

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

"THANKS BE UNTO
GOD FOR HIS
UNSPEAKABLE GIFT."

II Corinthians 9:15

december 1957



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The "Coast to Coast" topics are scheduled for the World Network and for individual stations in the United States and Canada. Two network stations in Miami, Florida and Portland, Oregon, do the program one week later than the above schedule.

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DAWN PUBLICATIONS

East Rutherford

NEW JERSEY

Out of Bethlehem

THE greatest news item of all time came out of Bethlehem. This item was the brightest of all the "highlights of Dawn" that have ever pierced the darkness of the world's night of sin and death. It was the announcement of the birth of Jesus. No other single event has so changed the course of the world, nor given so many millions of people a ray of hope for the future. For Jesus' followers it has been a bright hope.

The circumstances associated with the birth of Jesus were strange. Destined to be "The Prince of Peace" and the King of the whole earth, yet, he was born in a manger. The world as a whole knew little or nothing of what was taking place, yet the coming to earth of the Son of God was announced by an angel, who said to the shepherds on the hills of Judea, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Then the angel together with a "multitude of the heavenly host,"

sang "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men."—Luke 2: 10-14

What an introduction this was to the world, and with what authority it was given! It was freighted with hopes of peace and life for all mankind—"good tidings of great joy" because a Savior was born, One who had come to save mankind from sin and its penalty, death. No wonder the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest!"

However, this One who was born to be a king was soon confronted with difficulties. His parents were instructed to flee with the young child into Egypt to save him from the wrath of Herod. And from the beginning of his short ministry he was hated and persecuted by the religious leaders of his own people. Finally he was put to death upon a cross. A few years later the nation to which Jesus ministered, instead of entering an era of peace as a result of his coming, was destroyed, and the people scattered throughout the earth, and subsequently bitterly persecuted.

Meanwhile, many Gentile nations professed to accept Christ and to practice his teachings; but as it turned out, this was in name only. Instead of promoting peace on earth under the banner of The Prince of Peace, they waged war upon each other in Christ's name. The bloodiest wars of the Middle Ages were participated in by professed Christian nations; and some of them—such as the “Crusades”—under the banner of the cross.

There has hardly been a decade since the birth of The Prince of Peace that the world, or some part of the world, has not been plagued by war or the fear of war. Nor has the advancement of so-called civilization in recent centuries materially changed this picture. Even now, in 1957, while the world commemorates the birth of Jesus, millions are wondering, in view of the tense international situation, the symptoms of which are manifested in so many places, whether or not the feared holocaust of a third World War can be averted for another year. They know that when this happens the human race itself could well be destroyed; for since The Prince of Peace was born the nations have progressed from the crude implements of war used in ancient times to hydrogen bombs and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

But this does not mean that the purpose of Jesus' coming to earth has failed, nor that the accomplishment of that purpose has in any way been delayed. The storm

clouds of human passion hovering over the distraught and fear-filled world today are the result of human failure. This failure was foreknown by the Lord, and foretold; and he has permitted it in order that the human race might come to realize its need of looking to him for a way out of its confusion and perplexities.

One of the basic teachings of the Bible is that the “peace on earth” proclaimed by the angels when Jesus was born is to be realized through the establishment of Christ's kingdom. This great truth was almost completely lost sight of very early in the Christian era. The viewpoint was gradually adopted that Christ's kingdom was to be set up through human efforts, with the thought that whatever God had designed to do for the human race depended upon the efforts of men who would work and fight in the name of Christ. How shortsighted to suppose that the great God of the universe, the Creator of heaven and earth, would depend upon the feeble, imperfect, and misguided efforts of his human servants!

The professed Christian world has done the best it could to set up Christ's kingdom, and the result is what we see throughout the earth today. Failure is emblazoned upon all the monuments reared by human folly and selfishness. But for those who have faith in the promises and prophecies of the Bible, the heart-cheering message is that God will do for the human race

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what it could not do for itself, and soon, we trust.

Let us recall some of the promises of God which give us this assurance. One of them is found in the prophecy of Isaiah and pertains to the birth of Jesus. We all remember it—"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9:6, 7

There are two statements in this prophecy of Jesus' birth to which many fail to give proper heed. One is that the government here promised shall be upon "his" shoulder; and the other, that the "zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Both of these statements emphasize that the Lord takes the responsibility for the fulfilment of this promise. Christ will "shoulder" the responsibility for the successful establishment and functioning of his kingdom and the "zeal" of Jehovah himself, operating through Christ, guarantees the results.

For centuries professed Christians have been trying to set up Christ's kingdom by their own zeal. In devious ways they have endeavored to shoulder the responsibility

of Christ's kingdom themselves. In Europe, for example, they united with the State and called the union Christ's kingdom—"Christendom." But this arrangement did not bring peace on earth. Instead, it fostered wars, cruel and bloody wars. Christianity, so-called, was spread by the sword, followed by the "Holy Inquisition" to force conformity. This was not the "zeal of the Lord of hosts," but the work of ambitious, power-thirsty zealots whose zeal was contrary to the will and plan of God.

Another prophecy which assures us that the Lord not man, establishes the messianic kingdom, is found in the 2nd. chapter of Daniel, verses 31-44. Here Gentile rulership is depicted, beginning with Babylon, when the Jewish kingdom was overthrown, and concluding with the divisions of the Roman Empire as they existed in Europe prior to the first World War, and referred to in the prophecy as "these kings." The prophecy puts its finger on our day and says, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom."

Christ's kingdom is not set up by human intrigue and diplomacy. Nor will it function through balances of power brought about by the threat of destruction in the use of hydrogen bombs. Instead, it is established by direct intervention in the affairs of men, and in spite of all the misguided efforts prompted by human selfishness.

In the prophecy of Micah we are given a similar assurance. We

quote: "In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it."—Micah 4:1-4

Beginning with David, the kings of Israel ruled as the representatives of God, with the headquarters of the government in mount Zion at Jerusalem. (I Chron. 29: 23) To the people of Israel, therefore, the "mountain of the house of the Lord" would readily be understood as meaning the kingdom of the Lord, functioning through a ruling house of divine appointment. The ruling house of David was typical of this foretold mountain of the house of the Lord." God's typical ruling house ceased to function with the overthrow of

Judah's last king, Zedekiah. A prophecy then given declared that it would be no more "until he come whose right it is."—Ezek. 21:25-27

The One "whose right it is" was born as a babe in the manger at Bethlehem. In the annunciation to Mary, the angel Gabriel said, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name **Jesus**. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Judah forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."—Luke 1:30-33

This is in keeping with the prophecy of Isaiah, already quoted, in which we are told that Jesus would sit upon the throne of David, "to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." Thus it is that Jesus became the head of God's antitypical ruling house. And then, beginning with his first advent, there began the selection and preparation of a company called from the world of mankind to be "joint-heirs" with him in this ruling house. Through the begetting and birth of the Spirit these are made members of the divine family with Jesus.

For a time the opportunity of becoming a part of this royal house of sons was limited to the natural descendants of Abraham. These were the typical people of God to

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whom the promises had been made, and it was among these that Jesus conducted his ministry. "As many as received him," we read, "to them gave he power to become the sons of God." (John 1:11, 12) But not a sufficient number of the Jewish nation responded to this call, so later, through the Gospel, the invitation was extended to Gentiles. The work of gathering and preparing these to live and reign with Christ has continued throughout the age. As each one, through trial, has proved worthy, he has fallen asleep in death to be awakened at the close of the age in the "first resurrection" to "live and reign with Christ a thousand years." Just as Jesus was raised from the dead by the mighty power of God at the beginning of the age, so his joint-heirs are resurrected at the close, or harvest of the age, joining him to make up the spiritual and all powerful "mountain of the house of the Lord" which is established in the "top of the mountains," that is, dominating all the affairs of men.

One reason men have misunderstood God's plan is that they have failed to take into consideration his mighty power. Thinking that he has been limited to what impotent humans are able to accomplish in his name, it appears that the divine plan has failed. But, on the contrary, God is abundantly able to accomplish his purposes despite the efforts of men and devils to hinder.

A good example of this is in the

case of Jesus. He was born to be a king, and to sit upon the throne of his father, David. The religious rulers of his day hated him, and finally succeeded in having him put to death, one of the charges against him being that he claimed to be a king. So they killed the King; but this did not thwart the divine purpose centered in him. Indeed, it was necessary that Jesus die in order to redeem the world from death; and God raised him from the dead.

The significance of this, as it relates to God's promises pertaining to the ruling house of David, is brought to our attention by Apostle Paul in a sermon preached at Antioch. We quote, "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David."—Acts 13:32-34; Isa. 55:3

Just as it was "good tidings" that he who was to sit on the throne of David forever had been born, it was also "glad tidings" that, when his enemies put him to death thus serving as cohorts of Satan in his efforts to thwart the divine plan, God raised this antitypical David from the dead. Can we doubt the triumph of the divine

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plan for the salvation and peace of the human race when power like this can be utilized to assure its successful conclusion?

It is by the exercise of such Almighty power that divine authority is established in the earth. And when, in the Lord's own way, the fact is made known to the nations that the Lord is reigning, the people will begin to "flow unto it." "And many nations shall come [Isaiah wrote, "all nations shall flow unto it," ch. 2:2], and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob."

When the people and nations of the world take this attitude, they will want to be taught the Lord's ways; and when they do, they will no longer learn war nor practice the arts of war. All the time and resources now being devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war will be directed toward peaceful ends. And then there will be security for all, as symbolized by the thought of dwelling under the vine and the fig tree.

Then none "shall make them afraid." Today the world is filled with fear. The nations are afraid of one another. There is fear of the hydrogen bomb and ballistic missiles. There is no genuine peace and security anywhere. It is as though the angels' message of "peace on earth" had never been proclaimed. This is because we are living at the end of the age when, as foretold by the prophets, Satan's empire is being overthrown by a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21, 22

To those unenlightened by the prophecies of the Bible concerning the meaning of the present "distress of nations," it appears as though the angelic message of "peace on earth" is just empty words. This has led to an incorrect translation of the angels' words. Instead of "peace on earth, and good will toward men," as it is correctly rendered in the Common Version, it is now more frequently quoted as "Peace on earth among men of good will."

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

DECEMBER 5—"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve;...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."—Joshua 24:15 (Z. '01-284 Hymn 160)

DECEMBER 12—"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."—Proverbs 23:7 (Z. '01-325 Hymn 166)

DECEMBER 19—"Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."—I Kings 20:11 (Z. '94-155 Hymn 34)

DECEMBER 26—"Be thou strong and very courageous."—Joshua 1:7 (Z. '02-285 Hymn Appen. G)

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This is not what the angels proclaimed. Their message was that peace would come to the earth because God's good will toward his human creatures was then being manifested through the birth of Jesus to be the Savior and King of the world. God's good will toward men had been shown in his promises to send a Savior, and then much more so when the Savior was born. God's good will toward the world of mankind was further shown by raising Jesus from the dead.

Although not recognized by the world, God's good will has continued through the preparation of Jesus' followers to live and reign with him in his kingdom. And again it is shown through the resurrection of these from the dead that they might be associated with Jesus in dispensing kingdom blessings of peace and life to the people of all nations.

Soon, and in a manner which will be recognized by all nations, God's good will is to be manifested still further through the exercise of governmental control over all mankind. This will be by means of that foretold "government upon the "shoulder" of the Prince of Peace. This will come in time to prevent the destruction of the human race as now feared by scientists and militarists.

Through that long-promised government, the people will be assured of peace and security, and given the opportunity, by obedience, to be restored to perfection and live forever. All of this will be as a result of God's good will toward his human creatures, for, as we read, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16

The year 1957 is rapidly draw-

HEAR . . .

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

ON THE TOPIC

"THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME"

WOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15
710 kc. 10:30 A. M.

What is the world coming to? The Bible answers this question, and the answer is presented in the booklet, "Armageddon, Then World Peace." Send for a free copy. Address:

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

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

JANUARY TOPIC: On Sunday, January 19, the "Frank and Ernest" topic will be, "Life After Death." With the increasing uncertainties of the present life the people are more than ever interested in what lies beyond death, so this topic is timely. Adequate supplies of circulars advertising it will be available. Send your order in early. There is a rich blessing in this service. The circulars are, of course, free.

ing to a close. With world conditions as they are, no one knows what the year 1958 holds for the people. But if we have confidence in the promises of God, we will not fear. So, whatever the daily news may be, let us, not only at the year's end, but throughout all the days and weeks ahead, turn

back with assurance to that Bethlehem date-line, and recall the announcement which came from heaven, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke 2:10, 11

"Prove Me Now Herewith"

Malachi 3:1-12

The Lord's consecrated people still in the flesh and seeking to make their calling and election sure to the kingdom glories, may gain a profitable lesson from these sharp criticisms of natural Israel. How is it with us? We as spiritual Israelites have vowed to give unto the Lord the first fruits, the very best, the very chiefest, the most valuable of all that we have and all that we are—of time, influence, talents, money, all. To what extent are we rendering unto the Lord our offerings and sacrifices in harmony with this our covenant?

Is it not true respecting many spiritual Israelites, that, instead of bringing the very best they have to the Lord and to his service, they bring him merely the tail-ends, the imperfect things, offerings with which he is not well pleased? This is so in respect to all who use the best they have in self-gratification, in providing chiefly and best for their own natural conditions and appetites, honors, dignities, leaving for the Lord the remnants, the fag-ends of time, influence, reputation and money.

