

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

"THE WORD
OF THE LORD
IS RIGHT."

--Psalm 33:4

February 1959



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The "Frank and Ernest" topics are scheduled for the Mutual Network, and for individual stations in the United States and Canada. The Network stations in Sacramento, California, and Portland, Oregon use the programs one week later than the above schedule.

Is This Your First Copy?

ARE you among the many who, with the February issue, have received your first copy of The Dawn Magazine? You may be a new subscriber, or you may have requested this copy of The Dawn when you heard it announced on the "Frank and Ernest" international radio program. We welcome you into our reading circle, and may the message of The Dawn bring peace and joy to your heart. Here are some of the special features of this issue:

"Israel in History and Prophecy"—This timely article begins on page 3. It will increase your faith in the inspired Word of God.

"Man's Eternal Home"—This is the second article in the series under the general heading, "The Bible Versus Tradition." It begins on page 18. Do you know that the idea of the earth being destroyed by fire is merely a tradition, and is not taught in the Bible?

"Your Questions"—This department begins on page 42. "What Is the Origin of Lent?" is one of the questions answered this month.

"Bible Study"—This department begins on page 10. Here you will find the "International Sunday School Lessons" discussed. They present a new approach to these lessons which you will find stimulating.

In the March Issue

The March "Highlights of Dawn" article is entitled, "The Prophetic Increase of Knowledge." Daniel foretold that in "the time of the end" knowledge would be increased.

The third in the series, "The Bible Versus Tradition" will discuss the topic, "Death the Penalty—Not Torment"—a forthright presentation of biblical facts.

One of the questions answered in the question and answer section of The Dawn for March, is, "Why did Jesus' soul go to hell when he died?" Another relates to being born of the Spirit.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

THE MEMORIAL DATE

The date this year for commemorating our Lord's death is Tuesday, April 21, after 6:00 P. M. An article on the significance of the Memorial Supper will be published in the April issue of The Dawn.

ON TELEVISION

Currently, the following television stations are presenting the truth each Sunday:

St. Louis, Missouri—KTVI-TV, Channel 2; 8:30 A. M.

Detroit, Michigan—CKLW-TV; Channel 9; 10:00 A. M.

Columbus, Ohio—WTVN-TV; Channel 6; 10:00 A. M.

Erie, Pa.—WSEE-TV; Ch. 35; 1:30 P. M.

PUBLIC MEETING IN NEW YORK

At a recent public meeting, sponsored by the New York Ecclesia of Bible Students, there was a total attendance of approximately 500, of whom at least 200 were the visiting public. Mail requests from the advertising matter distributed, together with the requests turned in at the meeting, totaled more than 700. It was a very happy and encouraging experience.

NEW HUNGARIAN BOOKLET

We are glad to announce that the booklet, "Christ's Thousand Year Kingdom," is now available in the Hungarian language. The price is five cents. See page 33 for listings of various foreign-language publications.

Israel in History and Prophecy

IN THE Jewish people we have convincing evidence of the historical accuracy and the divine inspiration of the Bible. Abraham is the father of this historic people, and this patriarch of four thousand years ago and his descendants are the ones recognized and discussed in the Old Testament Scriptures as the people of God. Most of the Old Testament promises of God are directed to this people, while the prophecies of the Old Testament foretold their experiences throughout the centuries, including their present return to the Promised Land of Palestine.

In the Jewish people, or Israelites, we have a monument of antiquity of inestimable value. In God's promises to them is recorded the final destiny of the entire human race. Their experiences throughout the ages have been related to the gradual outworking of a wonderful purpose in human affairs, in exact conformity with the predictions of their divinely inspired prophets.

While they were the people of God throughout Old Testament times, since the first advent of Christ they have been a scattered,

homeless, desolate, and persecuted people. Yet withal, in spirit they have remained a distinct and homogeneous people. They remained united by strong ties of blood relationship, and by a common faith in the wonderful promises of God, although they failed to comprehend the full import of those promises.

The first of these promises was made to their father, Abraham, to whom God said, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3) Later God added to this, saying to Abraham, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered."—Gen. 13: 14-16

Later, after Abraham had demonstrated his faithfulness to God by his willingness to offer up his son Isaac in sacrifice, God said to him,

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"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."—Gen. 22:16-18

These are the promises which relate to and have governed God's dealings with the descendants of Abraham from the time they were first made until now. The repossession of the land of Palestine, the land promised to Abraham and his seed, as we see it taking place today, is related to this promise. Various of the Old Testament prophets foretold that the Israelites would be driven from their land, scattered among the various nations of the earth, and finally be caused to re-inhabit their land.

But we will fail to comprehend the full purpose of God concerning this historic people unless we take into consideration God's promises to resurrect the dead. Actually, there are two aspects to the restoration of the Israelites: one is their being returned to the Land of Promise, and the other is their restoration from death to life. Both are necessary in order for God's purpose in and through Israel to be fully accomplished.

The first Christian martyr, Stephen, in speaking before the Jewish Sanhedrin, referred to God's promise to Abraham concerning the land, saying that God "gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." (Acts 7:5) The definite implication here is that since God promised Abraham that he would possess the land of Canaan, he will yet do so. This promise can be fulfilled only by virtue of the fact that Abraham will be raised from the dead.

And the promise of the land was not only to Abraham, but also to his seed, his descendants, of which only a few, comparatively speaking, are alive today, and still fewer in Palestine. There is sound scriptural reason for believing that the promises of God to the children of Abraham pertaining to the land of Palestine have been in course of fulfilment for many years, yet during this time thousands of those who have actually returned to the land have died. How inadequate would be the purpose of God concerning Abraham and his children were it not his plan to restore the dead to life!

Every Christian living today who understands the purpose of God concerning Abraham and his seed rejoices to see what is taking place in Palestine; and they rejoice the more to realize that what is occur-

ring in that ancient land of the Bible is a sure evidence that the accomplishment of the full purpose of God as it relates to Israel and all mankind is near, that we are already living in the great day of biblical promise, the "day of the Lord" which, before it ends, will see the whole human race, now dead through Adam's sin, restored to life through Christ.

The Messianic "Seed"

Another important aspect of the promise made to Abraham is the statement that through his "seed" all the families of the earth would be blessed. (Gen. 22:18) In the New Testament the Apostle Paul refers to this part of the promise, and explains its true significance. This explanation is found in Galatians 3:8, 16, 27-29. Verse 8 reads, "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen [or Gentiles] through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."

Thus does the great Apostle Paul associate the promise of blessing through the "seed" of Abraham with the Gospel of the New Testament. In the 16th verse he further explains, "Now 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." From this we see that God's promise to Abraham concerning a "Seed," was a promise of the coming Messiah, and that it is through the Messiah, or Christ

of the New Testament, that all the families or nations of the earth are to be blessed.

Had Paul given us no further explanation than simply that Christ is the foretold "Seed" of Abraham, it would have left us with many questions unanswered. We would have reasoned, for example, that since Christ came nearly two thousand years ago, all the families of the earth should have been blessed, yet we know that they have not been blessed.

The angel who announced the birth of Jesus acclaimed it to be good tidings of great joy, saying that a "Savior" was born, one who would "save his people from their sins." (Luke 2:10; Matt. 1:21) But the people of Israel have not been saved from their sins, neither have any of the other families of the earth been blessed in a manner implied by the promise made to Abraham. The Israelites have been a scattered and persecuted people ever since that time, until now. A few centuries after Jesus came the world was plunged into the darkest period of history—the Dark Ages. Wars have continued—ofttimes even in the name of The Prince of Peace. Why is this so?

Paul's further explanation concerning the "Seed" of promise furnishes the answer to this question. This further explanation is found in verses 27-29, which read: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

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There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

In verse 16 of this chapter Paul emphasizes that the promised "Seed" of Abraham is "one" seed. But in his further explanation he explains that this oneness includes all those who are baptized into Christ, whether Jew or Gentile—"for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." One of the important considerations here is that Jesus alone does not comprise the complete "Seed" of promise, that it includes those who are called to walk in his steps, and who faithfully lay down their lives with him. Those who thus qualify by their faithfulness in suffering and dying with Jesus are, according to Paul, also a part of the promised "Seed" through which all the families of the earth are to be blessed.

And this, at the same time, explains why it is that all the families of the earth have not yet been blessed. It is because the complete "Seed" of Abraham has not yet been developed. The calling and proving faithful of this class has in reality been the work of an entire age in the plan of God—this Gospel age, which we believe is now drawing rapidly to a close.

But in considering this point we need again to keep in mind God's

promise to resurrect the dead. This larger "faith seed" of Abraham does not consist of the limited number who followed Christ during the days of the Early Church. It includes those whom God selected from the world throughout the Gospel age as well as the thousands in the world today who will prove worthy of association with Jesus as the "Seed" of Abraham.

Today when nations are confronted with unexpected emergencies they find it necessary to initiate what is sometimes referred to as "crash programs" to meet the unexpected. But God needs no "crash programs" to carry out his purposes. This has been a long-range program. Insofar as the faith "Seed" of Abraham is concerned, he has taken a whole age to develop it.

Only God could take so much time to accomplish a purpose of this kind, because only God can raise the dead. When Jesus presented himself to Israel as the chosen of God, the One who had come to fulfil the prophecies given by the prophets of Israel, he was crucified, put to death. But this did not thwart the purpose of God concerning him. On the third day thereafter, God raised him from the dead, and exalted him to his own right hand, giving him all power in heaven and in earth.

