedule 36

ENCOURAGING LETTERS 49

THE BRITISH SECTION

The Twenty-first Annual
Convention At Portrush 55

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Great Britain 64

United States 63

CONVENTIONS 64

Then there is The Church of Scientology, established in 1954, but already claiming 600,000 members. Income is variously estimated at 50 to 300 million dollars a year. Others of these numerous new cults are The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, The Children of God, Zen Buddhism, Transcendental Meditation, and literally hundreds more. Speaking of the broad appeal of these movements, U. S. News & World Report magazine says, "Today, the nation's 'new believers' vary widely—from Oriental meditators to bands of youths waiting in the desert for saviors due to arrive in spaceships from 'the same kingdom that Christ came from.'"

Escapism

What is it that attracts people to these groups, particularly the young? "It's a reaction against the unsettled character of our times," says Robert J. Lifton, professor of psychiatry at Yale. These various cults or systems of belief purport to offer perplexed people something they feel they can cling to, commit themselves to. The discipline to which they are subjected in many of these groups is attractive to confused young people who have been raised and left adrift in the present permissive environment. Swami Prabhupada, leader of The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, says he sees himself as the "savior" of American youth.

The attraction of these groups is of course a sad commentary on the barrenness and sterility of the so-called orthodox, or conventional, church systems of religion upon which these cults and the leaders profess to improve.

A cursory study of the teachings of these cults, their leaders, their methods, and their motives leaves little doubt that it was against such as these that the Apostle Paul was warning the true followers of the Lord in the last days of this Gospel Age, when he wrote to Timothy, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."—I Tim. 4:1

But perhaps the most pernicious of all these new cults now gaining gullible adherents is the one that calls itself The Unification Church, under the leadership of a 56-year-old Korean called Sun Myung Moon, a millionaire industrialist from Korea. The church now claims to have 30,000 members in the United States, of whom 7,000 to 10,000 are described as full-time members. Total membership is placed at 2,000,000 active and associate members in 120 countries.

Mr. Moon travels between his sprawling New York estates in a chauffeured limousine, easily affordable from the organization's annual income of 12 million dollars last year (his estimate), or 100 million dollars (outsiders' estimate). The extensive real estate holdings of the church include the recently purchased Hotel New Yorker.

The National Observer recently featured an article on this movement with the headline, "The Rev. Moon: A Messiah—Or a Menace?" According to the article his followers do, indeed, regard Mr. Moon as "the Lord of the Second Advent, . . . the new Messiah." His followers regard themselves as "his disciples . . . and obedient children to the man they call Master. . . . They all believe that Moon . . . has been chosen to fulfill Christ's mission on earth."

Moon says that Jesus came to him in a vision in 1936 and chose him for the task. "Jesus explained God's desire to establish his kingdom on earth and presented the need for someone on earth to take up this mission," a Unification church booklet says of the incident. "He asked Reverend Moon to assume this responsibility." According to Moon's book of revelations, "Divine Principle," God sent Jesus to redeem mankind from sin; but Jesus failed in his mission and died before he could marry and father a new race of perfect children. As Moon puts it, according to the Times article, "The time has now come for a second Christ who will finally fulfill God's original plan." That plan will be fulfilled by the second "Messiah's" marrying and producing a perfect race.

“New Messiah” Needs Military Support!

The Unification church does not directly identify Moon as the new Messiah, but he just happens to have been born in Korea, in the year 1920—as was Moon. But there is little doubt that his numerous followers accept this implication at face value. According to an article in The New York Times Magazine, one young woman who was much troubled by the suffering and violence in the world and searching for a “meaningful life” attended a Unification weekend in Maine. She later called her mother breathlessly to ask if she had heard the “good news.” “What good news?” asked her mother. “That there is a new Messiah on this earth,” said the young woman.

Oddly enough, this new Messiah who has come to bring peace on earth and goodwill toward men operates a political affiliate in Washington, called Freedom Leadership Foundation, which, according to the Times article, “lobbies for United States military . . . support for South Korea.” And two of the new Messiah’s closest aides are former Korean Army colonels.

“False Messiahs and False Prophets”

Among the signs that would mark his second presence, Jesus said there would be “great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” (Matt. 24:21) Daniel speaks of it as “a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time.” At that time, Daniel informs us, “shall Michael [Jesus] stand up.”—Dan. 12:1

We believe that our Lord is indeed present; that he has stood up, and that we have entered into the foretold time of trouble with which this present evil world will end. As mankind vainly struggles to extricate itself from the results of its own ages-long selfishness and sin, their hearts are “failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.” (Luke 21:26) Perplexed by

what is happening about them, and not knowing that this present evil world is in the process of being destroyed, many deeply troubled people are grasping at any straw that might offer hope of saving them from sinking into the depths of hopelessness and despair. These become the easy prey of the present-day false prophets and false messiahs.

After pointing to this great time of trouble as being a sign of his presence and of the end of the age, Jesus issued a warning against being misled at that time by false leaders. He said, "If any one should say to you then, 'Behold! here is the Messiah,' or 'there;' believe it not; because false messiahs and false prophets will arise, who will propose great signs and prodigies; so as to delude, if possible, even the chosen. Remember, I have forewarned you. If, therefore, they say to you, 'Behold, he is in the desert!' go not forth; or, 'Behold, he is in secret apartments!' believe it not."—Matt. 24:23-26, Diaglott

The Lord of lords, and King of kings

How glad we are to see the signs of our Lord's second presence, and of the end of the age! How glad we are to know that when this present evil world passes away, then will come that foretold new world "wherein dwelleth righteousness." (II Pet. 3:13) How our hearts rejoice in the knowledge that when Christ's millennial kingdom is set up for the blessing of all the peoples of the earth, all error and deceit, all superstition and fear shall be swept away by the truth! Then, God will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent. (Zeph. 3:9) And then the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the one and only true Lord, as the waters cover the sea.—Hab. 2:14

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, and sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment

also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail [of truth] shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters [of truth] shall overflow the hiding place.”—Isa. 28:16,17

What Ransom Was Paid for Man?

WHAT our Lord did for us, what price he gave on our behalf, what he surrendered or laid down in death, since it was a corresponding price, “a ransom for all,” should correspond exactly to whatever was man’s penalty. Our Lord did not go to everlasting torment; hence we have this indisputable testimony that everlasting torment is not the wages of sin prescribed by the great Judge, but merely a delusion, foisted upon mankind by the great Adversary and those whom he has deluded. So surely as that which our Lord suffered in man’s stead, as man’s substitute, was the full penalty which men would otherwise have been obliged to suffer, so surely this is proof positive that no such punishment as eternal torment was ever threatened or inflicted or intended.

Those who know the testimony of God’s Word recognize its statements to be that “Christ **died** for our sins”; that he “**died** the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God”; that “he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world”; that “the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, and by his stripes [the things which he suffered in our stead—self-denial even unto death] we are healed.”

What harmony and consistency are seen in this scriptural view of matters; and how utterly inconsistent are the unscriptural delusions of Satan, handed us by tradition and popularly received!—I Cor. 15:3; I Pet. 3:18; I John 2:2; Isa. 53:5, 6 □

Bible Study

LESSON FOR SEPTEMBER 5

Justification by Faith

MEMORY SELECTION: "A man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ."—Galatians 2:16

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Galatians 2:15, 16; 3:1-14

ABRAHAM and other ancient prophets and servants of God were justified because they believed God and had unquestioned confidence that what he said would come to pass. Because of this great faith, God was able to use them in a very special way as his servants. No one, not even the prophets or the Ancient Worthies, was able to attain to perfection, or justification, by obedience to God's perfect Law expressed in the Law Covenant; for, as the Apostle Paul states in Galatians 3:11, "But that no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." The reward promised for perfect obedience to the Law was life (Rom. 10:5), and the graveyards are a mute evidence that none have earned the reward.

God, in his mercy and love, provided a way, however, whereby he could "be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26) This was accomplished by giving his only begotten Son, Jesus, as a ransom price for Adam: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—I Cor. 15:22

Since all were condemned in Adam, who was perfect when he sinned, all could be redeemed by the perfect man Jesus, who gave his life willingly as a price to correspond, thus fulfilling God's requirement of justice—a perfect life for a perfect life.

The merit or ransom price provided by Jesus on Calvary's

cross has not as yet been applied on behalf of Adam and his offspring; but rather, for some two thousand years, it has been used in a limited way during the Gospel Age to provide justification for the footstep followers of Jesus—the church, or the bride of Christ. When the last member of the church has been selected, then the ransom price, or the blood of the covenant (Matt. 26:28), will be available to inaugurate the New Covenant. It is through the operation of this arrangement that mankind—other than those called to be of the church class—will find their opportunity for life.

The availability of the merit of Christ—the ransom price—for the purpose of justification, does not mean that it is free to all. It is for the purpose of providing justification to those whom the Lord calls. We read Jesus' words in John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Then the scripture continues in verse 45, "Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

And so the thought is that God draws whom he will to the church. These are drawn through the preaching of the Word, and

because of their faith in the promises of God they are moved to consecrate themselves to God and his purposes.—Rom. 10:11-17

The center of the plan or Word of God is Jesus. Having faith in God's Word, then, also involves faith in Jesus and his work of providing the ransom price for Adam, and hence for the world of mankind. It also involves faith in God's arrangement of restoring mankind to perfection through the provisions of the New Covenant and the work of its Mediator, the Christ, during the times of restitution.

