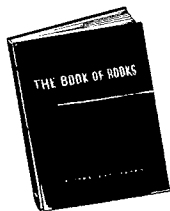


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Highlights of **Dawn**

Life in Outer Space

THE old idea of millions of children that there is "a man in the moon" has in the last few years been revised and made a reality by placing men on the moon—not to live there permanently but to remain at least for a few hours as explorers of its surface. Thus far all who have made these excursions to the moon have returned safely to earth, although some have had narrow escapes. Another of these trips is planned for later in 1972.

When these journeys to the moon were being planned it was sincerely believed by many earnest students of the Bible that God would not allow them to be successful. They believed that God had created man to live on the earth, and would not permit him to travel outside of its atmosphere. This view was supported largely by a statement in Paul's sermon on Mars' hill, where he said that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts 17:26

However, a closer study of this text indicates Paul is not referring to the "bounds of their habitation" in relationship to other planets, but to the division of nations upon the earth. Paul seems to be referring to a statement made

by Moses in Deuteronomy 32:8, which reads, "When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."

The Bible is very definite concerning the fact that man was created to live on the earth, that the earth is his eternal home. But so far as we know the Bible says nothing to indicate that it would be displeasing to God for members of the human race to make exploratory excursions into outer space. There is a vast difference between visiting the moon for a few hours, protected against certain death by space suits and oxygen, and attempting to live permanently under lunar conditions.

The earth is the only planet within the influence of our sun to be just close enough so that its inhabitants, under the protective blanket of earth's atmosphere, do not freeze, and just far enough away to prevent them from dying almost instantly from the heat. Man was created to live under these earthly conditions which are favorable to his anatomy, but so far as is known he could not survive permanently anywhere else in the Creator's vast universe.

We know from object lessons familiar to us that it is possible for God to create beings which can live in environments in which the human species would perish. We only have to look upon the fish to be aware of this. Fish cannot live out of the water, and man cannot live in the water. Man is perfectly at home here on earth, but would die on the moon, or on Mars, or on any of the other planets of which we have any definite knowledge.

Lower Than the Angels

The Bible reveals that there are higher orders of life than the human in God's great universe. Just how and where they live the Bible does not reveal. The Prophet David wrote, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of

thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.”—Ps. 8:3-5

In the Old Testament there are a number of accounts of one or more of these created angels visiting servants of God, either to warn them or instruct them. In the New Testament, when Jesus was being arrested he said that he could call upon his Heavenly Father, and he would send him twelve legions of angels to protect him. In the first chapter of Hebrews, in which the apostle reveals the high position of the resurrected Jesus in the plan of God, he says that he was made so much better than the angels.—vs. 4

Jesus, according to the Bible, was the original creation of Jehovah, the “beginning of the creation of God,” and also “the firstborn of every creature.” (Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15) The apostle also tells us that Jesus was the active agent in all the creative work. He says, “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him.” —Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; John 1:3; Eph. 3:9

Jesus was born into this world of humans as a man, and sacrificed his human life for the sins of Adam and his race. When this sacrifice was complete he was raised from the dead, and highly exalted above “all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet.”—Eph. 1:21, 22

The expressions, “principality,” “power,” “might,” and “dominion,” suggest planes or spheres of life higher than the human, even as Jesus in his prehuman condition and

the angels were and are on higher planes of existence. The Bible does not mention where these beings dwell, but even if it had given this detailed information we could not, with our limited, finite minds, have grasped the truth concerning these higher forms of existence in God's great universe.

Shortly before his crucifixion Jesus said to his disciples, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2, 3) These "many mansions" are undoubtedly planes, or spheres, of life which existed in the universe from the time of God's original creation. Jesus did not promise one of these to the disciples but said that he was going to prepare a place for them, and that he would come again and receive them unto himself.

This particular text has been misused to prove that it is God's purpose to transfer the world of mankind to a heavenly abode, at least all who are not incorrigible sinners. But the promise applies only to Jesus' faithful followers, those who sacrifice their lives in following in Jesus' footsteps. These are promised that if they are faithful unto death they will live and reign with Christ for the blessing of the world of mankind with human life on the earth.

Fallen Angels

The Bible speaks of angels which left their own estate. We quote, "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 6) Peter speaks of these angels and indicates that the time of their sin was just prior to the Flood. He speaks of them as "spirits in prison."—I Pet. 3:19, 20

The Old Testament record indicates the manner in which

these left their "first estate." In this record they are referred to as "sons of God." We quote, "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."—Gen. 6:1, 2, 4

Jesus said of the angels that they neither marry nor are given in marriage. Evidently, as a species of creation, they do not possess the power of procreation as do humans, but it seems that they did possess the ability to materialize as humans, and to beget children of the daughters of men. At least God permitted some of them to exercise such power, even though it involved a leaving of their first, or original estate; and the Scriptures indicate that they have been in God's disfavor ever since, although in God's due time they will have a judgment or trial day in which some of them may be reclaimed. We mention these fallen angels here merely as scriptural evidence of the existence of intelligent creatures other than man.

The Bible was not written to reveal details concerning the nature of angels, how they function, and whether or not they operate from some special location in the universe. The Bible was written to reveal God's plan concerning the creation of man, his fall into sin and death, and his ultimate recovery from the result of his transgression of divine law. Angels and others of God's intelligent creatures which are higher in nature than man are mentioned in the Bible only incidentally as, by divine decree or otherwise, they become involved in the affairs of men, especially in the affairs of God's human servants in working out some of the details of his plan of salvation.

Activities of Angels

Some of the activities of the angels are mentioned in the Bible. When the Prophet Daniel was cast into a den of lions to be destroyed, he announced to Darius the king, who visited him the next morning, that an angel had closed the mouths of the lions, and that thus his life had been spared.—Dan. 6:22

In the 12th chapter of Acts we are told of Peter's being incarcerated in a Roman prison, with the intention of later executing him. But an angel liberated him, leading him to the outer door of the prison—an iron gate which, the account says, opened of its own accord. The opening of that iron gate was no problem for the angel.

Psalm 34:7 reads that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

The Apostle Paul, speaking of the angels, says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"—Heb. 1:14

Jesus said of the angels which serve his people that they do "always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 18:10) This would seem to indicate that, while the angels frequently serve the cause of their Creator here on earth, they are not necessarily confined to the earthly habitat. But when it comes to the location of the angels, or how they or any other of God's creatures which are superior in nature to man operate, the Bible gives us no information. As a matter of fact, our limited minds would probably be unable to grasp and appreciate such information.

However, the fact that we cannot see angels, or comprehend how they function in carrying out their assigned work in the universe, is no argument against their existence. Horses can be taught to count, but they are quite ignorant of what they are doing, nor could they become

acquainted with higher mathematics, but this does not prove the nonexistence of higher mathematics. A dog, they say, is man's best friend, but how limited is the dog in understanding the superior thoughts of his master, especially if his master is a scientist.

It takes months and years of preparation, and billions of dollars, to place a man on the moon, but in all probability the holy angels, and other spirit creatures, can move about in outer space with ease without any special preparation. About all we know of them is that, like God and all other spirit beings, they are invisible and powerful, and are ready to do the Creator's bidding at any time.

God's Home

We are accustomed of thinking of "heaven" as God's home, and Jesus speaks of him as "our Father, which art in heaven." But where heaven is, and what it is like there, we do not know because the Bible does not furnish this information. Jesus also taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) This indicates that the place which the Bible calls heaven is not located here on the earth; and what an earth it would be if such were the case! The Bible indicates that in heaven there is joy, and peace, and love and harmony, and life, with no sickness and death.

We can grasp these realities because the language used to reveal them is part and parcel of our own daily experiences. We may not always experience the spirit of love in our lives, or even within our families, but we know what the language means. We may not always have peace, but we know the meaning of peace; and how blessed it is to realize that in answer to Jesus' inspired prayer these holy conditions of peace and joy and life will one day prevail here on earth among God's human creation.

Just as we cannot understand the angelic nature, much

more are we unable to understand the divine nature of the Creator, nor does the Bible try to explain his nature. The Prophet Isaiah wrote that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's thoughts higher than our thoughts, and his ways higher than our ways. (Isa. 55:9) The Bible does speak of God's listening to the prayers of his people, and that his eyes are ever open to our ears. But here the idea of eyes and ears is used simply to convey to our limited minds the fact that God loves his people, and cares for them, not to suggest that God has ears and eyes as do humans. If God were to explain precisely how he does care for his people, the explanation would probably be far beyond our ability to understand.