One after another of Jesus' followers throughout the age likewise fell asleep in death, many of them

being cruelly persecuted. Paul, when he expected soon to be put to death, wrote, "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (II Tim. 4:8) Yes, "all them" who proved faithful unto death have had a "crown" laid up for them. In the end of the age and the dawning of the kingdom age, these are raised from the dead, united with their Head, Christ Jesus, and together become the channel of blessing for all the families of the earth.—Rom. 8:17, 22, 19

A Spiritual Seed

A point not revealed clearly in the original promise made to Abraham, nor at any time prior to Jesus' first advent, was the fact that the completed Christ, the Messiah of promise, would, in the resurrection, be exalted to spiritual life, and as divine, spirit beings would rule and bless the world. Jesus said to his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—John 14:1-3

There was a hint of this contained in the original promise to Abraham, in the statement that his seed would be as the "stars of the heaven." And the promise was also made to him that his seed would be as the "sand which is upon the seashore," implying that there would

be an earthly as well as a spiritual seed. (Gen. 22:17) Other promises of God reveal that when the time comes for the spiritual "Seed" of Abraham to begin the work of blessing all the families of earth, there will be qualified human representatives here on earth who will be the administrators of the promised blessings. The Scriptures reveal that these human representatives of the divine Christ will consist almost entirely of the natural descendants of Abraham; indeed, that Abraham himself will be one of those representatives.

Jesus said that in the kingdom of God the people would come from the east, west, north, and south—world-wide—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets. (Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:28, 29) Here again we must recognize the necessity for the resurrection of the dead. And in this resurrection program we can recognize the purpose of God throughout the long centuries prior to our Lord's first advent. It was not merely a case of marking time. Actually, various important aspects of the divine plan were then being accomplished. One of them was the testing and preparation of those who would, when raised from the dead, be the human representatives of the divine "Seed" of blessing.

In the 11th chapter of Hebrews the Apostle Paul presents a beautiful summary of this class, beginning with righteous Abel, and points

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out their great faith in the promises of God, and their fidelity to him. These all proved faithful under trial. And they endured faithfully in order that, as Paul explains, they might "obtain a better resurrection."—Heb. 11:35

While these worthy servants of the past did not understand all the details of the divine plan, they did know and believe that loyalty to God and to his promises, regardless of what the cost might be—and it did often cost them their lives—would lead to a "better resurrection. Paul explains that they died without having received the fulfillment of the promises made to them, "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11:39, 40

As we have seen, the "better thing" provided for "us" of the present age is joint-heirship with Christ and exaltation to the divine nature with him. But with the spiritual "Seed" class completed and exalted to the divine nature will come the resurrection of the ancient worthies, to be made, as David describes them, "princes in all the earth."—Psa. 45:16

It will make no difference to God that some of these lived and died before the Flood, and that some lived and died in each century thereafter, until the coming of Christ. Regardless of when they lived and faithfully died, God will have them on hand at the exact

time he needs them, to serve as the tried, and fully qualified human representatives of the spiritual "Seed" of blessing.

Man, in choosing the personnel for any given project, is limited to those who may be living at the time, but not so with God. That is why he can take time to test and prepare those whom he will use in high positions of authority in the outworking of his design to bless all the families of the earth. That is why it is essential to keep the resurrection in mind if we are to get a true perspective of the divine plan.

All Israel Saved

God's love and care has kept the natural descendants of Abraham intact as a people throughout all the centuries, and there are many prophecies to show that the generation living in the due time for the establishment of Christ's kingdom of blessing would have the Land of Promise opened to them so that they could return and be first in line for the blessings of that kingdom, the blessings which eventually will flow to "all the families of the earth."

Among the many prophecies relating to the return of the Israelites to their land are Jeremiah 16:14-18; 23:5-8; Ezekiel 36:21-35, and Amos 9:14, 15. Some claim that these and other prophecies refer to the return of the Israelites from their captivity in Babylon, and have

nothing to do with their return to the Promised Land in this end of the age. But this theory does not hold, for in the prophecy of Amos particular assurance is given that when they are restored to their land "they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord." They were driven out of the land following their return from Babylon.

Others insist that the present returning to the Promised Land is not in fulfilment of prophecy because those going there are largely unbelievers, that few of them have faith in God or in his promises. But here again there is a failure to note all the details of the prophecies, which reveal that they would return in unbelief. God is taking them back there not because of their faith, but in order that they might be the first to have an opportunity to believe and to prove their worthiness of his continued blessing.

Referring to the rank and file of the Israelites, Paul wrote, "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Rom. 11:26) "Sion" is the divine, spiritual "Seed" of Abraham. It will be through the agencies of this "Seed" that the ungodliness of Israel will be turned away. This is after they return to the land. Thus we see that what is taking place today is quite in keeping with the prophecies.

The Scriptures reveal that the

wonderful manner in which God's blessings will be manifested toward the returned Israelites, including the revealing to them of their Messiah, will attract the attention of the remainder of mankind, and that their example of belief and obedience will encourage others along the same line. Thus the blessings of the kingdom, beginning with the restored Israelites, will increase and expand until, in fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham, they reach and include "all the families of the earth."

Today, the Israelites possess only a small portion of the Land which God promised to Abraham, and only a minority of the Israelites have gone there to live. Nearly all the early settlers who returned to the land when the "set time" came have now fallen asleep in death, even as did their forebears throughout the centuries. But they will all be restored. God's resurrection plan provides for this. In no case does death interfere with the accomplishment of his purposes.

As the work of that new age gets under way, we will have the first fulfilment of that wonderful text, Revelation 22:17, which reads, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth [the Jew first, and also the Gentiles] say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." What a glorious prospect! Let us continue to pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Jesus Questioned About the Tribute

GOLDEN TEXT: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's."
—Luke 20:25

LUKE 20:19-26

THE first loyalty of every true Christian is to God. In the United States, and certain other countries of the so-called "free world," the civil laws take this into consideration, so that a follower of Jesus need not violate his conscience in order to be a law-abiding citizen. In countries where this favorable situation exists a Christian has little difficulty in applying the principle of rendering unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's.

To a considerable degree this was true in Palestine at the time of Christ. The Jewish people then were subjects of the Roman Empire, and while the emperors of that world power had arrogated to themselves the title, "Pontifex Maximus," meaning chief religious ruler, the policy of the government was to permit subjugated people to observe their religious rites and ceremonies with little or no interference. Thus the Jewish people were free to worship God as they pleased so long as they did not

foster a spirit of insurrection against Rome.

Besides, Rome occupied a unique position in the world at that time, being the fourth great world power foretold in the prophecy recorded in Daniel 2:31-44, and illustrated by the human-like image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream. Babylon was the first of these world powers, represented by the head of the image, and Rome the fourth, illustrated by the legs of iron. "The God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory," Daniel said to the king of Babylon; and that grant of authority carried through to all four empires pictured in the image.—vs. 37

It was because of this situation that the Apostle Paul could write, "The powers that be are ordained [Greek, "arrange in an orderly manner"] of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." (Rom. 13:1, 2) We are not to understand that in granting this lease of power to certain Gentile governments God sanctioned everything they did. It was simply that he saw the need for a certain degree

of law and order being maintained to make possible the development of his own people, that they might be prepared to live and reign with Christ.

In writing to Timothy, Paul said, "I exhort [margin, desire] therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty." (I Tim. 2:1, 2) This indicates that the Christian's prayers for kings and rulers are not that God might bless their exploits, but that under their rulership conditions would be favorable for the Lord's people.

After the apostles fell asleep in death, the spirit of ambition began to manifest itself among the leaders of the church, and this ultimately led to the transformation of the Roman Empire from pagan to papal, with the popes assuming the title, "Pontifex Maximus," instead of the Roman emperors. This presented a new problem to those humble, conscientious followers of the Master who were not willing to accept the popes as the vicegerents of Christ and render blind obedience to them.

Refusal to bow the knee to this unholy union of church and state under the popes of Rome led to an era of cruel persecution characterized by the "Holy Inquisition," and other forms of torture inflicted upon the faithful followers of the

QUESTIONS

-
- What is the Christian's first loyalty?
 - Was there religious freedom in Palestine at the time of Christ?
 - Explain the prophetic position of the Roman Empire.
 - For what purpose should Christians pray for rulers?
 - Explain the cause for persecution of Christians during the Dark Ages.
 - When will God's people cease to be persecuted?
-

lowly Jesus who himself suffered and died at the hands of the jealous religious rulers of his day.

We can thank God that at least in some countries today a higher degree of civilization prevails, and that emphasis is being placed on the right of everyone to worship and serve God according to the dictates of conscience. Where this situation prevails, the matter of rendering to "Caesar" the things which belong to him without interfering with our full devotion to God is not a difficult one, for decisions do not need to be made under duress and threats of the torture rack.