A meaningful faith thus is based on knowledge, and it is a faith that stimulates and motivates the desire to consecrate. If the Lord accepts that consecration, he applies the merit of Christ, and this justifies the believer.—Rom. 5:9; Heb. 9:14; I John 1:7; Rom. 5:1; James 2:24

But the work does not stop here. Justification is provided for the express purpose of making a life of sacrifice acceptable to God, so that if faithful in this, the believer will receive the reward of joint-heirship with Jesus in the kingdom and have the privilege of helping to bless all the families of the earth.—Heb. 12:1, 2; Rev. 2:10; II Pet. 1:3, 4; II Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:21 □

And to thy Seed, which is Christ." Christ is the English translation of the Greek word "Christos," which means Anointed, or Messiah. The Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 12:12 explains, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ [Messiah]."

And so in our text, Galatians 3:26-29, the apostle further identifies the seed of promise, or heirs, as the footstep followers of Jesus during the Gospel Age: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

There are conditions, however, that must be met before anyone can become an heir of God. Our text just quoted states, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." The baptism spoken of here is the real baptism elucidated by the Apostle Paul in Romans the sixth chapter, that is, of being baptized into Christ's death. When James and John asked of Jesus to have a special place in the kingdom, he asked them,

"Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"—Mark 10:38

Jesus was here emphasizing the fact that if James and John were to have a place in the kingdom and be heirs, it would be necessary for them to consecrate their lives even unto death—walking in the same pathway of self-denial, sacrifice, suffering, and death. Those who are walking in this pathway have "put on Christ"; that is, they are counted as part of the Anointed, and are prospective heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ if so be they are faithful in their covenant of sacrifice.

Jesus expanded his lesson to the disciples and to James and John—who were all now having a controversy over a special place in the kingdom; Jesus said, "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—Mark 10:42-45 □

Set Free!

MEMORY SELECTION: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."—Galatians 5:1

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Galatians 4:8-11; 5:1-10

IT WAS God's design that justification would come only by faith. The Ancient Worthies were justified by their faith even though they performed great and noble works. The Apostle Paul in Romans 4:3 states, "For what saith the Scriptures? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Why, then, was the Law added? Why was this burden or yoke placed upon the necks of the fleshly seed of Abraham? The Apostle Paul states in Galatians 3:19, "Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

The Law provided a standard of performance that could be attained to only by a perfect man. Since none of Adam's imperfect offspring could attain to the perfect standard, it should have been a constant reminder to the Jews of their

fallen, imperfect condition and the need for help in attaining a personal relationship with God. The failure of the Jews to earn justification by works was also an object lesson to all of mankind.—Rom. 3:19, 20

Most of the Jewish leaders—the scribes and Pharisees—made an outward appearance of keeping the Law, but inwardly they were far from being perfect. (Matt. 23:27, 28) But there were sincere Jews who were aware of their inability to attain to the lofty requirement of the Law, and one of these was the Apostle Paul, who said, "For I was alive without the Law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." (Rom. 7:9, 10) And then in the 24th and 25th verses of the same chapter he states, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ

our Lord. So then with the mind [the spirit-begotten new mind] I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

The apostle proclaims this wonderful liberation from the condemnation that resulted from the Law in Romans 3:21-25: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto . . . all them that believe: for there is no difference: . . . being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

So it is entirely by faith that we have standing with God—faith in the shed blood of Christ—faith in God and his provision for the application of the merit of Christ to cleanse us individually from all sin.—Col. 2:13, 14

In spite of this wonderful provision by the Heavenly Father to believers free from the heavy yoke of the Law, there were certain Jewish converts called Judaizers who held to the belief that it was necessary for Gentile converts to come under the Law before they could accept Christ.

These had considerable influence among the brethren at Galatia, and some began to compromise their newfound liberty in Christ. And so the apostle, in our memory selection, admonishes the brethren not to get entangled again with the yoke of bondage, but to hold fast to the liberty that is in Christ Jesus.

But the liberty that is in Christ is a sacred trust, and is not to be used for an occasion to the flesh. The apostle recognized that with the restrictions of the Law lifted, some would have a tendency to return to worldly habits and pursuits, and so he admonishes in Galatians 5:13, 14, 16: "For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. . . . This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

The apostle then concludes with the thought that if we live in the Spirit we should walk in the Spirit, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made believers free from the law of sin and death, and elevated the plane of our conduct—if we are led by the Spirit—above that of the flesh.—Rom. 8:2-5 □

Set Free to Serve

MEMORY SELECTION: "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."—Galatians 5:25

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Galatians 5:13-15, 25 through 6:10

THE Apostle Paul, in Hebrews 9:13, 14 states, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

In this text the apostle is pointing out that the Law produced dead works, but that the blood of Christ, by providing the means of justification to life, made it possible for the footstep followers of Jesus to serve the living God. But what is God's will with respect to acceptable service?

Again the Apostle Paul, in Hebrews 10:7-10, gives us the answer to our question. He quotes a portion of the 40th Psalm, which prophetically speaks for Jesus: "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of me,) to do

thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the Law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

In our text the Apostle Paul has interpreted for us the meaning of the 40th Psalm, verses 6-8, which he had quoted in part in the verses preceding. He states that God was not pleased with the sacrifices offered under the Law Covenant, but that Jesus recognized that those sacrifices represented him, and that he was to be the real sacrifice for sins. Psalm 40:6 represents Jesus as saying, "Mine ears hast thou opened." And Jesus was willing to comply with the Lord's will in this matter. So he gave himself as the real sacrifice for sins, which

did away with the first arrangement under which the sacrifice of animals was made, and established the second, or the reality, where Christ became the offering for sins.

Then the apostle continues, and explains that the same will which directed that Jesus should die has directed that the footstep followers of Jesus be sanctified for the same cause and be made an acceptable sacrifice through the merit of Christ. These are accounted as body members of the Christ.

This then is the will of God for the footstep followers of Jesus, that they like Jesus lay down their lives as Jesus laid his down, serving the interests of the kingdom, witnessing to the truth, and serving the brethren. The sacrifice of Jesus was the meritorious sacrifice, and the sacrificial death of his footstep followers adds nothing to the merit provided by Jesus; but it pleased God that they should be counted in as part of the sacrifice of Jesus.

Again the Apostle Paul, in Romans 12:1 states, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present [yield] your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." And in Romans 6:5 we read, "For if we have been

planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection."

To be planted together in the likeness of his death means that:

(a) The Christian must be figuratively beheaded; that is, renounce his own will completely and recognize and do only the will of the Heavenly Father. (Rev. 20:4) This includes renouncing the things of the world.

(b) Jesus was anointed to preach the Gospel (Isa. 61:1-3), and since the Christian shares the same anointing (II Cor. 1:21, 22), he too must preach the Gospel. (I Cor. 9:16-19) It was the preaching of the Gospel that brought about the majority of our Lord's difficult trials and experiences, and it was by these that he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. (Heb. 5:8) It is by this same kind of trials and experiences that the footstep followers of Jesus receive their development and testing.—I Pet. 4:12-17; 2:19-23

(c) Not the least important aspect of walking in the footsteps of Jesus is the requirement that Christians serve one another.

Thus the footstep followers of Jesus are set free to serve, but in accordance with the divine will and purpose. □

Christian Life and Doctrine

“By Faith . . . Not Knowing”

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.”—Hebrews 11:8

ABRAHAM'S living faith in the promises of God highlights many of the experiences of his life. The apostle cites other Old Testament saints as also being examples of faith but dwells more upon the life of Abraham than on any of the others. “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,” Paul writes, and “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death,” because he “walked with God.” By faith Noah built an ark, and by faith Moses was hid three months by his parents, and by faith he later forsook Egypt, “esteeming the reproach of Christ” greater riches than anything that could be offered to him in the court of Pharaoh.—Heb. 11:1-27

These outstanding experiences in the lives of the various patriarchs are indeed wonderful examples of faith, and undoubtedly it was their continued strong faith that enabled them to bear up through all the trials which divine wisdom and love permitted to come into their lives. But in the apostle's citation of Abraham's faith, he covers nearly the whole life of this father of the faithful in his endeavor to illustrate for us the manner in which faith is “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

When God first called Abraham he offered him a “land.” (Gen. 12:1) Abraham had never seen that land. He was wholly unfamiliar with its fertility and whether or not it was

favorably situated. But he accepted the invitation and left his native country, "not knowing whither he went."

God promised Abraham that he would have a "seed," but his wife was barren; hence Abraham did not know how this promise would be fulfilled. His lack of knowledge, however, did not weaken his faith. Abraham believed God. He believed that God was both willing and able to fulfill his promises; so he embarked upon a life of faith, ever believing that the time would come when the "seed" of promise would be born.

When finally Isaac was born and had grown to become a young lad, God asked Abraham to offer this beloved son in sacrifice. Abraham did not understand why this was necessary, but he obeyed, "not knowing." Finally, like the other Ancient Worthies, Abraham "died in faith," not having realized in full all the implications contained in God's promises to him. Abraham did not know—and will not know until he is resurrected—the exact manner in which his "seed" is destined to participate in the blessing of all the families of the earth. To him faith was truly the "evidence [conviction, Diaglott] of things not seen."

Parallel Experiences

Many of Abraham's experiences were similar to those in which the followers of Jesus during the present age have an opportunity to demonstrate their faith. From the time God first spoke to the patriarch while he was living in Ur of the Chaldees, we can note these similarities. And, even as with Abraham, our faith takes hold of the promises of God, enabling us, by comparison, to prize most highly the things which cannot be seen by the natural eye or understood by the human intellect.