The Earth Man's Home

The first chapter of Genesis contains the Bible's account of the creation of the planet Earth, and the record of its preparation for human habitation. At the time the works described in verse two began "the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." The accomplishing of the work described in this chapter is divided into six "days," or epochs, and man was created in the sixth day. It is an interesting chapter which will be a blessing to all who read it.

Beginning with Genesis 1:26 we read, "And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [Hebrew, 'fill'] the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."—vss. 26-28

Careful notice should be taken that there is nothing in this record of the creation of man to indicate that he was ever to occupy any place in God's great universe other than on the earth. The earth was to be his eternal home, and he was to fill it with his offspring and "subdue" it; that is, bring it under control and productivity. The fact that man is now polluting the earth, and threatening thereby to destroy himself, does not change the original divine purpose concerning his eternal habitat.

There is nothing in the Bible anywhere to indicate that God changed his mind concerning the purpose for which he created the earth. Isaiah 45:18 reads, "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else."

The expression, "He created it not in vain," might imply that some situation had arisen which raised a question as to whether or not the earth would be inhabited by man, and this in reality was the case. We read that "the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." Concerning the trees in Eden the Lord said to Adam, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. 2:8, 16, 17

All who have a knowledge of the Bible are aware that Adam did disobey God in partaking of this forbidden tree, and that as a result he was sentenced to death. Eve shared in that sentence, and they both began to die. But that did not make vain the creation of the earth to be man's eternal home, for in his love the Creator provided a way of escape from that death sentence, and that way was through Christ, his own beloved Son whom he gave to be man's Redeemer. Through this loving arrangement of redemption

man will, in God's due time, be restored to life and have the privilege of living forever in the earthly home which the Creator provided for him, despite the temporary threat of extinction through death.

As in Adam

The Apostle Paul gives us a beautiful statement of God's plan of redemption through Christ. We quote: "Since by man came death, by man . . . also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:21, 22) If we can imagine what the state of human life on earth would have been, had sin not entered the scene—no sickness, no pain, no death—then we can surmise what conditions will be like here on this planet when God's great plan of redemption through Christ shall have been accomplished; for because of Jesus' death as the Redeemer and Savior of the world we can be sure that that which would have been is yet to be.

Paul confirms this. He wrote, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (I Tim. 2:3-6) The word "ransom" in this passage is translated from a Greek word meaning "a price to correspond." Jesus was born into the world as a human, and when he went into sacrificial death it was as a corresponding price for Adam, who brought death upon himself and his progeny by his transgression of divine law. This redemption from condemnation has already been provided, and in God's due time the happy result will be the restoration of the human race to health and life.

"Restitution"

The Apostle Peter gives us assurance of this restoration

of man, using the word "restitution." The Apostles Peter and John had performed a miracle of healing a man who had been lame from the time of his birth. To the Israelites who had witnessed this miracle Peter explained that when Jesus returned there would be "times of restitution of all things," and added that this glorious feature of the divine plan had been spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21) In the beginning of the next chapter we are informed that "the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead."

And how comprehensive is the statement that all God's holy prophets had foretold the coming times of restitution! In the prophecy of Isaiah alone there are many wonderful assurances of this glorious time of future blessing for mankind. He wrote that God would "swallow up death in victory," and that he would "wipe away tears from off all faces." (Isa. 25:8) The Prophet Isaiah also wrote that "then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."—Isa. 35:5, 6

Describing the resurrection as a returning from death of those who had been ransomed by the Lord, Isaiah wrote, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. 35:10) What a joyous time that will be for a world which now is sin-sick and dying, and plagued by war and a host of other evils!

New Heavens and New Earth

Turning again to Isaiah's prophecy we quote: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad

and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." (Isa. 65:17, 18) Here the "new heavens and . . . new earth" of promise, and the new "Jerusalem," are closely associated, indicating that they both have to do with the same great events in the plan of God.

In vision the Apostle John sees the fulfilment of this prophecy. We quote: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . . And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21:1, 2) In verses 9 and 10 this "holy city, new Jerusalem," is identified as "the bride, the Lamb's wife," the marriage of the Lamb having been referred to in chapter 19, verse 7.

The Lamb, of course, is Christ, and the "bride" is made up of his faithful followers who will live and reign with him in his kingdom; that kingdom which is symbolized as a "new heaven and a new earth," and a "holy city." This is symbolic language. It has no reference to the creating of a new universe.

Many natural things of earth, as well as the heavens, are used in the Scriptures, to illustrate one or another feature of God's plan, such as water, fire, rivers, trees, sheep, goats, and many others, including the sun, moon, and stars. The Apostle Peter informs us that a "heaven" and "earth" came to an end at the time of the Flood. He refers to it as "the world that then was." (II Pet. 3:6) He informs us also that the symbolic heavens and earth which began there are "reserved . . . against the day of judgment" (II Pet. 3:7), and that they will be destroyed in a great time of trouble which he symbolizes by fire. To this he adds that "we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—vs. 13

This is the new heaven and earth foretold by Isaiah, and

seen in vision by John on the Isle of Patmos. It appears after the marriage of the Lamb takes place, and the new holy city comes down from God out of heaven. Briefly, these are symbolic of Christ's kingdom when his bride, exalted to heavenly glory, will reign with him.

How wonderful it will be in that "new heavens and . . . new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." After seeing in vision the holy city come down from God out of heaven, John continues, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." In ancient times God manifested his presence with his people in connection with a tabernacle, and here he is using this as a symbol of the fact that again he will dwell with "men," and be their God.

And how wonderful will be the results—"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Rev. 21:3, 4) In Isaiah's prophecy concerning the new heaven and new earth which God will create, he says that then "there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days." When John sees this fulfilled in vision this thought of longevity becomes expanded to the point where there is no more death at all, and no more sickness and pain.

Human Failure

Certainly the nations and people of earth today are showing no inclination to look to the Lord for a way out of their chaos and distress, nor is there genuine economic security throughout the earth. It is truly, as Daniel foretold, "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1) But how we should rejoice to realize

that God has provided a solution, the kingdom solution, and that in his own due time the nations will accept God's ways!

Then there will be economic security; then there will be no more war; then there will be no more sickness and death, for all the former evils which have plagued a dying world shall have passed away. Paul said that Christ would reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. We rejoice in this glorious prospect of the future happiness of God's human creatures.

These blessings will not be limited to those who will be living at that time, for as we have seen, God proposes to restore the dead to life, that they also might share in those kingdom blessings. Is this too difficult to believe? It should not be. If man in his fallen condition and with limited resources can travel to the moon, let us realize that God with his almighty power is able to accomplish anything which he has promised to do.

Besides, it will be no more difficult for God to restore the dead to life than it was for him to create life in the first place. The religion of the Bible is the only one in the world which holds out the hope of a resurrection of the dead, and there could be no true and lasting solution of the woes of the human race unless that solution provided for the resurrection of the dead.

So, let humans travel to the moon if they will, or to Mars, or anywhere else in outer space their fancy may dictate; but let us, by putting our trust in the God of all space, and of the universe, continue to rejoice in the provision he has made for the followers of Jesus to be exalted to spiritual glory to live and reign with him in his kingdom, and for humanity in general to be restored to life on the earth, the wonderful home which the Creator so lovingly prepared for them. □

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Sheffield WSHF 1290 1:30 p.m.

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Los Angeles KBIG 740 9:30 a.m.

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San Francisco KNEW 910 8:15 a.m.

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Montrose KUBC 580 8:15 a.m.

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Wilmington WTUX 1290 10:15 a.m.

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Tampa WFLA 970 9:30 a.m.

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Kealahou KKON 790 11:30 a.m.

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Minneapolis KQRS 1440 11:30 a.m.

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Great Falls KKGf 1310 9:15 a.m.

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WHLd 1270 12:00 noon

Kingston WBAZ 1550 9:45 a.m.

Mineola (Sat.) WTHE 1520 9:00 a.m.

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Aguadilla (Frl.) WGRF 8:00 p.m.

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Cheyenne KVWO 1370 9:15 a.m.
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CFCB 570 10:30 a.m.
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RADIO TOPICS FOR FEBRUARY

6—"Science and Creation"

20—"Evolution Versus the Bible"

13—"History in Advance"

27—"Life Beyond the Grave"

Bible Study

LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 6

Christ in the City

MEMORY VERSE: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!"

—Luke 13:34

LUKE 19:37-48

THE experiences related in this lesson occurred near the close of Jesus' ministry, and in the city of Jerusalem. We do not know how many times Jesus visited Jerusalem during the course of his ministry. Matthew, Mark, and Luke report only this one occasion, but John indicates that he had been to Jerusalem several times. In any case, Jesus doubtless loved Jerusalem, for it stood for the entire Jewish polity, and as our memory verse clearly shows, he would have been happy if the people had responded in belief to his message of the kingdom.