The argument which the Lord used to natural Israel was that if they properly loved and respected him as their God, they would feel that they had nothing too good to offer to him and his service, and that it was a privilege on their part to be permitted to lay their little all at his feet, the very best that they had or could present. How much more true is this in respect to spiritual Israel, whose eyes of understanding have to some extent been opened, who are enabled to see the Lord from the new standpoint, to realize what great things he has done for us and what wonderful things he has proposed to give us if we show ourselves worthy of them by faithfulness to our covenant obligations.

—Reprints 3685

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 1

Paul's Triumphant Witness

GOLDEN TEXT: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

—Philippians 1:21

PHILIPPIANS 1:1; 2:12-21

AT THE time Paul wrote his letter to the brethren in Philippi he was a prisoner in Rome. But he was permitted to live in his own hired house; and although he was in the constant custody of a Roman guard he was privileged to have visitors, and apparently he enjoyed a great deal of fellowship with the brethren. It appears from the opening verse of the lesson that his beloved "son" in the Lord, Timothy, was with Paul at the time, for he includes him in the opening statement.

As with all Paul's epistles, this one is addressed, not to the world, nor to unbelievers, but to "all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." Here the word "bishop" translates a Greek word meaning "superintendent," or "overseer." The "deacons" in the Early Church were chosen to care for the material needs of the congregation, such as serving tables.

Paul's admonition to the Philippian brethren to work out their own salvation was seemingly related to his own imprisonment. In chapter 1, verses 20-25, while he reveals his hope of being released and visiting the church at Philippi again, he indicates that he is not certain. He expresses his complete resignation to the Lord's will. "For me to live is [to live for] Christ," he wrote, "and to die gain." "Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you," Paul added.

Since Paul realized the possibility that he might not be able to render further service to the brethren in Philippi, he reminds them anew of their own responsibility. "Work out your own salvation," he wrote. You have always been obedient, "not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence," so continue in this. After all, it was not Paul who was working in the brethren at Philippi, but the Lord. And even if they did not again see Paul in the flesh, the Lord could continue to work in

them to will and to do of his good pleasure.

This viewpoint reflects Paul's humility, and his complete submission to the Lord's will. He knew that he had been chosen by the Lord to be a special apostle to the Gentiles. But he also knew that the Lord could accomplish his purposes without Paul's services, and was humble enough to say so. He was confident, as expressed in chapter 1, verse 6, "that he which hath begun a good work in" the brethren at Philippi, would be able to "perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

In working out their own salvation the brethren at Philippi were admonished by Paul to "do all things without murmurings and disputings." (ch. 2:14) Paul admonishes them to hold forth the Word of life; that is, to continue faithfully bearing witness to the truth. It is clear that Paul considered this essential in working out their own salvation.

In this connection, Paul makes a surprising statement, which reveals how important he considered witness work to be. In admonishing the brethren to hold forth the Word of life, he adds, "That I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." (vs. 16) Paul realized how few there are of all who profess to be followers of Christ who catch the real vision of sacrificial service. So many either become weary in well-doing, or else permit the cares of this world to hinder their ser-

QUESTIONS

Where was Paul when he wrote his epistle to the Philippians?

To whom is the epistle addressed?

In the Early Church, what service was rendered by bishops and deacons?

Explain what Paul meant by "working out your own salvation."

In this lesson, how does Paul emphasize the importance of "holding forth the Word of life"?

vice of God. Besides, many, it would seem, consecrate themselves simply to living a morally clean life in the name of Christ.

So Paul felt that if this little group of Christians at Philippi maintained the spirit of service, he would consider that his labor on their behalf had not been in vain, that these brethren had really been "obedient" to the heavenly vision, as he was determined to be.

In our Golden Text, Paul did not mean that to die in the service of his Master would be "gain" in the sense that he would be immediately taken to heaven, for he did not expect to receive his heavenly reward until Christ returned in "that day." (II Tim. 4:6-8) In verse 23 Paul states that he was in a "strait" between two possibilities; that is, continuing to live and serve, or finishing his course in death to wait the resurrection! There was a third thing—although impossible—which he would prefer; namely, to be with Christ. In the Greek text the word "return" is used. Paul longed for the return of Christ.

That I May Know Christ

GOLDEN TEXT: "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

—Philippians 3:8

PHILIPPIANS 3:4-14, 20, 21

JESUS explained to his disciples that those who would be his followers would need to deny themselves and take up their cross and follow him. (Matt. 16:24) In Paul we have an outstanding example of willingness to do this. He wrote, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more." (vs. 4) Then he mentions some of the things which, according to the flesh, were considered of value among the Jewish people of that time.

He had been circumcised, and was of the true stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin. He was a "Hebrew of the Hebrews," and, "as touching the Law, a Pharisee." And he had been zealous for the Law and the prophets. Believing that Christ and his followers were imposters, he did all he could to stamp out this heresy. Outwardly he had kept the Law, so from this standpoint was "blameless."

So, for Paul to deny self meant to turn his back on all these things which to the natural man were as-

sets. None of them were of any value to him as a follower of Jesus. At one time they were "gain," but now he counted them loss. "Yea doubtless," Paul continues, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."—vss. 7, 8

There is more to being a Christian than simply to accept Jesus as one's personal Savior. In chapter 1, verse 29, Paul states, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Since Christ suffered and died for the world, why should it be necessary for those who accept this work of redemption, to suffer and die for Christ? This is one of the "mysteries" of the Gospel which few in the entire age have understood, although made clear by Paul.—Col. 1:24-27

Writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the prophets had foretold the "sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

(I Pet. 1:11) Paul, and the other apostles, understood that this prophetic testimony applied to the true footstep followers of Jesus as well as to Jesus himself, that we have the privilege of suffering with him, inspired by the hope—if faithful unto death—of sharing in his glory, living and reigning with him in his kingdom.

It was in order to attain to such a relationship with Christ that Paul gladly suffered the loss of all earthly things. Or, as he states it, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."—vss. 10, 11

Up to this point in his Christian life Paul had suffered much, as he recounts in II Corinthians 11:23-27. He realized, however, that he could not rest on his laurels, that he had not yet "attained." He had not yet "apprehended," or laid hold upon that for which he had been "apprehended of Christ Jesus." Until he had reached the end of the way, there was always the danger of becoming unfaithful.

There is an important point brought to light in Paul's reference to being "apprehended of Christ Jesus," or, more literally, laid hold upon. No one can take this honor unto himself. No one can come to Christ unless drawn by the Father. (Heb. 5:4; John 6:44) Those who have this privilege are partakers

QUESTIONS

What was implied in Paul's denial of self?

What is there to being a Christian besides believing on Christ?

What did Paul mean by being "apprehended" of Christ Jesus?

Why did Paul say that he had not yet "apprehended"?

of a "heavenly calling."—Heb. 3:1

In our lesson, Paul describes this as the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (vs. 14) It is indeed a very "high" calling. Paul speaks of it as a "prize" to be won. It is made possible, of course, by the grace of God through Christ; but it will be attained only by those who, through self-sacrifice even unto death and by willingness to suffer in any way divine providence may permit, prove worthy of the great honor bestowed upon them through this "high calling."

No wonder Paul was hesitant to say that he had "attained." At the time he wrote these words he had hope of being released from prison and of again mingling with the brethren and serving them. Would he be able to endure the further tests that would thus come upon him? Paul felt that this remained to be seen. Later, however, when he knew he was to be executed, and believed he had passed the final test, he wrote, "I have fought a good fight, . . . I have kept the faith. . . . Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."—II Tim. 4:7, 8

Christian Joy

GOLDEN TEXT: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
—Philippians 4:19

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-13

TRUE Christian joy is, as expressed by Paul in verse 4 of the lesson, a rejoicing "in the Lord." One may be suffering physical agony or be weighed down with sorrow over mundane situations, yet be rejoicing in the Lord. In order to rejoice in the Lord despite earthly afflictions our faith must be sufficiently strong to be able to "see" the things which are unseen by the natural eye, and to realize that through trial the Lord is working out in us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—II Cor. 4:17, 18

"Let your moderation be known unto all men," Paul wrote. The Revised Version uses the word "forbearance," the **Emphatic Diaglott**, "gentleness." The Greek word used by Paul is translated "patient" (R. V., "gentle") in I Timothy 3:3, and is stated here to be one of the qualifications for teachers in the church. Prof. Strong gives the literal meaning of this Greek word as "appropriateness." It is never appropriate for a Christian to be rude and impatient. We should all strive to say the right thing at the right time, and in the

proper, Christlike way. Thus we will be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves."—Matt. 10:16

"The Lord is at hand," Paul added. The imminent return of Christ and the consummation of the Christian's hope was kept before the Early Church as an incentive to faithfulness. Now that we are living in the presence of the Lord, the shortness of the time in which we have to prove our worthiness of living and reigning with him should more than ever cause us to be "sober" and "vigilant," ever on the alert to resist all the assaults of the Adversary.—I Pet. 5:8

"Be careful for nothing." The thought of the Greek text here is not to be overanxious about anything. As Paul admonishes, we should, through prayer and thanksgiving, make known our needs to the Lord; and having done this, leave all matters in his hands. If, through faith, we can do this, then the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding," will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. We have peace "with" God through justification. (Rom. 5:1) The peace "of" God springs from his assurance that all things are fully under his control, that noth-

ing can happen which is contrary to his will. Since he is caring for us, we can share his peace.

Paul gives us a list of virtues upon which our minds may properly dwell—the things which are “true,” “honest,”—or “venerable,” as shown in the margin—“just,” “pure,” “lovely,” of “good report,” virtuous and praiseworthy. “Think on these things,” he admonishes. How holy indeed would be the mind which entertained only those thoughts which would be in harmony with these limitations! Where such thoughts prevail, there is no room for envy, malice, hatred, and strife. We cannot prevent evil thoughts from entering our minds, but we do not need to harbor them. Our habits of thought must be in harmony with this standard if we are finally to hear the Lord’s, “Well done.”

In verse 9 Paul exhorts the brethren to continue to do the things which he had taught, and to practice them in keeping with the example which he had set before them. Books could be written on Paul’s teachings and faithful ministry, but he sums them up himself by the statement, “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”—I Cor. 2:2

To know and follow Jesus Christ is to know and practice the whole truth of the divine plan, and to be fully devoted to its accomplishments, meanwhile being completely submissive to the Lord’s will. Paul was all this. For the Gospel of

QUESTIONS

What is the difference between Christian joy and earthly joy?

What is a better translation of the expression, “Let your moderation be known”?

What is the up-to-date application of the statement, “The Lord is at hand”?

What is the peace “of” God, and how may we possess it?

Can we live up to Paul’s formula for holy thinking?

Explain some of the things involved in following the example of Paul.

Christ, he had suffered the loss of all things which the world considers of value. And while, in the Lord’s providence, his faithfulness had led him to prison in Rome, even this he accepted with resignation and acquiescence.

While as a prisoner he had been given the privilege of living in his own hired house, yet apparently he did not always fare sumptuously. He was much appreciative of the “gift” sent to him by the Philippian brethren. “Not that I speak in respect of want,” he wrote, “for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”—vss. 11, 12

This was the example of devotion and resignation which the brethren at Philippi had to follow. And we have the same example. Paul explained that he could do all things through Christ who gave him the needed strength.

Christ in the Likeness of Men

GOLDEN TEXT: "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

—Galatians 4:4, 5

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11

ALTHOUGH this lesson makes no mention of the angelic message of "peace on earth" and "good will toward men," nevertheless it is very closely related to the birth of Jesus. Our Golden Text states that "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman." Jesus' birth, however, was but the necessary beginning of his becoming a man for the suffering of death.—Heb. 10:5, 10; 2:9

Paul explains that Jesus was "found in fashion as a man." (ch. 2:8) This suggests a prehuman existence. John informs us that Jesus was originally known as the Logos—Word, or mouthpiece—of the Creator, and that the Logos "was made flesh." (John 1:14) The Apostle Paul tells us that the Logos was the "firstborn of every creature," and Rev. 3:14 tells us that he was the "beginning of the creation of God." Paul also states that by him "were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." (Col. 1:13-17) John confirms this, saying that without the Logos "was not any thing made that was made."—John 1:3

This means that Jesus, in his

prehuman existence, occupied a very exalted position in the universe. In our lesson Paul notes this, saying that Jesus was "in the form of God." (vs. 6) An unfortunate translation of this text reads that Jesus "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." This translation destroys the real point of Paul's admonition—"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (vs. 5) Surely Paul is not saying that we should strive to be equal with God. Yet this is what he would be teaching if the King James translation of verse 6 were correct.

This is just another case where the translators of the King James Version, believing that Jesus and God were equal, and in fact one and the same person, have colored their translation to lend support to their belief. Even so, it is little comfort they get from this distorted translation, for the whole passage clearly reveals Jesus and his Father to be separate beings.

There are various other translations of this text. The simplest one reads that Jesus thought not "by" robbery to be equal with God. Another rendering is that he "did not

meditate a usurpation to be like God.” (**Emphatic Diaglott**) Both of these are in keeping with Paul’s admonition to us to have the mind of Christ, which he shows to be a humble mind that led to sacrifice and self-effacement; which is quite contrary to the thought of usurping Jehovah’s place in the universe.

It was Lucifer who endeavored to exalt himself “above the stars,” that is, above the bright ones of God’s creation, and to be “like the most High.” (Isa. 14:12-14) The Logos had no such attitude. Instead, as Paul states, “he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” (vs. 7) Verse 8 states that he was “found” in fashion as a man. This might imply that from the time of the Annunciation to his birth, the whereabouts of the Logos was unknown to the heavenly hosts, and when he was “found,” or discovered by them, he was “in fashion as a man.”