First let us note the fact that God spoke to Abraham and revealed to him the great "theme song" of his purpose toward the children of men. David inquired, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Ps. 8:4) And well might Abraham have asked, "Who am I, that God should speak to

me, and make known to me his purpose to bless all the families of the earth?" But this was exactly what God did, and Abraham had the necessary faith to believe what God told him—to believe it so thoroughly that he gladly staked his life upon it. Surely Abraham was honored, and he demonstrated his worthiness of that honor by believing that which he could not understand.

Evidently Abraham believed in the existence of God even before the divine plan was made known to him. Many throughout all the ages have been blessed with a faith of this kind. But only those to whom God has spoken, and to whom he has revealed some measure of his plan, have had an opportunity to demonstrate their faith by obedience to the knowledge received.

In this respect faith is based upon knowledge. It is not "blind" in the sense of having no assurance of the unseen blessing to come. By faith Abraham started out for the Promised Land, "not knowing whither" he was going; but he did know that God had promised him the land, and he knew also that God had promised him a seed. What Abraham did not know was the exact manner in which God would fulfill his promises and just what the land would be like when he reached it. These points of knowledge were not essential to Abraham's faith. All he needed to know was that God had promised. On these promises his faith rested.

God's Theme Song

A Christian who is enlightened with the truth of the divine plan knows that God has spoken to him, even as he spoke to Abraham. This is a fact of positive knowledge to those who have been blessed with the "witness" of the Spirit. (Rom. 8:16) It is not a matter of basing their faith on an uncertainty. One of the main reasons they know that God has spoken to them is that they have heard the same joyful "theme song" of the divine plan that delighted the heart of Abraham—they have heard that glad message concerning the divine purpose to bless all the families of the earth.

And as it was in the case of Abraham, so with us, accompanying this message is the "call." We might well wonder why God has singled us out for such favor, why we should be honored with the privilege of hearing his voice; but it is not long before we learn that such marvelous grace is not bestowed upon us without a purpose. It is a wonderful thing indeed to hear the voice of God, but it is costly. To Abraham God said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." (Gen. 12:1) This meant the forsaking of much that he held dear, but Abraham obeyed.

And when we hear the voice of God, there is in the message not only the hope of restitution blessings for the world, but we also hear God saying to us, "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." (Ps. 45:10) While this invitation does not have the same literal meaning as did the divine call to Abraham, it is no less exacting in terms of sacrifice. We are not asked, necessarily, to move away a great distance from our relatives; but we are asked to forget them in the sense that God and his will should henceforth come first in all our plans. Jesus said that those who love father or mother, sister or brother, husband or wife, more than they love him, are not worthy of him.—Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26

Leaving our "father's house" is a far more drastic requirement for the Christian than it was for Abraham. In our case it is father Adam's house. When God speaks to us we are given a vision of paradise restored. We learn that it is the divine purpose to restore the human race to life upon the earth. We speak of this as the hope of restitution. We are glad to learn that all mankind will have an opportunity to live everlastingly upon an earth made perfect. Truly, we think, our father Adam's house is to be one of joy and peace and health and life, and we look forward to the time when all mankind can "return home."

But to us as Christians the divine call is, "Forget also thine own people and thy father's house." What does this mean? It means we have an opportunity to forgo restitution blessings

and to embark upon a long and difficult journey to a heavenly Canaan. Yes, God has promised us a "land," not on earth, but in heaven, for we are partakers of a "heavenly calling." "Unto us," writes Peter, "are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature."—II Pet. 1:4

And so, by our appreciation of the message that has come down to us from the past, we know God has spoken to us. We know that the "exceeding great and precious promises" belong to us. We know that we have passed from death unto life. We know that no good thing will be withheld from us if we walk uprightly in the narrow way of sacrifice. We know that all things will work together for our good because we love God and have been called according to his purpose. We know that we are now the "sons of God," having received the Holy Spirit of sonship. These and other precious points of knowledge are the foundation of our faith, and our faith in the promises of God relating thereto is the evidence of things unseen. But it is also true of us, even as of Abraham, that by faith we enter the narrow way "not knowing whither" we are going.

An interesting fact in connection with Abraham's faith is that it grew stronger with the passing years. When God first spoke to Abraham, his faith enabled him to "obey" the call to leave his own people, although not as fully as he might have done, for he took some of them along with him. In this, too, there is somewhat of a parallel to our own experiences, for we do not always obey the call as fully as we should.

When we make a consecration to the Lord, we tell him that it is our intention to leave all earthly things behind. We promise, if need be, to break every tender tie which binds us to a world like this; yet how often we fail to live up wholly to this promise. With one hand, as it were, we lay hold upon the heavenly promises, while with the other we cling to earthly things. We hear the admonition to "set" our "affections on things above," and we try to do it; but how often our

affections come tumbling down to earth and entwine themselves around the temporal joys and advantages which we promised God we would give up in order to make the more rapid progress toward the heavenly Canaan.

Of course our consecration was sincere. It had to be, or else it would not have been acceptable to God. But our earthly minds and hearts will not bend heavenward all at once. It requires training and struggle over a period of years for the terms of our consecration to be carried out as we would like. And it is here that our faith becomes so essential. Faith, the apostle tells us, is the victory that overcometh the world. (1 John 5:4) And we can understand how this is. If our faith in the heavenly promises of God is weak, those promises are sure to be proportionately unimportant to us, while at the same time the temporal blessings and pleasures of the world will loom up as being of great importance. If our faith in the promises is strong—an overcoming faith—the unseen things of God will become real and vital while the “world and her pursuits” which “perish” will fade into positions of relative unimportance.

Faith Made Strong By Tests

Abraham's faith was put to the test, and each triumph enabled it to grow stronger. We should pray, “Lord increase our faith,” and when we thus pray, we should expect God to permit experiences to come into our lives which will test our faith; that is, give us an opportunity to lay hold upon the divine promises with a firmer grip because of the experience through which we are permitted to pass.

One of God's methods of testing the faith of his people is in connection with the element of time. A thousand years are but as yesterday in the sight of God, but we measure nearly everything by the short rod of our own lifetime. Ten years to us, therefore, is a long time, and if perchance God permits us to wait that long for the fulfillment of one or more of his promises, our faith is put to a severe test. It was thus with

Abraham. In addition to the land of Canaan, God promised Abraham that he would have a son, and that Sarah would bear this son to him. But when years passed and no son was born to Sarah, Abraham's faith was tested.

Finally Abraham, through lack of faith, and in response to Sarah's suggestion, arranged with his bondmaid, Hagar, to mother a child for him. Some time after Hagar's son was born, the Lord spoke to Abraham again and told him that Sarah was to give birth to a son and that the name of the son would be Isaac. When he heard this, Abraham fell on his face and laughed. (Gen. 17:15-19) Then he said to the Lord, "O that Ishmael [Hagar's son] might live before thee!" (Gen. 17:18) This evidenced a lack of faith. Abraham was suggesting that Ishmael could just as well be the seed of promise, and that if God would accept this arrangement there would be no more difficulty about the promised seed.

Abraham's laughter on this occasion would seem to denote that he doubted that Sarah would ever bear a son. Sarah was barren even as a young woman, and at the time God first made the promise of a seed. At that time Abraham's faith was strong enough to believe that God would overcome Sarah's barrenness. But years had passed, and this had not been done. Now she was not only still barren, but past the normal age for childbearing as well. Why should God keep talking about what seemingly was daily becoming more unlikely? Abraham's faith could not reach up to the occasion, and he laughed at the idea.

Abraham did not know how God would fulfill his promise, and his faith was not strong enough to believe what he could not know. Had he understood the manner in which God proposed to fulfill the promise, Abraham would have been walking by sight. All he needed to know was that God had promised. This should have been sufficient foundation for his faith. In the final analysis it was; because when God assured him that Sarah would bear a son, Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith,

. . . being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.”—Rom. 4:20,21

Our Faith Similarly Tested

God also tests our faith by permitting us to wait for the fulfillment of his promises. This principle of God’s dealings with his people is referred to by the prophet where he says, “Though it [the vision] tarry [be long], wait for it.” (Hab. 2:3) Jesus illustrated it by the Parable of the Ten Virgins. And surely the Lord’s people in this end of the age have had their faith severely tested by the seemingly long wait for the fruition of their hopes.

And some have lost their faith because of this. When reminded of the glorious vision of truth some have said, “I believed that once, but that was years ago. I thought the kingdom would be here long before this. Now I have lost faith in it.” Some of these have been reassured, even as was Abraham. The signs of the times today should be a great stimulus to a dwindling faith. Surely the vision of truth is speaking eloquently and convincingly today. It is saying, “Look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh.”—Luke 21:28

The Boy Isaac

Finally Isaac was born. God had performed a miracle! The woman who was barren and old had conceived and had given birth to the promised seed. Even Sarah had laughed at the idea that she would ever have a son. This was on the occasion of the visit of the three angels to Abraham. They confirmed the promise of the seed and also told Abraham of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.—Gen. 18:12-22

And there is an interesting thought in this connection. The main purpose of the angels’ visit on this occasion was to talk with Abraham further about the promised seed. Only incidentally did they mention the destruction of those wicked cities. Even so today, our most important consideration is the fulfillment of God’s promises concerning the “seed.” If

faithful, we will be a part of that spiritual seed of Abraham. There is much for us to do in connection with it. We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God who is working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure, even as he did in the case of Abraham and Sarah.

And now also, as then, God is revealing to his people the fact of a great destruction, not of one or two cities merely, but of a world. He has revealed to us that we are living in the end of this present evil world. We are glad for this knowledge. It enables us to give an effective witness to the people. But the knowledge of prophecy in itself is not the main thing in connection with the vision of truth with which we have been blessed. It is important to know that the old world is being destroyed, but how blessed is the knowledge that through the seed a new world is to be established!