The verse following our memory verse reports Jesus as continuing, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, ye shall not see me, until the time come

when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Literally, Jerusalem was made desolate by the Roman army some thirty-seven years later than this, but it would seem here that Jesus is referring particularly to the Jewish polity, and Israel's hope of being a royal nation in association with their Messiah as the future rulers of the world. This hope failed as a result of their rejection of the Messiah, although when awakened from the sleep of death they will receive an opportunity to accept Jesus as their Redeemer, and those who do will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Jesus had performed many miracles in Israel, and on the occasion of this final visit to Jerusalem "the whole multitude of the disciples [that is,

the believers] began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest."

Hearing this acclamation, some of the Pharisees requested Jesus to rebuke his disciples, "and he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

When Jesus came near to Jerusalem he began to weep over the city, lamenting that the eyes of the people had been closed to the significance of his presence with them. Forecasting the doom of the city, he said, "The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

Jesus went into the temple "and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought, saying unto them, 'It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.'" (see

Jer. 7:11) Jesus taught daily in the temple, at least for a short time, "but the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, and could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him."

What an excellent opportunity this was for the Master to present his message of the kingdom, for there would be many more worshipping in the temple than at other times of the year. It had been said of Jesus that never had man spoken as this man did, and with what rapt attention those people in the temple must have listened to him! Besides, probably many of them had been robbed by the money changers whom Jesus had cast out of the temple, and he would be appreciated by them for this much needed reform in temple practices. However, it was not long after this that Jesus' enemies did succeed in destroying him, but in his death he became the world's Redeemer.

QUESTIONS

What did Jesus mean when he said to the Israelites, "Your house is left unto you desolate"?

Who were the money changers?

Endurance and the Christian Hope

MEMORY VERSE: "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away."—Luke 21:33

LUKE 21: 25-36

THE prophecies contained in this lesson pertain to what the Bible indicates to be "the end of the world." However, to understand the end-of-the-world prophecies correctly it is essential to realize that to a large extent they are couched in symbolic or pictorial language.

Actually, the end of the world described in the Bible is not the end of the literal heavens and earth, but of a social order which these symbolize. Many of the literal things of earth, as well as the heavens, are used in the Bible to picture various truths of the divine plan—rivers, trees, grass, mountains, the oceans, sheep, goats, etc. The characteristics of these literal objects suggest the meaning which the Bible attaches to them when they are used to present God's truth.

Similarly, the sun, moon, and stars are used as symbols. For example, Malachi 4:2 reads, "The sun of righteousness [shall] arise with healing in his wings." Here the warming, heal-

ing rays of the sun are used to illustrate the divine healing powers of the Messiah that will operate during the thousand years of his kingdom.

Our lesson speaks of the "powers of heaven" being shaken, and of heaven and earth passing away, but actually, according to the promises of God's Word the literal heaven and earth shall never pass away. The earth was created to be man's eternal home. Isaiah 45:17, 18 reads, "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord; and there is none else."

The literal heavens exercise a certain control over the earth. The tides and seasons are thus controlled, and this means that life itself is pretty much subject to the control ex-

exercised by the heavenly bodies. This fact is used in the prophecies to illustrate that the social order under which we live has two principal aspects, the heavenly, so far as we are in contact with it, being largely the powers of religious control.

It is this symbolic picture of a great time of trouble that is presented in verses 25, 26: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." (see Isa. 17:12, 13)

There seems no doubt that we are now living in this foretold time when the hearts of the people are failing them for fear of what they see coming upon the earth. The fact that the powers of the symbolic heavens are no longer able to hold society in check is one of the major contributing causes of the distress of nations and the resulting fear.

Verse 27 associates these events with the coming of the "Son of man." The text says that he comes "in a cloud with power and great glory." (compare Revelation 1:7) Here is further use of symbolic lan-

guage. Literal clouds would conceal, but these clouds of trouble reveal the presence of the Son of man. No human will see Jesus literally. The thought is that those who know the meaning of the prophecies will discern their fulfillment as indicating that the end of the age has been reached, and that the time is near for the establishment of his kingdom, which will be the new world, or social order of tomorrow.

The "Parable of the Fig Tree," and "all the trees," is revealing. The fig tree is a symbol of the Jewish nation, but in addition to Israel many new nations have come into existence; and Jesus said that this would also be an evidence that the "kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

Jesus assures us of the trustworthiness of his words. Though the symbolic heavens and earth will pass away, his prophecies will remain and be fulfilled, and today we are seeing their fulfillment. It is a time for great watchfulness on the part of all true followers of the Master.

QUESTIONS

Give examples of the use of symbolic language in the Bible.

What will supplant the symbolic heaven and earth of today when they pass away?

The Death that Changes Lives

MEMORY VERSE: "By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—I John 3:16, RSV

LUKE 23:39-53

THE account of Jesus' crucifixion, and the events associated with it, is always reassuring and revealing. He was crucified between two "malefactors." One of these was very critical of Jesus, but the other showed a degree of kindness. He rebuked the other malefactor and then said unto Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

It is not necessary to conclude from this request that the thief had become a believer in the Gospel of the kingdom. It is more likely to suppose that all he knew of the kingdom was from the inscription nailed at the head of the cross—"This is the king of the Jews." Anyway, by the use of the word "verily" Jesus acknowledged the thief's request as being a proper one. Prof. Rotherham translates Jesus' reply, "I say unto thee this day: with me shalt thou be in paradise."

The essential difference in Rotherham's translation of this

verse is that he places the punctuation (in this case a colon) after the words "this day" rather than before them. This puts the emphasis on the day he made the promise to the thief, rather than on the time they would be in paradise. This was proper, because as things looked at the moment there did not appear to be much prospect that Jesus would ever come into a kingdom. Whether the thief had faith to believe that he would is beside the point. Jesus believed that he would come into a kingdom, and that was the basis upon which he responded to the thief's request, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

Jesus not only had faith that the Heavenly Father would raise him from the dead to be the great King in the messianic kingdom, but he knew also that the kingdom would accomplish its intended purpose; namely, the restoration of the human race to life, and the establishment of a world-wide

paradise. That is why he could promise the thief on that dark day of seeming defeat that his kingdom would come, and that through its agencies a world-paradise would be established, and that the thief would have the opportunity of enjoying the blessings of life in that paradise.

As a matter of fact, the thief who rebuked Jesus will also be awakened from the sleep of death and be given an opportunity of enjoying the blessings of that earthly paradise. This will be true of all who have died, for they will all be awakened from death at that future time when the life-giving blessings of the kingdom will be flowing out for the enjoyment of all who then believe and obey the laws of Christ's kingdom.

Verse 48 reads, "And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned." This implies that these were not too sympathetic with the way the religious rulers of Israel had brought about the death of this One who spake as never man had spoken before.

In addition to the general audience which witnessed Jesus' crucifixion "all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things." Their

reaction must have been one of genuine sorrow, especially since they did not then know that on "the third day" he would be raised from the dead. Nor did they understand at the time that it was necessary for Jesus to die—"to make his soul an offering for sin."

Rotherham translates verse 46, "And calling out with a loud voice Jesus said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And thus saying he ceased to breathe." The "spirit" which Jesus committed to God was his life, and he had confidence that this life would be restored.

Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Jesus' body. This Joseph was a member of the council, "a good and righteous man" (Roth.) who did not consent to the death of Jesus.

Joseph obtained consent from Pilate to take charge of Jesus' body, "and he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid." It is said of Joseph that he "waited for the kingdom of God," and how he will rejoice when that kingdom is established!

QUESTIONS

Did Jesus and the thief go to paradise the day they died?

Who was Joseph of Arimathea?

Walking with the Living Christ

MEMORY VERSE: "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."—1 John 1:7

LUKE 24:13-16, 27-35

JESUS' disciples were much confused and filled with sorrow when, unexpectedly, he was taken from them and crucified. As the lesson states, they expected that he was the One who should redeem, or deliver Israel from the Roman yoke of bondage. To them it was unthinkable that a dead Messiah could accomplish such a far-reaching work of deliverance.

There seemed a tendency for the disciples to scatter. After all, what could be done, now that their Leader was dead? The lesson states that "two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs" — about eight miles. "And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they

should not know him." It is evident from this that Jesus here appeared in a body quite unlike the one to which the disciples were accustomed.

Verse 27 reads that "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." What important point of truth did Jesus explain to these two disciples? Obviously it was what they needed most to know in view of their sorrow and confusion over his death. Verses 25 and 26—omitted from the lesson assignment read, "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

The disciples rejoiced in the many wonderful messianic promises of the Old Testament which outlined the glory of the coming kingdom and the blessings it would dispense to the world,

but they had failed to note those prophecies which foretold the death of Jesus—that he was to die in order to redeem the world from death. Had they had these prophecies in mind they would not have been so confused when Jesus was taken from them and crucified.

