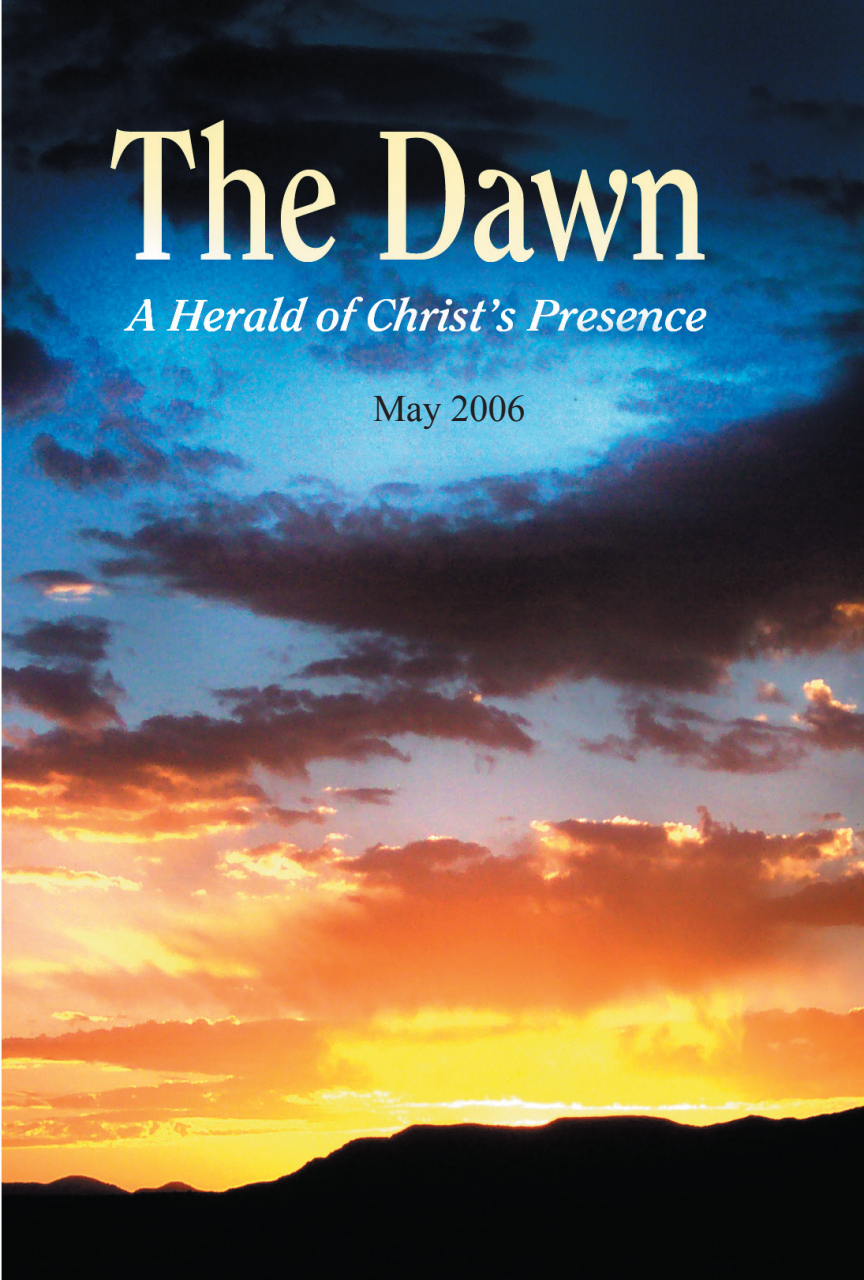


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**AUSTRALIA:** Berean Bible Institute, P.O. Box 402, Rosanna, Victoria 3084

**BRITISH ISLES:** Associated Bible Students, P.O. Box 136, Chesham, Bucks HP5 3EB

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**GREECE:** He Haravgi (The Dawn), 33-33 149th Street, Flushing, NY 11354 USA

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# Pestilences: In Diverse Places

*“Great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences.”*  
—*Luke 21:11*

## **IN THIS SCRIPTURE AND**

its accompanying context, Luke provides an account of one of the prophetic signs that Jesus gave to his disciples foretelling the dramatic events that would transpire during the present Gospel Age. The prophecy thus includes further indication of what may be expected to take place at the end of the age and concurrent with his return. He says that ‘pestilences’ (as well as ‘famines’ and convulsions of nature) would be part of the trouble that would come upon the world and its people during the age, and its closing climactic scenes. These prophetic words are powerful evidence to those living during the closing years of this age that his promised millennial kingdom is near at hand.

We are all witnesses to the increasing number, and frequency, of pestilences of all kinds throughout the world, that Jesus foretold would mark the end of the age. This would coincide with man’s selfishness, pride, and often total disregard for the

natural laws of God. The fulfillment of these predictions has caused catastrophic changes to mankind and his environment.

## **PESTILENCE**

Standard English dictionaries verify that pestilences are very contagious and widespread diseases. They are associated with highly virulent epidemics, with rapid and devastating effects. The Greek word, from which pestilence has been translated in the New Testament, is defined as any deadly infectious malady. In our featured text (Luke 21:11), it is used in its plural form [*Vine's Amplified Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*].

The word pestilence (singular form) is also found in many Old Testament scriptures. The Prophet Habakkuk writes, "Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals [diseases—*Marginal Translation*] went forth at his feet." (chap. 3:5) He associates the severity of pestilences and burning diseases with the carrying out of God's judgments.

In Psalm 91, "pestilence" has been used twice in its figurative sense. The psalmist writes, "It is He who delivers you from the snare of the 'trapper,' and from the deadly pestilence." (vs.3, *New American Standard Version*) The word 'pestilence' is associated with Satan, the symbolic trapper. God's watch care over his people will keep them from the trapper's snares. Further, we read, "Of the pestilence that stalks [walks—*Marginal Translation*] in darkness, or of the destruction that lays waste at noon" (vs. 6, NASV). Here, the word 'pestilence' suggests symbolic stumbling stones of darkness that the Adversary places in the pathway of the New Creature in Christ.

## **BLACK DEATH**

Instances of pestilence have been prevalent in many parts of the world since Jesus spoke the words of this prophecy, and they have been responsible for the infection and death of countless numbers of people. Several infectious diseases were called 'plague' or 'pest,' but, during the Middle Ages, these calamities became known as the Black Death. During the Dark Ages, these pestilences were primarily confined to rodents, and disease epidemics affected humans by contact with infected rodents—most commonly rats—and their fleas. Plague was spread rapidly from rats to people who often lived in overcrowded and very unsanitary conditions.

This highly infectious disease had three major clinical forms: a) bubonic, which was characterized by swelling of the lymph nodes (buboes); b) pneumonic, in which the lungs were infected; and c) septicemic, when the blood stream became invaded by vigorous fast-growing infection. Death usually occurred quickly before either the bubonic or pneumonic forms had time to develop.

What became known as the Bubonic Plague (although other forms of the disease were prevalent) spread over large areas of Europe during the 6th, 14th, and 17th centuries with catastrophic consequences. During these epidemics, the number of deaths reached one-fourth of the entire population of Europe. There is also evidence that outbreaks of plague existed in China, India, and other parts of Asia before ravaging Europe.

## **GREAT PLAGUE OF LONDON**

England was isolated from the European continent, but the plague slowly made its way there by

way of sea travel. It came to a climax in the Great Plague of London which occurred in 1664-65. Records indicate that the mortality rate from the epidemic during that time reached 68,596 deaths in London alone, out of a population of approximately 460,000. It is further estimated that thousands of other people also died during this same time from spotted fever, which is believed to have been attributable to the plague, but was not included in the plague's statistics. From London, the plague spread throughout the nation affecting large numbers of people. The great fire of London, in September 1666, is believed to have been largely responsible for the rapid decline of the epidemic during that year.

## **THE 1918 PANDEMIC**

Some living today may recall the plague that spread over the world during the closing year of World War I in 1918. More people died as a result of the pandemic than had lost their lives during the entire four-year period of the war. For comparison, it is also noted that more people died during that single year than had fallen victim to pestilence during the four years of the Black Death plague that ravished Europe between the years 1347 and 1351. The 1918 pestilence has been cited as the single most devastating pandemic in recorded history.