But even in the twentieth century this is not true in all parts of the world, for today there are many languishing in prison whose only "crime" has been to stand firm for the principles of righteousness and truth to which they have dedicated their lives. We thank God for that glorious coming time, when, under the rulership of Christ's kingdom, the rebuke of his people will be taken away from the whole earth.—Isa. 25:6-8

Jesus Questioned About the Resurrection

GOLDEN TEXT: "For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him."
—Luke 20:38

LUKE 20:27-38

THE Sadducees, "which deny that there is any resurrection," doubtless thought that they had presented Jesus with an unanswerable question when, concerning the woman who had seven husbands, they asked, Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection? From the standpoint of human reasoning this would seem to present serious complications, but not so when the divine purpose concerning the human race is taken into consideration.

When our first parents were created they were commanded by the Creator to multiply and fill the earth. (Gen. 1:27, 28) They disobeyed the law of God and brought upon themselves the penalty of death. But through Jesus, the Redeemer, provision was made to restore the dead and dying world to life, so Paul wrote that by man came death, and that by man—Christ Jesus—the resurrection of the dead is made possible.—I Cor. 15:21, 22

The resurrection feature of the divine plan does not occur until

Christ's second visit to earth, and is accomplished throughout the thousand years of his kingdom. By this time a sufficient number of humans shall have been born to properly fill the earth, so the purpose of marriage and the bringing forth of children will have been accomplished. Thus, as Jesus explained to the Sadducees; when awakened from the sleep of death the people will face new conditions in this respect, so will neither marry nor be given in marriage.

So far as marriage is concerned, resurrected humans will be like the angels, who do not marry and reproduce their kind. They will be like the angels also in the fact that if then obedient to the laws of Christ's kingdom they will not die, or again go into death. Human marriage and propagation will cease, for the earth will by then be fully populated. It is concerning the human race at that time that the Revelator wrote, "There shall be no more death."—Rev. 21:4

The Sadducees were unbelievers also in the sense that the books of Moses were the only ones of the

Old Testament which they accepted as speaking with divine authority. Jesus knew this, and it was probably for this reason that he selected a quotation from the Second Book of Moses to prove to them that there would be a resurrection of the dead, even though the word resurrection is not used in the quotation which he gave them.

Jesus' quotation was from a statement which God made to Moses at the "burning bush"—"The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (vs. 37) In quoting this, Jesus explained that Jehovah is not a God of the dead, but of the living. (vs. 38) Many have missed the real point of Jesus' argument in this connection, claiming that this statement proves that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not really dead, that although they seemed to die they are really more alive now than before they died.

This is a distortion of the facts. Jesus was proving that there would be a resurrection of the dead, which meant that from the divine standpoint the ancient patriarchs had not perished, that they had merely fallen asleep in death, to be awakened in the resurrection. With respect to God's people during the present age, Paul wrote that unless there be a resurrection of the dead "then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."—I Cor. 15:18

Jesus further explained that "all live" unto God, even though they fall asleep in death. In confirmation

QUESTIONS

Explain why it will not be necessary for the propagation of the human race to continue.

Explain how Jesus' quotation from Moses proves the resurrection.

Explain how all live unto God.

of this, we find the Bible over and over again referring to those who have died as being asleep. Jesus said of the brother of Martha and Mary, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." (John 11:11) David wrote of the "sleep of death."—Ps. 13:3

Those who are asleep are unconscious, and there is an expectancy of their awakening. So it is with those who are asleep in death. Because they will be awakened by divine power, they are said to live unto God. Jesus said to the Sadducees, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." (Matt. 22:29) This is true with respect to many. They deny the reality of death, and fail to understand the teachings of the Bible with respect to the resurrection of the dead.

This, in turn, is also a failure to take into consideration the almighty power of God to restore the dead to life. Millions who believe that there is something about man which does not die when the body dies, seem unable to believe that God is able to restore life. But this latter is the hope of life beyond the grave which is held out to us by the promises of God.

Jesus Questioned About the Great Commandment

GOLDEN TEXT: "And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

—Mark 12:33

MARK 12:28-34

WHILE the scribes and Pharisees as a class bitterly opposed Jesus and were often hypocritical in their attitude toward him, there were individual exceptions, one of which appears in today's lesson. This scribe, the record states, was prompted to ask Jesus a question because he noted the wisdom with which the Master was answering the questions of others. He apparently had a sincere desire to know more about Jesus of Nazareth.

This is borne out by Jesus' observation when he said to the scribe, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." (vs. 34) In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:3) To be "poor in spirit" is to realize a sense of one's spiritual need for guidance by the wisdom which is from above. Evidently this scribe displayed a certain degree of this characteristic which, if it continued to develop, would eventually lead to full discipleship.

The scribe's question concerning

the "first" or primary commandment had reference, apparently, to the basic, or fundamental law of God. In answering this question, Jesus wisely quoted from the writings of Moses: "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." "This," Jesus said, "is the first commandment."—vss. 29, 30; Deut. 6:4, 5

Quoting again from Moses, Jesus continued, "The second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." (vs. 31; Lev. 19:18) The first of these commandments stresses supreme love for God, and what it implies; the second, a genuine, unselfish love for our neighbors, which we may properly think of as including all mankind.

The first four of the Ten Commandments outline in further detail what is involved in supreme love for God—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me"; "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image";

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain"; and, "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." (Exod. 20:3-11) All of these commandments refer to our duty toward God, and explain what is involved in supreme love for him.

The last six of the Ten Commandments reveal the manner in which love for our neighbors will affect our relationships to them—"Honor thy father and thy mother"; "Thou shalt not kill"; "Thou shalt not commit adultery"; "Thou shalt not steal"; "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor"; and, "Thou shalt not covet." (Exod. 20:12-17) It is obvious that if we love others as we love ourselves, we will keep these six commandments.

Thus, we see, the two commandments of Moses which Jesus referred to as the "first" and "second" commandments are in reality a summary of all the Ten Commandments; so in quoting these to the scribe he was really emphasizing the importance of the whole law of God.

The scribe, being sincere, could find no fault at all with Jesus' answer to his question, agreeing that the keeping in spirit of these two commandments "is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." (vs. 33) This scribe realized that the various animal sacrifices enjoined upon the people of Israel were of little value if the people did not, in their hearts, live

QUESTIONS

Were all the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites?

What was implied in the scribe's question concerning the "first" commandment?

What is the relationship of the "first" and "second" to the Ten Commandments?

What is the "new commandment" given to Christians?

up to the spirit of true love for God and for one another.

In Jesus' ministry he exemplified the full meaning of supreme love for God, a love which impels one to do God's will regardless of what the consequences might be. In sending Jesus into the world, it was God's will for him that he should lay down his life sacrificially as the world's Redeemer. This is not God's will for all, but it was for Jesus; and Jesus was wholeheartedly obedient to it. This led to his death on Calvary's cross.

And Jesus gave his followers the opportunity to demonstrate the same full devotion to the Father's will. Indeed, this is the only condition upon which one may be a true disciple of Christ. We are to deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow Jesus into death. This sacrifice, however, is not a pointless one, but is designed to bring blessings to others. Jesus' "new commandment" to his disciples was that they should lay down their lives for the brethren. Thus, while Christians are not directly under the Mosaic law, the spirit of that law is fulfilled in their hearts and lives.

Jesus Teaches About the End of the Age

GOLDEN TEXT: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."
—Mark 13:33

MARK 13:1-7, 32-37

AFTER Jesus had ridden into Jerusalem on the ass, and had been proclaimed king by the multitude, his disciples took a great interest in the temple and other beautiful buildings of the city, possibly because they thought that the whole city would soon be ruled by their Master, and that they would have some prominent position in his kingdom. (Matt. 21:8, 9; John 12:12, 13, 18) They said to Jesus, "Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!"—vs. 1

It doubtless surprised them greatly when Jesus replied, "Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." (vs. 2) From this the disciples would surely realize that their expectations were wrong, so, when opportunity afforded, they said to Jesus, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?"—vs. 4

It was only a few years after this

that the temple and city of Jerusalem were destroyed; but in replying to the disciples' question Jesus dealt also, and in fact primarily, with events which pertained particularly to this end of the age, the time of his second visit to earth and the establishment of his kingdom. The disciples did not realize that more than nineteen centuries would elapse before their cherished hopes of the messianic kingdom would be fulfilled.

The disciples asked Jesus two questions. One pertained to the "time" when all these things shall be," and the other to the "sign," or outward evidence that they were taking place. (vs. 4) Jesus told them that he did not then know the time. He said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."—vs. 32

After Jesus was raised from the dead the disciples again asked him about "time," and he replied, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in is own power." (Acts 1:7) Jesus did not mean by this that

his followers would never be favored with a certain understanding of the time features of the divine plan. It was simply that those at the beginning of the age were not permitted to know. God held this information in his own power and would release it to his people whenever it would serve a good purpose in their lives.

Jesus gave the disciples a lengthy answer concerning the indication of his second visit and the end of the age. The most detailed report of his reply is recorded in chapters 24 and 25 of The Gospel of Matthew. Matthew also records the disciples' questions more explicitly—"When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming [Greek, *parousia*, meaning "presence"] and the end of the world [ion, meaning "age"]?"—Matt. 24:3

Among the earlier signs of his "presence," Jesus said that there would be "great tribulation" upon the earth, a tribulation so severe and widespread that unless it were shortened all flesh would be destroyed. (ss. 21, 22) There is every reason to believe that this "tribulation" is already upon the nations, hence the present threatened destruction of the human race. Luke's report of this part of Jesus' discourse describes the "tribulation" as "distress of nations, with perplexity," with men's "hearts failing them for fear," as they look ahead to the things coming upon the earth. —Luke 21:25, 26

QUESTIONS

When was Jesus' prophecy concerning the destruction of the temple fulfilled?