It was a long walk that Jesus and these two disciples had that day. They must have been on the road for more than two hours, and in that time Jesus could refer to many of the prophecies which pertained to his suffering and death. He began with Moses, probably reminding them of certain sacrificial services of the tabernacle which pointed forward to his death. He may have quoted Psalm 22:1, as he had done on the cross: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

And then there is Isaiah 53: 12, which foretold that Jesus would pour out his soul “unto death,” and that he would be numbered with the transgressors. The disciples knew that Jesus was not a transgressor, and it was difficult for them to understand why he would need to suffer and die as would a criminal.

But evidently they began to understand the reason for this as Jesus discoursed to them, for afterward they said, “Did not our heart burn within us,

while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?” Jesus continued to walk with the two disciples until they reached Emmaus, and then he indicated that he would continue on alone. But they constrained him to remain with them, saying, “Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.”

When they sat down together to partake of their meal Jesus acted as host. “He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.” It was his special way of performing this service that opened their eyes to Jesus’ identity. Later when they met with the other disciples they told them “how he was known of them in breaking of bread.” Having disclosed his identity Jesus vanished from their sight.

Now they were convinced that Jesus was indeed risen from the dead. Armed with this knowledge they returned immediately to Jerusalem, where they announced the good news to the eleven gathered there.

QUESTIONS

What basic point of truth did Jesus reveal to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus?

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Waiting Ended

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."—Revelation 19:7

THE "Lamb" symbolism is very prominent in the Bible. It is introduced in Genesis 3:4 where we are told of a lamb sacrifice which Abel offered to the Lord, and which was accepted by him—apparently prefiguring the sacrifice of "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) Later Abraham was instructed to offer a lamb in sacrifice to the Lord as a substitute on the altar for Isaac.—Gen. 22:11-13

Then there was the passover lamb which was offered in connection with the deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt, pointing forward to the deliverance of all mankind from bondage to sin and death. In this picture the first-born of Israel were the first to benefit from the shed blood of the lamb.

In Isaiah 53:7 we read of the antitypical "Lamb" that "he was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

In the New Testament the Apostle Paul refers to "Christ our passover [lamb]" who is "sacrificed for us"; and the Apostle Peter explains that we are redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."—I Cor. 5:7; I Pet. 1:19

This wonderful Lamb of God is also mentioned in the Book of Revelation in the 5th chapter. Verse 6 reads, "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth unto all the earth." Notice that here we are informed that the Lamb "had been" slain. The personal sacrificial aspect of Jesus' ministry was now over, and he was the highly exalted Lamb.

The ultimate objective of his sacrifice was that all mankind might be reconciled to God through the agencies of the messianic kingdom which he would establish. This, in part, is the foretold glory which was to follow the suffering of Jesus, and a prophetic description of this glory is given in verses 11-13, which read:

"I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, . . . and such as are in the sea, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Washed in the Blood

Revelation 7:14, speaking of the "great multitude," says

that "these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." While here the reference is specifically to the "great multitude" class, the purpose of the blood on behalf of all who benefit from it is to cleanse from sin and to make the beneficiary acceptable to God.

In Revelation 13:8 Jesus is again referred to as a Lamb—"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." In Revelation 14:1 we find the Lamb standing on mount Sion, "and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." In verse 4 we are informed that "these are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."

In Revelation 15:2-4 we are told of those "that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, . . . and they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not reverence thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

The Lamb Overcomes

The Book of Revelation refers repeatedly to evil forces opposed to the Lamb and the work of God he is accomplishing. These opponents are referred to as "beasts," "dragons," etc. In chapter 17, verse 14, these evil forces "make war with the Lamb," and the Lamb overcomes them. This denotes progress in the plan of God—progress to the point where evil is no longer triumphant. And by the time

this becomes true, the "called, and chosen, and faithful" are with the Lamb, participating in his glorious victory.

The last reference to the Lamb in Revelation is in chapter 22, verse 1, which reads, "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Here the Lamb is enthroned, and the promised blessings of the kingdom are flowing out to the people. However, this cannot become a reality until the marriage of the Lamb takes place, and he is united in glory with the "called, and chosen, and faithful."

Work of an Age

The work of the "bride" in making herself ready to become the Lamb's "wife" requires an entire age in the divine plan. It began at Pentecost, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and still continues. It is a work of the Holy Spirit within the hearts and lives of the consecrated followers of the Master, who in their present relationship with him are spoken of as espoused virgins.

While it is the power of the Holy Spirit which accomplishes the making ready of the "bride," it is not without the earnest co-operation of each individual who will make up that honored company which will share the glory and the riches of the heavenly "Bridegroom." First there is the full submission of the mind to be governed by the mind of Christ, which, in turn, is the mind or will of the Heavenly Father. The Holy Spirit cannot work in a heart that is rebellious to the will of God.

The prospective members of the Lamb's wife must be thoroughly loyal to him, and fully set apart to the task of being developed into his character image. This means a complete separation from the world; a resolute warring against the flesh and its interests, and a complete opposi-

(Continued on page 34)

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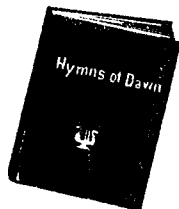
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THE WAITING ENDED

(Continued from page 31)

tion to Satan and all his godless influences. These things can be accomplished in our lives only through the power of the Holy Spirit, but we can negate that power by showing sympathy for our fleshly, evil tendencies. The great objective of being made ready for marriage with the Lamb is absolute loyalty to him and for all that he stands, for those who participate in that marriage will not do so on an experimental basis.

Her Clothing

The bride of the Lamb is described in Psalm 45:13 as "the King's daughter," the "King" being the Heavenly Father. We are told by the King James Version that the King's daughter is "all glorious within," and that "her clothing is of wrought gold." Rotherham's translation reads, "All glorious—the daughter of a king sitteth within. Brocades, wrought with gold are her clothing." Verse 14, Rotherham, reads, "In embroidered raiment shall she be brought unto the king."

How glorious indeed will the bride appear within the palace of the King! Her clothing will be "brocades wrought with gold," symbolic of the divine nature. She shall also be brought into the King's palace "in raiment of needlework." This suggests the adornment of character, the "fruit of the Spirit" which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." How wonderful indeed will be the characters of those who are adorned by this fruitage of the Spirit, and all of the bride class must be thus adorned before the marriage of the Lamb can take place, for this is not to be a piecemeal marriage of some of the bride class at one time and some at another.

God's work through the Holy Spirit, and our work in connection therewith, are beautifully set forth by the Apostle Paul. Writing to the church at Philippi, he said, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. 2:12, 13

Important Step

Just think what an important juncture in the divine plan it will be when, finally, the "marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." There have been many important developments in God's great plan for the deliverance of the human race from sin and death. His promise to Abraham that through his seed he would bless all the families of the earth was one of these. The coming of Jesus at his first advent was a wonderful step forward in the divine plan. For centuries God had promised the coming of Jesus to be the Redeemer, Messiah, and King, and now he had come: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ our Lord."—Luke 2:10

The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was another step forward in the outworking of the divine plan of salvation. But this marked only the beginning of the work of making ready the "bride, the Lamb's wife." Long centuries were to elapse while this preparatory work was to continue. Satan was to be permitted to try the individual members in all sorts of ways. The Book of Revelation portrays his beastly organization through which he has persecuted the saints—the false kingdom arrangement made up of the union of an unholy "woman" with the kings of the earth.

But these are eventually destroyed; that is, when the time comes in the plan of God for the marriage of the

Lamb to take place. And then, when that does occur, and the bride and the Bridegroom are made one before the great white throne, Satan is bound, that he should deceive the nations no more. (Rev. 20:1-3) With the marriage of the Lamb having taken place, it means that the "first resurrection" has been accomplished, and then those who have been thus exalted "live and reign with Christ a thousand years."—Rev. 20:4, 6

The judgment day for all individuals of the human race can then get under way. Then "the dead, small and great" will "stand before God" and the "books will be opened, which is the book of life"; and the dead will be "judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. 20:11, 12) All truly enlightened Christians have longingly waited for the time to come when mankind would be enlightened and tried upon the basis of the things written in these symbolic books, but this will not become a reality until after "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

God's City

In Hebrews 11:10 we read that Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." A city, in the Bible, symbolizes a government, or kingdom, and the people of God in all ages have looked for his "city", his promised kingdom to come. In vision the Apostle John saw the coming of this "city": "I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." In Revelation 21:9 and 10 John writes, "There came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, and I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."