During World War I, men fought 'trench warfare' and lived through some of the most brutal and unsanitary conditions imaginable. When it rained, trenches became seas of mud, and men, dead or dying from horrible wounds, were surrounded with filth, and the smoke and fumes of war. Lungs were seared from mustard and other poisonous gas attacks.

The Great War of 1914-1918 created tremendous mass movements of men and materials that were brought to the front lines of Europe from all parts of the globe. These conditions helped contribute to an environment for the pestilential plague which soon followed.

## **SPANISH INFLUENZA IN AMERICA**

In the spring of 1918, while the world was still occupied with the devastating war, a mysterious bug suddenly appeared that infected soldiers who were stationed in the state of Kansas, and then spread to other United States military camps. Amid the global confusion and commotion, the virus propagated quickly, affecting healthy adults as well as children, and elderly people, all over the country. By the time the pestilence declined the following year, more than half a million Americans had died from the disease, and communities all over America had been affected. Millions of people are estimated to have died throughout the world as a result of the virus. The pandemic earned its name, Spanish Influenza, from the eight million people who died in Spain during the month of May 1918 alone, although the disease did not originate in that country.

## **THE BIRD FLU**

People around the world have recently become aware of a potential health crisis that is slowly migrating across the globe. The Bird Flu virus that is now being feared by researchers could become a global pandemic if the disease is not promptly contained. If an outbreak of the disease did occur, it could cause tremendous loss of life in the United States and in other countries. The health systems that are now in



place would be overwhelmed by such a calamity, and the monetary cost would be very high.

A recent news report, “New Avian Flu Warning Targets Economic Health,” appeared in *The News* (December 9, 2005), and was submitted by Tony Pugh. He writes, “A severe avian flu outbreak would cost the United States economy \$625 billion—about 5 percent of the gross domestic product—as employers struggled with absenteeism, lost production, and a sharp decline in consumer spending, a new government report has found. The economic impact, driven in part by fear and confusion, would be equivalent to a recession, according to the Congressional Budget Office report. The estimates are based on a pandemic that would sicken 90 million people in the United States, and kill about 2 million.”

Avian influenza is a modern-day infection that is caused by bird influenza viruses. These viruses can occur naturally among birds. Wild birds may carry the viruses without getting sick from them, but it can affect domesticated birds such as chickens, ducks, and turkeys. These birds may become infected by the virus through direct contact with infected poultry, or through contact with cage and other surface materials that have been infected with the disease.

There are two main forms of the avian type influenza virus. The ‘low pathogenic’ form may go relatively undetected and usually causes only mild symptoms, such as a drop in egg production. The ‘high pathogenic’ form may cause disease that affects multiple internal organs in birds, and the death rate can reach 90-100 % often within a period of only 48 hours.

Most cases of avian influenza that have affected humans have resulted from contact with infected domesticated poultry such as chickens, ducks and turkeys, or the surfaces that have been contaminated with infected bird secretions. The spread of the disease from one person to another is rare, but is presently under observation to prevent a possible outbreak of the infection. This particular type of influenza has, at the time of this writing, caused infections in poultry in Asia and Europe, and humans in Asia.

### **SOONER OR LATER**

A news article, “A Flu Pandemic is Expected to Happen Sooner or Later,” appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* (November 2, 2005) written by Charles Piller. He points out that “No one knows whether the bird flu now migrating across the globe will cause a human pandemic, but researchers say it is inevitable that some flu virus eventually will. ‘It’s like predicting the Big One in California,’ said a respected epidemiologist. ‘We are overdue for another pandemic. But we don’t know when it will hit.’

“Unlike seasonal flu or more serious epidemics that can move through large regions, pandemics leap across the world, spreading through populations with little or no immunity. In the last century, there have been three major flu pandemics, each of which originated with birds. In 1918, the Spanish flu spread, killing 500,000 people in the United States and as many as 50 million worldwide—more than all the battlefield deaths of World War I. In 1957, the Asian flu traveled across the world, killing 2 million people, including about 70,000 in the United

States. The 1968 Hong Kong flu killed 1 million people, with 34,000 deaths in the United States. Recent research has shown that the H5N1 virus bears genetic similarities to the 1918 flu; and unlike many other flu viruses originating in birds, H5N1 can spread directly from poultry to people without passing through another species, such as pigs, increasing the risks.”

## **SIN AND SICKNESS**

The Scriptures frequently refer to various diseases that have affected mankind throughout the ages. This calamity has occurred because of sin by Adam and Eve. Pestilences are the natural consequences of sin, and the death sentence. It has accompanied the degeneration and downward spiral of Adam’s race as it has been passed down to his progeny. Physical sickness and illness has caused untold distress to mind and body as the sentence of death has been carried out.

## **CLEANSING THE LEPER**

During Jesus’ earthly ministry, leprosy was the most dreaded of all diseases to affect the poor groaning creation. Leprosy is a symbol of sin and uncleanness, and Jesus performed one of his most dramatic miracles on behalf of a man who was afflicted with the disease, as an indication of his powers over sin and death. “There came a leper to him, beseeching him, . . . and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was

cleansed. And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.”—Mark 1:40-45

In this remarkable account, Jesus pointed back to the “law of the leper,” as it is recorded in the third book of Moses. “The LORD spake unto Moses, saying, This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest: And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper.” (Lev. 14:1-3) In performing the miracle, Jesus made known that God had provided him with the power to cleanse the man afflicted with leprosy, the very symbol of sin. But Jesus performed this miracle as an illustration of the power of healing that will be used to cleanse the whole world from leprosy and the curse of death during his kingdom.

## **ASTONISHED DOCTORS OF THE LAW**

On another occasion, Jesus astonished the Pharisees and the doctors of the law as they witnessed his power over sin and sickness. “It came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was

present to heal them. And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.”—Luke 5:17-26

Jesus had thus demonstrated to the religious leaders of Israel, as well as those who witnessed this miracle, that if he were able to heal diseases, he surely had the power to also forgive sin. They had truly seen a remarkable demonstration of Jesus’ power on that memorable day.

## **ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE KINGDOM**

Jesus performed many wonderful miracles during his ministry as opportunities to illustrate the

greater powers of healing that will be more grandly manifested during his future millennial kingdom. When John the Baptist was put into prison, he became discouraged and began to doubt whether or not our Lord was the Messiah. This gave Jesus opportunity to defend his God-given powers. When John asked the two disciples who had gone to see him, he said, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." (Matt. 11:3-5) John had also been a witness to these marvelous powers that were exercised in behalf of sin-sick mankind.

## **NO MORE PESTILENCES**

When selecting his twelve apostles, Jesus sent them on their way with a most blessed commission. He told them, "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." (Matt. 10:7,8) Mark verifies the apostles' works, "And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them."—Mark 6:13

There is also the wonderful account when Apostle Peter raised Tabitha from death. "There was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in

an upper chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.”—Acts 9:36-41

The apostles were given exclusive privilege to share in Jesus’ work. They participated as further illustration of the grander blessings in which the faithful bride will share in Christ’s kingdom, extending blessing to all the families of the earth. At that time all pestilences will be removed, and there will be no more death. “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father.”—John 14:12, NASV ■

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*“Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.*

*“Yea, the LORD shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase.*

*“Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set us in the way of his steps.”*

*—Psalm 85:11-13*

# A Treasure Worth Seeking

**Key Verse:** *“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.”*  
—Proverbs 3:13

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Proverbs 2:1-5; 3:1-6, 13-18*

**KING SOLOMON, WHO AU-**thored the first twenty-nine chapters of Proverbs, was especially cited for his exceeding wisdom. (I Kings 3:12) The godly counsel he dispensed in this book reflects both Divine and natural laws which, when obeyed, would provide a greater measure of peace and blessings than could otherwise be attained.

Those who hearken to guidance offered by their earthly parents generally fare better in the world than others who rely upon their own understanding of matters. Consecrated believers, who obey the principles outlined by their Heavenly Father, have the hope of attaining eternal life with Christ.—Prov. 3:2

“Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.” (vss. 3,4) Anyone who shows mercy towards others, and is truthful in his speech, will likely be acknowledged by his fellow man as being kind, honorable, and one who is worthy of respect.