This was only the beginning of Jesus’ voluntary humiliation. As a man, and servant, he continued to humble himself, becoming “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” We obtain the full import of this brief statement only when we note, through Jesus’ experiences, what obedience unto the death of the cross really meant. Think of all the ignoble attacks that were made upon him by the scribes and Pharisees and others. Consider

QUESTIONS

By what name was Jesus known in his pre-human existence?

Why was it necessary for him to be made flesh?

Explain why the King James translation of verse 6 is wrong.

How completely did Jesus humble himself? What was his reward?

him before the high priest, and before Pilate. Ponder his crown of thorns and the “contradiction of sinners” which he endured while hanging on the cross. All this Paul wanted us to remember when he wrote, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

In addition to being made flesh, Jesus was “made under the Law,” as our Golden Text states. This arrangement was on behalf of the Israelites who were in bondage to the Law. It made it possible for Jesus to redeem them from the curse of the Law as well as to redeem all mankind from adamic death. Through Jesus’ death redemption was provided for all mankind.

And, as Paul explains, it was because Jesus was faithful even unto death that God highly exalted him and gave him “a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.”—vss. 9-11

Brothers Through Christ

GOLDEN TEXT: "Above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."
—Colossians 3:14

PHILEMON 1-16

IN THIS lesson there comes to light one of the most heartgripping human interest stories of all time. Briefly the setting is this: Philemon was a wealthy Christian in Colosse. He received his knowledge of the Gospel from Paul, and the Colossian church held their meetings in his home. As was not unusual in those days, Philemon was a slave owner. Onesimus, one of his slaves, escaped from his Master and went to Rome. Possibly he had met Paul in his Master's home, and knowing that he was a prisoner in Rome, sought him out for help. In any event, under Paul's preaching Onesimus accepted Christ and dedicated himself to the Gospel. Paul's letter to Philemon requests that he now receive his former slave as a brother in Christ.

Some very interesting facts are revealed by this story, especially in the light of present-day attitudes toward slavery. In several of his epistles Paul reveals what he believed to be the proper Christian position at that time. In Ephesians 6:5, 8, 9 we read, "Servants [Greek, 'slaves'] be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in

singleness of your heart, as unto Christ." "Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."

All of Paul's references to this delicate relationship between the brethren, some of whom were masters and some slaves, are along the same line. Deep down in his heart doubtless Paul wished that slavery could have been abolished. At the same time, he knew that he had not been commissioned by the Holy Spirit to campaign against this, or against any of the other evils of society. It was his business as an ambassador of Christ simply to preach the Gospel, and to encourage those who accepted it to make the best of the circumstances imposed upon them by the social order in which they lived.

And, as Paul saw it, making the best of this situation was for Christian masters to treat their believing slaves as brethren in Christ; and for the believing slaves likewise to consider their masters as brethren, and to serve them faith-

fully, as unto the Lord. Thus each, in the practice of true Christian love, would receive the experiences necessary to be properly trained for the future kingdom work of righting all the wrongs that have been inflicted upon the people throughout the reign of sin and death, even to setting free the captives of death.

It was in keeping with this approach to the problem of slavery that Paul wrote to Philemon requesting him to receive Onesimus as a brother. In his letter Paul sets forth a true example of Christian brotherhood. The Revised Standard Version translates verses 8 and 9 to read, "Though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you—I, Paul, an ambassador and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus."

As an apostle, Paul had the authority to command Philemon to "do what is required," just as Philemon, under the social laws then in vogue, had the authority to command his slaves, and to punish them for disobedience. But Paul wanted Philemon to see and practice the better way, the way of brotherly love, so he wrote, "I prefer to appeal to you," rather than to command. Paul continued, "I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become in my imprisonment. . . . I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart."—vss. 10-12, R. S. V.

It would seem impossible for

QUESTIONS

Relate the background of Paul's letter to Philemon.

How did Paul deal with the question of slavery in his day?

Why did Paul refrain from commanding Philemon to receive his former slave as a brother in Christ?

Philemon to ignore an appeal so genuine as this. But Paul continues, "I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the Gospel, but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness not be by compulsion but of your own free will."—vss. 13, 14, R. S. V.

It would seem that Philemon was one of the few wealthy Christians of his day, and was ministering to Paul's needs while in prison. His offer of help must have been such that Paul felt he could have kept Onesimus as a servant without defrauding his master. But this would have been forcing the issue, which Paul did not wish to do. He wanted Philemon voluntarily to receive Onesimus and treat him as a brother. Thus the great apostle reveals his interest in both slave and master. He desired to see them both filled with and controlled by the spirit of true Christian love. "Love never faileth," Paul wrote. (I Cor. 13:8) In this case he expected love to cut through the customs of the day, and bring Onesimus and Philemon together as brethren in Christ. We believe it did!

JUDAS, one of the original Twelve Apostles chosen by Jesus under the direction of the Holy Spirit, became a traitor, and lost his position among the Twelve. Jesus referred to him as the “son of perdition.” (John 17:12) After committing the shameful crime of betraying his Lord, Judas hanged himself, and nothing more is recorded concerning him, except that he was buried in the potter’s field. —Matt. 27:5-7

ciples. He said to his Father, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."—John 17:18

After Jesus was raised from the dead, his eleven remaining apostles, without waiting for instruction from him, decided to choose a successor to Judas. The record of this action is found in Acts 1:15-26. There can be no question about the sincerity of the eleven in deciding upon this course; but there is no evidence that the Lord accepted their choice, Matthias. So far as the

record goes, there is nothing to indicate that Matthias was ever used to perform any sort of apostolic service.

It should be remembered that at the time the eleven selected Matthias, they had not received the Holy Spirit. They had been commanded by Jesus to tarry in Jerusalem until they were "endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:49) While they did not leave Jerusalem, they did not "tarry in the full sense, for they took this unauthorized action of choosing Matthias.

In I Corinthians 12:18 Paul informs us that God has "set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." So far as the "twelve apostles of the Lamb" were concerned, God acted directly through Jesus in choosing them. Jesus recognized this, and referred to them as being given to him by his Heavenly Father. (John 17:6,12) Matthias was chosen by the eleven through the casting of lots, which seems quite out of keeping with the manner in which the others were chosen.

Saul, the Lord's Choice

"Saul of Tarsus" is shown clearly to be the Lord's choice as the one to take the place of Judas. Saul was the original name of this faithful servant of the Lord. Later he took the name Paul, meaning "little." He was probably born about A. D. 1 to A. D. 4. Of his parents we know nothing except that his father was of the tribe of Benjamin. (Acts 23:6; Phil. 3:5) Although a

Jew, by some unexplained manner he was "born free" as a Roman citizen. While born in Tarsus, Paul was "brought up" in Jerusalem, and was educated at the feet of Gamaliel. (Acts 22:3) Paul also was educated in the Greek language as well as in his native Hebrew tongue.

These details of Paul's earlier life had a bearing on the effectiveness of his ministry later on. Naturally, they were all foreknown to God, which, together with what the Lord also foreknew concerning his sterling traits of character, and his love for righteousness, explains why he was "separated" from his "mother's womb" for the high position he occupied in the church.—Gal. 1:15

The first mention we find of Saul is in Acts 8:1, where we are told that he was "consenting" unto the death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Thus in this introduction Saul is presented to us as an enemy of Christ and of his followers.

Sincere

Saul was sincere in his efforts to stamp out Christianity. He later said to King Agrippa, "I verily thought within myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." (Acts 26:9) Sincerity, however, is not enough in one's service to God. Indeed, as was the case with Saul, a person may be wholly sincere in his efforts, but instead of rendering acceptable service to God, he may

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be working against him, and dishonoring his name.

Speaking of Jesus' disciples, Paul also said to King Agrippa, "I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." (Acts 26:11) Saul "verily thought" it would please God for him thus to cause Christians to suffer; and now there are those who "verily think" that they please God by attempting to bring converts to him through the threat of eternal torture. These are just as wrong, and more so, than was Saul of Tarsus. Their sincerity does not sanctify their God-dishonoring activities.

We read in Acts 9:1,2 that "Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."

Apparently Saul was given the "letters" he requested, "and as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. He fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."—Acts 9:3-5

What a revelation this was to Saul! Trembling and astonished he inquired, "Lord, what wilt thou

have me to do?" The immediate instructions were limited. He was simply bidden to go into the city, with the explanation that there it would be told him what he was to do. Saul arose, blinded by the light of the vision, and was led by the hand into Damascus.

Paul Saw Jesus

Apparently the Lord considered that one of the qualifications for apostleship was that each of the apostles should be given "infallible proofs" that Jesus had been raised from the dead. Acts 1:1-3 reveals that the eleven had been given these proofs; but what about Saul of Tarsus? He was not with the eleven when Jesus appeared to them.

Paul himself explains this in I Corinthians 15:3-9. Here he mentions different ones to whom Jesus manifested himself after his resurrection, and then adds, "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." This is a reference to Paul's experience on the Damascus road. Jesus' appearance to him was very different from that of the other apostles. To them Jesus appeared in a body of flesh, but not so to Paul, who explains, "He was seen of me, . . . as of one born out of due time." What did Paul mean by this?

The Apostle John wrote, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he

is." (I John 3:1,2) The eleven did not see Jesus as he "is." They saw him as he "was," that is, what they saw was a body of flesh in which Jesus had miraculously appeared.

Actually, however, when Jesus was raised from the dead he was "born of the Spirit," and as a divine, spirit being, was invisible to human eyes. (John 3:8) His followers are promised that in the resurrection, when they also are "born of the Spirit," they will be like the resurrected Jesus. Then they shall see him "as he is," and, in fact, will be with him.—John 14:3; 17:24

When Paul wrote his first epistle to the brethren in Corinth, he had this glorious hope of being born of the Spirit in the resurrection and of thus being with Jesus, being like him, and seeing him "as he is." But in telling of his experience on the Damascus road he said that he saw Jesus as one "born out of [before] due time," that is, he caught a brief and partial glimpse of the resurrected Jesus prior to his own birth of the Spirit, prior to the "due time" of his birth into the heavenly realm. So Paul did see Jesus after he was raised from the dead and thus had this qualification for apostleship.

A Chosen Vessel

From the Damascus road, where Paul caught that brief glimpse of the resurrected Jesus, he went into the city and lodged in the house of Judas, who lived on the "street which is called Straight." It was here that the Lord sent a messen-

ger to Paul with definite instructions concerning the things he "must do."—Acts 9:6, 11

This messenger was Ananias, to whom the Lord appeared in a vision. The Lord said to Ananias, "Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, . . . that he might receive his sight."—Acts 9:10-12

Ananias at first protested against this arrangement, explaining, "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name." (vss. 13, 14) "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."—Acts 9:15, 16

Here is further proof that Paul was chosen by the Lord to be one of the "twelve apostles of the Lamb." He is a "chosen vessel," the Lord said. And Ananias was to explain to Paul "how great things" he would be called upon to suffer for the Lord's "name's sake." In writing to the church at Corinth, Paul refers to his suffering for Christ as one of the evidences of his apostleship.—II Cor. 11:23-28

"Are they ministers of Christ?"

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Paul inquires, referring to some who had called his apostleship in question. Then he adds, "I am more," more, that is, than simply a minister of Christ. All the consecrated followers of Jesus are ministers of Christ; but Paul was a chosen vessel, chosen to be a special apostle, and in this position he accepted the bitter persecution that was heaped upon him as evidence of his calling, as Ananias had explained the matter to him.

Paul was blinded by the light which shone around him on the Damascus road, but as Ananias ministered to him in the house of Judas, the "scales" fell from his eyes and he was able to see. Then "he arose, and was baptized." (Acts 9:17-19) The "vision" on the Damascus road had opened the eyes of his understanding, and now, having received instructions from Ananias, this man of action was immediately ready to enter upon his new vocation. He who had been doing all he could to destroy Christianity was now ready to lay down his life promoting the cause of his new found Lord.

Since Paul recognized his direct appointment by the Lord to the apostleship, he did not deem it necessary to confer with the other apostles before entering upon his ministry. (Gal. 1:15-19) We read in Acts 9:20 that, after tarrying certain days with the disciples in Damascus, "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said;

Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?"

Chronologically, Paul's early ministry in Damascus is somewhat ambiguous. In Galatians 1:17, 18 he explains, "I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days." How long Paul remained in Arabia, and what he did while there, the Scriptures do not reveal. Seemingly, however, he returned from Arabia to Damascus. It was probably after he returned that he preached Christ in the synagogues. It seems apparent also that he first went to Jerusalem three years after his conversion, meanwhile having gone to Arabia and returned to Damascus.

Because of Paul's faithful ministry in Damascus, persecution arose against him and his life was in danger. By the assistance of fellow-disciples he escaped "by night" from the city, being let "down by the wall in a basket." It was then that he went to Jerusalem. The brethren in Jerusalem were "all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them com-

ing in and going out of Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him."—Acts 9:23-29

In Galatians 1:18, 19 Paul explains that he went up to Jerusalem from Damascus to see Peter, and adds, "Other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother." This may seem to disagree with Acts 9:27 which informs us that Barnabas brought Paul "to the apostles." Actually, however, it does not. It is very doubtful if the "apostles" here mentioned included all eleven of them. Doubtless some of them were out of the city at the time doing missionary work. Apparently the only "apostles" in Jerusalem at the time were Peter and James, whom Paul testifies to having seen.