This "Holy City," then, is the "bride, the Lamb's wife," but there is no such bride until the marriage of the Lamb takes place. This means that this symbolic city, which will be God's agent in blessing all families of the earth, cannot come until the bride has made herself ready; and we believe that there is a considerable number of the bride class still engaged in this blessed work.

When the espoused virgins become the bride of Christ, and the "city" comes down from God, then will be poured out all those wonderful blessings which are described in the chapter. Then "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."—Rev. 21:4, 5

We know that the words of him who sitteth on the "throne" are always true and faithful, although the time may seem long while we wait for their fulfilment. But God has a complete and precise timetable of every detail and major event in his plan. Just as it was in his "due time" that he sent his Son to be the Savior of the world, so it will be in his due time that "the marriage of the Lamb" will come. God knew how much time would be required for the bride to make herself ready, and not until that due time will this great event take place, and not until then will the Holy City be ready to come down from God to rule and bless the people. Not until then will the long waiting period be ended, in which the people of God have frequently inquired, "How long, O Lord, how long?"

The Throne and the Lamb

The final chapter of the Bible tells us further of events to follow the marriage of the Lamb. Verse 1 reads, "And

he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." The throne of God here symbolizes divine authority operating throughout the earth. And, of course, the Lamb symbolism reminds us that the blessings of that wonderful government have been provided by the shed blood of Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."—John 1:29

Verse 2 reads (RSV), "Through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Here is another reference to the "city" with the added information that a river of life runs through the midst of it; and that on either side of this river there are the trees of life.

This "river" of life is clear as crystal. No more will men's minds be polluted with all sorts of traditional theories as to how to obtain salvation, for he who deceived all nations will then be bound. The water of life then flowing from "the throne of God and of the Lamb" will be wholesome and will provide life eternal for all who will humbly and obediently partake of it.

And the opportunity to partake will be extended to all. Verse 17 reads, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." What a prospect this is for the sin-sick and suffering world of mankind; a prospect which, nevertheless, must wait its fulfilment until the bride has made herself ready, for until the marriage of the Lamb there is no bride. It is "the Spirit and the bride who initiate the invitation to "Come" and partake of the water of life.

Here, then, is another wonderful prophecy of the king-

dom which is still awaiting fulfilment—waiting for the last members of the bride of Christ to complete the embroidery on their garments which will appear so beautiful when at long last they are ushered into the palace of the King. There is nothing any of the Lord's servants can do to speed up the timetable of God's plan, but through diligence and faith we should endeavor to be ready for the marriage to the Lamb when God's due time for this great event in his plan arrives.

In Revelation 7:1-3 we are reminded of God's great interest in the last members of the bride class. The great "time of trouble" which brings this present evil world fully to an end is here symbolically described as "four winds," and four angels standing on the four "corners" of the earth are instructed to hold back these winds "till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads." So may this sealing work go on in our foreheads, and in our hearts also, until the work is complete, which will be when the last member has passed beyond the veil. Then the waiting will be ended, for then the "marriage of the Lamb" will come. Then there will be a Holy City; then there will be a river of life; then there will be a bride to say "Come" and partake. And then all, Jew and Gentile, can pass the invitation along to all mankind. □

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The British Section

The Armour Of Light

MANY illustrations are used in Scripture to show the relationship between the people of God and the Lord Jesus, the great Head of the church, as to the work of grace which goes forward in our hearts. There are also pictures of our work both among the brethren and in the world. These are helpful in our calling and preparation for the kingdom.

One of the most helpful and comforting pictures is that of Jesus as our Shepherd and we his sheep. Again, he is the Head of the body, and we the members; he is the Vine, we the branches; he is the Bridegroom, we the prospective bride; Jesus is the High Priest, we the church, the under-priests, together constituting a Royal Priesthood; he is the Captain, we the soldiers in his army.—Heb. 2:10

In connection with this last illustration, the apostle exhorts each to be "a good soldier of Jesus Christ." (II Tim. 2:3) In writing to the Ephesians, Paul specially refers to the "armour" with which the Lord's soldiers must be clad if they would successfully fight the good fight of faith. In his illustration he refers to the various pieces of armour worn by the Roman soldier in his day. Rome being the conqueror of almost the whole of the then known world, her soldiers would be more familiar in the every-day life of both Jews and Gentiles living in the countries through which Paul traveled than would be the soldiers of any other nation. Six pieces of armour are referred to: the helmet, breastplate, shield, girdle, sandals, the sword; and Paul exhorts, "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."—Eph. 6:13-17

Breastplate

The breastplate was one of the most important pieces of armour. It protected the front of the body, especially the vital organs, such as the heart and lungs. The piece of spiritual armour corresponding to this is called a breastplate of righteousness, so it well illustrates the Lord's imputed righteousness which covers our imperfections and is vital to our standing as new creatures in Christ Jesus. Surely we need the breastplate of righteousness that we might be able to stand. It is elsewhere described as "the breastplate of faith and love."—I Thess. 5:8

As the breastplate was worn over the front of the body, it, as already suggested, very appropriately represents that imputation of Christ's righteousness each soldier receives on enlisting in the Lord's army. Before we can be accepted, however, we must cease serving the Adversary, repent of sin and the wrong course in which we have been walking, and turn to the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer, through whom alone we can come to the Father with acceptance. When we turn to

him in true faith, and in consecration give ourselves to him, the merit of the sacrifice for sins made on our behalf is imputed to us, hence the breastplate of righteousness is called "the breastplate of faith and love."

If we would be accepted, there must be a willingness to enlist as soldiers in the Lord's army, to fight for the great principles of righteousness for which Jesus fought; a willingness, in spite of all the fiery trials, evil-speaking, and misrepresentation hurled at the Lord's little army. But we can rest firmly upon the assurance, "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" "There is . . . now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."—Rom. 8:1, 33, 34

Girdle

"Stand . . . having your loins girt about with truth." (Eph. 6:14) That which holds the armour in position is the girdle. A soldier could hardly be expected to engage in successful combat if his armour hung loosely about him. As a part of the panoply of the Christian, the girdle suggests service. Everyone called

to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ must be prepared for active service. If we do a great deal of Bible study without zealously engaging in the service of the truth, our armour will hang loosely.

In other words, unless we seek to be faithful witnesses, we will be in danger of failing to become firmly established in all the fundamental doctrines of the divine plan "rooted and built up in him." (Col. 2:6, 7) The more we tell the good tidings to others, and contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, the more firmly grounded and convinced of the truthfulness of our message shall we become. With special reference to our day the Master said, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning."—Luke 12:35, R.V.

Protection for the Feet

The Roman soldier often had to march and fight over very rough, difficult country, hence the feet needed special protection. This was provided for by specially made shoes and by the greaves which protected the legs and instep. So, in view of the dangers and difficulties of this present

evil world, the Christian needs special protection in his walk through life, and specially through the dangerous and difficult country he often finds must be his battleground.

He has experiences which continually remind him that he is in the same narrow way as that in which his Master walked, and whose promised grace is sufficient to strengthen and uphold, however difficult the pathway may be. In view of this we are exhorted to "make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way."—Heb. 12:13

It is important, therefore, in view of the difficult path we tread, to see that we are properly shod, that it is the Gospel of peace, the true Gospel, that we are carrying to others—a message which speaks to the church during the Gospel Age, and later to all mankind during the Millennium.

Not only must we be shod with this Gospel of peace, but the spirit of the Lord's message must also go with it, which is peace and good will. The Master suggested, "Into whatsoever house ye enter,

first say, Peace be to this house." (Luke 10:5) Paul wrote, "Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed."—II Cor. 6:3

Shield

The Roman soldier used his shield as a protection for whatever part of the body the weapons of the enemy were likely to reach. Especially did he need protection from the poisoned arrows which sometimes would be falling thick and fast. This shield beautifully pictures the shield of faith, or "the shield of the faith."—Eph. 6:16, Diag.