Those who have dedicated their lives to Christ, having repented from their sins, and being recipients of God’s



forgiveness, above all people should be merciful in their dealings with others since they have been blessed so abundantly. Truthfulness and sincerity are evidences of a regenerated heart, and, without that quality of heart condition, none may expect to be part of the body of Christ. Nevertheless, the opportunity to learn righteousness will be given to the human family during the coming age, when Satan will be bound and unable to deceive mankind for one thousand years.—Rev. 20:1-3

The value of seeking and acknowledging Divine wisdom is further emphasized in this chapter. “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.”—vss. 5-7

Even those who have not fully committed their lives to God often will concede that the wisdom contained in the Bible has long endured. For this reason, when difficult situations occur, quite often they will search for passages of scripture that may help them in their dilemma. While periodic reference to the Word of God is preferable to ignoring its advice completely, those who fully devote their lives in consecration to God will derive the maximum benefits from the Bible. These recognize the fallible nature of their own judgment, and trust the Lord to direct their steps in his way, instead of demonstrating conceit by believing themselves sufficient to successfully cope with all of life’s affairs.

In the Key Verse, we find ‘wisdom’ to be a veiled representation of the Savior. This thought is also given elsewhere in the Bible. “Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” (I Cor. 1:30) How blessed are all of the Lord’s people who can claim Jesus as their own. By claiming him, and the wisdom which results from understanding his character, we will truly find a treasure worth seeking. ■

# Wisdom's Invitation

**Key Verse:** *“Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?”*  
—Proverbs 8:1

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Proverbs 8:1-5, 22-31*

## OUR KEY VERSE OF THIS

lesson affirms that wisdom has personal qualities such as intelligence, and the ability to cry out, or speak in an authoritative manner. In succeeding verses, the nature of wisdom's exhortation is for men to hearken to an invitation for instruction in righteousness. (Prov. 8:2-8) A striking similarity exists between the foregoing expressions and words spoken by Christ, who personifies wisdom. The offer of discipleship was made to those who would accept Jesus during his earthly ministry. Following his crucifixion and resurrection, the Holy Spirit was sent to consecrated believers on the Day of Pentecost. (John 7:37-39) Throughout this Gospel Age, God has been selecting devoted Christians to be a part of Jesus' bride, who will be united with him in heavenly glory during God's kingdom.

Peace, joy and everlasting life on earth will be the portion for all obedient members of the human family who respond favorably to the invitation that will be offered to mankind at that time. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”—Rev. 22:17

Another important teaching is contained in a reference to the prehuman condition of Jesus, when he was associated with his Father before the six days of creative

works, described in Genesis, commenced. “The LORD possessed [created, see *Strong’s Bible Concordance*, #7069] me (Wisdom) in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.” (Prov. 8:22) This text confirms that Jesus was a created being and, therefore, there was a time when he did not exist, demonstrating Jesus is not equal to God.

The New Testament also affirms the Son to be a created being as the firstborn of every creature, and the active agent in bringing into existence everything else, which was “created by him, and for him.” (Col. 1:15,16) It is for this reason Wisdom can attest to being present when the clouds were formed, when fountains and springs gushed forth, and when the boundaries of the oceans were determined. Additionally, he was there when the foundations of the earth were made. “When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth.”—Prov. 8:27-29

We may be certain Wisdom rejoiced with the Heavenly Father in the privilege of bringing into being the human creation on the sixth day. (Gen. 1:26,31) Many years after sin and death entered into the world through the disobedience of Adam and Eve, Wisdom was manifested in the flesh by giving his life to become man’s Redeemer. “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb. 12:2) We should be ever thankful for this wonderful provision that will result in the restoration of earthly life to the obedient members of the human family in God’s kingdom, and a heavenly resurrection to those who faithfully follow the Master during this present Gospel Age.—Rom. 2:6,7 ■

# Choosing the Path of Integrity

**Key Verse:** *“The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.”*  
—Proverbs 11:3

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Proverbs 11:1-4*

**INTEGRITY IS A BASIC REQUIREMENT** for all who believe the teachings of Christ Jesus, although much more in addition is required by those who would be his disciples. “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” (Matt. 16:24) Nevertheless, justice and honesty are qualities that are appreciated even by those who do not profess to be true Christians.

In this lesson, some dishonest practices are brought to our attention. Today, for example, deceptive packaging is often employed when a certain container holds a smaller quantity of substance than is recorded on the outside label, and the purchaser pays more than the item is worth. (Prov. 11:1) Dishonesty is often practiced with a view to obtaining greater prestige by increasing one's wealth at the expense of others.

This is contrary to the spirit which the Lord seeks to impart through the Holy Spirit into the minds of all who name the name of Christ. “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely;

. . . if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (Phil. 4:8) As the mind feeds upon spiritual matters, it will resist the deceitful impulses of the fallen human nature as evidence of a determination to walk in a Christlike manner.

All, who desire God’s favor rather than that of man, must strive against feelings of pride or self-importance. “He giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.” (James 4:6) By carefully applying this principle in their daily walk, believers will avoid the contempt that comes upon those whose motives are not in harmony with the will of God. “When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom. The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.”—Prov. 11:2,3

Our Key Verse is a reminder that obedience to God’s laws will keep the Lord’s people in the straight path as they are strengthened in their Christian walk. They will be preserved from the harmful practices and attitudes that would bar them from instructing the human family in righteousness in God’s kingdom. “They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”—Jer. 31:34

Equally true is the fact that the Scriptures promise retribution shall be meted out to those who do not obey the precepts set forth by Christ and his church. When the 1,000-year judgment day has ended, a determination will be made as to who will be worthy of attaining everlasting life as a result of the arrangements God has made for mankind, to be instructed in righteousness before a final test is applied. “It shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.”—Acts 3:23 ■

# Living Out Wisdom

**Key Verse:** *“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.”*  
—Proverbs 31:30

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Proverbs 31:8-14, 25-30*

## THE AUTHOR OF PROVERBS

31 is identified as King Lemuel who records a prophecy taught to him by his mother. (vs. 1) Bible commentators are divided as to whether King Lemuel actually was King Solomon or whether someone else wrote this chapter. “Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.” (vss. 6,7) These verses suggest the use of strong drink is appropriate for those who are very ill, filled with sadness, or extremely poor. Such thoughts are at variance with the following text that clearly was written by Solomon. “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”—Prov. 20:1

Certain portions of Proverbs 31 do not appear to have applicability either for Christians or for mankind in general today, even though, when these words were written, in certain cultures they may have depicted views as to how the idealized wife might conduct herself, at least in the minds of Lemuel and his mother.

In addressing Christian men, sage counsel is given as to how they should relate to their wives. “Ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being

heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” (I Pet. 3:7) Many of the expectations concerning wives as recorded by King Lemuel are contrary to the foregoing expression by the Apostle Peter, such as rising prior to daybreak to prepare breakfast (Prov. 31:15), buying fields and planting vineyards (vs. 16), and spinning, weaving, and toiling into the night. (vss. 18,19) At the same time, it is suggested the well-fed and well-dressed husband should be involved in handling matters of importance with other elders of the city.—vs. 23

Christian believers recognize the dual responsibility of both men and women in seeing that their respective responsibilities agree with the following scripture. “If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” (I Tim. 5:8) Providing for one’s own implies not only temporal needs, but also—and most importantly—spiritual nourishment and concern in every way for the entire family. It is, therefore, difficult to harmonize King Lemuel’s view as to the roles and relationships of husbands and wives with what is indicated in other scriptures, especially with regard to devoted Christians.

There are many transitory concerns that may come to the believer’s mind, but our Key Verse indicates that the woman that reverences God is worthy of praise. (Prov. 31:30) The chapter then concludes with the thought that others will recognize a life so ordered as well. All faithful believers, men and women, will reap rich rewards by following the words of the Master, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. . . . Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”—Matt. 6:19-21,33 ■

# The Appearing and Revealment of Jesus Christ

***“Looking for the  
blessed hope and  
the appearing of  
the glory of our  
great God and  
Savior, Christ  
Jesus.”***

***—Titus 2:13, New  
American Standard  
Version***

## **A TRAGIC SENSE OF LOSS**

must have filled the hearts of the disciples when Jesus, having appeared to them for the last time before his ascension, suddenly departed, and in a manner which left no doubt that the short seasons of fellowship they had been enjoying with him subsequent to his resurrection had come an end. Two angels then appeared to them. “While they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:10,11) This gave them assurance that he would one day return, yet they knew that for the time



being they must carry on without the help of his personal presence.