Paul states that he abode with Peter fifteen days, and these must have been busy days. It was apparently during this time that he "spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians." It is doubtful if he was persecuted by the Grecians. They gloried in their pastime of "disputing," and doubtless found an able contestant in Paul. Perhaps it was here that Paul became acquainted with some of their theories, as revealed by him in his sermon on Mars' Hill.—Acts 17:22-30

However, the religious rulers in Jerusalem were far from pleased with Paul's preaching, and "went about to slay him." Again, by the

assistance of the brethren, Paul escaped from his would-be killers. "They brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus." (Acts 9:30) Saul the persecutor, was now Paul the Christian. He was back in his home town. No longer himself a persecutor; and temporarily inactive in preaching Christ where the enemies of the cross were most numerous, the church had rest "throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied."—Acts 9:31

Paul Again Becomes Active

The persecution of the brethren at the hands of Saul, which reached its climax in the martyrdom of Stephen, caused a scattering of the disciples, some of them traveling as far as "Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only." (Acts 11:19, 20) The Lord blessed this effort, "and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."—vs. 21

The brethren in Jerusalem learned of this activity and its results, and wishing to assist, "they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch." (vs. 22) Of Barnabas it is written that "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." (Acts 11:24) Having become acquainted with Paul, and recognizing his abilities, Barnabas, before going to Antioch, first went to Tarsus to seek out this new apostle and invite him to assist in the work at Antioch.

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Paul accepted the invitation and, reaching Antioch, "it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people." Evidently the activity of Barnabas and Paul, together with the other disciples in Antioch, attracted public attention. It was here, the record states, that the disciples were first called "Christians."—Acts 11:26

It does not say that the disciples called themselves Christians. Evidently this name was given to them by the world. The name appears only two other times in the New Testament. One of the two other times is in Acts 26:28, and the other is in a text in which the Apostle Peter says, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." (I Peter 4:16) This suggests that "Christians" were then held in derision, and it is quite possible that this name was applied to the followers of Jesus by their enemies as a means of heaping ridicule upon them. Today the name Christian is generally accepted as though it had been given to the followers of Jesus by God.

Ananias no doubt had revealed to Paul that he would have the opportunity to suffer for the name of Christ, and in Damascus and Jerusalem he had already experienced bitter opposition. In both places the enemies of the cross had plotted to kill him. But now that he was back in active service, he was to learn the awful lengths to which the blinded ministers of the Adversary

can go in opposing the light of the Gospel and those who bear witness to it.

It was from Antioch that Paul embarked upon his first missionary journey. Beginning with the February issue, we will publish a series of articles reviewing Paul's experiences, as he went out to as much of the world as he could reach proclaiming the glad tidings of the kingdom and setting forth the hope of joint-heirship in that kingdom now being offered to the faithful followers of the Master.

Up then, and linger not, thou saint
of God,

Fling from thy shoulders each
impeding load;

Be brave and wise, shake off
earth's soil and sin,

That with the Bridegroom thou
mayst enter in.

Clear hath the voice been heard,
Behold I've come—

That voice that calls thee to
thy glorious home,

That bids thee leave these vales
and take swift wing,

To meet thy glorious Heavenly
King.

Gird on thy armor; face each weap-
oned foe;

Deal with the sword of heaven
the deadly blow;

Forward, still forward, till the prize
divine

Rewards thy zeal, and victory
is thine.

God's Unspeakable Gift

THE Apostle Paul, when writing to the brethren at Corinth concerning their privilege of giving material aid to their less fortunate brethren of Judea, climaxed his remarks with the statement, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." (II Cor. 9:15) God is continually bestowing his benefactions upon his human creatures, the worthy and the unworthy. Jesus said concerning his Heavenly Father, "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—Matt. 5:45

In Jesus we have the greatest of all God's gifts. No member of the fallen race is worthy of this gift, "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) Although unworthy, we do have the privilege of accepting this "unspeakable," or indescribable, gift and being enriched thereby. By accepting this gift, we receive life and all the joys which accompany it. This fact is simply stated in the Bible—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16

This is the season for the bestow-

ing of gifts. It is appropriate when receiving a gift to examine it in order to more fully appreciate its value and the more heartily give thanks to the giver. Should we not also examine God's greatest gift to us? Indeed, the better we learn to know God's "unspeakable gift," the more we will cherish him and the greater effort we will put forth to be like him.

Jesus is prophetically described as the One "altogether lovely." (Song of Solomon 5:16) There was nothing unlovely about Jesus. Depending upon our own inclinations, we may see and appreciate in Jesus certain praiseworthy traits of character and think of him almost entirely from these limited viewpoints. If we are of a mild, gentle disposition, it is likely that we especially admire in Jesus his kindness and gentleness; if by nature we are combative, we will note with approbation Jesus' encounters with the scribes and the Pharisees.

Jesus was indeed gentle and kind. The "gracious words" which fell from his lips must have warmed the hearts of many who heard them. (Luke 4:22) Jesus was also bold in his stand against the false teachings of the "blind guides" of

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of his day. (Matt. 23:16) Being able to read the hearts of those with whom he came in contact, he did not hesitate to expose hypocrisy wherever he found it. Where there was no wilful intent, Jesus was ready to extend mercy to the erring. Jesus was "altogether" lovely, and the more we see of his loveliness the greater should be our appreciation of God's "unspeakable gift."

One of the "lovely" traits of Jesus' perfection was his unswerving devotion to his Heavenly Father. This always had been true of him, even in his prehuman existence. Speaking through the prophet concerning his Creator, the Heavenly Father, the Logos said, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."—Prov. 8:30

And then, when the Logos was "made flesh," and while waiting until he reached maturity under the Law, he sought out the doctors of the Law in the temple to ask questions and reason with them. Chided by his mother for leaving his parents, Jesus replied, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49)

He probably learned from his elders in the temple that according to the Law he would not be entitled to enter upon any special ministry for God until he was thirty years of age. So when he was thirty, he immediately went to John at Jordan, to be baptized. The sentiment of Jesus' devoted heart at that time was, as expressed by David, "I de-

light to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy Law is within my heart."
—Psalm 40:7

"Lovely" in Prayer

Some like to think of Jesus almost exclusively from the standpoint of his life of prayer. Surely Jesus did delight to commune with his Heavenly Father in prayer. In a prayer beside the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus said to his Father, "I know that thou hearest me always." (John 11:42) Jesus knew that in every situation of his life of sacrifice he needed the guidance and strength which he could obtain only through communion with his Heavenly Father. Since he was assured that his Father's ear was always attuned to hear his every word of thanks and his every request for help, what delight Jesus must have experienced through prayer!

Too frequently, probably, prayer is looked upon as the need we have of going to God in times of distress and trouble. And surely every Christian will seek the Heavenly Father's help and comfort in such times. Actually, however, we need the Lord's assistance as much when the circumstances of life are favorable as when they are calamitous. Is everything going well with you? Are you popular with your friends, and as far as you know, have no enemies? If so, you need to go to the throne of heavenly grace asking your Heavenly Father to help you realize your need of him.

Jesus understood this. Surely

Jesus must have placed himself in a very favorable light before that multitude which, by a miracle, he had fed with loaves and fishes. Altogether there were about "five thousand men, beside women and children." What did Jesus do? The record says, "When he sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray."—Matt. 14:21, 23

We do not know the nature of this prayer. At the moment, though, Jesus was riding a wave of popularity. When tempted by Satan to use his God-given power to turn stones into bread to satisfy his own hunger, he refused to do so. Now he had used that power to create food for the multitude. Would their appreciation and praise turn him aside from his own course of sacrifice? These thoughts may have gone through his mind. In any event, at such a time he realized his need of communing with his Father.

For Guidance

The prayer life of Jesus is again brought to our attention in connection with the selection of his apostles. We read, "It came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles."—Luke 6:12, 13

So confident was Jesus that the Father, in answer to prayer, guided him in the selection of his

apostles, that later, in another prayer, he referred to them as those whom the Father had given him. (John 17:6) What a "lovely" example of belief and trust! True, Judas was among those whom the Father had given to him, but Jesus made no exception. At times we may seek the Lord's guidance, and yet, if our experiences are not such as we would prefer, we would be inclined to doubt. But he who was "altogether lovely" had confidence in his Father's wisdom and in his ability to direct.

In another prayer Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father... because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. 11:25, 26) Here again we find Jesus completely in harmony with his Father's judgment.

From the natural standpoint he may have preferred the friendship and co-operation of the elite of his day, the scribes and Pharisees, the doctors of the law, and other professionals in Jewish society. But since the Father did not reveal the truth to these, they were in bitter opposition to him.

Those to whom the Father did reveal the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" were for the most part, the unlearned, the fishermen, publicans and sinners. (Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11) It was such as these, therefore, who became his

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followers and his friends. But they were simple people, honest at heart, and appreciative of the message. He loved these and thanked his Father for choosing them.

Jesus' interest in his apostles, and in those who would believe on him through their ministry, is evidenced in his prayer on their behalf. He said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy Word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth."—John 17:9-17

What depth of interest Jesus

thus displayed in those whom the Father had given to him to be his brethren and friends! Through this prayer we can see another aspect of the glorious character of the One who is "altogether lovely," the One who is the Father's "unspeakable gift" to us, and, by and by, to the whole world.

Yes, the love of this "lovely" One embraced the world, and this also is revealed in his prayer life. Even when praying for those whom the Father had given him to be his ambassadors, he did not hide his interest in the world. In praying for them, Jesus added, "That they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."—John 17:21

In that precious text, which tells us of God's loving gift of his "only begotten Son," we are informed that "whosoever believeth in him" will not "perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) So, when Jesus prayed that the "world may believe," he was petitioning his Father for the life of the world. And this is in keeping with the prayer he taught his disciples: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) This, in reality, is a prayer for the blessing of the world. Yes, Jesus was interested in the world. He came to give his life that all mankind might have an opportunity to live.

Jesus' Loyalty

Just as in his prehuman existence Jesus, because of his loyalty,

was daily the delight of his Father, so he was also during his earthly ministry. Soon after his baptism Satan attempted to swerve Jesus away from his course of obedience, but failed. First, it was suggested by Satan that Jesus use his God-given power to turn stones into bread in order to satisfy his hunger. Jesus' reply was, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—Matt. 4:4

We will appreciate the absolute obedience of God's "unspeakable gift" a little more by noting his insistence on the need and importance of "every word uttered by his Father. This is in sharp contrast to the attitude of many of Jesus' professed followers, who, in their weaknesses, seek out and obey only those instructions of the Bible which harmonize with their own ways of thinking and doing. But the perfect Jesus was alert to obey "every" word, regardless of what the cost might be to him. In the circumstance under consideration, the cost of obedience was hunger and the increased antagonism of his "adversary the Devil."—I Pet. 5:8

Failing in his first attempt, Satan approached Jesus from another standpoint. "If thou be the Son of God [Satan said], cast thyself down [from the pinnacle of the temple]: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou

dash thy foot against a stone."—Matt. 4:5,6

Here was a temptation to disobedience supported by a misapplication of scripture. It was an appealing temptation for it suggested a way of suddenly attaining popularity and notoriety. One who could demonstrate that he enjoyed the protection of angels, even though he defied the laws of nature, could have the world in his hand.

In less spectacular ways many since have yielded to this type of temptation. It is, in principle, the temptation to make a display of great and "wonderful works" as proof of heaven's blessings. (Matt. 7:22) "See how we are growing in numbers!" "Let's do something that will stir the city!" "We'll soon be needing a larger church." Such are some of the viewpoints expressed by those who depend upon the spectacular as evidence that the Lord is with them.

But the perfect Jesus, God's "unspeakable gift," did not yield to this temptation. His reply again was, "It is written." "Every" word that had been written must be brought to bear for the guidance of his "lovely" life. This "word" which he here applied was "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."—Matt. 4:7

Only forty days prior to this, Jesus had heard the voice of his Father in those reassuring words, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17)

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With this assurance there was no "if" in Jesus' mind concerning his divine sonship. Therefore, to expect his Father to say or do more to convince him would have evidenced his own lack of faith, hence tempting God to withdraw his favor from him.

Jesus was not concerned as to whether or not the world believed that he was the Son of God, although he probably knew that this issue would eventually lead to persecution and death. But that did not matter; for after all the very purpose of his being "made flesh" was that he give his humanity in death for the life of the world. Jesus himself knew that he was the Son of God, and this was all that mattered. How heart-searching this example should be for us!

Satan's third approach was again different. As "prince of this world" he offered to share his authority with Jesus. The condition was, "If thou wilt fall down and worship me." (Matt. 4:9) No scripture was used here. It was simply a vicious attempt to lure Jesus into disobedience. But the "every word" by which Jesus lived was brought to bear by him in resisting the temptation. The Master's reply was, "It is written thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."—Matt. 4:10

Jesus, God's unspeakable gift," had come into the world to be a king. He knew that in his Father's due time the uttermost parts of the earth would be brought under his

dominion. But Jesus also knew that first he must sacrifice his life to redeem mankind from death. His rulership was to be over living subjects, not those condemned to death and dying. There was only one way to obtain this position in his Father's plan, and that was by humble obedience. He had no desire to take any other course, for this One who was "altogether lovely" loved Jehovah with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Directed by the Word

Jesus loved the world—all the world. His natural desire would have been to bestow blessings or healing upon and proclaim the glad tidings of the kingdom to all—Jews and Gentiles alike. But in this also he put aside what might have been his own preferences, and served in harmony with the "every word" of his Heavenly Father. When he sent his disciples into the ministry he forbade their going to the Gentiles. "Go rather," he said, "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:6) Later, when a Gentile woman sought a blessing from him for her daughter, he said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 15:24

This woman persisted, and Jesus explained further, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." To this the woman replied, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Jesus' heart of sympathy was touched by this

display of humility and faith, and he granted the woman's request. The fact that Jesus made this exception emphasizes the restriction which the Father's Word had placed upon his ministry, a restriction which he respected and obeyed.