And what a wonderful protection we have in "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"! (Jude 3) The truth of the divine plan enables us to see immediately what is, and what is not, in accord with the Word of the Lord. Before seeing the light of present truth we were often uncertain regarding the correctness of the message presented to us. Now, by means of the truth of the Word—our shield of faith—we are protected from all the poisonous arrows of false doctrine which, hitting our shield, instead of injuring us, will

fall harmlessly to the ground. **All** the fiery darts may be quenched in this way, even "all power and signs and lying wonders," which Satan seeks to hurl against the faithful.—II Thess. 2:9

The Helmet

We find that the Scriptures present things to us from the standpoint of reason. The Lord invites us, "Come now, and let us reason together." (Isa. 1:18) And when we respond to this gracious invitation, coming to the Word of God with a sincere desire to understand the plan of salvation in Christ, we find from the beginning of our inquiries that "Christ is made unto us wisdom," that what he reveals appeals to us as reasonable.—I Cor. 1:30

The Lord, through Isaiah, tells us that the special truth he desires us to reason about, and to see its justice and wisdom, is the arrangement whereby sin can be canceled, and one made right with God. In other words, the arrangement whereby God can be "faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9) Isaiah says, "Though

your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”
—Isa. 1:18

This wisdom from above which in our day has been so abundantly supplied, James tells us is first of all “pure,” clear—not dark, obscure, unreasonable—and appealing to the mind as well as to the heart. (James 3:17) It is a message which brings us out of darkness into his marvelous light, fulfilling the words of our dear Redeemer, “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”—John 12:46; 8:12

And so we find that under the guidance of the Spirit of truth, the Word of God in its personal appeal to the heart and conscience as well as in its dispensational features, becomes more and more a protection to our reasoning faculties. In addition, it is a guide to our spiritual life and conduct.

Sword

The only offensive weapon of a good soldier of Jesus Christ is his spiritual sword, the sword of the Spirit used in attack against Satan’s king-

dom of darkness, its errors and deceptions—false doctrines of all kinds. Our fight, as Paul says, is not a fight against flesh and blood, against our fellows in any shape or form, but is against “principalities, against powers, against [the evil influence of] the rulers of the darkness of this present [evil] world.”—Eph. 6:12; Gal. 1:4

Of the great Captain of our salvation it is written, “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved,” by delivering them from all those things holding them in bondage and in blindness to the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. (John 3:17) Paul, in speaking of his share in the Christian warfare, said, “I am set for the defense of the **Gospel**.” (Phil. 1:17) To defend the Gospel against all comers requires courage and faith, and means a constant looking to the Lord that he might continue to supply grace sufficient for all our needs.

Temptations will sometimes come to us not to use our sword, or to use it halfheartedly. The prophet writes a

word of warning concerning this: "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood." (Jer. 48:10, R.V.) If we would have the Lord's approval, we must surely be instant in season and out of season.

In addition to having on the whole armour of God and a well-sharpened sword of the Spirit, we must be of good courage and war a good warfare in the face of the enemy, remembering that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, "casting down

imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God."—II Cor. 10:4, 5

Just as the Roman soldier before going into battle appealed to his gods for protection and victory, so it must be with the good soldiers of Jesus Christ. We should, as Paul says, "Pray always with all prayers and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." (Eph. 6:18) Throughout our course we should be able to say with Paul, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—I Cor. 15:57 □

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Your Questions

Prayers for the Sick

Please explain James 5:14, 15, which speaks of prayers saving the sick.

The text cited reads, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

Although no such ordinance was enjoined upon believers by Jesus, evidently it was the custom of some in the Early Church to use an anointing oil at such times as described in this passage. But the question arises as to whether or not all Christians who become ill, in the ordinary sense, have recourse to this apparently sure method of recovery. Certainly James does not say that the "prayer of faith" "may" save the sick, but "shall" have this result.

We think the key to a proper understanding of this passage is in the Greek word translated "sick," in the statement "shall save the sick." It is the same word that is translated "wearied" in Hebrews 12:3, where we read, "Consider him [Christ] that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Obviously the thought here is discouragement, described by Paul in Galatians 6:9 as "weary in well-doing."

In James' question, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church," he uses a Greek word which literally means "to be feeble (in any sense)." Deep-seated discouragement seriously depletes one's vitality, and James' admonition is that those who have been made feeble because of "weariness" or discouragement should call the elders to pray with them and for them.

For such—the spiritually weary and discouraged, that

is—"the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up"—give him renewed spiritual strength to continue on in the narrow way. "If he hath committed sins, they shall be forgiven him," James adds. At times a Christian becomes discouraged over his failings and shortcomings. There is no better remedy for this sort of "sickness" than fellowship and prayer with those of "like precious faith."

"Armageddon"

A minister says that Armageddon will be a great atomic war that will destroy good and bad alike. What do the Scriptures say?

The word "Armageddon" is used in the Bible only once, and that is in Revelation 16:16. The text reads, "And He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Verse 14, speaking of the same "gathering" of the "kings of the earth and of the whole world," says that it is "to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." In verse 15 there is a reference to the re-

turn of Christ, as if to emphasize that "Armageddon" is in some way associated with that event.

While the word "Armageddon" is used only this once in the Bible, the prophecies abound with various symbolic references to this final struggle of the ages. In Daniel 12:1 it is described as a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." This "time of trouble" is shown to be the result of the standing up of one called "Michael." This is one of the titles the Bible applies to Christ, particularly at his second advent.

Daniel says that Michael will then "stand up," signifying the exercise of authority and power. He "stands up" for the salvation of God's people, for the rectification of error and wrong, for the establishment of right and truth, to bring to the world of mankind the great kingdom of God which has been preached from the days of Abraham.

In answer to questions asked by his disciples concerning the sign of his second presence, Jesus quotes

Daniel's prophecy concerning a "time of trouble," our English translation using the word "tribulation" instead of "trouble." It seems clear, therefore, that this "great tribulation" referred to in Revelation 16:16 under the symbolic term "Armageddon" is the final great struggle of the ages. Jesus, in fact, said that there would never be anything like it again.—Matt. 24:21, 22

The prophecies use various symbols to illustrate different aspects of this "tribulation," for no one symbol could describe all that it involves. Among the symbols used are "earthquake," "fire," "storm," "tempest," and "flood." None of these is to be understood in a literal sense. It is simply that the trouble which brings about the destruction of Satan's social order is in some respects like these various upheavals of nature.

The "Armageddon" symbolism illustrates an aspect of this great and final struggle not contained in any of the others used in the prophecies. In the Hebrew, "Armageddon" means "mountain of Megiddo." Megiddo occupied a very marked position on the south-

ern edge of the Plain of Esdraelon, and commanded an important pass into the hill country of Galilee. Here many of the battles of ancient Israel were fought. It was here that Gideon defeated the Midianites.

What made these battles different from others is the fact that God took a hand in them, and directed the outcome. We think this is the principal lesson conveyed by the symbolism of "Armageddon." It is the battle of the "great day of God Almighty." In this struggle God directs the issue for the destruction of Satan's world, in preparation for the establishment of Messiah's kingdom. "Armageddon" will result in much destruction of human life, but many will pass through the struggle alive, and be the first to enter into the blessings of the kingdom which will then be available. But those who die in "Armageddon" will not be deprived of the kingdom blessings, for later they will be awakened from the sleep of death, that they too, under the laws of the new kingdom, may be given an opportunity to live forever. □

Talking Things Over

Our Partnership in the Gospel

THE Greek word in the New Testament which is often translated "fellowship" is just as properly translated "partnership." Thus when the Apostle Paul wrote to the brethren at Philippi and said that he thanked God for their "fellowship in the Gospel," he meant their partnership in the Gospel. One of the blessed aspects of our fellowship consists of our studying the Word of God together: comparing notes with respect to the meaning of this or that text of Scripture. This is refreshing to us a new creatures, increasing our knowledge of the Bible and stimulating our faith.

Precious though these seasons of talking things over with one another may be, there is much more than this to our fellowship, or partnership, in the Gospel. The "Gospel" is the good news pertaining to God's plan for his people of the present age and also his plan for the world of mankind in the next age. Paul wrote, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation." (Rom. 1:16) Yes, "the power of God" works in us through the Gospel, but only if we become totally involved in the doing of God's will as it is reflected through the Gospel.

To have partnership in the Gospel means that we are partners with God—"workers together with him." (II Cor.

6:1) In human relationships, partnerships are formed by two or more people, with each contributing something of value to assure the success of the undertaking. One individual might own a farm, but alone he is unable to work his farm and make a profit, so he invites one or more of his trusted friends to share in the work and the profits, if any, of their joint efforts.

But all partnerships thus arranged are based on the premise that each one who participates is in a position to contribute something of value to the total effort of the undertaking. In our illustration the farmer contributes the land. Money is needed to purchase farm machinery, so others provide this. Many work-hours must be spent on the land in order that it might produce profitable crops. There would also be a measure of time and experience needed in connection with marketing the produce of the farm. This too would be a valuable contribution to the partnership.

However, in our partnership with the Lord, he provides everything of value. The only thing we have to contribute to this blessed "fellowship in the Gospel" is a willing and humble heart; a willingness to spend and be spent in his service, and a humility that makes as sure as possible that we are serving along lines which are directed by the Lord, and which he therefore can approve.