What did Jesus say about the "time" of his return?

Describe one of the early "signs" of his second presence; and also one of the final ones.

Why should we "watch and pray"?

Christ's second visit to earth is not a momentary one. His "presence" continues for a thousand years—the thousand years of his kingdom, with the "great tribulation" at the beginning destroying the "kingdoms of this world." (Rev. 11:15-18) The ultimate objective of Christ's reign is to restore mankind to life, and to the dominion over the earth which was forfeited because of sin. So the last and most impressive of all the signs of Christ's second presence will be the accomplishment of this purpose, when he will say to those who prove worthy at that time, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. 25:34; Gen. 1:28

Our Golden Text expresses the proper attitude for all true disciples of Christ with respect to both the "time" and "signs" in the outworking of the divine plan. Because we are not given definite knowledge of "time" in advance, and usually are unable to identify "signs" until they are in course of fulfillment, we need to "watch and pray."

THE BIBLE VERSUS TRADITIONS

Article II

Man's Eternal Home

"The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men."—Psalm 115:16

THE Creator of the universe designed the earth to be the eternal home of his human creation. When God created our first parents he said to 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."—Gen. 1:28

The Creator prepared a special garden home for Adam "eastward in Eden." "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayst 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, 9, 16, 17

From these divinely inspired statements of the Bible it is clear that man was created to live on the earth, and that he would find everything on the earth adapted to his needs, comfort, and joy. However, the continued enjoyment of this home on earth, and dominion over it, depended upon his obedience to the Creator's commandments. He was warned that if he disobeyed he would die. The record is that man did disobey the divine law, and that he was sentenced to death. The Lord said to man, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—Gen. 3:17-19

It is important to observe that in pronouncing the sentence of death

upon Adam the Lord said nothing about man being transferred to another part of the universe. The sentence clearly implies that man was to be deprived of continued life on the earth. In the garden which the Lord had specially prepared for our first parents there was a "tree of life." The Hebrew word here translated "tree" is plural, indicating that actually there was more than one tree of life. It was a grove of trees, the fruit of which would sustain human life continuously. But our first parents were driven out of the garden so that they could not have access to these life-giving trees, the reason for this drastic action on God's part being, as he explains, "lest" man "eat, and live forever."—Gen. 3:22-24

This shows beyond a doubt that God's original design was that man should live forever on the earth, and that every necessary provision had been made to enable him to do so. It was not God's purpose for man to live here for a few short years, and then to be whisked off to heaven for eternity. He did not tell our first parents that if they obeyed they would one day be taken to heaven, or that if they disobeyed they would be consigned to a place of torment.

The Traditional View

One wonders how the truth so clearly set forth in the opening chapters of Genesis could become so terribly distorted, but so it has been. As human traditions devel-

oped, the professed Christian world came to believe that dying and death are a natural and inevitable part of human experience; that it is God's plan for man to live but temporarily on the earth, and that during this short earthly life span he has an opportunity to prove worthy or unworthy of an eternity of bliss in heaven, and if unworthy he will suffer eternal torture. The Catholic tradition modifies this latter somewhat with the doctrine of purgatory, which calls for an end of torture for the victims who under such stress repent and reform.

The traditions of men hold that human experience on earth is limited also by the claim that at some time in the future God will rain down fire from the sky and destroy the earth. Then, it is claimed, all the "worthy" ones on the earth will be taken to heaven at once, and all the unworthy sent to torture. That, says tradition, will be the end of "time," and the beginning of "eternity."

We cannot overstress the fact that these unreasonable, even revolting views, are entirely traditional, and without any support whatsoever in the Word of God. Nothing of this sort was even hinted to Adam by the Creator. As we have seen, he was told to multiply and fill the earth. The earth was given to him as his home, and he was to have dominion over it. If disobedient to divine law, he was to forfeit all these blessings, and

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in death return to the earth from which he had been taken. If human tradition be true, then God falsified the truth in his dealings with our first parents.

We know, of course, that Adam did disobey divine law, and was sentenced to death. However, this did not change the divine purpose concerning the human creation. More than three thousand years later the Prophet Isaiah wrote, "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."—Isa. 45:18

God's statement that he did not create the earth in vain, but formed it to be inhabited, clearly implies that his purpose as originally stated to Adam is still to be carried out. The Lord assures us that he has "established" the earth. He did not create it as a temporary expedient, or as a place where he could experiment with a human creation. He designed the earth as a home for man, and its creation was not in vain. It is yet to be inhabited—not by a dying race, but by the living human race.

In verses 22 and 23 of this same chapter the Lord says further: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me

every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Two important thoughts appear in this text: (1) that salvation is provided for those who look to the Lord, and (2) that eventually every human knee shall bow and every tongue confess obedience to the Lord.

Because of rebellion against divine law, man lost life. "In Adam all die," wrote the Apostle Paul. (I Cor. 15:22) But this rebellion against God and against his authority in the earth is to be put down and those who return to obedience to the Lord are to be saved from the sentence of death which came upon Adam, and, through him, upon all mankind.

This program of salvation from death is accomplished through Jesus the Redeemer and Savior of mankind. So Paul further wrote, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:22) The Lord's statement in Isaiah 45:22, 23 that unto him "every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear," is quoted in the New Testament by the Apostle Paul and applied to Jesus. (Phil. 2:8-11) Thus Paul shows that the redemptive work accomplished by the death of Jesus is God's provision for the salvation of all mankind; which, in turn, means that God did not create the earth in vain, and that it will yet be inhabited by the redeemed and restored human race.

Further Assurances

In Psalm 78:69 we read that the Lord "has established the earth forever." Again, "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth." (Ps. 119:90) In Ecclesiastes 1:4 we read that "the earth abideth forever." Jesus' Third Beatitude states, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." (Matt. 5:5) This promise to the meek would be pointless if the earth is one day to be destroyed.

Human tradition holds, of course, that the death of Jesus as the Redeemer of the world did not provide continued human life on earth, and the awakening of the dead to life on earth as humans. The claim is that if this were so, those who accept Christ would not grow old and die; and long before this we would have witnessed at least the beginning of the resurrection of the dead. But this is a false position due to a failure to understand the "due time" aspects of the divine plan of salvation.

In Hebrews 2:6-10 Paul reveals the manner in which the plan of God for human salvation is being accomplished. First he quotes from the 8th Psalm in which the Prophet David reminds us that man was created to be king of earth, and that all earthly things were put under him. Then Paul adds, "But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels

for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Here Paul explains that while we do not now see man as king of earth, enjoying the dominion given to him when created, we do see that the plan of God for man's recovery from sin and death is moving forward—"We see Jesus," and we see that he "by the grace of God" tasted death for every man. Jesus' suffering and death were a very vital part of God's plan for human recovery from death. Through his suffering Jesus was also trained to be the "Captain" of our salvation.

Paul also explains that in the plan of God many "sons" are brought to "glory" through suffering, just as Jesus was. Thus Paul reminds us of the great truth of the divine plan that Jesus will have associated with him in bringing salvation to mankind during the thousand years of his kingdom, a group of joint-heirs, called and chosen from among mankind. These will share the work and glory of his kingdom. This high reward, attained through faithfulness in sacrifice and suffering, is described earlier in the chapter as the "great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord." Jesus

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is thus the "Captain" of those who will attain this "great salvation."—vs. 3

An entire age is set aside in the divine plan for the calling and training of these "many sons" who prove worthy to be exalted to glory with Jesus their Captain. These have the privilege of suffering and dying with him. They follow in his footsteps which lead to death. Because of this, when they accept Christ and dedicate their lives to follow him, they are not restored to perfection of life; but through the merit of Christ's blood, what is left of their imperfect and dying humanity is made acceptable as a sacrifice which leads to death with Jesus.—Rom. 6:3-6; 12:1, 2

The restoration of mankind in general to perfect life on earth as humans must wait until this sacrificial work of the present age is completed. That is why we do not as yet see any of the human race being restored to health and life. But we have the assurance of the Word of God that this loving provision of his plan of salvation through Christ will, in his own due time, be accomplished. As Paul says, "We see Jesus," we see that he "by the grace of God" has tasted death "for every man," not merely for the "called ones" of the present age. Knowing that the justice of God remains sure, and that nothing can stand in the way of his almighty power in the accomplishment of his loving purposes, we can

be confident, even as the Creator himself was confident, that the earth was not created "in vain," and that it will yet be inhabited by the restored human race.

God has made this abundantly clear in his Word. The Apostle Peter locates the time for this work of restoration as following the second coming of Christ. He describes that period as "times of restitution of all things," and declares that it was "spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21) Could we ask for more confirmation of a great truth?

Social Upheavals

Efforts have been made to find support for all the many traditional misconceptions of God's plan of salvation. This has been done with respect to the tradition that at the second coming of Christ the earth is to be destroyed by fire. The apparent support found in the Bible for this tradition has come through a misunderstanding of the prophecies in which the words earth, world, and fire are used pictorially to illustrate the great upheavals of human society which would occur as a result of Christ's return to overthrow Satan's empire and establish his kingdom.