The obedience of Jesus to his Heavenly Father's Word is further revealed through his observance of the "times and seasons" in the divine plan. The enemies of Jesus who desired to put him to death, were concentrated more particularly in Judea. Knowing this, he was conducting his ministry in Galilee. "His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest." Jesus' reply was, "My time is not yet come."—John 7:3-6

Jesus was still in Galilee when Lazarus died. After two days he announced to his disciples that he was returning to Judea. They reminded him of the dangers involved. He replied, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" indicating his consciousness of time. (John 11:6-9) In Matthew 26:18 we find Jesus saying that his time had come. So he did not then hesitate to return to Judea, even though he well knew that he would be arrested and put to death. Thus his observance of the Father's "times" prevented him from recklessly throwing away his life, and also challenged obedience to his covenant of sacrifice when his hour did come.

Jesus' Humility

Another lovely trait of Jesus' character was his humility. Actually never man spake as this man did, yet he was glad to testify, "The words which I speak unto you I speak not of myself but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 7:46; 14:10) "My Father is greater than I," Jesus testified. (John 14:28) And again "I can of mine own self do nothing."—John 5:30

Another display of Jesus' humility was in his willingness to leave the glory which he had with the Father in his prehuman existence, to become a man. And, as a man, he humbled himself still further by becoming a servant and suffering the humiliating death of the cross. Paul's way of expressing it was that Jesus made himself of "no reputation," and that he "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. 2:5-8

Jesus was also humble in his willingness to admit his lack of knowledge with respect to some of the time features of the divine plan. When asked about the time of his second advent, he humbly acknowledged that he did not know. He said that at that time only his Heavenly Father knew this. (Matt. 24:36) How this contrasts with the attitude of many of his followers, who, even though they do not know, would like to have their brethren think that they know a great deal about the "times and

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seasons" which have not yet been revealed to the Lord's people in general!

In this end of the age, when we are living in the **parousia** of our Lord, all the consecrated are properly concerned as to "how long" it will be before the last member of the church passes beyond the veil, and the kingdom is fully established. This is the question most frequently asked by the Lord's consecrated people. The majority admit, as Jesus did, that they do not know. Others, apparently hesitant to admit their lack of knowledge, will speculate about it, setting one date after another. How much better it is for all to follow the example of Jesus in this respect, and admit outright that we do not know. Truly this "lovely" One, who is God's "unspeakable gift" to us is an Exemplar in every aspect of true godliness, which we should endeavor to imitate.

Jesus' Submission

Jesus was submissive to whatever the Father's will was for him. Submission is closely allied to humility. It involves humility in the face of severe trial and suffering. Peter wrote concerning Jesus, "When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself unto him that judgeth righteously."—I Pet. 2:21-23

Jesus knew that not a single experience, bitter or sweet, could come to him without the Father's

permission. He did not, therefore, seek retaliation against those who persecuted him, but simply looked to his Father for wisdom to learn whatever lesson might be involved, and for strength to accept the buffeting with that humility which would enable him to look up to his Father and say, "Not my will, but thine be done."

Jesus' Compassion

Jesus was sympathetic and compassionate. We read in Matthew 9:36 that when he "saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." An exhibition of the manner in which Jesus' compassion moved him to sacrifice time and strength on behalf of the multitude is given us in connection with his miracle of feeding the multitude.

This occurred on the same day, and very shortly after Jesus had said to his disciples, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." The reason for this invitation is explained thus: "For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat." (Matt. 6: 31) In an attempt to escape from the crowd to be alone and rest, Jesus and his disciples entered into into a boat and crossed to the opposite shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was apparently near the end of the "Sea," and many, noting what had happened, hurried around the

edge of the water reaching the opposite shore in time to greet the Master when he arrived.

The attempt to escape the multitude failed. What did Jesus do about it? He could have directed his disciples to sail the boat back into the middle of the lake so that there they could rest. But he did not do this, and the record explains why. We quote, "Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things." (Mark 6:34) This was at a time when Jesus was tired, needing rest. But his compassion for the multitude would not permit him to rest. After teaching the multitude "many things," he then performed that marvelous miracle of feeding them by causing the increase of the few loaves and fishes.

How does our attitude toward the service of the Lord compare with this? Do we serve the Lord merely when it is convenient, and when we feel "up to it"? Or are we willing to forego needed rest, give up our personal plans and ignore our preferences because our compassion for those whom we have the responsibility and privilege of serving compels us thus to deny self by sacrificing the flesh and its interests? This was Jesus' attitude. He was truly a "man of sorrows," not on account of his own circumstances in life, but because

of his sympathy for the sin-sick and dying world.

In the storiest verse in the Bible we are told that "Jesus wept." (John 11:35) This was when he was standing beside the tomb of his friend Lazarus. Surrounded by mourners, and realizing that the great enemy Death would continue to claim its victims for a long time to come, spreading sorrow and suffering everywhere, the sympathetic heart of Jesus was overwhelmed.

Zealous

Jesus was consumed by the zeal of his Father's house. (Ps. 69:9) He said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." (John 9:4) Again he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." (John 4:34) Later, within the shadow of the cross, Jesus said in prayer to his Heavenly Father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John 17:4

This statement was made by Jesus with the knowledge that his active ministry had been completed. He was still to be tried. He would still need to bear up under mocking and scourging. Even when hanging on the cross he witnessed concerning his coming kingdom and the paradise conditions which it would restore world-wide. Finally, when his last bit of strength was gone he looked up to his Father and said, "It is finished." "Into thy hands I commend my spirit," my life.—John 19:30; Luke 23:46

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Faithfully, even unto death, this "unspeakable gift" of God had exemplified all those commendable aspects of perfection, the sum of which had made him the One "altogether lovely." In his death there came his greatest accomplishment, for it provided an opportunity for life to all who believe on him. It was for this that the Heavenly Father had sent his Son into the world, and now Jesus had vindicated his Father's trust in him.

So, when we think of the birth of Jesus, let us remember that he would have been born in vain unless he had been willing to lay down that perfect life which was

his in birth. Let us thank God for Jesus' birth, but seek his mercy, guidance, and help through the merit of his sacrificed life. And, rejoicing in the birth of God's "unspeakable gift," let us remember our lifetime privilege of emulating him in obedience and devotion; in prayer; in loyalty to the Word of God; in resisting temptation; in humility; in submission to the Father's will, and in sympathetic compassion for the entire groaning creation. And, as with Jesus, may the zeal of our Father's house continue to consume us until the last ounce of our energy has been devoted to his work and glory!

ABIDING IN CHRIST

TO ABIDE in Christ implies that one has first come into him. This gives us the thought of a body. The Scriptures everywhere represent the church as being this body, with Jesus as the Head. "God gave him to be Head over the church, which is his body." During the Gospel age an invitation has been given to certain persons to be of this body of Christ. There is only one door by which these may come into the body. It is the door of sacrifice, baptism into Christ's death. We are accepted only by giving up our own will, and taking instead the will of God. We pledge ourselves to walk in Jesus' steps, to become his followers, his disciples. We are buried with him and rise to walk in newness of life.—Romans 6:4

But it is not sufficient that we take these steps, not sufficient that we have received the Holy Spirit, and have been accepted of the Father. We should be sure that we continue to abide in Christ. Let us ask ourselves, Are we having the experiences common to all who are associated with Jesus? One of the ways to be sure that we are abiding in him is to realize that we still love him. Another is to know that we are still in harmony with God's Word. A third way is that we have no will but the Lord's will. Still another is to have his peace in our hearts and lives as the ruling and controlling influence.

The Spirit on All Flesh

"It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh."
—JOEL 2: 28

OUR text reveals that God's Holy Spirit, his miracle-working power, will be exercised for the blessing of all mankind—"all flesh." This prophecy is located in a context of predictions pertaining to the transition period between the present age and the age of Christ's kingdom. The general testimony of the prophecies related to this time is that there would be "great tribulation" upon all nations, in which both Jews and Gentiles would be perplexed and distressed. The prophecies reveal, nevertheless, that in the midst of this "time of trouble" the dispersed people of Israel would be returned to their own land and that God's favor would be manifested upon them in a marked way.

The word "afterward" in our text is a revealing one. On the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the waiting disciples, the Apostle Peter quoted this prophecy, and instead of using the word "afterward" he said the "last days"—in the "last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." Peter quoted the prophecy in full, "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy."—Acts 2: 17, 18

Peter also quoted part of Joel's prophecy which, in highly symbolic language, describes certain aspects of world conditions leading up to and associated with the time of "great tribulation" with which the present age comes to an end—"I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood." (vss. 19,20) So, when the apostle said, as quoted in verse

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16, "This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel," we are not to understand all the prophecy that he quoted was fulfilled at Pentecost. Peter wanted his hearers to be sure to recognize the prophecy from which he was quoting, even though only a portion of it was then being fulfilled.

What actually happened at Pentecost was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Lord's "servants and handmaidens," but "afterward," as Joel states it, or in the "last days" as Peter interprets Joel, it is to be poured out on "all flesh." Actually, Joel's prophecy pertaining to the shedding forth of the Holy Spirit in the outworking of the divine plan covers briefly this entire feature of the plan. It began to be fulfilled at Pentecost, but the outpouring upon "all flesh" is yet future, although there is every reason to believe that it is not a too distant future.

To the Jew First

In pouring out the Holy Spirit upon his "servants and handmaidens" at the beginning of the Gospel age, the Lord's providences directed that it first be upon the Jewish believers assembled in the "upper room" in Jerusalem. A short time later there was another outpouring upon the Gentiles to demonstrate the divine acceptance of Cornelius and his household into the "body" of Christ. The Scriptures indicate that there will be a similar sequence in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon "all flesh." The first to receive it will be the regathered people of Israel in the Holy Land, and then its influence will extend world-wide to "all the families of the earth."

Significantly, Joel's prophecy assuring us that the Lord would pour out his Spirit upon "all flesh" is in a context which refers to the regathering of Israel into the Promised Land. (Joel 2:28—3:1) In Ezekiel 37 is another prophecy depicting the restoration of Israel. In this chapter the "whole house of Israel" is likened to a valley of dry bones." (vss. 11 and 4) In the vision of restoration given to Ezekiel he saw the "bones" come together, "and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath [life] in them."—vss. 1-8

Then Ezekiel was commanded to prophesy, "Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me,

and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army." (vss. 9,10 This does not portray the resurrection of the dead, but the restoration of Israel to God's favor. The next verse reads, "Son of man [Ezekiel], these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts."

Then Ezekiel was commanded to prophesy further "and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live." (vss. 12-14) The "graves" here are symbolic, even as are the "dry bones" in the graves. The graves evidently depict the various countries in which the Israelites throughout the ages of their dispersion were domiciled. They surely were "cut off," that is separated from other segments of their people, and all of them symbolically said, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost."—vs. 11

But, since we are now living in the "last days" this situation has already undergone a marked change. A goodly representation of all Israel has been brought up out of their "graves." As a people they do not feel so "cut off." Considerable flesh has appeared on the dry "bones," and "skin," too. But as yet they do not "live." Few of them associate their changed position with the promises of God. The vast majority of them have little or no hope in the God of Israel. There is one more event in their foretold experiences which is yet to occur, and must occur, ere this prophecy is completely fulfilled.

The Lord did not say that his people would know him when he merely brought them out of their "graves." It is when he has not only uprooted them from the countries where as "dry bones" they were living, but when he has put his Spirit in them, that they shall know him and "live." "Then shall ye know that I the Lord hath spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." (vss. 13, 14) Our particular interest at the moment is in the fact that here the Lord indicates that he will put his Spirit in the regathered Israelites, and that as a result of this they will "know" that he is the Lord, and will live.

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The following two chapters of Ezekiel (38 and 39), prophetically outline the major developments in a sequence of events associated with Israel's regathering in the Holy Land. Enemies are shown to attack them, and when the attackers are defeated by divine intervention, their eyes will be opened to behold the glory of God. The Israelites also will recognize the providences of their God in the mighty deliverance that is wrought for them. Then, in the last eight verses of chapter 39, we are presented with an explanation as to the significance of the events foretold in these three wonderful chapters—the 37th, 38th, and 39th. The principal point in this explanation is that “the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day forward.”—vs. 22

And finally, in the last verse of the chapter, the Lord says, “Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.” The point is that as a result of God's deliverance from a situation which would otherwise have meant utter ruin for the regathered Israelites they learn to know their God, and God's explanation is, “I have poured out my Spirit” upon them, and I will not “hide my face any more from them.”

First upon his Servants

The Holy Spirit “shed forth” at Pentecost for the blessing of the entire church of the Gospel age led to certain gifts of apostles, pastors, teachers, etc. These, together with their Head, Christ Jesus, have served as channels through which the Holy Spirit of truth has flowed out to all the consecrated believers. The entire church, in turn, through the ministry of the Spirit, is prepared to be to Israel and the world what the glorified Jesus was to her; namely, the source of the outpoured Spirit, in association, of course, with Jesus.