## **THE BLESSED HOPE**

Under these circumstances, and because they realized that all they hoped for in and through him would not be realized until he did return, his coming again took on an aspect of tremendous importance to them. Christ's return and coming kingdom, together with their hope for a share in his kingdom, was indeed a blessed hope. In fact, it was the center of all their hopes. Just as Paul reasoned that if there were no resurrection of the dead the Christian's faith and preaching are vain, so it would be if Christ did not return; for it was after his return that the promised resurrection of the dead, of both the church and the world, was to take place.

## **THE FALLING AWAY**

Paul wrote of a general falling away from the faith before Christ's promised return could be realized. In his second letter to the Thessalonian brethren, he emphasized, "We beseech you, brethren, by the coming [Greek, *parousia*—presence] of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."—II Thess. 2:1-3

The hope of Jesus' return had already begun to lose its significance, and ultimately ceased to be a vital factor in the lives of many of the early Christians.

But the misguided efforts of man had not changed the Divine plan concerning the return of Christ and the establishment of his future millennial kingdom. Those who had faith in God's promises took him at his word, and this aspect of his plan was still of fundamental importance to them.

## **DARK AGE TEACHINGS**

For many centuries during the Middle Ages, the Bible was virtually buried in darkness and dead languages. During this period, many false ideas and theories developed that pertained to God's ultimate design toward his human creation. When the Bible began to be translated into the languages of the common people, these distorted views, many of which were based on careless translation and misguided error, considerably influenced those honest-hearted people who were endeavoring to learn the Truth from God's Word. An example of this confusion may be found in the English translation of the Hebrew word *sheol* which is found in the Old Testament, and the Greek word *hades* which is used in the New Testament. Both of these Bible words, in their respective languages, simply mean the state of death, and not an eternal condemnation to the flames of hell.

In many instances, these and other words were carelessly translated in a manner that has led to much misunderstanding of the Word of God. In some cases, the translators attempted to support some of the traditional ideas and theories of their time concerning the condition of the dead, with God-dishonoring teachings such as eternal torture. Our loving Heavenly Father was thus seen as a vengeful God, and one to be feared.

## **A SPIRIT OF REVIVAL**

After the upheaval that had occurred between church and state during the period of the French Revolution, there began to be a revival of what once had been the greatest of all hopes among the early Christians. At that time, there began to be increasing interest and anticipation concerning the Word of God, and the long-promised return of Christ to earth. Christian people everywhere began to study the prophetic scriptures with a new sense of freedom that was relative to the approaching time of Jesus' Second Advent.

This was a time when Bible societies began to make the Scriptures available to the common people for the first time, and in their own languages. It also coincided with new educational systems that were established to provide general education for the young people. Eventually, it became mandatory on a large scale. People from all walks of life were able to read the precious Word of God, and to reflect upon the wonderful prophecies that were contained therein, and especially those pertaining to the Second Advent of our Lord. There was a great spirit of revival, and a sense of anticipation in many places, especially in America.

## **THE SECOND ADVENT**

During the nineteenth century, God's earnest people began to look more closely at the teachings of the established church systems. Emphasis became centered on the Second Coming of Christ, and they proclaimed it widely. The effect of the unscriptural concepts became apparent when compared with the prophecies concerning the real meaning and

purpose of our Lord's return. The earlier translators had not brought to light important Bible truths that were relative to the subject of a Second Presence of our Lord. For example, the Greek word *parousia*, had been translated by our English word 'coming,' instead of emphasizing its true meaning—'presence.' This mis-translation had thus made it impossible to harmonize the true meaning and purpose of Christ's return.

## **CHRIST'S PRESENCE**

The Greek word *parousia* [presence], to which we have given reference, is used twice in the New Testament where it does not apply to Jesus but to the Apostle Paul. These uses of the word when examined carefully will readily establish its true meaning.

In the first instance, Paul, in his second letter to the Corinthian brethren, expresses what other men's appraisal of him had been. He says, "His letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence [*parousia*] is weak." (II Cor. 10:10) Again, when writing to the saints at Philippi, Paul says, "My beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence [*parousia*] only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."—Phil. 2:12

It can be seen at once that the use of the word 'coming' to translate the Greek word *parousia* in either of these foregoing texts would have given an entirely wrong meaning to express Paul's thoughts. In both of these scriptures, it is the apostle's presence, and not his coming, that he was emphasizing. He was not discussing his coming, or arrival, with them, but his actual bodily presence. We need only to reason on these two very understandable examples

of the true meaning of the Greek word *parousia*. This will be beneficial when comparing the word with other texts that use the same word *parousia* in connection with Christ's Second Presence.

## THE SIGN OF JESUS' PRESENCE

The first time the word *parousia* is used in the New Testament prophecies is in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew's Gospel. In this text, the disciples came to Jesus asking him about the destruction of the Temple which he had previously spoken to them about. "As he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming [*parousia*], and of the end of the world [consummation of the age—*Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*]?" (Matt. 24:3) Here the word *parousia* has been mistranslated 'coming,' instead of presence. It is also noted that this event takes place at the end of the Gospel Age, and is not, therefore, the end of the world.

In Jesus' response to his disciples' question, he outlines many events that will take place in the world during the intervening Gospel Age, but then gives the evidence of his actual presence at the end, or harvest period, of the age. He answers, "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming [*parousia*—presence] of the Son of man be." (vs. 27) Jesus used light as a symbol to identify his presence at the end of the age. He was not speaking about his coming, but his actual presence. The watchers would be the first to be blessed by the enlightenment of his presence. The world of mankind will be blessed under the administration of Christ's future kingdom.

The word *parousia* has again been used in an important text. It reads, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming [*parousia*—presence]." (I Cor. 15:22,23) Here the reference is to the appointed time of Christ's Second Presence. During his first presence on earth, he had redeemed the human family from the death sentence inherited by Adam. During the time of his second presence, all mankind will ultimately be given opportunity to receive everlasting life.

### **PETER'S TESTIMONY**

Another interesting use of the Greek word *parousia* is by the Apostle Peter, where he says, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming [*parousia*] of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." (II Pet. 1:16) Peter is referring to his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration, when, together with James and John, he saw Christ transfigured before them. In that vision, it wasn't Jesus coming that he saw, but his presence. He was there with them, and Peter uses the word *parousia*, mistranslated 'coming,' to describe this blessed experience. Peter uses this experience on the Mount of Transfiguration as an illustration of the grander power and majesty that Jesus will exercise during his future thousand-year kingdom.

### **THE SCOFFERS**

Peter uses the word *parousia* again when, discussing the subject of Christ's presence, he writes, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the

last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming [*parousia*]? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” (II Pet. 3:3,4) Scoffers have not questioned the fact that the Bible promises the return of Christ, which is the implication of this scripture. Yet, the misuse of the word *parousia*, translated ‘coming’ instead of presence, leads to confusion. The question raised by the scoffers is whether or not we can believe that Christ has returned, and is present, since everything in the world, as they see it, seems to be going along as usual.

## THE BRIGHT SHINING

Another Greek word used in conjunction with Christ’s promised return is *epiphania*, which means manifestation, or bright shining. It is used in various prophecies which directly, or indirectly, refer to the manifestation of the fact that the Lord is present. As an example of the use of this word, we read, “Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness [*epiphania*] of his coming [*parousia*].” (II Thess.2:8) The Wicked one referred to in this text is Satan and his great Antichrist system—the mystery of iniquity. It is a system that came into being during the Dark Ages through the union of church and state. It is not merely a false church, but the illicit union of the false church with civil power. This union, it was claimed, was the kingdom of Christ on earth.

Paul explains that this system would be destroyed by the ‘bright shining’ [Greek, *epiphania*] of Christ’s

presence [Greek, *parousia*]. This describes the affect that the light will have on all unrighteousness. Under the administration of Christ's kingdom, the light will ultimately destroy all powers of darkness and false ideologies that have influenced mankind. The people will become more and more enlightened with the Truth so that eventually the power of ignorance, superstition, and error will be completely removed from the earth. The Prophet Isaiah describes this wonderful time. He says, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."—Isa. 11: 9

## **THE WATCHERS**

Great blessings are promised to those who are watching for the promised presence of our Lord. We read, "Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." (Luke 12:37) Here is confirmation of the enlightenment that would reveal Jesus' Second Presence to the children of God. Only his own true people would be blessed and know about it. The household of faith is served "their portion of meat in due season." (vs. 42) The watchers are the first to be enlightened by his return, whereas the world of mankind will be blessed under the administration of Christ's future kingdom.