A Further Test

Yes, Isaac was born, but there were long years of waiting before he grew to be a young lad, and when he did, Abraham's faith was further tested. God spoke to him again and asked the patriarch to offer Isaac in sacrifice. This was truly a severe test of Abraham's faith—a test that surely he could not have endured when God first spoke to him while he lived in Ur of the Chaldees.

But through the years Abraham's faith had grown strong. He had learned to know the voice of God. He knew that it was nothing short of the power of God that enabled Sarah to give birth to Isaac. Now he heard the voice of God again. There was no question about that, but how strange was the message! It seemed contrary to all that God had wrought in and through him during all the years. God had performed a miracle in order that Isaac might be born; therefore why should he now be slain?

But again Abraham obeyed, "not knowing." He obeyed because of his implicit faith in the wisdom and love and power of God. By now his faith was so strong that he believed God

would raise Isaac from the dead, if necessary, in order to fulfill his promises in connection with the seed. This was "full assurance of faith" indeed! (Heb. 10:22) It is comparatively easy to have faith in God and in his promises when all the circumstances of life are favorable for the exercise of such a faith. If all our temporal affairs are in good order—we have a comfortable home, a congenial family, a secure position, good health; and besides these temporal blessings, we enjoy privileges of fellowship with the brethren and service of the truth—we exclaim, "Surely the Lord is good!"

Yes, we have a strong faith under such circumstances; but how strong is our faith when God speaks to us out of a cloud, and his providences are dark and foreboding? Do we then have faith?

O for a faith that will not shrink,
Tho' press'd by ev'ry foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.

God spoke to Abraham in terms of sacrifice, and he speaks to us in the same manner. Is our faith, like Abraham's, strong enough to obey, even though we may not know the reason for what we are asked to do? It was a great joy to Abraham when Isaac was born. There was no question about his faith then. There was too much evidence of God's providences in connection with that birth to doubt its meaning. But now it was different. This dear boy, this miracle son, this seed for which he had waited a lifetime, was to be offered as a sacrifice—this is what the voice of God said—and Abraham obeyed.

How does our faith compare with that of Abraham's in this connection? Oh yes, when we hear Jesus say, "My peace I leave with you," we accept that with rejoicing, and the peace and joy of the Lord is accepted as a blessed portion. It should be! But how do we react when we hear those other words, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, . . . that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is

your reasonable service''? (Rom. 12:1) Do we recognize this "call" as also being the voice of God; and recognizing it, are we obeying it?

God Provides

The place designated by God where Isaac was to be offered in sacrifice was three days' journey from Abraham's home. During these three days Abraham did not divulge to Isaac just what was to occur. Isaac began to wonder, and as they began to ascend the mount (probably Moriah) he asked his father about the lamb for the sacrifice. Seemingly they had everything else they would need for offering a sacrifice except the lamb, and Isaac was puzzled.

But in simple faith Abraham replied that God would provide the lamb. Surely Abraham did have faith! Even here he did not know just what God would do, but he had faith to believe that, if necessary, he would raise Isaac from the dead. Strengthened by this faith, he took the step in the dark, knowing that God would meet him there and do for him what he could not do for himself.

Abraham said that God would provide the lamb, and he did. As the knife was raised to slay the boy, an angel of the Lord intervened to prevent the killing. Turning around, Abraham saw a ram in the thicket—the lamb which God provided. Abraham did not know why this test of faith was put upon him; but now we understand—we see in this sacrifice a picture of the sacrifice of Jesus, the antitypical "lamb of God," which he provided to take away the sin of the world.

Abraham passed successfully this supreme test of his faith, and God said to him, "Now I know that thou fearest me." (Gen. 22:12) There is something very sweet about this. It indicates that God had reserved judgment concerning Abraham until he demonstrated fully that he truly believed and was willing to obey. It is even so with us! When we have fully reached the end of the way and have been successful in demonstrating our faith by our works, we will hear that "Well

done, thou good and faithful servant, . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Matt. 25:21

Abraham "died in faith" not having received the complete fulfillment of the promises God had made to him. Sarah had borne a seed, but that seed had not blessed all the families of the earth. God had promised him the land of Canaan; but while Abraham sojourned in it for a while, he never owned it—never truly possessed it. The complete fulfillment of God's promises to him will not be until the resurrection; but Abraham's faith did not waver—he was faithful unto death.

And so again with us. Faith will not have gained its victory for us until we have been faithful unto death. Only then will we receive the crown of life. (Rev. 2:10) So may we continue on! Our God is a promise-keeping God. We may not know—in fact will not know—the full implications of his promises; but we know that the promises belong to us and that he is able to fulfill them. Let us, then, step out upon these promises, leaving behind all earthly things, and keep our sacrifice upon the altar until it is wholly consumed. Brother, hast thou a faith like this?

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

SEPTEMBER 2—"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."—I Peter 1:22 (Z. '03-207 Hymn 206)

SEPTEMBER 9—"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the Word of life."—Philippians 2:15, 16 (Z. '03-358 Hymn 267)

SEPTEMBER 16—"The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace."—Psalm 29:11 (Z. '96-163 Hymn 313)

SEPTEMBER 23—"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3 (Z. '03-423 Hymn 261)

SEPTEMBER 30—"The love of Christ constraineth us."—II Corinthians 5:14 (Z. '03-55, 58 Hymn 331)

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RADIO TOPICS FOR SEPTEMBER

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 5—"The Three Worlds" | 19—"The Truth About Hell" |
| 12—"This Gospel of the Kingdom" | 26—"Your Adversary the Devil" |

Christian Life and Doctrine

Unmovable and Abounding

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”—I Corinthians 15:58

STEADFASTNESS is a paramount requisite to Christian faithfulness. One who is unmovable from his position of loyalty to God and to the truth will also abound in the work of the Lord, for the truth calls upon a Christian to sacrifice all that he has in its service. It is evident, therefore, that to be “steadfast and unmovable” does not mean to stand still or to be idle.

A similar thought to the one expressed in our text is set forth in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, where he admonishes us to “put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil,” “and having done all, to stand.” (Eph. 6:11, 13) We are to make every possible use of the truth as a defensive armor against the fiery darts of doubt and unbelief, and against all the subtle attacks of Satan, that we may be able to stand our ground in the Christian warfare. It is those who are thus steadfast and unmovable in the truth who are the best fitted for “abounding in the work of the Lord.”

We are admonished in the Scriptures to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (II Pet. 3:18) We are also informed that the “path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” (Prov. 4:18) There are many scriptures which

indicate that the Lord desires our knowledge of the truth to increase with the passing years. He wants our understanding of his plan to become ever clearer and more comprehensive. We should be guided by these admonitions and search the Scriptures daily that our knowledge of the truth might, by God's grace, be increased.

“New Light”?

However, it is also well to note that there is a great danger of not holding fast to what we have learned. The history of the church indicates that many have fallen from their steadfastness in the truth through becoming overly concerned with the desire to make progress. Scriptures which enjoin upon every Christian the importance of growing in knowledge have been misused as an excuse for seeking and developing “new light.” Oftentimes the new light which has been discovered in the name of making progress has turned out to be not new light but old error, that is, some doctrine or theory long held by one or more branches of the nominal church.

The truth IS progressive, and “the path of the just” does shine “more and more unto the perfect day.” All who have been enlightened by the truth can testify to its increasing clarity as each day they see in it depths and beauty which they had never before noticed. We all rejoice in this proper growth in knowledge; but when we find it necessary to discard this or that doctrine of the truth in order to accept some fanciful new theory, we should realize that this is not true progress in grace and knowledge, but a letting slip of truths once learned and proved.

So the apostle urges us to take “more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.” (Heb. 2:1) He also admonishes us to “hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.” (Heb. 10:23) There is a great need for all of us to watch ourselves well along this line. One of the weaknesses of the fallen flesh is that of soon becoming weary of anything that is undertaken.

Steadfastness is a virtue sadly lacking in nearly all members of the fallen race; but Christians should seek to develop it, and as they grow stronger along this line, to employ their growing strength to a more resolute and enthusiastic stand for the truths which they have learned and which they have proved by a "thus saith the Lord."

Probably there has never been a time in the whole history of the church when Christian steadfastness in doctrine and practice was more essential than it is now. A looseness of thought is permeating the minds of the people everywhere. One of the insecure foundations of modern education is the theory of "open-mindedness," which really means the art of having one's mind filled with many ideas but not actually believing any of them. This ultramodern viewpoint of faithlessness and instability, like all other worldly viewpoints, keeps knocking at the door of the Christian heart, and it is important that through prayer and a constant and earnest study of the Word of truth we be fortified against it.

The great majority of the teachers in the nominal churches hold to this modern philosophy of being established in nothing. In their own hearts they have discarded the creeds of the churches in which they preach; but only occasionally, and then very vaguely, do they indicate this to their congregations. By failing to say anything about the doctrines of their respective churches they are allowing them gradually to be forgotten by the people, while they preach from Sunday to Sunday on moral philosophy, social hygiene, politics, and other nonreligious topics of the day, admonishing the people that even in these matters they should keep an "open mind."

Not Our Pattern

We should not expect anything else from the nominal church. After all, this great worldly system of organized religion is what the Revelator describes by the symbolic term "Babylon"—confusion. And truly the confusion of the nominal systems is great, and on the increase. The growing

lack of faith in the inspiration and authority of the Bible has been prophesied in the Scriptures, so we are not surprised.