The pattern designed for the enlightenment and blessing of the church by the Holy Spirit during the Gospel age will have its counterpart through the millennial age. Then, also, there will be “servants and handmaidens” who will be used by God as channels of the Holy Spirit, hence the instructors of the people in the ways of truth and righteousness. These will be the ones described in Psalm 45:16 as “princes in all the earth.” In Isaiah 1:26 these are referred to as “judges” and “counselors,” and the promise given

to Israel, "I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning."—Isa. 1:26

Judges served Israel during the period of the judges. These were raised up by God in special times of need, and through them the people were delivered from their enemies. A case in point is Othniel, Caleb's younger brother. Through this judge the Israelites were delivered from King Chushan-rishathaim, whom they served eight years. The secret of Othniel's ability to deliver the Israelites was that the "Spirit of the Lord came upon him."—Judges 3:9, 10

Now if the judges will be raised up to serve the Israelites "as at the first," it follows that the Spirit of the Lord will be upon them also, even as, in a special manner, it came upon Jesus at Jordan and upon the apostles at Pentecost. This enabled them to perform miracles of various sorts. These served as "signs" which contributed greatly to the establishment of the Early Church.

Evidently it will be the same in connection with the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh, beginning with the Israelites. There will be miraculous demonstrations of divine power. The divine intervention to save Israel from her enemies in the final phase of the great Armageddon struggle will never be forgotten. Since this will lead immediately into the full manifestation of kingdom authority in the earth, and since the ancient worthies are to be the human representatives of that kingdom, it must be that their awakening from the sleep of death will take the place at about this time.

This itself will be a most convincing "sign" that divine power is operating on behalf of Israel and the whole world. Through the use of divine power, plus their perfection of manhood, the ancient worthies will quickly become the recognized leaders, under the spiritual phase of the kingdom, in the new world.

What Will Be Accomplished?

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit of truth upon all flesh will not accomplish all the things for the world of mankind that it has for the church of this Gospel age. It will not be, properly speaking, a "baptism" of the Spirit, because in the church the only way to come under this baptism of the Spirit is individually to be baptized into the death of Christ. It will, however, lead to full surrender to do God's will.

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It will not be an "anointing" of the Spirit, for the "anointing" signifies appointment to a special office of ambassadorship now, and to reign as kings and priests in the kingdom. The world of mankind will not be thus commissioned to serve. The Holy Spirit will not beget believers of the next age to a new, spirit life, for the willing and obedient then are to be restored to human perfection, not exalted to spirit nature. The "witness" and "seal" are also functions of the Holy Spirit, through the Word of truth, which apply specifically to its working in and for the new creation class of the present age.

Spirit-begotten believers of the present age find themselves surrounded by an unfriendly, and often antagonistic world. Satan is the "god of this world," and the "prince of this world." (II. Cor. 4: 4; John 12:31) And Satan's "spirit" or influence among the people is far from holy. Instead it induces sin. It is the spirit of deception, of ignorance, of superstition, of anger, malice, hatred and strife. Today the Spirit-begotten children of God have to resist these influences of Satan with which they are surrounded. In order that the various manifestations of the Holy Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, meekness, etc.—may manifest themselves, the spirit of Satan has to be overcome.

It is Satan who, in his attacks against the "Seed" of promise, stirs up enmity and persecution against those who are now blessed by the Holy Spirit of truth. But during the millennial age Satan will be bound. No longer will it be necessary to suffer for righteousness' sake. No longer will all the Satan-inspired, unholy influences which war against the people of God now, be permitted to hinder progress in righteousness by those upon whom God pours his Spirit in the kingdom age. Isaiah wrote of that time that the Lord will take away the "rebuke of his people" "from off all the earth."—Isa. 25: 8

While there will continue to be a measure of imperfection manifested in the world until the work of the Holy Spirit upon "all flesh" is completed, righteousness and truth will predominate. That is why Peter foretold that it would be a world—"new heavens and a new earth"—"wherein dwelleth righteousness." (II Pet. 3:13) How different, then, will be the position of the people of God in that age from what it is today!

Even as now, however, believers in Israel and throughout the

world, if faithful to the privileges granted to them at that time, will become "filled with the Spirit." But this will not mean the same for them as it does for the Spirit-begotten children of this age. Now, to be filled with the Spirit implies, among other things, zeal in sacrificing the flesh and its interests, and the setting of affections on things above, on heavenly things, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. But not so in the next age. Then the righteous will not be called upon to sacrifice earthly blessings and joys, but will be encouraged to "plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them," to "build houses and inhabit them," and to "long enjoy the work of their hands."—Isa. 65:21, 22

In this age the calling of God, through the Holy Spirit, leads those called to enter into a covenant of sacrifice. (Ps. 50:5) But in the millennial age, beginning with the "house of Israel and the house of Judah," those who came under the influence of the Holy Spirit as poured out on "all flesh" will enter into what is styled a "new covenant." This "new covenant" does not call for sacrifice. The promise is, "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, 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. 31:31-34

This salutary work of righteousness in the hearts of the people will be accomplished by the Spirit of God. Just as God's Spirit during this age ministers to the church through the written word of truth, we may assume that in the next age there will be definite courses of instruction for the people which will reveal to them the holy will of God, and inspire them to obedience. This is clearly implied in the prophecy which states of that time that "the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the *Word of the Lord* from Jerusalem." (Micah 4:1-4) This is the manner in which the desire of the people will be met, those, that is, who say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain [kingdom] of the Lord, . . . and he shall *teach us of his ways*, and we will walk in his paths." Isaiah, in a very similar prophecy informs us that "*all nations* shall flow unto it."

It has long been recognized by students of the Bible that the

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"Zion" of this prophecy symbolizes the spiritual phase of Christ's kingdom, and that "Jerusalem" represents the human phase in which the ancient worthies will be the "princes," the "judges." Through these, the "Word of the Lord" will go out to all people, and we can be certain that that "Word of the Lord" will be inspired by the Holy Spirit, even as the Word of the Lord through the Holy Spirit of truth reaches us.

The consecrated attitude of the people who then will say, "he will teach us of his ways" is also revealing. They say, "We will walk in his paths." Just as the Holy Spirit of truth in this age has no power over those who do not surrender to its directions, even so it will be in the Millennium. Only those who yield themselves in obedience, declaring their determination to "walk in his ways," will have the law of God written in their hearts. "The Law shall go forth of Zion," the prophet declares. This is the law of the New Covenant. The "Word of the Lord" which goes forth "from Jerusalem," the earthly phase of the kingdom, will be the interpretation of that law in the sense of its proper application in the lives of the people.

Then, even as now, in order to enter into covenant relationship with the Lord it will be necessary to repent of sin, and accept Jesus as the Redeemer and Savior from sin. Jesus, together with his "body" members, will be the mediators of that New Covenant, and will have to be recognized as such by all those who wish to obtain life under its terms. "It shall come to pass," Peter said, "that every soul, which will not hear that prophet"—Christ and his joint-heirs—"shall be destroyed from among the people."—Acts 3:23

A Pure Language

Zephaniah 3:8, 9 is another prophecy pertaining to the time of "great tribulation" which immediately precedes the full establishment of Christ's kingdom, and shows that in that kingdom the Word of the Lord will be diffused among the people in order that all may have an opportunity to serve him. In this prophecy all the nations of the earth are mentioned, and the indignation of the Lord is shown to come upon them, with the whole symbolic "earth"—the present social order—being "devoured" by the "fire" of God's jealousy, or "zeal," as it is in the Hebrew.

All the prophecies pertaining to the "time of trouble" with which

the present age ends reveal, in one way or another, the later outpouring of God's blessings upon the people. So in this prophecy of Zephaniah we are assured that after the present symbolic "earth"—"this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4)—ends, the Lord will "turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." This pure "language" is the Lord's message of truth, the "Word of the Lord" which will go forth from "Jerusalem," that is, from the earthly phase of the kingdom, the resurrected ancient worthies.

Thus, again, we see that the pouring out of God's Spirit upon "all flesh" will be reflected in the knowledge of the divine will which will then fill the earth. It will be this true understanding of God and his laws that will enable the people of all nations to call upon and to serve him. When all serve the Lord, and are in covenant relationship with him, there will be peace and joy everywhere. Isaiah wrote, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [kingdom]: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."—Isa. 11:9

In Revelation 20:12 the diffusion of the knowledge of the Lord which will result from the Holy Spirit being poured out upon all flesh, is symbolized by the opening of "books." The truths contained in these "books" will be the basis of judgment among the people—all the people, even those who have died and will then be awakened from death. Those who yield themselves in obedience to the truths in the opened books will have their names enrolled in the "book of life." This also is symbolic language, but the thought is that obedience to the law of God, the law revealed in the "books" which are then opened by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, will lead to life—not spiritual life, but restored earthly life.

It is this full obedience to the "pure language," the "knowledge of the Lord," and the truths revealed by the opened "books," that is described in the promise of the New Covenant as the law of God being written in the hearts of the people. This means a return to human perfection. It is this work of restoration that is described by Peter as the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21) Then the human race will be in the same covenant relationship with God as Adam was before he sinned.—Hosea 6:7, margin

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Then, through agencies beyond our ability to comprehend, the Holy Spirit of God will provide all the assistance needed in order that the glorious objective of the divine plan for the recovery of mankind from sin and death might be accomplished. It will reach down into the tomb and restore the dead to life. This will be as a re-generation, a re-creation of the human race, and by the same mighty power which accomplished the original creation. The psalmist said concerning God, "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they [the dead] are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall be forever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works."—Ps. 104:30, 31, margin

It is only because sin and death will be destroyed, and the earth filled with a perfect and happy people in keeping with God's original design in creation, that he will "rejoice in his works." Then, too, his name will be honored and glorified by all. Isaiah wrote, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh [the "all flesh" upon whom the Spirit of the Lord will then be poured out] shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—Isa. 40:5

What a glorious prospect! May we continue to rejoice in it, and pray for it, "until the Spirit be poured upon 'all flesh' from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."—Isa. 32:15-17



*Lo, the days are hastening on
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years
Comes 'round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendor fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.*

Children of Light

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."
—I Thess. 5:5

DURING his ministry Jesus declared: "I am the light of the world," and the Scriptures elsewhere record of him that he "was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 8:12; 1:9) The light at that time was only local. Only a few saw it, for it shone in a dark place, and to those who did see it, the Master said: "Blessed are your eyes, for they see."—Matt. 13:16

All those who will ever have the right to life must have the light [divine truth], and since it is God's purpose that every one [including those in the prison-house of death] shall have an opportunity to accept life, the time must come when all will see the light of truth. It is the will of God that "all shall be saved [from adamic death, ignorance, and blindness], and brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth."—I Tim. 2:3, 4, **Diaglott**

The Scriptures reveal that before the world will have this light or knowledge, a saintly class, the true church, the "bride" of Christ, must be enlightened as "children of

light," and must be completed and glorified together with Jesus beyond the veil. Concerning the true church during her earthly pilgrimage we read, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." (Eph. 5:8) When classified as "darkness" we were in ignorance and misunderstanding of God and his holy Word and will. But now we are enjoying the light.

The "children of light" gauge their views, and direct their thoughts, words, and deeds, not by what the majority of their neighbors think to be right, but by what the Word of God teaches. In harmony with their full consecration unto death, they say, "To my Lord I must be true." Thus they are led by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of love, which actuates them.

Our Heavenly Father's sacred Word is indeed a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path (Ps. 119:105), and we each can gladly testify:

"The light of the Word shines
brighter and brighter,

As wider and wider God opens my
eyes;

My trials and burdens seem lighter
and lighter,

And fairer and fairer the heavenly
prize.

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"The wealth of this world seems
poorer and poorer,
And farther and farther it fades
from my sight;
The prize of my calling seems
surer and surer,
As straighter and straighter I walk
in the light.

"My joy in my Savior is growing
and growing,
As stronger and stronger I trust in
his Word;
My peace like a river is flowing
and flowing,
As harder and harder I lean on the
Lord.

"My praise and thanksgiving are
swelling and swelling,
As broader and broader the prom-
ises prove
The wonderful story I'm telling
and telling;
And more and more sweetly I rest
in his love."

Watch

"Let us not sleep, as do others;
but let us watch and be sober."
(I Thess. 5:6) In the context of this
verse we are exhorted to watch
the signs of the times related to
"the Day of the Lord," even the
dispensational change, now present.
While Satan, our Adversary, is ever
active in his efforts to do harm to
the Lord's great and glorious cause,
he will be still more seductive in
his evil influences, "with all power
and signs and lying wonders"
(II Thess. 2:9) during the days in
which we now live. We must, there-
fore, be more and more alert in

guarding every point of attack.
"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith,
... be strong."—I Cor. 16:13

Our Father requires us to do
this watching, and he will reward
the faithful ones. He urges us to
keep awake and with all the "chil-
dren of light" to be learning more
and more of his holy Word and
will; to be more comprehensively
informed concerning his wondrous
"plan of the ages, which he formed
for the Anointed Jesus our Lord."
(Eph. 3:11, **Diaglott**) We are to
grow in grace and in knowledge as
we watch.

The world is still a dark place.
But God's people are granted a
special light; they are "children of
light," and they love the light. The
dawning rays of the great millen-
nial day are here. "Watch thou in
all things, endure afflictions, do the
work of an evangelist [one who
announces good tidings], fulfil thy
ministry." (II Tim. 4:5, margin)
And carefully watching the in-
creasing signs of the times, we, as
faithful watchmen, always on the
alert, call the attention of others
to those wonderful fulfillments of
divine prophecy, and how they are
related to the long-promised king-
dom.