## **MEAT IN DUE SEASON**

The 'meat in due season' has been provided as a special blessing for these watchers at the end of the age. Meat is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of truth. It is the Truth of God's plans and purposes



that has been hidden from the worldly wise and is revealed to the watchers during the closing years of this present Gospel Age. In the above reference, the thought is given that the meat would be served in due season—seasonable to the time in which it was revealed. The Apostle Peter presents a similar thought. He says, “I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.”—II Pet. 1:12

The glorious heavenly hope was not offered to the people of God prior to the First Advent of Christ. In the plan of God, this glorious prize was to be offered to those willing to suffer and die with the Master, being inspired to do so by the hope of living and reigning with him in his kingdom. Great stress was laid upon this hope by the apostles, and it captivated the minds and hearts of all the true believers in the Early Church. However, they did not overlook the fact that the Divine plan also provided a hope of life on the earth for all mankind, and that this feature of the Divine purpose would become operative during that future time.

Since the hope of the kingdom applied to a future age it was but natural that it should be more and more overlooked by the Lord's people after the apostles fell asleep. The hope that the world of mankind would be restored to human perfection on the earth following the return of Christ was soon almost completely ignored, and it became buried and hidden by human ideologies and traditions during the Dark Ages. For the Lord's true saints throughout the age, the heavenly hope continued to shine. It may have lost some of its lustre during a darker time, but it was still a glorious hope to (Continued on page 35)

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(Continued from page 31) the children of the kingdom who stood alone among the overwhelming number of tares, which, as a result of Satan's planting, had grown up around them.

## **APOKALUPSIS**

The wonderful promises, and manner in which the Lord enlightens his people by his presence, is shown by the Apostle Peter in his first epistle, which was written about 30 years after Jesus' earthly ministry. Here, Peter uses another Greek word, *apokalupsis*, to strengthen his point. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you [for us, *Marginal Translation*], Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed [Greek, *apokalupto*] in the last time."—I Pet. 1:3-5

This passage emphasizes the depth of love and appreciation that the apostle had for the great hope that was within him. His use of the Greek word *apokalupto* [revelment] points to those children of God who are being kept by his great power, and that all promises will be revealed to them at the end of this present age of sacrifice.

He further says, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed [Greek,

*apokalupto*], that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit [mistranslated Ghost] sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.”—vss. 10-12

The children of God have been especially blessed by the appearing and revealment of our Lord Jesus Christ during the closing years of this Gospel Age. Truths that were kept secret for many centuries were unlocked to the watchers. As a further admonition, we read the Apostle Peter’s encouraging words, “Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation [*apokalupsis*] of Jesus Christ.”—vs. 13■



## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**MAY 4**—“The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”—I Samuel 16:7 (Z. ’03-171 Hymn 198)

**MAY 11**—“For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.”—Psalm 44:22 (Z. ’03-408 Hymn 8)

**MAY 18**—“We which have believed do enter into rest.”—Hebrews 4:3 (Z. ’99-253 Hymn 273)

**MAY 25**—“Be not overcome of evil.”—Romans 12:21 (Z. ’97-267 Hymn 256)

# Lessons from Jonah

*“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”*  
—*I Corinthians*  
10:11

## **SOMETIMES BELIEVERS**

don't pay much attention to the Old Testament, possibly because a large portion of it relates to Israel, and also because there are lots of names, places and battles that took place long before Jesus came at his First Advent. Perhaps these may not seem as relevant to the Christian's faith

as do the admonitions found in the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament. There are many students of the Bible who are interested in prophecy and may suggest various possible fulfillments regarding Old Testament events, but even if such is not the case, valuable lessons still may be gained from studying Old Testament narratives and making profitable application for the Christian's walk in newness of life. Such are the lessons from the Book of Jonah.

II Kings 14:25 specifically identifies Jonah as a servant of God and a prophet. As such, it would be expected that such a chosen one would do the Lord's

bidding as required. Unlike other prophets, he was not sent to Israel but to the heathen residing in Nineveh, which is described as a bloody city, full of lies and robbery. (Nah. 3:1,7) After God directed Jonah to preach to the Ninevites, what was his reaction? He didn't say anything, but simply left Nineveh and took a ship out of Joppa that was going to Tarshish. He ignored God! He was disobedient. Biblical characters often did many things wrong. In looking at their deficiencies, we might even feel a little superior to them, thinking to ourselves that we would never have done what Jonah did!

### **FULFILLING RESPONSIBILITY**

Do we ever ignore, or disobey, the Word of God? Do we utilize all the opportunities for telling others the good news of the Gospel, as we should? (Matt. 28:19,20) As the Lord's people, we should not flee from our commission, as did Jonah, but understand that we are to fulfill our responsibilities. When Isaiah queried as to how long he should proclaim God's word, we read, "Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate." Isa. 6:11

Concerning obedience to God, we are reminded of the following admonition. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:1-3) While not condoning Jonah's failure to hearken to God's instructions in preaching to Nineveh, as followers of Jesus we might engage in a



bit of self-introspection. Is it true of us that our affections are always set upon things that are above? If not, then to the degree that such is not the case, we are not fully hearkening to the Word of God.

Jonah 1:4-10 indicates Jonah was asleep in the ship, in the midst of a storm, as the heathen sailors were praying to their gods for deliverance. They were aware something unusual was happening and cast lots to determine who was the cause of their calamity, and it fell upon Jonah. The shipmaster was rather astonished that he would be sleeping instead of calling upon his God, and inquired who he was. Jonah told them he was a Hebrew and feared the LORD of heaven. A consideration for believers is suggested by the following text, "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."—I Tim. 4:12

As children of God, do our actions and dealings with others in the world always reflect that something is different about us, that we have higher aspirations and standards of conduct? Could it be said of us, as it was of Daniel, that no fault could be found in us except it be concerning the law of our God? (Dan. 6:4,5) Although Jonah stated he feared the Lord, the God of heaven, if he had the proper reverence for the Creator, would he have fled from his assigned task of preaching to the Ninevites? Would he not at the very least have been concerned about the men in the ship and have prayed to the Father? In Jonah 1:10, the men were amazed that he would be running away from his God, especially since they spent their lives trying to appease, or pacify, their own gods. The earlier question, as to why he was asleep and not praying, was indeed a

reproof to one who was a messenger of the true God.—vs. 8

### **SELF-EXAMINATION**

Do we ever fail to live up to our professions of Christian living? Have we ever had unguarded moments when we said or did something that does not represent the highest standards of devotion to the Master? Has the Lord ever permitted someone who was not a believer to reprove us for our conduct, thus making us feel ashamed? This is all in the way of self-examination, but the closer we are to the Lord the more we are cognizant of the Apostle Paul's words, and realize our need for cleansing and forgiveness through Christ's mercy. "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . . 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 I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."—Rom. 7:18,19,24,25

Jonah 1:11-17 contains considerations both with respect to God's awesome power as well as lessons of a prophetic nature. In this portion, Jonah urges the sailors to cast him into the sea because his presence was the cause of their distress, but they really showed nobility of character by rowing harder in order to avoid taking that step. Ultimately, they sought pardon from Jonah's God for throwing him overboard and immediately the sea became calm. They recognized that God was true, and they

prayed to him, offered sacrifices, and made vows. Concerning Jonah, he was swallowed and in the fish's belly for three days and nights.