Using plain language, the Bible describes the passing away of the rule of sin and selfishness under the direction of Satan, the "prince of this world," as a "time of trouble such as never was since there was

a nation." (Dan. 12:1) Jesus quoted from this prophecy, and applied it to the time of his return and second presence, using the expression "great tribulation" instead of "time of trouble."—Matt. 24:21, 22

Jesus explained that this "tribulation" would be so severe that unless "those days" were shortened no flesh would survive, that the entire human race would be destroyed. He gave assurance, however, that he would not permit this to happen, that "all flesh" would not be destroyed. Since this is Jesus' assurance concerning the time of his return, it means that the traditional idea that then the earth would be burned up and the human race completely destroyed cannot be true, for as Jesus promised, "all flesh" will not be destroyed. The "end of the world" foretold in the Bible is something that all who love righteousness, and seek the welfare of mankind, should desire, and should look forward to with joyful anticipation.

The Apostle John wrote, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."—I John 2:15-17

It is very evident that the Apostle John is not here writing about the earth, but of a social order which exists upon the earth. This is the "world" which Christians are not to love. Referring to the same thing, Jesus said, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) To his disciples Jesus said, "I have chosen you out of the world." (John 15:19) This is the "world" which, John explains, "passeth away." It is not the earth at all, but the evil conditions to be found everywhere in human society. These are to be supplanted by the establishment of divine authority through the agencies of Christ's kingdom. This is in keeping with our Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. 6:10

Symbolic Language

The word "earth" is often used in the Bible to denote the association of men upon the earth. "Give ear, O earth," we read in Isaiah 1:2. "Let the earth hear," the Prophet Isaiah wrote. (Isa. 34:1) "Let the earth be glad," wrote David. (Ps. 96:11) We might continue to quote these examples of the figurative use of the word earth, for there are many of them. Students of the Bible in reading these texts have no difficulty in understanding them, except when the passage refers to the destruction of the "earth," and then, influenced by the misconceptions of human tradition, they

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insist on a literal interpretation which would call for the burning up of this planet Earth which the Lord has assured us he has established forever.

Psalms 46 contains one of the prophecies symbolically descriptive of the time of "great tribulation" foretold by Jesus, and in this prophecy we are told that the earth would be "melted." But in the final picture presented in the prophecy we read, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen [Gentiles], I will be exalted in the earth." (vs. 10) Thus we find that after the symbolic "earth" "melted," the literal earth, the scene of the great "time of trouble," still exists, and that God's name is exalted in it; that his will is done in earth even as is stated in our Lord's prayer.

In order to help us understand more vividly the different aspects of the "tribulation" by which Satan's social order is destroyed, various expressions are used symbolically in the prophecies. The "time of trouble" is likened to a flood, to a storm, to winds, to an earthquake, and also to fire. And the fire is symbolic as well as the wind, storm, earthquake, and flood.

Fire is very destructive, and is used a great deal in the Bible to symbolize destruction. Peter writes of the "fiery trial" which comes upon Christians to destroy the dross of their characters. (I Pet. 4:12) Paul, quoting from Proverbs 25:22, speaks of heaping "coals of

fire" upon our enemy's head. (Rom. 12:20) No student of the Bible has ever supposed that the "fire" in these various references is literal.

But to find scriptural support for human tradition, when fire is used in the prophecies to symbolize the destructive effects of the "great tribulation" which was to come upon the earth, the misguided student insists that it must be literal fire. This has helped to keep alive the tradition concerning the burning up of the earth, and thus has blinded many to the real plan of God for the restoration of the human race from death that all might have an opportunity to accept the provisions of redemption through Christ, obey the laws of the messianic kingdom and live forever in the earthly home which God provided for them.

And what glorious conditions will ultimately obtain here on the earth! In Isaiah 11:9 we read that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." In Isaiah 25:6-9, and 33:24 we are informed that sickness and death will be destroyed, and that the righteous shall no longer suffer persecution as has been the case during the reign of sin and death, that the "rebuken" of God's people shall be taken away from the face of the whole earth.

The psalmist wrote: "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; that thy way may be known upon the earth, thy saving health among

all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon the earth. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase: and God, even our own God, shall bless us."—Ps. 67:1-6

When our first parents transgressed God's law and were driven out of their garden home in Eden, the Lord said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." (Gen. 3:17, 18) But this "curse" is to be removed, and as the psalmist wrote, the earth will "yield her increase." How reassuring are these promises of God!

In Isaiah 66:1 the Lord informs

us that while heaven is his throne, the earth is his "footstool." In Isaiah 60:13 the Lord promises that he will make the place of his "feet," his "footstool," glorious. It will be then that the beautiful promise of God recorded in Revelation 21:3-5 will have its fulfilment. We quote: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men [men live on the earth, not in heaven], and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 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. 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."

"LOVE AS BRETHREN"

"Be pitiful, be courteous. ... Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (I Pet. 3:8; 5:5, 6) "Be clothed with humility." The thought would seem to be that outside of every other adornment of character, and covering all others, should be this robe of humble-mindedness, the opposite disposition to pride. The apostle adds, "Casting all your care upon Him." All true saints of God are care-full. They have an interest in the Lord's work; they have a care in respect to it. They cannot be indifferent to the interests of Zion.

—Selected

Seven Dailies

THESE seven "dailies" have no reference whatever to daily newspapers. However, these "dailies" do apply to "news agents"; to those who are agents, not for secular news, but kingdom news, to those who constitute the kingdom, or ruling class. These agents are referred to in Philippians 2:15, 16 as being in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom they shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life.

There never was a generation more crooked or perverse in its attitude towards the Creator than the present one, unless it was the generation in the days of Noah, to whom Jesus likened this present generation. "As it was in the days of Noe [Greek for Noah], so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." (Luke 17:26) Noah was present in the days of Noah. The Son of Man is present in the days of the Son of Man.

The first of these seven "dailies" is "daily bread," referred to in Matthew 6:11: "Give us this day our daily bread." As we know, bread is used, in both secular and sacred writings, to cover all the

necessities of life. We speak of a man going forth to earn his bread, meaning to provide the necessities of life for himself and for those dependent upon him.

When we come to the Bible, we find the same use made of the word bread. For instance, in Genesis 3:19 we have the words spoken by God to Adam: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." In other words, only by laborious toil could man provide for himself the necessities of life. The word bread is used to cover all the basic needs of this life.

Now let us look at Matthew 6:11 a little closer. It is a special kind of bread that is spoken of here: "Give **US** this day **OUR** daily bread." This is the bread which belongs to us as the children of our Father who is in heaven. This thought is clearly seen by referring to verses 5 and 7. Jesus is teaching God's children how to pray, and he makes a distinction between them and others. He says: "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites." Again, "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen." We, the children of God,

taught by Jesus to pray, "Give us this day **our** daily bread," are contrasted with the hypocrites and the heathen. It is not the bread of all men for which we are taught to pray. It is for **OUR** bread, the children's bread. This covers all the needs of the consecrated life, whatever is needful to us as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

And now, we want to emphasize that word "daily"—"Give us this day our daily bread." In an earthly family the children sit down to the table day after day. They do not ask their parents how they obtained the means to feed and clothe them. They do not fret when they awaken in the morning, wondering whether their parents have made provision for them. So we are taught to recognize God as the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Let us go to the throne of grace day by day, every day, for the supply of our daily bread, laying greater stress upon our spiritual needs, in the full assurance of faith that if we seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, all other things will be added unto us.

Daily Cross

Our second "daily" is the daily "cross" referred to in Luke 9:23. "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." The first step in following the Lord is properly designated in the Scriptures as a sacrifice. The "cross" symbolizes

this sacrifice, a sacrifice which terminates in death.

The desire to give up our will, and to accept God's will, must be a joy, a pleasure. Our wills must be sacrificed willingly, else the sacrifice will not be acceptable to the Lord. We shall have neither part nor lot with him unless our wills be joyfully resigned to the Lord's will. All subsequent sacrificing will not be to our advantage. Our Master's expression respecting the surrender, the sacrifice of his will to do the Father's will, illustrates this matter very clearly. Hear him: "I **delight** to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."—Ps. 40:8

We, too, must **delight** to have God's will done in us—**delight** to surrender, or sacrifice, our own wills. Let us see this clearly. If there is anything lacking in respect to the sacrifice of our wills, let us give it our first attention. Those who have completely sacrificed their will to the Lord's will have gained the victory at the start, and will be able to tread faithfully the narrow way, if they continue steadfast unto the very end.

The Master's crossbearing did not consist in fighting the weaknesses of the flesh, for he had none. It consisted in the day by day doing of his Father's will under unfavorable conditions. In doing the will of our Father in heaven we, too, will have opposition. In letting the light of truth shine out as our

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Master directed, we, too, will have persecution.

Our crossbearing comes when we find that the truth, so beautiful and so beneficial to us, is doubted and denied by others. It draws upon us, their ridicule and opposition, just as it did upon the Master. Our faithfulness in bearing the cross daily includes not compromising the truth under any circumstances, and in our willingness to stand up for the truth, meekly but firmly. We must be prepared to do this, whatever the cost.