In addition to being watchful, we
are to be sober in mind, not ex-
cited or heated with passion, but
calm and well exercised in self-
control. Some people easily be-
come excitable, and are carried
about by every wind of doctrine.
They cannot give the reason for

what they accept. They do not appear to know that divine truths are intended for those who are seeking, waiting, watching, also hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

A part of our sober watchfulness is also specially with a view to the keeping of our sacrifice upon the altar; maintaining full consecration to God; growing in Christlikeness; faithfully witnessing to the truth, and assisting others to do the same.

Walk

The faithful followers of Jesus do not walk "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2) They are the light of the world, and they "walk as children of light." (Eph. 5:8) God's Word is continually a lamp to their feet.

Human imaginations and ideas, or even consciences, are not sufficient to guide us aright. We need the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and its illumination of our mind in respect to what has been written in God's Word of truth for our learning and instruction. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but that Spirit which is from God, that we may know the things graciously given to us by God." "Because that God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shone into our hearts for illuminating with the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—I Cor. 2:12; II Cor. 4:6. **Diaglott**

As children of light we should lay particular stress upon honesty in our walk before the Lord. "Let us walk honestly, as in the day." (Rom. 13:13) Every true child of God should see to it that he is honest, not only in financial matters, but in his treatment of his neighbors, his brethren in the ecclesia, and above all, in his confessions, respecting his faith. A test is being made along this line, and those who love the favor of men rather than the favors of God will be given an opportunity to prove that they are unfit for the kingdom, no matter what else they may be fit for.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him [make progress]: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith." Walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "Walk in newness of life." "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."—Col. 2:6,7; Rom. 8:1; 6:4; Gal. 5:16

In our walk of complete sanctification we shall experience, even as Jesus did, that the darkness hateth the light. "If ye were of the world," said Jesus, "the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:19) Nevertheless, we are to be zealous for the truth: growing and walking in truth; faithfully proclaiming it, never compromising with error, and at all times speaking forth the truth in love.

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Shine

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5: 14, 16) Our "lamps" are to be cleaned, trimmed, and brightly burning, if our light is to shine out brightly to the glory of our Father. It would appear that some of the Lord's dear children seem very indifferent to the matter of trimming their lamps and letting their light shine. They get some truth and some error, and hold them both together. As a result their light does not shine brightly, for the vessel is darkened by the error.

Others may have the light, but fail to let the truth have the proper place or effect upon their character; and so the light in them is very dim because of the uncleanness of the medium through which it passes. The admonition of the Scriptures should be kept in mind: "Light is sown for the righteous." —Ps. 97:11

The Apostle Paul has referred to our privilege and responsibility as light bearers: "Ye are our epistle . . . known and read of all men." "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men."—II Cor. 3:2; I Cor. 4:9

As far as we permit prejudice, pride, selfishness, self-esteem, strife, injustice, or unrighteousness to interrupt the freedom with which

we receive and hold forth the light of truth, in that same proportion will the light rapidly decline; and such a course persisted in will ultimately lead such a one into utter darkness. If that light within us should go out, we would be in greater darkness than we were before. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"—Matt. 6:23

A great exhortation for us is, "Quench not the Spirit." (I Thess. 5:19) It could be extinguished entirely, but by the Lord's help, we must keep this priceless treasure. It is an evidence that we are children of God. It is the earnest, pledge, or assurance, of our eternal inheritance.

As children of light, "we are ambassadors for Christ." (II Cor. 5:20) While still living in the world, we are not of it, but have transferred our allegiance and citizenship to the heavenly kingdom. As representatives and ambassadors, surely we feel both the dignity and the honor of the position, and the weighty responsibility, as, whatsoever we do in word or deed, we do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. The desire of our heart is to "shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life."—Phil. 2:15

Trials

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." (I Pet. 4:12) We, today, are to be prepared

for severe tests, of which we read: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."—Matt. 24:

24

Not only will our knowledge of the truth, and our faith, be tested, but so also will our Christian love. "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing."—I Cor. 13:2

We can be quite sure that the Adversary will use every means to present to us darkness for light, and to turn us aside from the plainly stated rule of love. It should be remembered that a loveless condition of heart, a hypercritical spirit [so foreign to our Master's Spirit] does not enter us suddenly, but develops gradually.

Hence every day each of the Lord's people should have a searching of his heart to see whether or not he can find there toward anybody, saint or sinner, any of the spirit of malice, hypocrisy, or error which the Lord figuratively represented as leaven, contaminating in its influence.—Matt. 16:6

"Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (I Cor. 5:6) A little envy, a little malice, or anger, hatred, and strife, may leaven our heart completely, and in a comparatively short time turn

the sweets of our nature, the spirit of love, into acid bitterness. Moreover, the leaven is not likely to be confined to one person, but spreads to others, and thus many may be defiled.

Stedfastness

"Beloved, . . . beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked [*Diaglott*, deceit of the lawless], fall from your own stedfastness." (II Pet. 3:17) It will be seen from the context of this verse that the apostle's exhortation has special application to the Lord's consecrated people, "the children of light," living today, during our Lord's presence, when the present social order "shall be dissolved."

The apostle here is not exhorting us merely to be aware of the recognized notoriously wicked persons, but rather that we be watchful lest we be led away with the error of the unstable, or unsettled. The Greek word *athesmos*, here translated "wicked," actually means "unsettled, lawless."

There is danger, we readily see, that those once enlightened in the truth might be so led away as to become unsettled, and to "wrest" the Scriptures, handling the Word of God deceitfully. Thus they become unstable, lawless, in the sense that they would set aside the Word or law of God, and take instead a twisted interpretation which would the better suit some theory of their own.

Such a wrong course the apostle

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points out would surely "unsettle" them, and eventually mean the destruction of their spiritual interest. Thus they would go into "outer darkness" in respect to present truth.

The implication is that the unsettled ones would first be shaken out, and that subsequently there would come still more insidious trials which would test even those who are steadfast. And such trials are, indeed, now upon the Lord's true people. We must be on guard. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. 8:20

The "children of light" are to cultivate more and more all the

various graces of the Holy Spirit. "Knowledge [alone] puffs up, but love builds up." (I Cor. 8:1 **Diaglott**) There is one way only whereby we may insure ourselves against falling into any of the delusions and traps of the Adversary. This insurance is not secured wholly by knowledge, although knowledge is vital, a very important element in it. Another element, of paramount importance, is obedience to the principles laid down in our Father's Word, and illustrated in the life and character of our Lord Jesus. We are to superadd to our faith: fortitude, knowledge, self-control, patience, piety, brotherly-kindness, and love. —II Pet. 1:5-11, **Diaglott**

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Hope (Consolation booklet)—1/2 o dozen.

"Songs in the Night"—2/6

Our Most Holy Faith—10/

God's Promises Come True—10/

The Book of Books (Cloth)—5/-

THE DAWN

98 Seel Street

Liverpool 1

"We Will Not Fear"

AS THE year 1957 draws to a close, and the world prepares to commemorate the birth of Jesus and again recall the words of the angel, "Fear not," the hearts of the people are filled with fear as they consider the failure of human wisdom to solve the perplexing problems which are causing increasing distress everywhere. Not a single one of the baffling problems confronting the world at the beginning of the year has been solved. Nearly all of them have worsened, and many new ones have sprung up. Perhaps the one single event which contributed most to increasing world tensions was the launching by Russia of an artificial "moon." As the atomic age began with the dropping of the first atom bombs to bring the second World War to a close, so now, the scientists tell us, we have entered the "outer space" age.

But as man, by his inventions, ushers in one "age" after another, his problems increase. None of the achievements of human wisdom does anything to destroy the menace of human selfishness, so that everywhere we look the world is beset by worry and strife. As reported in *U. S. News and World Report*, "Not since the chaotic days at the close of World War II have so many nations and governments had so many internal problems to cope with. It is a time when anything can happen."

"Suddenly the world is out of kilter," reports *U. S. News*. This is wrong. It was knocked out of kilter by the impact of the first World War, and has never been able to recover itself. The second World War was another staggering blow which left the world reeling to and fro like a drunken man. In isolated places there was some apparent recovery, but now, it seems, the nations as a whole are in a worse predicament than they were at the war's end in 1945.

Looking briefly at some of the trouble spots—the festering sores of a dying world—we find that in Korea there are millions of un-

employed, and it is only the aid received from the United States that prevents wholesale starvation.

The new Japan is in trouble. The withdrawal of United States troops has greatly curtailed the dollar supply, and the living costs are steadily rising.

In China there are threats of revolt, with famine and flood menacing the nation. The huge army, it is said, is eating up a lopsided share of the resources. This is always true with a big army.

In Indonesia, revolts, gains by the communists, together with seemingly uncontrolled inflation, are threatening to disrupt the entire nation.

France, sometimes referred to as "the sick man of Europe," seems more ill than ever as the year draws to a close. The continued war with Algeria is causing much of France's troubles; and Algeria continues to demand independence.

Syria, with its constant infiltration of communist influence, is posing a threat to the entire Middle East. The United States is endeavoring to offset the communist influence by pouring money and arms into friendly Arab nations. Thirty million dollars a year is being sent to Jordan alone to prevent this little nation from going bankrupt. Israel and Turkey particularly, are much concerned over what is taking place in Syria.

Great Britain is threatened with inflation, so is West Germany. Indeed all the nations are struggling with this problem, even the United States.

Russia's Five Year Plan has been scrapped, and unrest is growing at home and in her satellite countries.

The race problem, in addition to becoming a real issue in the United States, is pestering India and South Africa. The "untouchables" of India, who ten years ago were declared equal with the remainder of India's citizens, are still kept segregated.

For a number of years there has been a gigantic armament race between the Eastern and Western worlds, with the West enjoying a certain sense of security in the belief that the communists were far behind in the race, scientifically, and otherwise. When Russia launched her first artificial satellite this sense of security began to vanish. Now Russia is first in at least one area, and more credence is

THE DAWN

given to her claims of having intercontinental ballistic missiles. So, as the year ends, the non-communist world does not feel certain of anything.

But in a time like this let us thank God for the truth. It is because we know the truth of God's great plan of salvation that we can look out upon this out-of-kilter world, realize the hopelessness of the situation, and yet not share the fear that is in the hearts of so many at the present time, especially the rulers. The psalmist explains this saying, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."—Ps. 46:1-3

The removal of the symbolic earth; the mountains being carried into the midst of the sea; the roaring of troubled waters; we readily recognize as pictorially descriptive of the chaotic and distressing conditions which are everywhere apparent today. We recognize these conditions, and understand more clearly than the people of the world just what their certain outcome will be. We know that "this present evil world" cannot be patched up and made to continue. Not only is France the "sick man of Europe," but the whole world is sick unto death. "Dollar ointment" smeared on the festering spots will not effect a cure. The remedy must be applied from within, and only the Lord can do this; and then it will not be to save Satan's world, but to prepare the people to receive and rejoice in the blessings of the new world, even Christ's kingdom.

It is because we know that Jehovah has the real remedy for earth's ills at hand that we do not fear. "God is our refuge and strength." The psalmist also wrote, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler."—Ps. 91:1-4

God has unlimited ways of caring for his people, but blessing them with a knowledge of his divine plan at this time is a prime factor in removing fear from their hearts. The truth gives no assur-

ance that we will be shielded from trouble, but it does reveal the meaning of the troubled conditions of the world through which we are passing, and assures us that the Lord will give us strength to bear whatever experiences his wisdom may permit. "There is a river," the psalmist wrote, "the streams whereof make glad the city of God," that is, the people of God. (Ps. 46:4) Instead of fearing, our hearts are made glad by the "streams" of the "river," that river of life which eventually is to flow from underneath the "throne of God and of the Lamb" for the blessing of "all the families of the earth."—Rev. 22:1, 17

In this prophecy of the 46th Psalm we are given a figurative description of the removal of all the selfish institutions of the world. The "earth" is removed, the "mountains" are carried "into the midst of the sea." The "waters" are "troubled." But this is not true of the Lord's people, referred to collectively in the prophecy as "her." "God is in the midst of her," we read, "she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." or, as the marginal translation reads, "when the morning appeareth."

"She shall not be moved." This does not imply protection from physical harm. What it does mean is that having been called to joint-heirship in Christ's kingdom, and proving faithful to the terms of that call, we will maintain our position of favor with God, and receive an abundant entrance into the kingdom. Paul puts it this way: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."—Heb. 12:28

We are interested in the affairs of the world because we see in them the fulfilment of prophecy concerning a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1) We know from the events around us that "the time is short." (I Cor. 7:29) We know from the Word of God that the only lasting thing of value to which we can cling is our hope of the kingdom. All else is fleeting and transitory. May the Lord indeed give us grace to serve him acceptably! This is the lesson to us of a deteriorating world. As the raging seas of human passion increase their roaring, may we strive more diligently than ever to make our "calling and election sure," and thus be worthy to reign with Christ on mount Zion.

The Stockholm Convention

A TWO-DAY convention was held in Stockholm, Sweden on August 31 and September 1. In addition to the Swedish brethren, a number were in attendance from Denmark and Finland. Seven discourses were given at the convention. Those who spoke were: Brothers J. Hasselgaard and Axel Christensen, of Denmark; Brother Gunnar Nyholm, of Finland; Brothers Anders Karlen, Stig Dominique, and Einar Dominique, of Sweden. The program also included a testimony period called "The Old Campaigners' Meeting." It was very interesting and blessed to hear the testimonies given at this meeting.