In a prophetic sense, Jonah seems to represent Christ and also his body, members of his Church. Jesus said, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matt. 12:40) Christ rose on the third day receiving his spiritual resurrection. Thus, as Jonah willingly let himself be put symbolically to death by being cast into the sea, Christ willingly yielded his life in actuality as a sacrifice for father Adam and the whole race of humanity. During this present Gospel Age, followers of Jesus willingly give their lives in sacrifice. This process has been going on during parts of three great one-thousand-year day periods. (II Pet. 3:8) Other prophecies, and deteriorating conditions on earth, suggest it will be very soon when the human family will return from the grave, and receive blessings during Christ's kingdom of righteousness.—John 5:28,29, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*

Jonah, chapter 2, depicts the prophet's experience while in the belly of the fish when he committed himself to prayer. He was in very difficult straits because of his disobedience in fleeing from God's command. There is an element of hope when acknowledging that even though he was apart from God, he spoke of looking toward his holy temple again. Possibly this may be a reference to the sacrifices in connection with the Day of Atonement and a recognition that God has made provision to grant forgiveness when one goes astray and then returns to him. One obvious lesson is that even when we have done poorly we

should never neglect the opportunity for prayer. Not all prayers may be answered in the manner desired, but those who have been chosen by the Father may rest assured that as long as they have the desire to commune with the Lord, he will in his own manner, answer in accordance with his perfect will.

## **DISCIPLINE NECESSARY**

Jonah's situation finds certain parallels in his experience with that of the nation of Israel. Like Jonah, Israel was especially chosen by God. They were to be a kingdom of priests, and through them all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. (Exod. 19:3-6) They, like Jonah, rebelled against God, failed to obey him, and thereby fulfill their mission. Thus, they received discipline and abuse by other nations even to the present time. The Master's words were very pointed as he wept over the nation of Israel. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."—Matt. 23:37-39

Presently, Israel is still looking to military alliances and national defense as a solution to her problems; but, just as Jonah, from the depths of despair, acknowledged that "Salvation is of the LORD" (Jon. 2:9), so too will Israel have to make the same acknowledgment when the work of restoration commences. (Acts 3:19-21) When Jonah finally went to Nineveh and did as God commanded, the people repented. "The

word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not."—Jon. 3:1-10

As we look at all the wickedness in today's world, if we are living righteously, it must distress us as believers. The story of Nineveh's conversion is an important one concerning the scope of the effectiveness of Christ's kingdom. While the Bible indicates that some will have to be forever destroyed (Rev. 20:12,15), that would probably include a minority of

individuals. If it were not so, God's permission of evil, so that mankind would learn the exceeding sinfulness of sin and then make the appropriate contrast during the kingdom when Satan is bound, would not really be effective. Sodom was destroyed because ten righteous individuals could not be found dwelling there. "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." (Matt. 11:23,24) If the people of Sodom are recoverable, we can be assured the same will be true for the overwhelming majority of mankind.

## **TRUSTING IN GOD**

"He prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil." (Jon. 4:2) Perhaps Jonah was thinking these heathen deserved to be destroyed, especially since they were a threat to Israel; and how could God allow such people to live. Weren't the Israelites his chosen people? Were they not better than others? God is an all-wise and merciful Father. He is ready to forgive when sincere repentance is made, regardless of one's previous circumstances. It is true that we are to love righteousness and hate iniquity but it is also true that we cannot hate sinners and be pleasing to God. "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I

have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"—Ezek. 33:11

Perhaps one of the reasons Jonah was displeased was that he felt that he was made out to be a false prophet, since he preached that Nineveh would be destroyed in forty days and that it didn't happen. Also, in Jonah 4:2, the reason Jonah fled from God is given. He knew the people of Nineveh would be forgiven if they repented, but apparently he hated the Assyrians so much he didn't want them to have a chance to repent. It seems unusual that Jonah, a chosen servant, should be angry with God. In recalling his experiences in the depths of the ocean in the belly of the fish, and the fact that in the Lord's providence he was saved and given a second chance to do what he was directed to do in the first place, how is it possible that he could dare to be angry with God? Are we ever angry with God?

Are we ever angry because we are having difficult experiences? Do we ever wonder why we must go through them? Do we ever complain about anything? Do we believe that as children of God, with guardian angels, sometimes things happen to us that he does not permit for a good purpose? "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."—I Cor. 10:13

"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them

which are exercised thereby.” (Heb. 12:11) Every true child of God can attest to experiences of chastening. Would that we would always appreciate these as evidences of our sonship as opposed to resenting them, and, even if not so expressed openly, be angry that God did not see fit to prevent them.

Subsequently, Jonah went outside the city and he saw a plant prepared to provide him shade as an evidence of God’s graciousness towards him, but after that, a worm was appointed to attack the plant and it withered. “God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.”—Jon. 4:9

## **FULFILLING A MISSION**

Jonah’s pity upon the gourd that perished was more important to him than the fact the people of Nineveh repented. Although Jesus died for all mankind, the offer of salvation now is only to Christian believers during this present Gospel Age, and to the world at large in the future. Satan, as “the god of this world,” has blinded the minds of those who believe not (II Cor. 4:4), and it will take the work of Christ’s kingdom to straighten them out. (Isa. 26:9) Like Sodom, the people of Nineveh also must come back from the tomb and be given an opportunity for life and to learn righteousness. “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.” (Matt. 12:41) The mission of faithful Christians now is to proclaim the soon to be established kingdom of Christ as the good news that will eradicate all the evils of this present order. ■



# Trip to Australia

Bro. Allan and Sr. Donna Allers

**ON DECEMBER 25, 2005**, we boarded planes bound for Melbourne, Australia. Having crossed the international dateline, we landed in Melbourne on December 27. We were met at the airport by dear brethren. Two of them brought a large container of freshly picked blueberries, along with their smiling faces. The third also greeted us warmly, loaded our luggage into his car, and drove us around nearby Sunbury for two days prior to taking us to the Melbourne Convention at Marysville, Victoria. While in his home, we had kitchen-table discussions about various Bible topics, in addition to adjusting to the 18-hour time difference and seeing a bit of the surrounding area.

## AUSTRALIAN CONVENTION

December 29: Following lunch at his home with brethren from Adelaide and Melbourne, we left for the convention. On the way, we picked up a sister arriving from the Sun Coast in NE Australia. On the trip, of something less than 100 miles, we enjoyed seeing something of the Australian scenery, along with touching on a few scriptural topics. When we arrived at the camp, we immediately began seeing brethren we had met on our previous trip there 14 years ago. One sister spoke of a study she recently

made on Nadab and Abihu and their 'strange fire,' and related it to mixing the times and doctrines, and the danger thereof.

December 30: Around 62 brethren from all parts of Australia attended, and there were discourses on *Looking Back, Looking Forward, Our Most Holy Faith, Famous Last Words*, and *God's Grandeur*; along with a study on II Peter 3:3-7. In the evening, there was a period set aside for greetings from around the world.

On New Year's Eve day, discourses were given on *Rest, Christ, The Good Shepherd, Come and Rest Awhile, God Has Received Him*, and *Our Walk With God*; along with an afternoon study on II Peter 3:14-18. On New Year's Day, around 60 additional Polish brethren came to the convention, and a brother from Poland spoke on *The Burning Vine Bush*. Also, there were discourses on *Elijah Shall Come First, Earthquakes, The Days of Noe*, and *The History of Our Favorite Hymns*; along with a study on James 3:17-18. After the last meetings, three cars took 17 of us to see the beautiful night-lit Spencer Falls nearby. We took several photographs, and admired our Heavenly Father's handiwork.

On January 2 we had discourses on *Faith, Serpents and Doves*, and *Prove and Hold Fast*. After lunch we departed, driving back to Melbourne and dropping off the sister from the Sun Coast back at the airport for her flight home. At Sunbury, the brother who had brought our luggage back from Marysville in a different vehicle dropped it off and stayed for dinner and to visit. The next day we went to see a brother and sister who had been unable to come to the convention, and

renew our acquaintance with them. While there, we spoke of different happenings in the Truth movement in United States and Australia, and of brethren who had been with us when we first traveled down under.

## **BRETHREN AT ADELAIDE**

After breakfast on January 4, brethren came in their motor home to take us to Adelaide, and other westerly places, to meet with isolated brethren. As we traveled, we touched on many scriptural subjects, and discussed different aspects of the Truth. We also were able to see very different landscapes, and often, the South Sea. We read aloud and discussed an article from *The Dawn*, and one of the convention discourses.

On January 5, we arrived at Adelaide and the home of dear brethren. In the evening, we were treated to 'tea,' which might mean anything from a 'cuppa' with a biscuit, to a full meal. During the day of January 6, seven of us went to a park where we fed and walked among kangaroos, wallabies, koalas, and saw Tasmanian devils, exotic birds, etc. What a variety the Creator displayed in the animals and birds, as well as the flora of the earth. After a 'lie down,' dinner was prepared and there were 10 of us for fellowship, dinner, and to hear the discourse *To Us The Scriptures Clearly Teach*. There was tea afterward, along with a bit of discussion.