Crossbearing is made necessary because we are living in this present evil world; because the spirit of Satan and of this world is contrary to the Spirit of the Lord and his righteousness. Having consecrated our all to God, having the sentiments of our hearts finding expression in the words, "I delight to do thy will, O my God," let us continue to bear the cross faithfully day by day. If we do this we shall, in due time, wear the crown; for it is written, "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:17

Daily Searching

Our third "daily" is daily searching the Scriptures, referred to in Acts 17:10, 11: "And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming went into the synagogue of the Jews. These [the Jews] were more noble than those in Thessa-

lonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

The Greek word here translated "noble" means well-born. True nobility implies reasonableness as opposed to prejudice. Paul and Silas were agreeably surprised to find the Jews in Berea ready to receive the truth. They were prepared to search, to examine, to investigate, to see whether or not the things spoken were in harmony with the prophetic statements respecting Messiah and his work.

Professing to believe all that was written in the law and the prophets, professing to be looking for Messiah, they welcomed the servants of God, who sought to draw their attention particularly to the things written aforetime. With all readiness of mind, they began to search, not merely on the Sabbath but daily to see how well Paul's presentation was supported by the testimony of the law and the prophets.

All of us are "leaky vessels," some more, some less. Unless we are imbibing the Word of truth day by day, we leave ourselves open to the attacks of the Adversary. The Christian course is not covered by fits and starts, but by patient continuance in well-doing. So with our study of the truth—this is not done spasmodically, once a week on Sunday, or perhaps less often. Not merely on Sunday, but daily we should search, examine, inves-

tigate, and meditate upon the Scriptures.

As we do this, we obtain clearer views and a deeper appreciation of God's wisdom, justice, love, and power. Let us daily meditate upon these eternal verities, and come more into harmony with them. Let them become an essential part of our existence. As we read in Psalm 119:11, "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." But something more is necessary than a readiness of mind to receive the truth.

Jesus referred to a class who received the Word gladly, but who had no depth, no root in themselves. Consequently, when the sun of persecution arose, they withered, they lost their Christian vitality. It is not always those who receive the truth most favorably that hold out the longest and bring forth fruit. Persecution and opposition often cause the line of demarcation to be drawn between those who have depth, and those who have not; those who really love the truth, and those who merely have a perfunctory or head knowledge thereof. Let us day by day search the Scriptures, so that we might have a proper judgment, and a clear conviction respecting the divine Word. By so doing, we shall not be blown about by the many winds of false doctrine so prevalent today.

Daily Dying

Our fourth "daily" is daily "dying," referred to in I Corinthians

15:31: "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." A companion passage to this, which shows the kind of dying referred to, is II Corinthians 4:10: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." Yes, it is the dying of the Lord Jesus to which the apostle refers. For three and a half years Jesus was daily dying, pouring out his soul unto death, a sacrificial death.

The whole world is dying, as well as the church, but the world does not die in Christ. What a wide difference there is between being dead in Adam and being dead in Christ! Says the Apostle Paul (Romans 6:3), "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" His death was a sacrificial one.

Henceforth, from the divine standpoint, we are not to count ourselves as human beings. We are moved by God's Spirit. We are new creatures in Christ Jesus. We have new and heavenly hopes and aims. Our lives should be new, distinct and separate from those in the world. We are always, day by day, "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." The Lord's people, in proportion as they are faithful in his service, are sharing in the likeness of Jesus' death.

Our Lord's experience in the narrow way was three and a half years of daily dying. He is our ex-

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ample as to how we should die daily, how we should lay down our lives. We have made a covenant by sacrifice. We have consecrated our lives to the Lord and his blessed service.

Concerning the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, we read in Acts 10:38: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good." Jesus laid down his life daily in doing good, in proclaiming the truth then due. The Christian life is a ministry, a life made up of doing good. We, too, are to lay down our lives in the same manner, going about doing good, proclaiming the truth.

We are to do this, whether the time of our ministry be three and a half years, thirty-three and a half years, or whatever it might be. We are to do this until the Father's good time for our deliverance. Let us, then, continue in this daily dying, knowing that if we be dead with him now, we shall live with him in the future.

Daily Renewing

Our fifth "daily" is daily "renewing." The reference is to II Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." The Greek word here translated "renewed" means to make new, or "renovate." We read in Romans 12:2: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of

your mind," by making your mind new. The reason for this is that we "may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

While it is quite true that our consecration to the will of God was an act of a moment, yet the making new, the bringing of every thought into harmony with the will of God, is a gradual work. It is a life work, going on day by day. It is the daily bending heavenward of that which naturally bends earthward. Says the apostle in II Peter 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

The daily renewing of the mind from earthly to heavenly, from the human to the spiritual, is the beginning of that change of nature referred to by the Apostle Peter. Either we submit ourselves to be conformed to this world by its influences, its spirit surrounding us; or we submit ourselves to the will of God, to the Holy Spirit, thus to be transformed by the heavenly influences emanating from the Word of God.

We should ask and answer the following question: To which influences am I submitting? We know that the daily renewing of our minds leads to sacrifice, but the end will be glorious. Let the good work go on!

We remind you of a few phrases in the third chapter of Colossians (Verse 1): "Seek those things which are above." Verse 2: "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Verse 5: "Mortify [put to death] therefore your members which are upon earth." Verse 8: "Put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication." Verse 9: "Put off the old man." Verse 10: "Put on the new man." Verse 12: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind meekness, long-suffering." Verse 14: "And above all these things put on love."

No wonder the apostle wrote in another place, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. 2:12) It is a life's work, made up of daily renewing. "Thine arduous task will not be done, till thou hast gained thy crown." Daily there is to be a renewing of the mind; the setting of our affections on things above; the putting off of the old man; the putting on of the new.

Daily Exhortation

Our sixth "daily" is daily "exhortation," referred to in Hebrews 3:13, where we read: "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." The Greek word here translated "exhort" is the verb from which comes the word **parakletos**, meaning a comforter, a strengthener.

Daily we are to exhort, comfort, strengthen one another. Here is a form of service in which all the consecrated can be engaged.

This can be done, both by the spoken and the written word. There are some false ideas about exhortation. It is so often divorced from doctrine. If you care to listen, you can hear the moral and devotional truths of the Bible spoken about over the radio, and by members of the various churches and chapels. But would you hear them speak of the Abrahamic Covenant? Would you hear them speak of God's purpose to bless all the families of the earth through the long-promised "seed" of Abraham, Christ and his church? Would you hear them speak of restitution, based upon the ransom sacrifice of Jesus? Would you hear them speak of the ransomed of the Lord returning, coming to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, there to obtain joy and gladness, sorrow and sighing to flee away?

Many of those who speak and write about the moral and devotional truths of the Bible are believers in those three great masterpieces of Satan, those three God-dishonoring and truth-hindering doctrines—the trinity, the immortality of the soul, and eternal torment. We are reminded here of those words of Jesus, recorded in Mark 7:7: "In vain do they worship-

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me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

We cannot properly exhort one another as Christians apart from true doctrine. Neither can we speak of the doctrines of the truth without exhorting one another. We cannot divorce exhortation from doctrine. In this, as in all things appertaining to the Christian life, we have Jesus as our example.

We refer you to that wonderful discourse Jesus gave to those two disciples on the way to Emmaus as recorded in Luke 24:25-27: "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? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself."

That was a doctrinal exhortation to faith, proving from the Scriptures that Christ must suffer, and then enter into his glory. We know the condition of those two disciples before Jesus spoke to them. Verse 17: "And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" Were these sad and sorrowful disciples exhorted, comforted, strengthened by that doctrinal talk Jesus gave them? Hear them, verse 32: "Did not our heart burn within us, while

he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

Some today say, "Let us have union, and ignore doctrines; for, after all, it does not really matter what we believe." It does matter what we believe! Let us keep the truth pure, unmixed with error. It is the truth by which we are sanctified. It is the truth by which we can daily exhort, comfort, and strengthen one another as we continue our journey towards our heavenly home.

Daily Paying Vows

Our seventh and last "daily" is daily "paying vows," referred to in Psalm 61:8: "So will I sing praise unto thy name forever, that I may daily perform my vows." The Hebrew word rendered perform is translated "pay" in other passages. Leeser renders the text (only he makes it verse 9), "So will I sing praise unto thy name forever, that I may pay my vows day by day." It is the same Hebrew word as used in Deuteronomy 23:21: "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee." Surely, brethren, this seventh and last "daily," the daily paying of our vows, is of vital importance to us.

"The Morning Resolve"

My earliest thought I desire shall be: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward

me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord [for grace to help]. I will pay my vows unto the Most High."—Ps. 116:12-14

Remembering the divine call, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" (Ps. 50: 5), I resolve that by the Lord's assisting grace I will today, as a saint of God, fulfil my vows, continuing the work of sacrificing the flesh and its interests, that I may attain unto the heavenly inheritance in joint-heirship with my Redeemer.

I will strive to be simple and sincere toward all.

I will seek not to please and honor self, but the Lord.

I will be careful to honor the Lord with my lips, that my words may be unctuous and blessed to all.

I will seek to be faithful to the Lord, the truth, the brethren, and all with whom I have to do, not

only in great matters, but also in the little things of life.

Trusting myself to divine care, and the providential overruling of all my interests for my highest welfare, I will seek not only to be pure in heart, but to repel all anxiety, all discontent, all discouragement.

I will neither murmur nor repine at what the Lord's providence may permit, because faith can firmly trust him, come what may!