We also know that we are living in the time when “Babylon is fallen,” and when the truly consecrated people of God are called to “come out of her.” (Rev. 18:2,4) Certainly, therefore, those who are enlightened by the truth should not seek to copy Babylon’s example of being “broad-minded,” and “open-minded,” once they realize that these terms are usually merely subtle descriptions of unbelief.

But we are concerned with the viewpoints of nominal churchianity when we see a tendency among ourselves to succumb to their influence; and occasionally such a tendency can be noted. Sometimes we hear the expression among the brethren, “We should be open-minded, you know!” And this remark is usually made in such a manner as almost to cause some to feel that they have committed a sin in definitely believing any item of the truth.

And, from the standpoint of the modern unbeliever, who poses as an outstanding example of one who exercises a noble Christian spirit, it IS wrong dogmatically to believe anything. According to this modern theory of being “broad-minded” a Christian should stand willing to change his mind on any feature of the truth, or at least be ready to question it whenever a suggestion of doubt may be cast upon it. And he should thus be ready to discard his faith, regardless of the fact that over and over again he has proved every item of his “profession of faith” by the inspired Word of God. Brethren, let us not be ensnared by any such alluring “wiles of the Devil.”—Eph. 6:11

“Therefore”

The admonition of our text to be steadfast and unmovable is prefaced by that very meaningful word “therefore.” This indicates that the thoughts which follow are related to what has preceded and are in reality the object of the lesson—the final conclusion, as it were, of the facts previously stated.

And what is the main discussion of this chapter? It is the resurrection of the dead, beginning with the resurrection of Jesus; then the resurrection of his body members; and finally the resurrection of all mankind, when tears will be wiped away and the sting of death removed.

The chapter reveals that in the church at Corinth there were some who were not steadfast in their belief of this basic truth of the Gospel. "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" he asks. Ah, that was it! False doctrine had come into the church; or we might better say, a lack of belief in all the true doctrines; and Paul, with all the logic and persuasion he could command, struck out to protect the people of God against this fiery dart of the Adversary.

Paul was not one to take the viewpoint, "What difference does it make what one believes as long as he professes to be consecrated and tries to be Christlike?" Rather, he knew that every part of the divine plan bears a vital relationship to every other part, hence that one cannot accept what he wishes of the Gospel and doubt or reject the rest, yet be truly pleasing to God. Paul knew that it is the truth which sanctifies us for the service of God; hence if any part of the truth is lacking in our faith structure, we cannot be qualified to serve God acceptably.

The particular question at issue in the church at Corinth was belief in the resurrection. In this chapter of the epistle he reminds us of how futile the whole Christian life would be if there were to be no resurrection of the dead. We are suffering and dying with Christ—"baptized for the dead"—so that we may have the blessed privilege of reigning with him for the blessing of the dead world, by raising them from the sleep of death. But all of this would be in vain, Paul shows, if there is to be no resurrection of the dead.

"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," wrote Paul in his dramatic approach to this serious error which had crept into the Corinthian church. "Why stand we in jeopardy every hour" if death is to end everything? Why should any of us put

ourselves in the position where we are persecuted; or why should we use time and strength and means in the service of the Lord and the brethren, if there be no resurrection of the dead?

All the efforts of the Christian who endeavors to let his light shine in this dark world cost weariness, misunderstanding, and persecution, because the darkness hateth the light. But it is all worthwhile, Paul argues, because there is to be a resurrection of the dead. All the promises of God for both the church and the world are to be fulfilled. The church will be raised to celestial glory with Jesus, and the world will be restored to the terrestrial glory originally possessed by "the first man." Because this is true, and because there is a real objective in Christian sacrifice, our "labor is not in vain in the Lord." And because our labor is not in vain, we should "abound in the work of the Lord."

When Paul argued the point of the resurrection, he had to resort to available evidence and to the promises of God in order to support his position. He could not say to the church at Corinth that he would bring Jesus to visit them and then they would know that he had been raised from the dead. For those who wanted to doubt, there was no **absolute** proof. The best that could be said was that men of integrity had seen Jesus when he manifested himself to them. And to this Paul could add that he had seen Jesus as "one born out of [or, before] due time."—I Cor. 15:8

Those upon whom the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost rejoiced in that wonderful experience as further evidence that Jesus had been raised from the dead and, having returned to the heavenly courts, had fulfilled the promise he had made to send the Comforter to them. But here again it was a living faith which turned things unseen into a "substance" upon which they could lay hold and, firmly grasping thereto, could stand up against every "wind" of false doctrine which sought to take away from them their cherished belief and the source of their inspiration and joy.

That which satisfied the hearts and minds of the apostles concerning the resurrection of Jesus satisfies us today. We too believe that he was raised from the dead, not because we can see him or touch him, but because we believe the testimony of the inspired apostles. And they believed and bore witness to their belief because they were satisfied with the evidence at hand.

And it is exactly the same today with respect to our belief in the second presence of Christ. We believe that Jesus was raised from the dead. We believe that he returned to heaven and "shed forth" the Holy Spirit upon the church at Pentecost. We believe that he has returned and is now present, because on every hand we see the things occurring which the Scriptures tell us to expect at the time of Christ's return. We are satisfied with the evidence and without hesitancy exclaim, "Behold the Bridegroom!"

Is It Important?

Properly, we think of the ransom as the great fundamental of God's plan of salvation. But it is well to remember that in order for the human race to be ransomed and later restored to at-one-ment with God, the divine plan called for a visit to earth of the Logos, first to die for the people and later to establish a kingdom for their blessing. In a sense it is but one visit, separated by the Gospel Age during which Christ's body members have been selected to share with him in the work of his kingdom.

Most of the prophets promised this visit to earth by a royal representative of heaven. When He came at his first advent, John the Baptist announced to Israel, "There standeth one among you, whom ye know not." (John 1:26) Not many of that day believed in the first presence of Christ. Later in life even John the Baptist began to wonder about it and sought confirmation from Jesus. The nation of Israel did not believe that their Messiah had come and to this day still refuses to believe. But shall we say that belief in a development of

God's plan so vital to its accomplishment was unimportant, simply to excuse the unbelief of some? Certainly not!

And we should remember, too, that faith in the presence of the Messiah at that time was based upon the evidence contained in the various "signs" which accompanied the Master's ministry. There was nothing in the Scriptures to identify the Messiah except the signs, that is, the things which would occur when he came. True, he was there as a man, who could be seen and touched; but so far as his being the Messiah was concerned, this proved nothing.

Suppose someone had come to Jesus while he was here in the flesh and had said to him, "I like your way of speaking; you are kind and sympathetic; and I know that through your miracles you are doing the people much good. I like your philosophy of life, too. It is certainly better to love our enemies than to hate them. But I am not sure that you are the Messiah. My thoughts incline in that direction, but if I were asked about it I would have to say that I couldn't prove it. Nevertheless, I want to be your disciple." Can we think that Jesus would say to such a one that it really didn't make much difference whether or not he believed him to be the Messiah?

It was not merely the fact that Jesus was the Messiah which was important. That was indeed a vital truth. But the fact that the Messiah had come meant a **change of dispensation**. An age in the divine plan was coming to an end, and a new age was about to begin. It was necessary to recognize the presence of Christ in order to know of this change in the divine plan and thus be able to co-operate with the Lord intelligently and acceptably in the work of the new age.

And now the second phase of the Messiah's "visit" to earth has become a fact. Again it foretells a change of dispensation. At this time it means not merely the ending of an age, but also the ending of a world, for "the heavens and the earth" which began at the Flood are now passing away, and "the new heavens and the new earth" are soon to be established. The second presence of Christ is the signal for these changes.

How unwise it would be, therefore, to say that belief in his presence is unimportant!

The Scriptures are so explicit in associating the second presence of the Master with the events of the "last days" that there is no satisfactory explanation of present-day events except the fact that the Master has returned. Everywhere we look the "signs" are visible. It is of course as true now as at the first advent that the One who is present and responsible for the downfall of a world is not known or recognized by the people in general. Furthermore, it is true now, as then, that even the professed people of God, with few exceptions, fail to recognize the true significance of the world-disturbing events of our days. But the brethren "are not in darkness, that that day should overtake . . . [them] as a thief."—1 Thess. 5:2, 4

"Unmovable"

If, then, "The sure word of prophecy" has revealed the presence of Christ to us, let us cherish this blessed vision of truth and rejoice in the opportunities it opens up. Let us not be influenced by the arguments of the modernists, who say concerning nearly everything in the Bible, "You can't prove it!" We can't prove to some that the "wages of sin is death," but this is no excuse for us to be uncertain about it. There are millions who do not agree with anything we believe. But we believe, nevertheless; so let us hold fast the profession of our faith. Let us be unmovable.

Steadfastness in the truth is essential if we are to experience in large measure the joys of the truth, for we can get no true satisfaction out of that which we only half believe. Steadfastness in the truth is also essential if we are to be acceptable servants of the Lord; for the truth is God's plan, and when he reveals his plan, it means that he wants us to become co-laborers with him in the outworking of that plan. And how can we work for him acceptably if we are not sure of what he wants us to do and are uncertain as to where we stand in connection with his plan?

But what inspiration there is in knowing and steadfastly adhering to our belief—especially our belief at this time in the great dispensational truths of the divine plan! We are standing at the turning point of the ages, at the very threshold of the new kingdom. Already the King is here! He has come as the Bridegroom to gather his bride. He has served “meat in due season” to the household of faith; and in the strength of this rich spiritual nourishment, let us steadfastly hold to the truths of which we have been assured. Holding fast to these doctrines, let us go forward zealously in the work of the Lord, abounding therein with thanksgiving and praise.