January 7: We left the brethren of Adelaide and headed west to the peninsula farm of brethren at Curramulka (emu watering hole). This isolated brother was anxious to talk of scriptural subjects, as well as show us the thousands of acres he farms along

with his brother and son. In the evening, six of us sat around the kitchen table and discussed II Peter 3:19-21. We couldn't help but be interested in the stone house—built sometime in the 1870s—the stone out-buildings, the farmyard peacocks, and the many other interesting features of farm life in Australia.

The following day we left in the motor home, driving 300k, heading toward Sydney. In the evening, four of us enjoyed a study on *The Tree of Life* from Genesis to Revelation, which we continued the following evening, after another day spent traveling east. Australia is reclaiming former salt flats by planting bushes that somehow neutralize the salt. We drove past miles of this area, and many times saw the reclaimed land planted in lush vineyards and orchards. As in the western United States, where water was available and the salt was removed from the soil, the land flourished and each of us thought and spoke of the times when “the desert will blossom as a rose.”

## **BRETHREN AT SYDNEY**

On January 11, we arrived at Sydney, at the home of brethren. Among other subjects we discussed, was that of an absence of any Truth literature written in Chinese, and the difficulty of translation thereof. Since the sister in this home is from Taiwan, they have a great interest in having literature available for Chinese readers. They felt that much was being done in Africa, India, and the former Soviet Union, but wondered how more could be done to witness to the Chinese-speaking people? The following evening, twelve of us met in the home of a dear sister for dinner, and for a discourse on *The One Hope*. After the

discourse, we had the opportunity for little discussions on different Bible topics, and sweet fellowship.

January 13: We had a breakfast discussion on the power of God, and the need for faith structures in people's lives. Then we flew back to Melbourne and were met at the airport by dear brethren, with a beautiful bouquet. That evening, a wide age range of young people, as well as adults, gathered at the Polish House of Prayer to hear the address, *My Father's Business*. For the next few days, we stayed with dear brethren who cared for our every need, and saw that we visited with brethren living near; took us to meetings at the Polish House of Prayer, and generally had sweet fellowship. The following day, we were entertained in homes of brethren, shown some of Melbourne's beauty and the Botanical Gardens. At one of the meals, among other things, we discussed the origin of bothersome insects, as well as the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah.

## **THE POLISH BRETHREN**

January 15, at the Polish House of Prayer, the first of the three Sunday meetings was a children's study on Matthew 6:25-34: Take no anxious thought for tomorrow, for tomorrow shall take care of itself. Children were encouraged to read and to answer the questions. Afterward, there was a discourse for all on *God's Promises* and then, in a separate room, Bro. Allan led an hour-and-a-half study with 21 young people, aged 4 to 18, on Psalm 119:10-19: *Keeping God's Precepts in Their Hearts*. Each Sunday, before the children's studies begin, they read and discuss the daily lesson in *Bread from Heaven*.

After the morning meetings, several of us were taken to a buffet restaurant where we ate, fellowshiped, and discussed several subjects, such as the sin offering and parental obligations. In the evening, five of us walked to one of the homes where several families had gathered to see travel pictures taken on a trip made by visiting Polish brethren, and their natural family, and several children played outside.

January 16, in the evening, we were taken to the home of dear brethren we had visited 14 years ago. There were six of us present for dinner and several interesting discussions. Particularly interesting was the telling of the host's childhood in Poland and his longing for, and finally buying, a Bible when he was 12 or so, for \$2.50. He showed us that Bible and told many experiences he had, including his baptism at 14 in a bathtub of cold water, and the village priest telling his 'ma'am' to not harass him, but to let him study the Bible.

The next day we visited a brother and sister. The sister is housebound, but the brother showed us his wonderful garden, with many fruit trees he had grafted, and the rather complicated way of watering the garden solely with rain water he gathers in three very large tanks. In the evening, there was a final discourse at the Polish House of Prayer on *Being Fruitful*, and the strains of *God Be with You till We Meet Again*, sung after the discourse, will forever be in our hearts and memories.

We were enriched by meeting with these dear ones, the discussions we had, their generosity in caring for us, and in seeing their love for the Lord and their desire to serve and honor him. ■

# General Convention Bulletin

July 15-20, 2006—Johnstown, Pennsylvania

**THE 2006 GENERAL CONVENTION** will be upon us in less than three months. If you haven't yet made plans to attend, now is the time to do so. We encourage as many as are able to join in the blessings of this annual gathering of the Lord's people. The convention will be held on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Hotel-like rooms with private bathrooms in the Living-Learning Center (LLC), family-style apartments (also air conditioned) with private bathrooms (APTS), and housing with two rooms sharing one bathroom (not air conditioned) in other facilities are available on campus. A child may sleep on a bedroom floor at no charge in his own sleeping bag if both beds are occupied. If a child is alone in a bedroom sharing the bathroom with other adults, the double occupancy rate will apply to all family members.

The convention program appears in this issue of *The Dawn*, on the pages following the General Convention Registration form. In addition to the discourses, panel discussions, and testimony meetings, there will be two assigned topics, one titled "Christian Sacrifice," and the other "The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9."

The cost of meals for those 5 years old or younger will be paid by the convention. Once again 50% of the cost of those from 6 through 17 will be refunded if the young person attends at least 75% of the studies for his or her age group. This subsidy does

not cover meals paid in cash at the door.

The convention will provide one shuttle bus leaving the Pittsburgh airport in the early evening for the college in Johnstown on Friday, July 14. There will be one shuttle bus leaving the college in the early morning hours for the Pittsburgh airport on Friday, July 21.

We encourage you to make your plans now to attend, and participate in the blessings of this year's convention. ■

| Ages                                                                                                                                                                      | 18 & up | **13-17 | **6-12  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Breakfast                                                                                                                                                                 | \$6.00  | \$5.00  | \$4.00  |
| Lunch                                                                                                                                                                     | 7.00    | 6.00    | 5.00    |
| Dinner                                                                                                                                                                    | 9.00    | 8.00    | 6.00    |
| Total, three meals                                                                                                                                                        | \$22.00 | \$19.00 | \$15.00 |
| Lodging (per night)                                                                                                                                                       |         |         |         |
| *dbl occ (LLC or APTS)                                                                                                                                                    | \$25.00 | \$20.00 | \$15.00 |
| dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)                                                                                                                                                 | \$20.00 | \$18.00 | \$10.00 |
| *single occ (LLC)                                                                                                                                                         | \$45.00 | n/a     | n/a     |
| single occ (non-LLC)                                                                                                                                                      | \$25.00 | n/a     | n/a     |
| PKG: 7 nights, 18 meals                                                                                                                                                   |         |         |         |
| *dbl occ (LLC or APTS)                                                                                                                                                    | \$275+  | \$240+  | \$190+  |
| dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)                                                                                                                                                 | \$195+  | \$160+  | \$100+  |
| *single occ (LLC)                                                                                                                                                         | \$395+  | n/a     | n/a     |
| single occ (non-LLC)                                                                                                                                                      | \$235+  | n/a     | n/a     |
| If no breakfasts, deduct—+\$30 or +\$20<br>*Air conditioned<br>**50% of these costs will be refunded if the young person attends 75% of the studies for his/her age group |         |         |         |



# General Convention Registration

1425 Lachman Lane — Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

E-mail: Nekora@aol.com (310) 454-5248

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Brkfst | Lunch | Dinner | Bed |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-----|
| Friday, July 14, 2006                                                                                                                                                                                                             |        |       |        |     |
| Saturday, 15th                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |        |       |        |     |
| Sunday, 16th                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |        |       |        |     |
| Monday, 17th                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |        |       |        |     |
| Tuesday, 18th                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |        |       |        |     |
| Wednesday, 19th                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |        |       |        |     |
| Thursday, 20th                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |        |       |        |     |
| Check for package: 7 nights, all 18 meals <input type="checkbox"/><br><b>or</b> 7 nights, 12 meals (no breakfasts) <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                       |        |       |        |     |
| Check: <input type="checkbox"/> private bath <b>or</b> <input type="checkbox"/> shared bath<br><input type="checkbox"/> double occupancy <input type="checkbox"/> single occupancy<br><input type="checkbox"/> interested in APTS |        |       |        |     |
| Names and ecclesia name (age if under 18)                                                                                                                                                                                         |        |       |        |     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |        |       |        |     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |        |       |        |     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |        |       |        |     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |        |       |        |     |
| Address:                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |        |       |        |     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |        |       |        |     |