The Lord does not invite us to serve in this partnership with him because he needs our help. It is an act of grace whereby we are given an opportunity later to share in that future work of the Gospel, even in Christ's kingdom of restoration through which all the families of the earth will be blessed. Jesus gives us some idea of what this will mean when, speaking of his miracles, he said to his disciples, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto the Father."—John 14:12

The Bride Made Ready

Revelation 19:7 reads, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." This is a brief summary of the work of God in the earth during the present Gospel Age. The "bride" is one of the biblical names which applies to the faithful followers of the Master when they are united with him in the kingdom. Their worthiness of this high position with the Lamb calls for much preparation.

This work of preparation is an individual responsibility for each one invited to the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus." No one can do this work for us, but at the same time, an important aspect of being made ready for "the marriage of the Lamb" is the attainment of unselfish qualities of character which manifest interest in the spiritual prosperity of our brethren in Christ. The statement that the "bride" makes herself ready, rather than that the individual members of the bride class make themselves ready, seems to suggest the idea of co-operation. This is a co-operative work in which we show our willingness to lay down our lives for the brethren, that together we may all be built up in the most holy faith. This is a part of our partnership in the Gospel.

"Your Own Salvation"

Paul wrote, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12, 13) It is the "great salvation" that is referred to in this text, and we "work out" this salvation through faithful obedience to the will of God as expressed through his Word. And Paul adds that God is working in us "to will and to do of his good pleasure." After all, it is God's work. It is God who prepares the bride for marriage with the Lamb. He simply

makes us partners in the undertaking. It is his Spirit, the instructions of his Word, his guardian angels, and his providences, which accomplish the work. As noted, we share by devoting to him a willing, a consecrated heart, and a disposition that is pliable in his hands.

So we all work together with the Lord. What a wonderful partnership! None of us could qualify to be associated with Jesus in the kingdom by an individual effort. We need the help of one another, and above all we need the Lord's help. And how very thankful we are for his many promises that no matter what difficulties we may encounter he will never leave us nor forsake us, so we can truly say, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Opportunities Vary

Not all are favored by the Lord with the same opportunities of service. There are pastors, evangelists, and teachers; but we all have the responsibility of speaking the truth in love, that in the true spirit of partnership we "may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ." (Eph. 4:11-15) Not many have either the ability or the opportunity to preach sermons, whether to the public or to the brethren. Many of us are so restricted, either by distance or other circumstances, that we seemingly may be left only with the privilege of praying for our brethren. But the expression "only with the privilege of prayer" is hardly fitting, for it suggests that prayer is a minor thing in the Christian life. Actually, this is not true. The Scriptures declare that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," and this means that the importance of prayer on behalf of our brethren cannot be overestimated. Let us be "instant in prayer," for ourselves and for our brethren.—Rom. 12:12

We have opportunities of service today which were not

available to the brethren of the Early Church. We refer to the use of the printed page, the radio, television, and recorded lectures. Here again the thought of partnership in the Gospel enters. Why do we have the printed page which, throughout the harvest, has proved to be such a blessing to many of the Lord's people? It is because this form of service is made possible through the co-operation of the brethren.

We are continually receiving encouraging letters from individual brethren and from ecclesias, expressing appreciation of the services rendered by The Dawn, including, in addition to those already mentioned, the pilgrim service. We appreciate very much these letters of encouragement, and only wish that every word of encouragement could be passed along to the brethren generally, for they are the ones who make these various services possible. It is your work as much as it is ours. The Lord has taken us all into sacred partnership with himself, which means that the credit for anything which is accomplished properly goes to him.

It is the Spirit of God that stirs up his people to do all they can in this united effort, through the dissemination of the Gospel of Christ, to make ready his future bride. It is God who directs these efforts as long as we walk humbly before him, and listen carefully to the voice behind us saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Yes, God is doing all that is necessary to see that this work of grace in the hearts of his people is accomplished in the due time which he has set—even to employing the holy angels to minister unto the heirs of this great salvation.

The Lord Directs

Approximately forty years ago the New York Church of Associated Bible Students, in co-operation with other groups on the eastern seaboard, put a series of radio pro-

grams on one of New York's largest broadcasting stations. The results were encouraging, especially in that many of the Lord's people, who through no fault of their own had become separated from their brethren, were reached, and found a sense of direction.

Indirectly, this service to the brethren extended far beyond the New York area—over the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. All these brethren needed further help, and while the brethren of the New York Church were greatly pleased over this result of their efforts, they realized that the work of carrying forward this enlarging work was hardly appropriate for a local church. They recommended that it be taken over by the elders of the church directly involved in the effort and, with the help of others whom they might choose, to conduct this widening service independent of the local church.

This was done; and so it was that an effort which began as a local one was soon reaching out to the whole country, and to various countries overseas. It was a joy to hear from this increasing number of brethren, and to realize that we had the opportunity of working together with them. In order for them to render effective service locally they needed tracts and other literature, which we endeavored to supply as fully as we could. There were no hymn books available for use in their meetings, and as soon as we could do so we made these available; and in due course other publications which had long been out of print such as "Studies in the Scriptures" and "Tabernacle Shadows."

On our part we endeavored to serve in response to the expressed needs of the brethren. From the beginning we have realized that it was not our prerogative to tell the brethren what they should do, but as far as possible to be ready to co-operate in what they wanted done. Keeping this principle in mind we have, through the years, been

richly blessed by our partnership with the brethren in their work of the Gospel.

Actually, your brethren of The Dawn constitute a very small segment in this partnership. How futile it would be for a few of us here at The Dawn to make literature available, as well as the various other services, if the brethren did not use them! But the brethren in the field have used them, and our partnership in the Gospel has continued to be one of enthusiasm, and we have been kept busy. Funds have been made available by the brethren to keep up the ministry through radio and television, and through magazine advertising. How wonderful are the arrangements of the Lord with respect to the partnership over which he presides!

The Gospel

In thinking of the partnership of the Gospel we naturally think of the Gospel itself. What is "the Gospel of Christ" of which Paul was not ashamed, and which he declared to be "the power of God unto salvation"? Briefly, we believe that the Gospel encompasses all the great fundamental doctrines of the divine plan of the ages, starting with God's purpose in the creation of man, and ending with the destruction of sin and death, and even the Devil himself.

Within this framework we have the fall of man, and the redemption which has been provided for him through the death and resurrection of Jesus "who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (I Tim. 2:3-6) We have God's revelation of the nature of man; that he is earthly, and mortal, thus subject to death if disobedient. (Gen. 2:17) We also have the clear statements of the Word of God concerning the heavenly hope, and the hope of immortality which is held out to those who faithfully follow in the footsteps of Jesus, being planted together in the likeness of his death, that they might also be in the likeness of his resurrection.—Heb. 3:1; Rom. 6:5

Encompassed in the Gospel is that grand theme of restitution, which Peter declared had been spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3: 19-23) There is also the future judgment of the world, when all will have an opportunity to accept Christ, obey the laws of his kingdom, and live forever. This facet of the divine plan, like the work of restitution, follows the second coming of Christ. Concerning it Jesus himself said, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him [the church], then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them . . . as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."—Matt. 25:31, 32; Matt. 19:28

There is also God's oathbound covenant with Abraham; that covenant in which God promises to bless all the families of the earth through the "Seed" of Abraham! How clearly Paul identified this seed of blessing when he wrote, "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." And again, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ," "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:16, 27, 29

God also promised to make a "new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." (Jer. 31:31-34) The Scriptures indicate that the blessings of this covenant will be extended to all mankind—the blessings, that is, of having God's law written in their hearts. This is a symbolic description of the blessings of restitution being accomplished for all the families of the earth as God's promised blessings continue to spread until all are reached, throughout the great continents of earth as well as in the isles of the sea.

Another basic doctrine of the Gospel in this end of the

age is the blessed harvest message pertaining to the presence of Christ. There is every evidence that the work of the harvest has gone steadily on now for nearly a hundred years, which in itself gives us reason to believe that it will soon be completed. And this thought should give us joy, for it is when all the wheat is harvested into the "barn" that the righteous, the "children of the kingdom," "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13:43) Yes, if faithful, we will become a part of that blessed "Sun of Righteousness" which shall rise "with healing in his wings."—Mal. 4:2

The true followers of the Master—and the Lord knows who these are—will share in every aspect of the future kingdom work with him. They will serve as judges, kings, priests, ministers of reconciliation, and even in the awakening of the dead world of mankind to life. What a glorious prospect! The entire grand design of God for the blessing of all mankind is glorious. We have but briefly touched upon just a few of its main facets. As we so often sing in that beautiful hymn, "Blessed Bible," God's Word is like a mine which is deeper than any mortal can go and as we keep searching there are always rich gems of truth to be found.