It is a wonderful time in which to be living! At every turn of the road, and as each new vista of world drama appears before us, we discover fresh and unquestionable evidence that our Lord is present. Because the Lord has honored us with the truth, we are not in darkness. To us the Master has not come as a thief, but as earth’s new King, and we see the evidence of his presence in “the crumbling thrones of earth,” as well as in all the other events which are baffling a distressed world.

Knowing the true significance of the times in which we live and the great privileges which have come to us through this knowledge, nothing should be permitted to lure us away from our steadfastness nor hold us back from “abounding in the work of the Lord.” At the beginning of the age the Apostle Peter, writing about the melting elements of a world order following Christ’s return, said, “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?” (II Pet. 3:11) This admonition is even more timely today, for now we can say, “Seeing that all these things ARE being dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be?”

We should be on the alert, hence quick to detect the encroachment of every worldly viewpoint and philosophy which would rob us of our steadfastness in the truth. One of

the evidences of the time in which we live is the increasing love for ease and pleasure; but we are to be lovers of God, not of pleasure. There is a widespread and increasing lack of stability and responsibility, but we should endeavor to become more and more unmovable.

The pledged word has lost much of its former meaning; but we should, more faithfully than ever, "pay our vows unto the Most High." Hypocrisy is everywhere rife; but we should seek to be simple and sincere toward all and, especially, sincere before God. And to be sincere it is essential to believe and to act upon that which we profess to believe.

And think what drastic action is called for on the part of those who truly believe that we are at the end of the age and who are convinced that Satan's world is crumbling! Surely to such there can be nothing else of consequence except "holy conversation and godliness." If we think of "conversation" from the standpoint of what we talk about, it means that we will endeavor to speak only those things which will be unctuous and blessed to all. If we think of "holy conversation" as including our conduct in life—which it properly does—then we should realize the importance of having our every thought, word, and act such as will be in keeping with our belief.

Yes, the great consummation of past ages is upon us! Let us, then, not sleep as do others, but let us watch and pray, and be sober. Let us put on the breastplate of truth and righteousness. Let us, in fact, put on "the whole armor of God." And with the armor of truth to help us be steadfast and unmovable, let us abound in the Lord's work, knowing that our labor will not be in vain.

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.—Ephesians 5:8

Encouraging Letters

Family Discusses Subject

Gentlemen: I was listening to your program Sunday morning while waiting for time to attend my own church, and I was very impressed by it. I would like very much to receive your booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave." My children and I have often discussed this subject and wondered about it. We lost our husband and father six years ago. Thank you very much for making it possible to enlighten us on this question. Sincerely.—SD

War Veteran Receives Hope

Sirs: I have just listened to your program about Abraham, and I would deeply appreciate a copy of the same, and any other material you may have regarding the resurrection. I happen to be a disabled American veteran, and believe me, you have no idea how the sermon on TV this morning brought with it great joy and hope. May the good Lord's blessing be with all connected with this program. Thank you.—MA

Message Inspiring

On Sunday morning I was listening to your message over the radio. Praise the Lord for

sending you into my home that morning! Your message was very inspiring, and I would like to hear more. And I would like to ask for the booklet you mentioned—I believe you called it the "Peace" book. Thank you for offering this to the public! May you continue your good works! Because of Jesus.—AL

"My Most Precious Conclusion"

Dear Brothers: I have enjoyed your program, "The Bible Answers." The Lord is with you! I am writing to obtain the booklet on "Jesus, the World's Savior." You see, I am a sociology major in college, and I love studying government, and my most precious conclusion for government is Christ's kingdom. Thank you, and may God bless you and keep you! I will pray for your program.—CA

"Bible Has Answers"

Dear Sir: I have recently started studying the Bible. I used to be an atheist, but I now see that the Bible has certain answers to problems my school teachers can't supply me with. I'm sixteen, and right now I am studying the controversy over creation versus evolution. A friend of mine told me you have

some pamphlets on creation, possibly all of Genesis, and I would like to request them. Would you please also send me a catalog or list of your other literature. Thank you very much.—B.C.

Rejoicing in truth

Dear Brothers: Please send me two copies of each of the following booklets: "Oh, the Blessedness!" and "God Has a Plan." Also please send me eighteen copies of Question Supplement No. 1. I not only enjoy reading all of your literature but rejoice as I pass it out in my witness work. May God continue to shower his blessings upon your work. By His grace.—OH

"Really Opened My Eyes"

Dawn Publications: Please send me a copy of "The Creator's Grand Design," for which I am enclosing the amount. Also, I would like to tell you that I have just finished reading your booklets on "The Truth About Hell," "When a Man Dies," and "Hope Beyond the Grave." The lessons you have in these books have really opened my eyes and mind to what heaven and hell are all about. I am a deacon at my church, and I feel ashamed to have believed that our loving, merciful God would be cruel

enough to put millions of people in eternal torment. I was taught this and have repeated it many times. I am thankful to you people for bringing the truth out to me. Sometimes I am asked to bring a message to the congregation on Sunday evenings. I get a blessing from the Lord from doing this, and I realize that I can do much better if I have a true and clear understanding of God's entire Word. Thanks very much!—KY

Our Devotional Reading

Dear Sirs: Please send me two copies of "Daily Heavenly Manna." I use my copy every day, first reading the scripture and then the comment. My husband is a minister, and often we use this as our devotional reading together. Thanking you, we are happy in Him.—MO

Shares New-found Joy

Dear Sir: I have been the recipient of the monthly Dawn publications for almost two years and have found them to be very informative and inspirational. Also, I was fortunate to be given a copy of "The Book of Books," and I can truly say that gift was something I had been desiring for several years. Since I have been using this book as a guide for my Bible study, I have been able to interpret the

Scriptures more accurately. Most of all, I can see how God's plans for us have been and are developing, and how great is his love for mankind. Several changes have developed in my life since I have been studying the Scriptures. My faith has been strengthened, and no longer do I desire to live the kind of life I once lived. I would like to share this precious gift of new-found joy with a very dear friend, so please find enclosed a check for one copy of "The Book of Books." May God bless and keep you. Yours in Christ.—FL

A Grateful Refugee

Dear Author: I just looked at you on TV. Being a refugee, I am interested in everything in America, especially American deep thoughts. Your booklet "Armageddon" seems to me to belong in that category. As you said, it is a book to help the readers, and I am one of them. I have only some stamps to send you. Please give me a copy, and I will appreciate highly both your generosity and your thinking. My best regards. Gratefully yours.—CA

Timely and Beautiful Truths

Dear Friends in Christ: Thank you so much for your letter received today. I look forward

each month to receiving The Dawn, and I have the beautiful book, "Songs in the Night." Truly a blessing! Yes, and another one—"The Book of Books"—such timely and beautiful truths. Thank God I have so many of your booklets—a wonderful help in reading God's Word. Thank you so much! Your sister in Christ.—TX

A New Listener

My dear Rev. Ernest: I heard your teachings on the radio this morning, and I ask that you please send me the booklet "Divine Healing." I will keep up with your program. I enjoyed it so much. Thank you kindly!—NY

A Spiritual Blessing

Dear "Frank and Ernest": My sons, ages 17 and 15, and I deliver the morning Toledo Blade every Sunday. We listen to your programs. They are very educational, and a spiritual blessing. Please send me the booklet on death and the resurrection. Thank you. Sincerely.—OH

"This Blessed Little Book"

Gentlemen: Would you please inform me how to get this blessed little book called "Hope"? When my husband

passed away, a friend sent one in her sympathy card, and it just lifted the burden. If you have them, please send me as many as you can. I would like to send one to a friend. Thank you so much! Yours in Christ.—OH

Changed Entire Life

Dear Sirs: I received "The Book of Books" and "Behold Your King" today. I am very grateful for this reading material, and I can say it has changed my entire life, because it has taught me the correct way to live. Thanks for everything!—CA

"The Beautiful Dawn"

Dawn Bible Students Association: Thank you so much for the beautiful October issue of The Dawn. They are all beautiful and require much dedication to expound "the Word of Life," but this issue was special. As nature goes out in a glorious blaze of color, the Christian rejoices in the promises of our God, knowing that his Word will not return unto him void. God bless you all! Your sister in Christ.—IL

"People Love to Read"

To whom it may concern: I am so pleased to receive information about The Dawn magazine, and the order blank. I had been wondering how I could keep

mine coming. I enjoy it so much. The ones I've read I am placing in a nursing home. I find people there love to read the good news too. Thank you very much! Sincerely.—WA

Class Sees Film

Dear Sir: Please send me a free copy of your booklet called "Jesus, the World's Savior." I saw it advertised in the film "Unto Us a Child Is Born." It was very interesting, and the rest of my class thinks so too! Sincerely yours.—MO

"The Sound of a Trumpet"

Dear Brothers: For the first time ever, I heard your "Frank and Ernest" program on March 7, as it came through CKLW on my radio dial. It was like beautiful music, its message loud and clear. It had the sound of a trumpet. No one who heard it could possibly take it for anything else but the truth! If you have a supply of radio logs, I would like a few, and the booklet entitled "The Holy Spirit." I am longing to see all of you and hope that one day the Lord will make it so. But until then you are in my prayers, always. God bless you in your efforts to declare the kingdom of God to all the four parts of the globe. Your brother and fellow servant by His grace.—OH

Anxious to Read and Listen

Dear Sirs: I happened to hear your radio broadcast last Sunday, and it was extremely interesting. I enjoyed it so much. Please send me the booklet, "What Can a Man Believe?" I am anxious to read it, as well as to continue to listen to your broadcasts. Thank you very much. Very truly yours.—WA