# Saturday, July 15

Chairman: Robert Gorecki, *New York NY*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Orientation by College

10:00 **Welcome Address**

Allan Allers  
*Boise ID*

10:45 Intermission

11:15 Discourse

Richard Suraci  
*New Haven CT*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse

Carl Hagensick  
*Chicago IL*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse

Todd Alexander  
*Columbus OH*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

Michael J. Balko  
*Orlando FL*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **I Timothy 1:5—Charity (love) . . .  
Out of a pure heart**

Arbur Fernets, *Vernon BC*

**A good conscience**

Brian Montague, *Highland Park NY*

**Faith unfeigned**

George Balko, Jr., *West Newton PA*

8:15 Songs in the Night

# Sunday, July 16

Chairman: Dan Wesol, *Albuquerque NM*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Discourse J. Udhaya Kumar  
*Chennai INDIA*

10:30 Intermission

11:15 **Theme Discourse—Psalm 119:105**

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a  
light unto my path.”

Walter Blicharz  
*Detroit MI*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Praise and Testimony David Blencowe  
*Vernon BC*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse David Rice  
*San Diego CA*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse Stephen Jeuck  
*Orlando FL*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **Christian Sacrifice** Rick Suraci  
*New Haven CT*

7:45 Vesper Service

8:15 Songs in the Night

## Monday, July 17

Chairman: O. B. Elbert, *New Brunswick NJ*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Discourse Timothy Alexander  
*Columbus OH*

10:30 Intermission

11:15 Discourse Michael Nekora  
*Los Angeles CA*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse Russ Marten  
*Chicago IL*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Praise and Testimony Bernd Eckholt  
*Jersey City NJ*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse Ken Fernets  
*The Dawn*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **“The Fall of Babylon”**  
**Past (Rev. 18:2)** Homer Montague  
*Highland Park NY*  
**Future (Rev. 14:8)** Robert Goodman  
*Orlando FL*

*(Short presentations followed by discussion)*

8:00 Songs in the Night

8:15 Elders' Meeting

## Tuesday, July 18

Chairman: Timothy Thomassen, *Albuquerque NM*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 **Baptismal Discourse**

Len Griehs  
*Delaware Valley PA*

10:30 Intermission

11:00 **Immersion Service**

Robert Wilson  
*Fresno CA*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Praise and Testimony

Ray Luke  
*Jersey City NJ*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse

Rick Sconyers  
*Orlando FL*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

Joe Megacz  
*Chicago IL*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

## Wednesday, July 19

Chairman: Bill Dutka, *Detroit MI*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Convention Business Meeting

Robert Gorecki  
*New York NY*

10:30 Short Recess

10:45 Convention Business Continues

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse

Edmund Blicharz  
*Orlando FL*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Praise and Testimony

George Passios  
*New York NY*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

Mark Nemesh  
*Detroit MI*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9**

Erwin Kalinski  
*Chicago IL*

7:45 Vesper Service

8:15 Songs in the Night

## Thursday, July 20

Chairman: Wade Austin, *Los Angeles CA*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Praise and Testimony                      Byron Keith  
*Seattle WA*

10:30 Intermission

11:00 **Symposium:**

**Advocate**                      Carlton Chandler  
*Portland OR*

**Mediator**                      Frank Nemesh  
*Detroit MI*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse                      Mike Balko  
*Dawn Pilgrim*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse                      Jim Parkinson  
*San Gabriel Valley CA*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse                      Douglas Rawson  
*San Francisco Bay Area CA*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 Closing Discourse                      George Tabac  
*Chicago IL*

7:45 Melodies of Praise

8:30 Love Feast

# SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

## **K. Fernets**

Agawam, MA

May 20,21

## **M. Balko**

Los Angeles, CA

May 26-29

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

## **M. J. Balko**

Louisville, AL

May 28

## **E. Kuenzli**

Los Angeles, CA

May 26-29

## **C. Chandler**

Los Angeles, CA

May 26-29

## **P. Robinson**

Atlanta, GA

May 21

## **B. Eckholt**

West Newton, PA

May 7

## **R. Shahan**

West Newton, PA

May 7

Agawam, MA

20,21

## **R. Goodman**

Chicago, IL

May 27-29

## **S. Jeuck**

St. Petersburg

May 14

Chicago, IL

27-29

# OBITUARIES

*The following brethren have recently finished their Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to their family and friends in the loss of these dear ones.*

Sister Helen Dalamaga, Toronto, ON—February 7. Age, 71

Sister Mary M. Staniec, Norridge, IL—February 17. Age, 84

Brother Steven Jones, New York, NY—March 11. Age, 91

Sister Gertie Cornell, Poole Dorset, England—Age, 96



# CONVENTIONS

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

**METRO DETROIT CONVENTION, May 6,7**—Southfield Hotel, 48075. Phone: (248) 552-7777. Contact N. Hummel. Phone: (248) 485-6357

**WEST NEWTON CONVENTION, May 7**—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136. Contact J. Krasonic, Sr., 1106 State Route 136, Belle Vernon, PA 15012. Phone: (724) 872-6215

**AGAWAM CONVENTION, May 20,21**—Captain Leonard House, 63 Main Street, Agawam, MA. Contact F. Sansom. Phone: (860) 889-7517

**BUFFALO CONVENTION, May 20,21**—Holiday Inn, 5440 Amp Road, Hamburg, NY 14075. Phone: (716) 649-0500 or (585) 322-7459

**LOS ANGELES MEMORIAL DAY CONVENTION, May 26,27,28,29**—Chapman University, Orange, CA. Contact R. Bieniak. Phone: (949) 457-0894

**CHICAGO MEMORIAL DAY CONVENTION, May 27,28,29**—Contact R. Tabac. Phone: (630) 231-1874

**WATERBURY CONVENTION, June 3,4**—Saturday held in Morris, CT. Sunday at the Litchfield Firehouse Hall. Contact A. Tsimonis, PO Box 1494, Waterbury, CT 06721-1494. Phone: (860) 567-0109

**PORTLAND CONVENTION, June 16,17,18**—Ramada Inn, 6221 NE 82nd Avenue, OR 97220. Phone: (503) 255-6511. Contact G. Black. Phone: (503) 659-6930

**DETROIT MONTH-END CONVENTION, June 25**—Northwest YWCA, Grand River at Beech Daly, Redford, MI. Contact F. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

**PRINCE ALBERT-SASKATOON CONVENTION, July 1,2,3**—Siwak Farm. Contact B. Siwak. Phone: (306) 763-3170

**OKANAGAN VALLEY CONVENTION, July 7,8,9—**Schubert Centre, 3505 - 30th Avenue, Vernon, BC. Contact B. Blencowe, #113, 901 Middleton Way, Vernon, BC V1B 3Z1. Phone: (250) 545-0780

**BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 15-20—**University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown, PA. See General Convention Bulletin in this issue, page 53.

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 6-11—**Nowy Sacz, Poland. (International Youth Seminar follows in Baia Mare, Romania, August 14-18.) Contact T. Machacek. Phone: (219) 662-8107

**HUNTSVILLE CONVENTION, September 8,9,10—**Holiday Inn Select, 401 Williams Avenue, AL 35801. Phone: (256) 533-1400. Contact P. Mosley, 1006 Mill Race Circle, Guntersville, AL 35976. Phone: (256) 582-3640

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*In Thy Name*

*Where two or three, with sweet accord,  
Meet in thy name, O blessed Lord!  
Meet to recount thine acts of grace,  
O, how thy presence fills the place!*

*There thou hast promised, Lord, to be,  
To bless the little company;  
And while we offer prayer and praise,  
O! may we learn more of thy ways!*

*O! fill our hearts with heavenly love,  
And may we at its impulse move,  
That all around may clearly see  
That we have been, dear Lord, with thee.*

*—Hymns of Dawn*

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*To us the Scriptures clearly teach:*

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

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

**THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD** lies in the fact that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God “tasted death for every man,” “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5,6

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

**THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH** is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God’s witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6, 20:6

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