May 1972 be a year in which our hearts will often be made glad by the finding of these gems! They are not new doctrines of the divine plan, for that plan is complete and unchangeable, but there are precious thought gems to be found in the Bible which help to enhance our appreciation of the divine plan; and may we be zealous Bible students, "rightly dividing the Word of truth," as we continue to search the Scriptures. We can all do this! It is an important aspect of our partnership in the Gospel.

There is much prophetic truth in the Bible, some of it associated with time, and much that is not. As to those prophecies which have been definitely fulfilled in the past

we can have a good measure of understanding. But the world and the church continue to move across the prophetic stage, and there is much that we can watch. But let us be faithful watchers, rather than undertake to be prophets. We know what is happening today, but the events of tomorrow are only in dim outline in the Word.

The basic doctrines of the truth are so clearly set forth that all of us understand them essentially alike. Concerning the prophetic and other less clearly stated truths we are bound to have differing viewpoints. But even these we should be able to discuss in the spirit of love, and thus continue to help one another in a knowledge of the things of God not so clearly revealed. This is another aspect of our blessed partnership in the Gospel. And may we ever strive to be more and more helpful to all our brethren in Christ; and may the great fundamentals of the truth continue to inspire us to increasing zeal in our service of the Lord, the truth, and the brethren. □



EVOLUTION VERSUS THE BIBLE

To be discussed by

'FRANK and ERNEST'

WAVE—970 kc.—8:15 A.M.

Sunday, February 20

Tune in this enlightening discussion, and send for a free copy of the booklet, "Creation." Address:

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For Your Newspaper

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

MARCH TOPIC: On Sunday, March 19, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss the topic, "The Last Days." This will be an enlightening discussion of the prophecies, designed to give hope in these days of world chaos. Attractive circulars will be available for announcing it, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. Address your request to, The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey 07073.

Encouraging Letters

Isolated Students

Dear Brethren: Please accept our thanks for the recorded lectures and The Dawn magazine. We are isolated, and the taped sermons and Dawn magazine are somewhat like brethren at our family Bible study. How thankful we are that our children have heard and believe the promises of God to restore the earth to paradise; to restore life; to end wars, and create a new world wherein dwells righteousness. Thank you for continuing to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of Christ, which will fulfil all of God's promises to bless all the families of the earth.—Ohio

Welcome Visitor

Dear Brethren: Each month I look for and receive The Dawn magazine, that most welcome visitor God sends from the Dawn. May God continue to bless your labors of love and good will to all, and for the many splendid articles and Bible helps which are so valuable and heart-warming.—Oklahoma

Grateful for Answers

Gentlemen: I very much enjoy your question and answer program, which reaches me over radio here in Buffalo, N. Y. Many puzzling questions are answered clearly and con-

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

FEBRUARY 3—"My son attend to my Words; incline thine ear unto My sayings. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."—Proverbs 4:20, 22 (Z. '96-180 Hymn 315)

FEBRUARY 10—"Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."—I Timothy 4:12 (Z. '95-251 Hymn 23)

FEBRUARY 17—"Take My yoke upon you, . . . for My yoke is

easy, and My burden is light."—Matthew 11:29, 30 (Z. '00-137 Hymn 279)

FEBRUARY 24—"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans 8:3, 4 (Z. '02-248 Hymn 295)

cisely, and must be beneficial to many, many people. Kindly send me the booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave" and I shall be so thankful. My beloved Christian husband died quite a few years ago, but in faith I am carrying on as a good Christian should, with the help of God.
—New York

Mind Is at Rest

Dear Friends: I do want to thank you for The Dawn magazine, and to say how grateful I am that it has put my mind at rest. So often I have thought that I am not a good Christian; so often have failed and been depressed. But since studying The Dawn, and accepting its teachings, I have found it to be the most comforting, reasonable, and clearest explanation

of Bible truths I have ever heard. I have many friends who say they want to believe as I do, but just cannot, and when they become depressed, and fear they are condemned to eternal torment, I pass on to them your magazine. Could I be supplied with some of your tracts, please, particularly those suitable for the bereaved. Thank you so much. Yours sincerely.
—England

"It Is the Truth"

Dear Friends: Thank you so much for sending me the booklet. I really did enjoy it. I know it is the truth, and this is what we all need. God bless you all for bringing the truth to people! Thank you.—Michigan

Faithful Unto Death

On Saturday, December 15, Brother Claude R. Weida, Sr. of Allentown, Pennsylvania, finished his earthly course. Brother Weida was well known among the brethren from coast to coast, having served in their ecclesias and at their conventions for many years. He had been in the truth for more than fifty years.

For the last number of years Brother and Sister Weida spent much time working at The Dawn, conducting the Recorded Lecture Service, and preparing tapes for the radio witness. He will be greatly missed by The Dawn staff. In addition to Sister Weida, Brother Weida is survived by a daughter, Ruth, who lives in Washington, D. C. and a son, Claude, Jr., who lives in Allentown. Our love and prayers are extended to these.

GENERAL CONVENTION BULLETIN

An Earlier Date

THE General Convention this year will be held at an early date. Instead of the customary August date, it will begin on July 15, and end July 20; and, as already announced, at the new place, Western Kentucky University, in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Begin now to make plans to attend. The facilities at Bowling Green are excellent, and all the rooms air conditioned.

The Theme Text this year for the General Convention will be I Thessalonians 1:3—"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." This text is packed with timely and vital truths, which, as discussed at the convention, will yield rich spiritual reward. Study the text yourself, and be prepared for the feast that follows at Bowling Green.

—oOo—

Again this year, through the co-operation of the convention, special one-half rate will be available to the young people who attend the entire convention, ages 2 through 18. This will be an excellent opportunity for these upcoming Bible Students. □


Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

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

G. M. JEUCK		Grand Rapids, Mich.	16, 17
Baltimore, Md.	Feb. 13	Saginaw, Mich.	18
Philadelphia, Pa.	13	Detroit, Mich.	20, 21
		Pontiac, Mich.	22
A. H. KRUMPOLT		Chatham, Ont.	23
Hartford, Conn.	Feb. 27	Toronto, Ont.	24
		Tonawanda, N. Y.	25
M. C. MITCHELL		Buffalo, N. Y.	27
Sayville, N. Y.	Feb. 6	Rochester, N. Y.	28
GEORGE PASSIOS		LEO POST	
New Haven, Conn.	Feb. 6	New London, Conn.	Feb. 20
E. K. PENROSE		F. S. WASSMANN	
Toledo, Ohio	Feb. 15	Allentown, Pa.	Feb. 20

BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

C. A. CORNELL		W. F. READER	
Ipswich	Mar. 19	Yeovil, 3 Hill Grove Ave.	Mar. 5
E. T. NADAL			
Newport	Mar. 25		

Conventions

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Feb. 6—2601 Fillmore St., N. E. Mrs. C. R. Newham, 2601 Fillmore, St., N. E.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, Feb. 13—N. W. Gardens, Independence Hall, N. W. Blvd. & N. Star Rd. Mrs. Lois Smith, 4294 Ellery Drive.

SACRAMENTO, CALIF., Feb. 19, 20—Odd Fellows Hall, Ninth and K Streets. Mrs. E. F. Lankford, 6000 19th Ave.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Feb. 20—Brotherhood of Railway Clerks Bldg., Court and Vine Sts. Mr. John Slavich, 126 S. 22nd St., Richmond, Ind.

CHICAGO, ILL., Feb. 27—Masonic

Temple, 5352 W. Chicago Ave. Mr. Arthur Jezuit, 140 Forest Glen Road, Wood Dale, Ill.

DETROIT, MICH., Feb. 27—Northwest Branch YWCA, 25940 Grand River. Mr. Daniel Kaziak, 17559 Annchester Ave.

FRESNO, CALIF., March 18, 19—2540 Floradora. Mrs. Judy Smith, 4648 N. Bonadelle.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Apr. 1, 2

COVINA, CALIF., Apr. 9

MIAMI, FLA., Apr. 8-10—Florida Annual Convention

SALEM, ORE., Apr. 21-23

BOISE, IDA., Apr. 29, 30

Plan Now to Attend!

1972 GENERAL CONVENTION

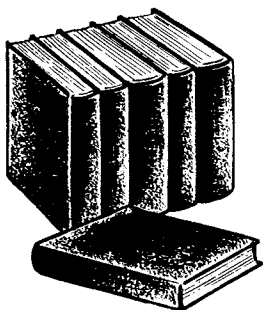
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To us the SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH...

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

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

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

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

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

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