Wonderful Messages

Gentlemen: We always listen to your wonderful radio program and your wonderful God-centered messages before we go to Sunday School and church. Please send me the booklet, "When a Man Dies." Thank you!—CA

Sample Wanted

Dear Sirs: I listened to your program and was very pleased with it. It was so inspiring that I am writing in response to it. I am very interested in your magazine, The Dawn, and would like you to send me a copy.—MI

Helps to "Fulfill Our Joy"

Dear Brothers in Christ: We watched your program on television Sunday. We are so delighted for and by your program, and by the way you portrayed Daniel and Nebuchad-

nezzar—it was fantastic. We pray for many more happy gatherings such as this one! Please send us the booklet "God and Reason" so we'll know more of the things that would help fulfill our joy; and please pray for us.—TN

A Blind Listener

Dear Sirs: We have a blind patient residing here who has been listening to your program for over 20 years. She would dearly love to borrow a cassette recording of your Memorial service so she could listen to your program more than once at her leisure. She is 84 years old, and she is a very special lady, and very close to the Lord. Thank you so much!—CA

"Most Wonderful Book"

Dear Friends: Thank you for the opportunity to receive The Dawn magazine. I am now reading "Studies in the Scriptures," the most wonderful book I have ever read. Yes, I believe our God is a God of love, who never could torture anyone. I do not believe there is a burning hell, where sinners are tortured forever, but many misunderstand this old teaching. I could not torture even a worm, and I am no one, so how could our loving God, who is all in all, be so cruel? I

thank him for all I have, in the name of Jesus, his Son.—CA

Learned As a Child

Dear Friends: Greetings in the name of Jesus! I want to tell you how much I appreciate The Dawn magazine. It surely describes the day of trouble we are living in from one end of the earth to the other. I have been a Bible Student since I was a child, as my parents both were. I am now 84 years old, and have arthritis, and cannot walk much. I am unable to go to any meetings, and so there are none of the Bible Students that I know. But I am thankful to see God's prophecies being fulfilled in our day. May God bless and keep you faithful in his work and Word. With Christian love.—OH

Wants to Study

Dear Sirs: In going through some old things that were my mother's, I found this one book, the first in a series of Bible studies. Enclosed is a sheet from it, advertising the complete set of six volumes. I enjoyed the book very much, and wonder if you still have such for sale. Would appreciate hearing from you as to what you may have to offer for Bible study. Thank you very much. Sincerely.—PA

Subscribes for Friends

Dear Friends in Christ: I am renewing my subscription for another year, and would like also to send five of my dear friends your Dawn magazine, as per the enclosed list. Your Dawn magazine is such a wonderful help to me, and I know that it will be to them, too. My son is a minister, and he reads it at my house, so I want him to have it also.—KY

"Beautiful Truths Revealed"

Dear Brothers in Christ: I am enjoying "God and Reason" and want to read "The Creator's Grand Design." Your broadcast called "Frank and Ernest" reaches me through radio on KWYO, Sheridan. I feel it a special privilege to have such beautiful truths revealed by inspired messengers. May God bless your efforts. Yours in Christ.—WY

Teacher Wishes Dawn

Gentlemen: I find your Sunday morning program on Station WEFM very informative, and would like to receive The Dawn, for which my check is enclosed. I teach Sunday School and can use all the help I can get. Sincerely.—IL



The British Section

The Twenty-first Annual Convention At Portrush

WHEN the disciples asked our Lord for signs of his second presence, he said there would be distress of nations with perplexity which would cause men's hearts to fail them for fear. Never before in the history of the human race has this declaration been so true as today. Look where we will, no nation is without distress and sadness, and this is true of Northern Ireland.

Last year we were able to report an easement in the tension as the province enjoyed a "ceasefire" offered by the terrorists, but violence is once again causing fear and destruction in this unhappy land. We who study the Word of God are assured these conditions will not last forever. The word rendered "perplexity" (Luke 21:25) really means "no way out," and men today are beginning to realise that there is no apparent solution to the troublous times in which we live. Jesus described this period as "the

beginning of sorrows," culminating in the greatest time of trouble the world has ever known.

The storm clouds which today hang low over this troubled earth have a silver lining, for the Scriptures leave us in no doubt as to the final outcome. Jesus, who at his first advent died for all men, has returned to establish his kingdom of righteousness and truth; and amidst the distress and sadness there is still an opportunity for the Lord's people to **make** their calling and election sure.

In accordance with the normal custom, the friends began to gather at Portrush on Friday, the 28th of May. The next day the convention started with "tea," after which we all assembled in Sister Stinson's lounge. Brother Joe Crawford of the Fermanagh Ecclesia, and on behalf of the Irish brethren, welcomed the friends who had travelled from England, France, and the U.S.A. to be with them

Spirit. Each individual Christian is a temple of God's Holy Spirit. In this way God meets with us, bestowing his blessings on us. The Scriptures picture us as stones being prepared to be part of the great temple of future ages. Each stone must be chiselled and shaped so that it fits accurately, the cutting and polishing representing the hard cutting experiences of the Christian way. Thus we are peculiarly his workmanship, and the shaping and polishing will continue until these precious stones have been made ready to be brought together in the first resurrection. Such a wonderful hope gives us strength to endure all the pain and difficulties which are necessary if we are to be part of God's glorious future temple—the meeting place between God and men throughout the ages to come.

A Blest Tie

Our Sunday worship commenced with further greetings from classes and individuals from both sides of the Atlantic, and we realised once again what a blest tie it is that binds our hearts in Christian love. The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. This was followed with a consideration of the Manna text found in Romans 12:12, where we realised that it is because of the

wonderful hope set before us that we are able to be patient in tribulation. How necessary are the trials and difficulties of life to teach us patience in fighting the natural tendencies of the flesh. In order to be faithful to the end, we must put on the whole armour of God.

The Still Small Voice

The morning's worship concluded with a talk from Brother Fred Binns, who expressed his appreciation for the wonderful period of fellowship we were able to enjoy at Portrush. The Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus had indeed made their abode with us.

The Scriptures refer to two advents of our Lord. At the first advent, Jesus met the woman of Samaria at the well. She had come to draw water, but she learned from him that he is the source of living water. So eager was she to share this knowledge with others that she hurried away with the wonderful news of the Messiah. They too came to hear Jesus, and now we also have heard his words and continue to drink of his life-giving water of truth.

Elijah had a zeal for God, which brought persecution upon the prophet. As we declare the truth we find there are very few today who love the Lord. Just as

our Heavenly Father prepared a way for Elijah, so we too hear the small voice behind us saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

The things of the world are of no importance to us. Today the whirlwind of trouble is beginning to gather. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," because it is a life's work to know God. We have to go through the wilderness and the fire, but we have a wonderful hope and, like Elijah, we receive divine strength in order that we may make our calling sure.

After the midday meal we enjoyed a prayer, praise, and testimony meeting, where the brethren reminded one another of the faithfulness of our Heavenly Father and his keeping power in all the experiences of life.

Upon the Mountains of Bether

We were privileged to have two speakers from France, and following tea we listened to Brother Adoph Debski on the subject, "Upon the Mountain of Bether." (Song of Sol. 2:17) These words are prophetic of the Church, who desire to see their Lord's return. He came once to die for all mankind. Whilst here he said he would go away to prepare a place for

them, where they would share his glory. The text carries the thought of "Be thou like a roe or a gazelle." When our Lord came as a Lamb, it was to die for mankind. The returned Lord has not come to die again. At his second advent he is likened to a gazelle, and should be as a beauty upon the mountains of Bether.

When he returned he came not only as Bridegroom and Chief Reaper in the harvest work, but as the King of kings and Lord of lords. All power in heaven and earth is now his. He is full of grace and beauty. The gazelle has great piercing eyes. In Revelation 1:14 our Lord's eyes are described as a flaming fire. He is all-seeing and can read every intent and thought of our hearts.

Mountains represent kingdoms. Jesus has returned to destroy this present evil world. Wherever we look today the nations are divided among themselves; and as knowledge increases, so the things of darkness in this corrupt world are being brought to light. All the works of the Adversary are being revealed. Our Lord is the Prince of Light, working against Satan, the prince of darkness. May we prove faithful so that we may be with our Lord in the resurrection of all mankind!

A People Set Apart

Following a night's rest we began the final day of the convention with a talk by Brother Joseph Orr of Northern Ireland, whose theme was "A People for His Name." (Acts 15:14) This fifteenth chapter contains a report of the first Christian convention. In the days in which we live such gatherings have become commonplace amongst the Lord's people.

The Early Church consisted of Jewish and Gentile converts, and those who had been educated in the Law of Moses insisted that it was needful that all Christian believers should be circumcised. This caused much difficulty and discussion in the church, and the apostles and elders at Jerusalem met to consider the matter.

When Israel became a nation they were assured they were God's special people. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." At his first advent Jesus told his disciples to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but later he instructed them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all nations. The Gospel of the kingdom teaches us that all families of the earth will eventually be blessed by the Christ, Head and body.

As a nation the Jews rejected our Lord, but to those who did believe on him, he gave them power to become sons of God. Only a few were prepared to follow Jesus unto death, and so the call went to the Gentiles. Israel of old failed because they did not keep God's commandments. When individuals responded to the high calling, obedience was still necessary, not as provided by Moses' Law, which insisted on an outward form of circumcision, but by circumcision of the heart. This is a wholehearted consecration to God's will.

The powers of evil are very strong today, and if we are to gain the victory, we must live very close to the Master. We must walk circumspectly, redeeming the time, knowing that if we are obedient to every requirement we shall hear our Father's "Well done" when we reach the end of our earthly course.