The harmony between the friends was wonderful. Love and joy radiated from all because of the fact that the Heavenly Father had poured out his overflowing blessing upon the convention. Before the convention closed Brother Einar Dominique proposed that the convention send greetings to the brethren of The Dawn in America, expressing appreciation for all the good help they are giving to the Scandinavian brethren.

This message closed with the admonition, "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—Phil. 3:16

Witnessing at California State Fair

FOR several years the Sacramento, California, Ecclesia, in co-operation with the brethren from other parts of California, has maintained a literature booth at the California State Fair. The report of this year's effort is, as in the past, very encouraging. The exhibit is in what is known as "The 'Frank and Ernest' Booth," and the particular theme displayed this year was "God's Precious Promise." The report states, "In the quiet section of 'Educational Exhibits' our booth stood out with its message. Our privileges were many and varied as we had opportunity to chat with those who came to us."

More than 2,000 booklets were distributed to those who visited the booth, and 150 names were received to which sample copies of The Dawn Magazine were sent. There was also a large quantity of tracts and radio announcements distributed; and a considerable

number of books were sold. Copies of The Dawn Magazine were requested in the German, Greek, Danish, Italian, and Polish languages. There were many interesting items in connection with this effort. Here are some of them:

A doctor visited the booth, explained that he was a regular listener to "Frank and Ernest," and that he uses The Dawn booklets in connection with his work with a group of young people.

There are now two men attending the meetings in San Francisco whose first contact with the truth was at the "Frank and Ernest" booth this year. They display deep interest in the truth.

One young man procured a supply of booklets which he took with him to the West Indies. Literature was taken from the booth to every section of California, and to a number of towns in other states as far east as Nebraska.

We rejoice with those who participated in this effort. It is just another opportunity to make known the glad tidings of the kingdom. Whether or not this could be done at other State Fairs is a matter for local inquiry. It is the willingness and the zeal to use these and all other opportunities of service which present themselves that result in the Lord's people as a whole being as "a city set on a hill," which cannot be hid.

OUR Lord, in his memorable words to Peter, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" referred, evidently, to his dying experiences, which were severe in the extreme. He was dishonored of men and reckoned as an enemy of God—a blasphemer. His physical sufferings he knew would be intense, but to his perfect mind the shame and disesteem, the opprobrium, added greatly to the poignancy of his anguish. Yet this was the cup the Father had given him; it was the divine purpose respecting him. Our Lord had all the experiences necessary for proving and testing his loyalty; for it was necessary that he manifest his loyalty before both angels and men. The whole matter had been divinely arranged from before the creation of man. He was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8) Everything pertaining to that slain Lamb was foreknown by the Father. Jesus was to drink the cup which belonged to the sinner, in order that he might redeem man and might thus be a faithful and merciful High Priest. This was the cup of suffering and death. Our beloved Lord drank of the bitter cup to its dregs, and did so thankfully.

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

The Truth

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Will you please send me "The Divine Plan of the Ages." Postal order is enclosed. I am very much interested in your discussions on the radio. Many years ago my mother read "The Divine Plan of the Ages." She died several years ago but I still remember many of the teachings she explained to me, which I believe are the truth. We can certainly see divine prophecies being fulfilled, and that Christ's kingdom is the only hope for the world. Yours sincerely.—Northern Ireland.

Great Comfort

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Would you please send me a copy of your booklet, "Hope Beyond the Grave." I am a widow, living alone, and your programme is a great comfort to me. It is most uplifting. I listen to all your broadcasts and feel much better for it. Thanking you.—England

Found "Millennial Dawn"

Dear Brothers: Quite by accident I heard your broadcast over station CKLW. I had been meeting with two women once a week who professed to rely entirely on the Bible for all their precepts—at least the sect to which they belong does so

profess. I had read the Bible to some extent and I knew that if I intended to be a part of any sect or group, I must be like the noble Bereans who studied the Scriptures daily to see if what they were being taught was true. I found that when I became convinced of a certain point, they refuted the Bible and pointed to their literature in its stead. Within a period of seven or eight weeks they revealed a horrible doctrine—"second death" for all humans who would not hear them and become a part of their sect. It was a time of great testing and trial for me, but I held on to the Bible, and soon God sent me a human friend. I was led to the attic of my home to some old books that had belonged to my father—the six volumes of "Millennial Dawn," written by Charles Taze Russell. Is it just coincidence that one of the men on your program is named Russell? I received these books with much joy. And now it has been a great comfort to me to know that there are still some loving, Christlike, humans with me on the earth. With love I salute your work.—Ohio

Truth Grows Beautiful

Dear Brethren: Christian greetings in the precious name of our dear Redeemer! We appreciate the visits of The Dawn very much. They always contain the truth as

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

taught by our late Pastor Russell. We love the way you bring us right up to date with the various prophecies as expounded by him. The articles on the Holy Spirit are very special and much enjoyed. How beautiful the truth grows, especially in these last days of so many varied voices. Only the truth can sanctify us, therefore we thank our Heavenly Father for your ministry in sending us The Dawn every month, with the message of truth contained therein, bringing joy and gladness to our hearts. We pray that the Lord may continue to bless you by a great indwelling of his Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth, and that you may continue to feed the brethren. Christian love from brother and self.—Australia

Lessens Heartache

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I have just listened to your wonderful words of God on the topic, "When a Man Dies." It has made my heartache a little lighter to bear. You see, I recently lost my dear husband in death. Please send me the booklet you offered. May God bless you in your work for him.—Michigan

Convinced

Dear Sirs: I have read several of your booklets, and I definitely believe that they are the best and most reasonable I have ever read on the Bible. It would make me

very happy to be able to help in spreading this truth; because I do believe it is true. I continue to thank God for bringing this truth to me. I will deeply appreciate it if you will send me information on the different things I can do to help. Very sincerely.—Missouri

The Great Blessing

Dear Sirs: I have just listened to your fine radio service, while I lay in bed. Others in the family were in church, but I believe that I received the greater blessing. Please send me the booklet you offered. God bless you.—New Jersey

The Blind Hear

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I want to express my gratitude to you for such explicit biblical programs that I listen to each Sunday on the radio, as I am blind. I do enjoy hearing the unadulterated truth. Words cannot express my sincere gratitude. May God's richest blessing continually abide with you. Yours truly.—Ohio

Reads Bible with Joy

Dear "Frank and Ernest: I thank God for directing me to your program and thereby helping me to gain light on his Word. I did not like what the ministers taught me about hell. Now I can see how great God's love really is. Now I read my Bible with joy. I wish I might tell everyone the joy I have found. Yours in his name.—Oregon

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

SAMUEL BAKER

Oklahoma City, Okla.	Nov. 29-Dec. 1	1
Wichita, Kans.		2
Topeka, Kans.		3
St. Joseph, Mo.		4
Kansas City, Mo.	5, 6	
St. Louis, Mo.		8
Mattoon, Ill.		9
Champaign, Ill.		10
Indianapolis, Ind.		11
Muncie, Ind.	12, 13	
Cleveland, Ohio		15
Buffalo, N. Y.		16

NICK BARACOS

East Liverpool, Ohio	December	8
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OTIS R. BARRALL

New York, New York	December	15
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JULIUS BEDNARZ

La Salle, Ill.	December	15
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WALTER BLICHARZ, JR.

London, Ont. Can.	December	8
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FRED A. BRIGHT

Paterson, N. J.	December	22
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DAVID A. BRUCE

Bakersfield, Calif. (Morn.) YWCA ..	Dec. 8	
Tehachapi, Calif. (Aft.)		8

EUGENE BURNS

Allentown, Pa.	December	22
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BERTRAM COOPER

Riverside, Calif. (Morn.) ..	December	15
Ontario, Calif. (Aft.)		15

ORLANDO D. DEIFER

Catawissa—Quakake, Pa.	Dec.	1
Pottstown, Pa.		8

THOMAS C. FAY

Whittier, Calif.	December	15
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IRVING C. FOSS

Bakersfield, Calif. (Morn.) YWCA ...	Dec. 22	
Tehachapi, Calif. (Aft.)		22

EARL L. FOWLER

San Diego, Calif.	December	8
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CLARENCE GEORGE

Zephyrhills, Fla.	December	22
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TED HACK

Gary, Ind.	December	15
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JOHN G. HULL, JR.

Bakersfield, Calif. (Morn.) YWCA ..	Dec. 15	
Tehachapi, Calif. (Aft.)		15
Santa Ana, Calif.		22

LEVI JACOBS

Wallingford-Hartford, Conn. ..	Dec.	1
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STANLEY W. JEUCK

Lakeland, Fla.	December	8
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DANIEL KAZIAK

Toledo, Ohio	December	15
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PETER KOLLIMAN

York-Lancaster, Pa.	December	15
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ARTHUR H. KRUMPOLT

Reading, Pa.	December	1
New Haven-Waterbury, Conn.		22

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

C. STUART LIVERMORE

New Brunswick, N. J. December 22

LUDLOW P. LOOMIS

Wilmington-Seaford, Del. December 1
Baltimore, Md. 22

JOHN Y. MAC AULAY

Charlotte, N. C. Nov. 29-Dec. 1
Columbia, S. C. 2, 3
Augusta, Ga. 4, 5
Atlanta, Ga. 6
East Point, Ga. 8
Eastman, Ga. 9, 10
Jacksonville, Fla. 12
Orlando, Fla. 13, 15
Lakeland, Fla. 16
St. Petersburg, Fla. 17, 18, 29
Ft. Pierce, Fla. 19, 20
Miami, Fla. 22, 23
Zephyrhills, Fla. 27
Dunedin, Fla. 30, 31

ADAM MISKAWITZ

Minneapolis, Minn. December 8

EVERETT MURRAY

Kansas City, Mo. December 26

HARRY PASSIOS

Monessen, Pa. December 22

E. K. PENROSE

New York, New York December 15

G. RUSSELL POLLOCK

Bakersfield, Calif. (Morn.) YWCA Dec. 1
Tehachapi, Calif. (Aft.) 1
Fresno, Calif. 8

RAYMOND RAWSON

Adrian, Mich. December 8

FRED W. RICE

Ventura, Calif. December 8

NORMAN F. RICE

Bakersfield, Calif. (Morn.) YWCA Dec. 29
Tehachapi, Calif. (Aft.) 29

W. W. RYBA

Flint, Mich. December 1

ALBERT SHEPPELBAUM

Milwaukee, Wis. December 8

J. I. VAN HORNE

Duquesne, Pa. December 1
Washington, Pa. 15

GEORGE M. WILSON

Jacksonville, Fla. December 4
Miami, Fla. 8

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as
the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so
much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

—Hebrews 10:25

CONVENTIONS

For Mutual Fellowship, Edification, and Service

Full information concerning programs and room reservations can be obtained by writing to the name listed. An asterisk (*) indicates an immersion service is being planned.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, December 8—Women's Benefit Association, 53 East Gay Street. Mrs. Josephine Ewing, 273 South Algonquin Avenue.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, December 8—I. O. G. T. Hall, 2922 Cedar Avenue. Mrs. Charles R. Newham, 678 40th Avenue, N. E.

SAGINAW, MICHIGAN, December 8—Woman's Club, 311 North Jefferson Street. Mrs. C. A. Sundbom, 207 Alice Street.

CLEVELAND, OHIO, December 15—YMCA Building, Prospect Avenue and East 22nd Street. Mrs. Ian Cipperley, 1539 Genessee Road, South Euclid, Cleveland 21, Ohio.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, December 15—In YMCA, 23rd Street and 7th Avenue.

SALEM, OREGON, December 15—2339 State Street. Mrs. Jerry Andrus, 3745 June Avenue.

DETROIT MICHIGAN, December 29—Macabees Building, Woodward Avenue at Putnam. Mr. Charles M. Chupa, 5666 Belmont; Dearborn 6, Michigan.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, December 28, 29—YWCA, 2027 Chestnut Street. Mrs. Otis R. Barrall, 42 Fairfield Road, Haver-town, Pennsylvania.

PHOENIX, ARIZONA, December 28-January 1—Osborn School Auditorium, 3415 N. Cen-

tral Avenue. Miss Esther Haldenwang, 2810 West Roosevelt Street.

WEATHERFORD, TEXAS—December 28-30. Zion Hill Community Church. Mrs. Hassie Long, P. S. R. Weatherford.

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA, December 29—610 Arch Street, Pittsburgh, North Side. Mr. J. I. Van Horne, R. F. D. 2, —Box 145, Mars, Pennsylvania.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, Dec. 31, Jan. 1—Watchnight services and convention on New Year's Day will be held at 912 North La Salle. Mr. Edmund M. Jezuit, 4327 South Christiana Avenue, Chicago 32, Ill.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, January 5—Mr. A. W. Abrahamsen, 2816 West 83rd Street, Inglewood, California.

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA, March 1-3.

MIAMI, FLORIDA, March 7-10.

PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION SPEAKERS

Brothers Orlando D. Deifer; Levi Jacobs; Raymond J. Krupa; Kenneth W. Rawson; and W. N. Woodworth.

PHOENIX CONVENTION SPEAKERS

Brothers L. Paul Davis; Edward E. Fay; Thomas C. Fay; Earl L. Fowler; E. Harry Herrs her; John C. Hull, Jr.; Everett Murray; Adolph Obenland; H. W. Ostrander; Gilbert Rice; William Soper; and Stuart Sowers.

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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 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 wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35