Let us, then, keep these seven "dailies" in mind. Let them find their outward expression in our daily lives. Let us never forget that we are agents for kingdom news; that we have not received the grace of God in vain; that our hearts have responded to the love of God in Christ Jesus. May we daily faithfully maintain our vows of consecration to know and to do the will of God! May the dear Lord bless us all, as we faithfully lay hold upon, and keep in mind, these seven "dailies"!

Then Shall I Know

*Not till the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly,
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why
The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver's skilful hand,
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern he has planned.*

Knowing the Unknown God

EVEN though world conditions are greatly changed from those of centuries ago, the God of the Bible remains an almost complete stranger to millions of well-meaning humanity. To many, the concept of the Deity is little less repugnant to Scripture-enlightened intelligence today than the totem poles of Gideon's day were to true Israelites then.

Many visualize our Heavenly Father as an austere personality. Others think of him as being most loving and kind and deeply interested in the salvation of mankind, but seriously lacking in the power and wisdom essential to bring to pass all his good wishes. These say that if peace is to be established on earth, man must accomplish it himself.

Paul's experiences at Athens, as recorded in the 17th chapter of Acts, were not unlike those of the Lord's people since. His spirit was stirred within him on beholding the city full of idols. And he, like all faithful Christians since that time, tried to do something about it. He reasoned in the synagogue and with pious persons, and those with whom

he daily met in the market place.

Some of the Grecian philosophers encountering Paul asked, "What does this babblers wish to say?" Professor Rotherham renders it "picker-up-of-scrap," while Professor Young uses the term "seed picker." They obviously viewed the great apostle as a mere scavenger, picking up what others did not want.

To many, Paul seemed to be a proclaimer of strange demons because he announced glad tidings concerning Jesus and the resurrection. When they had heard of the resurrection some mocked and others said, "We will hear you again." How much this sounds like viewpoints the Lord's people often hear expressed today.

Passing through Athens, Paul noticed an altar to the "unknown God." This God, he told them, made the world and all things therein, and that of one blood he had made all nations of men. In him, Paul pointed out, we live, move, and have our being, for we are the offspring of God, therefore we ought not to think of the Deity as being inferior in character and intelli-

gence to ourselves, or even vaguely represented by images in gold, silver, or stone, these being sculptures of human skill, which at best represented only human conceptions of God.

The Scriptures tell us of two spirits very different one from the other. These are the Spirit of God and the spirit of Satan. They are the two first causes, the sources of their respective characteristics, and they are as far apart as the Antipodes, as the east is from the west. Everything that is good, right, pure, clean, true, and loveable, stems from Him who inhabiteth eternity; while everything unclean, false, hateful, envious, merciless, selfish, and proud, stems from the father of lies.—John 8:44

We know from the Bible that our Heavenly Father's attributes of power, justice, wisdom, and love are so great as to be immeasurable, unbounded, limitless, and infinite. However, his power has been minimized and his character maligned by traditional misconceptions at the hands of professed Christian philosophers, even as the Epicurians and Stoics discredited and disparaged the doctrine of the resurrection in Paul's day.

The concept of God's character held by some of the modern philosophers is well illustrated by the story told of a little girl who, when asked what would be the first thing she would do when she got to heaven replied, "I will hide behind

Jesus so God can't see me." Why should she fear God? Obviously this little girl had been taught that Jesus is the One in heaven that understands human weaknesses. That it was he instead of God that really loved the world. Such a distorted view does not take into account the many Scripture texts which tell of the Father's superlative qualities of love and power. Actually, he is the inexhaustible source, the storehouse as it were, from which his creatures must draw spirit, truth, and life.

The very nature of God proclaims the superiority of his altruistic qualities. By intuition he knows more than his combined creation may ever expect to acquire through experience, observation, or information. We do not understand that any of God's creatures will ever equal God himself. Jehovah, by the very nature of things, is superior to his creatures, and capable of understanding man's every weakness.

Would we say that he who designed the eye cannot see, or that he who created the ear cannot hear? Surely he who planned the brain has full comprehension! Nor is he who set the standard for all acceptable heart qualities beneath that standard himself. The supporters of the eternal torment theory would seem to so think.

Jehovah himself claims the authorship of the great plan of atonement, therefore any magnanimous

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principles or graces involved must have originated with him since the plan was conceived in his mind before his beloved Son was created. Paul called this a mystery which God purposed in himself, a mystery hidden in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. This manifold wisdom of God was to be made known "according to a plan of the ages which he formed for the Anointed Jesus," when God was alone.—Ephesians 3:9-11, **Diaglott**

If this fact were fully comprehended, the false conception of the relationship between the Father and the Son would be dissipated. The testimony of the Bible is that the Father and the Son are one, not in organism, but in spirit and purpose. The Father is perfect in all his attributes of nobility, with the Son serving as his Logos, Arm, or agency, in extending his Father's Spirit and principles to others.

Joel 2:28 and 29, quoted by Peter in the second chapter of Acts, reveals that God's Spirit, influence, or power (not a third person of an imaginary trinity) was to be poured out upon all flesh. This began with the church at Pentecost, and will reach the whole world of mankind during Christ's mediatorial reign. By every law of reason it seems obvious that the Spirit (if a person) could not be poured out upon, or divided among millions of humanity.

Both Joel and Peter identify this wonderful invisible power or in-

fluence as the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. This was the same Spirit that energized Jesus' mind at Jordan, and it is the same transforming influence that has worked in the hearts of God's people ever since, toward the development of godlikeness.

You will remember that Paul, addressing the intelligentsia at Athens, said that man is an offspring of God. Man's life originally came from God. But instead of man being an infinitesimal part of God, we read that God created Adam in his own likeness. He formed the body of man out of the dust of the earth, and animated it by breathing air into his nostrils, thereby producing a living being with reasoning faculties. By virtue of his perfect human organism, man possessed godlike qualities in proportion to his limited capacity. And he was given dominion over the earth, as God is the Ruler of the universe.

Paul, in Ephesians 4:32, admonished the church to "forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." We find no admonition to follow either a higher or lower standard than God himself has set. One of the serious errors of all history has been man's disposition to lower God's standards in deference to the wishes of the worldly, but this produced tares and not godlike creatures. In Galatians 5:22-24 Paul lists the graces of the Spirit of God as love, joy,

peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. These are the graces of God.

Jesus never claimed originality, either in the truth he spoke or in the principles he inculcated. No! Jesus was, is, and always will be, the representative of the Father. In John 10:36 we read that the Father "sent him into the world." John 8:28 declares that what he heard of the Father, he spoke. We read in John 8:19 that Jesus so completely exemplified the Father's characteristics that anyone who had known him had also known the Father. Jesus declared that he did nothing of himself, but as the Father taught him, he spoke those things.—John 8:28; 17:8

Some poorly informed persons believe the God of Israel to be a cruel and bloodthirsty tyrant. These cite references in the Old Testament in support of their claim. The texts quoted by them, when taken separately, might seem to support their contention. God's commandments to Israel to destroy whole nations mark him and the Jews who obeyed him as merciless and pitiless tyrants in the minds of some. This is because they do not understand the plan of the ages.

A sample of these misunderstood commandments is found in I Samuel 15:3. It reads, "Go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant

and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." In some instances they were commanded to have no pity and show no mercy. A good example of this is found in Deuteronomy 7:1-16, where Israel was told to destroy seven nations without pity or mercy.

We are not surprised that some well-meaning but misinformed souls believe that God is incapable of compassion or feeling for fallen man. Obviously this distorted view of God is the reason for millions directing their prayers to Mary, a supposedly more sympathetic soul than either God or Jesus, and why the little girl thought she would hide behind Jesus so God would not see her.

It gives us great pleasure, and we are sure that it gives you joy also, to be able to say on the basis of a "thus saith the Lord," that God does have superior compassion and understanding for humanity, even though he has never experienced bodily pain or other distress which his creatures have suffered. To reason otherwise would be to discount the intuitive powers of God Almighty.

In every case cited by God's opponents, where there seemingly was lack of pity or understanding on God's part, a picture was being made of what ultimately will happen to everything that is not in perfect harmony with the divine standard. At the same time those involved were learning lessons in

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the exceeding sinfulness of sin, which will be of great value to them when raised from the dead and put on probation for everlasting life. Furthermore, putting them to sleep before they became totally depraved was a blessing in disguise. Their iniquity had come to the full, and God took them away as he saw good.—Gen. 15:16; 19:24; Ezek. 16: 50; Jude 7

Israel was a typical nation. Their conduct foreshadowed the victories and failures of nominal spiritual Israel. Sometimes Israel failed to obey God's commands to drive out or destroy their enemies. This, perhaps, was because of their having secret sympathies for the customs of their enemies, instead of being wholly devoted to God. Or it may have been that they were unwilling to forego certain friendships, or material benefits. Then, again, it may have required greater effort on their part to do God's will than they were willing to put forth.

In King Saul's case, Israel returned from battle with the Amalekites, bringing the opposing king and the best of the cattle and flocks for selfish purposes. The lesson for us is that God used this means to warn spiritual Israel against holding secret sympathies for uncleanness, the disposition to cater to the demands of the flesh and to neglect spiritual duties in the interests of material gain, ease, or in deference to worldly friends.