The Lord's Return

Our morning's worship concluded with a discourse entitled "Ten Signs of the Presence of the King." This was given by Brother Antoine Papajak of France. In Matthew 24 our Lord replied to the disciples' questions concerning the signs of his second presence and the end of the age. Luke 21 presents the

same subject in a different form.

In Matthew 24:45-47 Jesus speaks of the faithful and wise servant to be set over the household of faith to give meat in due season. Living at this end of the age we have been blessed with vast treasures of truth which have come to us from the pen of Brother Russell. He explained that we have reached the harvest period of the Gospel Age, with the seventh trumpet announcing the presence of earth's new King. It was the time when the tares would be bound in bundles and burned, and the wheat sifted and prepared for the heavenly garner. During this period there would be great tribulation. Daniel tells us that trouble and distress would follow the coming of the Lord, not precede it. Michael is shown to "stand up," after which comes the trouble. Today is not a time of blessing, but man has experienced a great increase of knowledge. Instead of bringing blessings, this knowledge is causing much trouble in the earth.

Before the new order can be established, much preparatory work must be accomplished. Today we are witnessing an increase in iniquity, which is the natural consequence of unbe-

lief. When Paul wrote to Timothy, he said that in the last days perilous times would come. Jesus likened this period to the days that were before the Flood, when God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth. The present evil world must be dissolved—"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

When our Lord returned, the sleeping saints were raised. In the time that remains before the final tribulation descends on this troubled earth, the purification of the sons of Levi must be completed. The remaining members of the bride must make themselves ready, and only those who are fully consecrated to God will be able to stand in this evil day.

The Lord Is My Shepherd

Following the break for our midday meal we assembled for the closing sessions of our gathering, commencing with a study on the 23rd Psalm, ably conducted by Brother Joseph Crawford. Verse 1 summarises the psalm, which reminds us of the shepherd's care for his sheep and shows the personal relationship the psalmist had with his God.

Although written so long ago by one of the faithful worthies,

the words of this psalm have been preserved for our encouragement at this end of the age. In the Middle East the shepherd was accustomed to leading his sheep instead of walking behind them as in Ireland, and when his sheep became mixed with other sheep they would always recognise his voice and follow him. At times they wandered from the flock, but he was always at hand to help them, thus illustrating the Lord's watchfulness for those who love him. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." "The Lord God is a sun and shield: . . . no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."—Phil. 4:19; Ps. 84:11

If we continue to follow the Shepherd's leading and feed from his table of truth, we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Our Choice of Yoke

The final discourse was given by Brother Bob Robinson, based on Jesus' invitation in Matthew 11:29,30: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." We must take this invitation very seriously.

When Jesus came he had available the whole of the Old

Testament Scriptures. At the age of twelve he presented himself at the temple, and at Jordan he consecrated his whole being to the Heavenly Father. He who had lived in the Spirit realms was not even born in a kingly state on earth. He made himself of no reputation, and taught us true humility of heart. He told his disciples that he who would be the greatest among us must be the servant also. True humility comes from the heart. We find it taught in our Lord's words in the Beatitudes, and as we take his exhortations to heart, so it grows within ourselves.

Jesus must have been the most understanding of carpenters. Yokes, when made, had to fit the animal, and Jesus must have made some of the most comfortable yokes ever put on an animal. Imperfect man can do marvellous things, but Jesus was perfect in every way. He tells us to take off the yoke that is bearing us down and take his yoke, which is easy to bear.

The Lord asked Paul why he kicked "against the pricks." This, Brother Robinson said, was yoke language. Paul was roped in the wrong yoke until after the light on that Damascus road, when he became yoked to the Lord Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, "My grace is sufficient

for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (II Cor. 12:9) We must rely entirely upon him.

The One driving and directing us is fully conversant with the way before us. We have a sympathetic High Priest, tempted in all points like as we, but not until we have been humbled can we be at one with him. We must learn of him who said that his "yoke is easy, and his burden is light," and thus we shall have personal contact between God and ourselves. We know we are not alone, because our Yoke-fellow is close beside us. We may think the toil of

everyday life is a great burden, but our Lord is always at our side as long as we keep his invitation close to our heart. We must have the strength and endurance to stand the heat of the day, and all the experiences of our everyday life are in his strength, with him in the yoke beside us.

With the singing of the Port-rush anthem, "How blessed, how glorious, how joyful to feel the love everlasting, of sonship a seal," another convention came to a close; but all present were satisfied that it was a beneficial milestone on our journey to the Heavenly Canaan.



**"Look up, O Earth; no storm can last
Beyond the limits God hath set.
When its appointed work is past,
In joy thou shalt thy grief forget.
Where sorrow's plowshare has swept through,
Thy fairest flowers of life shall spring;
For God shall grant thee life anew,
And all thy wastes shall laugh and sing.
Hope thou in him; his plan for thee
Shall end in triumph and release;
Fear not, for thou shalt surely see
His afterward of peace."**

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. 07073. A visit will be arranged when possible.

S. ALLEN			
Allentown, PA	Sept. 12	Milwaukee, WI	20
		Marshfield, WI	21
J. BACHER			
Spokane, WA	Sept. 1	Wausau, WI	22
Wenatchee, WA	2	Whalen, MN	23
Seattle, WA	4-6	Minneapolis, MN	24
Vancouver, B.C.	8	Milwaukee, WI	26
Victoria, B.C.	9	Gary, IN	27
E. K. PENROSE			
Vernon, B.C.	12	North Brookfield, MA	Sept. 1
Kalispell, MT	14	Hartford, CT	2
Havre, MT	15	New York, NY	5, 6
Bosler, WY	17	Columbus, OH	8
Denver, CO	19	Gary, IN	21
Pueblo, CO	20	Milwaukee, WI	22
Topeka, KS	22	Marshfield, WI	24
		Minneapolis, MN	26
		Winnipeg, Man.	29
M. BALKO			
The Dalles, OR	Sept. 1		
Seattle, WA	4-6		
L. POST			
Sacramento, CA	8	Boston, MA	Sept. 12
Los Angeles, CA	9		
R. RAWSON			
Phoenix, AZ	10	Buffalo, NY	Aug. 29
Detroit, MI	26	Johnstown, NY	Sept. 1
W. BLICHARZ			
Pittsburgh, PA	Sept. 18, 19	Boston, MA	2
		Agawam, MA	3
		New York, NY	5, 6
K. NAIL			
Buffalo, NY	Sept. 26		
L. RUTH			
		Pottstown, PA	Sept. 19
J. PANUCCI			
New Haven, CT	Sept. 26		
R. RUTH			
		Pittsburgh, PA	Sept. 18, 19
G. PASSIOS			
Sayville, NY	Sept. 12	Philadelphia, PA	26
R. SURACI			
F. WASSMANN			
New York, NY	Sept. 1-6	New London, CT	Sept. 19
Berwick, PA	7		
Chicago, IL	19	Pittsburgh, PA	Sept. 18, 19

Conventions

SAN DIEGO, CA, Sept. 4-6—Muir College, UCSD, N. Torrey Pines Rd. Mrs. Gilbert Rice, 4005 Olympic St., 92115

JACKSON, MI, Sept. 4-6—Jackson Community College, Fieldhouse, 2111 Emmons Rd. Mrs. Ray Lumley, 2531 Ashton Rd., 49203

SEATTLE, WA, Sept. 4-6—Norway Center, 300 Third Ave., W. Miss M. Stevens, 6525 - 24 Ave., N.W., #1, 98117

NEW YORK, NY, Sept. 5, 6—The Sheraton Hotel, 56 St. & 7 Ave. Mrs. Ann-Truth Lange, 76 Longview Ave., White Plains, NY 10605

NORTH BROOKFIELD, MA, Sept. 12—Elementary School, Oakham Rd. (end of N. Main St. after Lane's Garage). Miss Helen Waytina, Box 82, 01535

PITTSBURGH, PA, Sept. 18, 19—Joint Area Conv., Bower Hill Civic League Community Center, 1600 Bower Hill Rd. Mr. John Baracos, 736 Dunster St., 15226

CINCINNATI, OH, Sept. 19—2850 Dunaway. Mrs. Margaret Ellis, Rt. 1, Box 71, Melbourne, KY 41059

DENVER, CO, Sept. 25, 26—Rode-way Inn, Denver Airport, 4950 Quebec St. Mrs. Loretta Blair, 6705 S. Santa Fe Dr., Sp. 2, Littleton, CO 80120

BUFFALO, NY, Sept. 25, 26—Unity Temple, 1940 Niagara St. Mr. Joseph Szuba, 362 S. Union Rd., Williamsville, NY 14221

CHICAGO, IL, Sept. 26—Masonic Temple, 5352 W. Chicago Ave. Mr. Arthur Jesuit, 140 Forest Glen Rd., Wood Dale, IL, 60191

DETROIT, MI, Sept. 26—Northwest Branch YWCA, 25940 Grand River. Mr. Frank Nemesh, 25354 Cunningham, Warren, MI 48091

KALISPELL, MT, Oct. 2, 3
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA, Oct. 9, 10

MILWAUKEE, WI, Oct. 9, 10

CINCINNATI, OH, Oct. 16, 17

NEW LONDON, CT, Oct. 17

ORLANDO, FL, Oct. 30, 31

LOS ANGELES, CA, Oct. 31

BUFFALO, NY, Oct. 31

BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

E. T. NADAL

Dewsbury	Oct. 16
Newport	23
Latchford	Nov. 20

R. E. ROBINSON

Dewsbury	Sept. 11
Latchford	Oct. 2

YEOVIL GATHERING—Please note change of date **September 25, 26.**

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