Qualities of Goodness

The Scriptures abound with evidences of God's exemplary qualities. Isaiah 63:7-9, speaks of God's kindness, goodness, mercy, and pity. Psalm 103:11-13 speaks of his great mercy and his fatherly pity. David in the 136th Psalm speaks of God's mercy twenty-six times. While Bible concordances do not record the word sympathy, there is abundant proof that God is good, merciful, compassionate, gracious, long-suffering, and holy.

These intrinsic qualities, or graces, which God has by virtue of his very nature, have long been obscured by the machinations of Satan. However, scriptures indicate that soon, very soon, we believe, God is to be unveiled to mankind in general by the glorious mediatorial reign of the Messiah. It is for that wonderful event that Christians have prayed, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth" as it already is being done in heaven. Then the true Savior of mankind, Almighty God himself, will receive the long delayed praise and honor of which he is worthy.

This, we think, was foreshadowed by Elijah's contest with the four hundred and fifty false prophets of Baal, as recorded in I Kings 18: 20-45. In this picture Jehovah was unveiled to Israel in a typical sense. At the close of the long day of excitement, Elijah's sacrifice was spectacularly accepted by fire com-

ing down from heaven, and the Israelites fell on their faces shouting, "Jehovah, he is God."

The false prophets were slain and there was copious rain. This was a progressive picture. It required considerable time. First the cloud was small like a man's hand. Later the heavens were black with clouds, and there was a boisterous wind. Finally the rain came, picturing the restitution blessings of which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:19-21

Revelation 21:4 gives God the credit for the ultimate removal of all tears from all faces. In Revelation, chapter 4, we have a majestic mental picture of the glory of God. It is a throne scene. There are four "living ones"—mistranslated "beasts"—who unitedly proclaim, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Al-

mighty, which was and is, and is to come." The ancient Sinaitic manuscript repeats the word "holy" eight times.

Following this proclamation of divine glory and holiness by the four "living ones," there are twenty-four "elders" who do homage unto God, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor and power: for thou hast created all things and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Yes, as David wrote, even "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." And to all that the Scriptures reveal concerning the glorious attributes of our loving Heavenly Father may we heartily say, Amen—not alone by words, but also by conforming all our thoughts, words, and acts to the doing of his will.—Ps. 19:1-4

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Not Inspired

Mark 16:17 reads, "These signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; ... they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them." Has this generally been true in the experiences of the Lord's people throughout the age?

NO, IT has not! Actually this statement is no part of the inspired Word of God. All of the last twelve verses in this 16th chapter of Mark are spurious. By this we mean that they were added by some one who copied the ancient manuscripts. When the King James Version of the Bible was translated there were no Greek manuscripts of earlier date than the tenth century. Since then many earlier manuscripts have been discovered, and the earliest of them do not contain these purported words of Jesus.

Effective Prayers

Jesus said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7) How literally can we expect this promise to be fulfilled? Do not many prayers go unanswered?

YES, many prayers do go unanswered! James explained why this is so. He wrote, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." (James 4:3) Thus James informs us that unanswered prayers are those which are selfish and which seek one's own pleasure and advantage.

And this is fully in keeping with Jesus' promise that those who abide in him, and in whom his Word abides, may ask what they will "and it shall be done unto" them. Those who abide in Christ, and in whom the Word, or teachings, of Christ abide, desire and pray only for those blessings which the Lord has promised to give. To be in and abide in Christ means to accept his headship in all things. It means that his will has become our will; so we pray only for those things which are in harmony with his will, and to the glory of God. All such prayers by fully dedicated Christians will be favorably answered.

A Traditional Observance

What is the origin of Lent? Is there any authority in the Bible for the observance of Lent, or is it one of the traditions of men?

THE observance of Lent is based on tradition. There is no authority for it in the Bible. The original

meaning of the word itself was "spring," but in the early centuries after Christ it became confused with certain fasts which were then observed prior to the anniversary of Jesus' death and resurrection, so it gradually lost its original meaning and was used primarily to designate the fast which was observed in this particular period of the year.

When the Lenten fast was first enjoined upon the church by its leaders, it was short but very severe. Some ate nothing at all for forty hours between the afternoon of "Good Friday" and the morning of "Easter." By the middle of the third century it was customary to fast during "Holy Week." Many variations of the custom were practiced. During the Reformation many of the Protestant groups, realizing that Lent was not taught in the Bible, discontinued it altogether, although it was retained by the Anglican and Lutheran churches.

It is supposed by many that fasting in general, and particularly during Lent is encouraged by Jesus' statement, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." (Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34) However, the denial of self indicated by Jesus is much more far-reaching than to forego the pleasure of certain delicacies during the forty days prior to Easter. It is, as Jesus said, the denial of self, not the restraining of certain pleasurable desires.

To deny self means to renounce one's own will and way in life, and accept instead the will and way of the Lord. Those who have denied self, and have dedicated themselves fully to the doing of God's will, as exemplified by Jesus and outlined throughout the Bible, are represented in Revelation 20:4 as being "beheaded," meaning that they have given up, figuratively speaking, their own heads, and have accepted the headship of Christ over their thoughts, words, and deeds.

And this is not merely for a day, or forty days, but for life; for those who thus deny themselves also take up their "cross" and follow Jesus. This means that they suffer and die with Jesus, inspired by the many promises of the Word that if they are faithful unto death they will receive a "crown of life," and will live and reign with Christ a thousand years.—Rev. 2:10; II Tim. 2:12, 13; Rev. 20:4

Godlikeness

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) Does this refer to perfection in the flesh? If not, how are we to understand Jesus' admonition?

IT IS not possible for any member of the sin-cursed and dying race to attain perfection in the flesh. Even the great Apostle Paul wrote, "I know that in me [that is,

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in my flesh] dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."—Rom. 7:18, 19

The meaning of Jesus' admonition is clear when we take the context into consideration. We quote this context, beginning with verse 43: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

The word "therefore" is very important in this exhortation by Jesus—"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Jesus had explained the manner in which the Heavenly Father was "perfect"—"He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." The force

of this statement is more apparent when we take into consideration the literal meaning of the Greek word here translated "perfect." According to Prof. Strong, it means "complete," or "completeness," not partial or in part. As Jesus explained, the Heavenly Father is all-comprehensive in the bestowing of his blessings, showering them upon the evil as well as upon the good.

So we are to do the same. We should not be guided by the tradition that one should love his neighbor and hate his enemy. Instead, we are to love our enemies, and do good to them that hate us—"That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

Thus, while every follower of the Master should strive to overcome the weaknesses of his flesh, and thus attain the highest degree possible of moral perfection, this admonition by Jesus seems to refer to completeness in the application of the great principle of Christian love. We might paraphrase the text to read, "Be ye all-comprehensive in the bestowing of your blessings, even as your Father which is in heaven is all-comprehensive in the bestowing of his blessings." This, we believe, is possible for every true Christian.

Feet Washing

In the "upper room" on the night before Jesus was crucified he said to his disciples, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your

feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." (John 13:14, 15) Does this mean that Christians should now practice the ancient custom of feet washing?

NO, WE do not think so. In ancient times the custom of feet washing was almost a necessity. Sandals were worn on the feet, and in walking over the dusty roads of that time gravel would get into the sandals and irritate the feet. So, for the comfort of a guest upon entering a home, it was considered a part of good hospitality to wash his feet, and thus make him comfortable. In homes where servants were used, it was, ordinarily, their responsibility to see that this was done.

There were no "servants" in the "upper room" that night before the crucifixion, and the disciples had not seen their opportunity to make the Master comfortable by washing his feet. Much less did they consider washing one another's feet. However, they were greatly concerned over who would be greatest among them, so Jesus washed their feet as an exhibition of what it means to be truly great from the Lord's standpoint. It was a lesson in humility.

Today there is no need for this custom, but the lesson of humility which Jesus taught by washing his disciples' feet at a time when this

service meant so much should still be heeded. Every follower of the Master should consider it a privilege, and be ready and willing at all times to render any service whatever to his brethren in Christ, regardless of how menial it might be. Those who are willing to serve only when it brings them into the spotlight of popular acclaim do not have the real spirit of Christ, who was a true and humble servant of all.

In God's Image

Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5:7) If we are expected to show mercy toward others, how is it that God will not show mercy toward those who die in unbelief, but instead will torment them forever?

GOD will not torment unbelievers forever. The theory that he will do so is one of the traditions of the Dark Ages which blasphemously misrepresents the character of God. Man was created in the mental and moral image of God. A normal human would not torment his worst enemy for even a few minutes, and this quality of mercy displayed in right-thinking men and women is a reflection of the image of God, and we may be sure that God is certainly as merciful as any of his intelligent creatures. This, in itself, disproves the theory of eternal torture.

A Vessel unto Honor

IT IS doubtless the desire of all the Lord's people to be useful, helpful, and encouraging to their brethren, the fellow-members of the Lord's family. That we might have this privilege, our risen Lord has "led captivity captive." This means that through the sacrifice of himself Jesus has purchased the captives of sin and death (all condemned in Adam), and this gives him the right in due time to set at liberty these captives.

Jesus has also given gifts unto men. (Ps. 68:18; Eph. 4:8) These gifts result from the receiving of the Holy Spirit by the church, and among these is the gift of prophecy. In I Corinthians 14:1 Paul says, "Follow after love; yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy."—R. V.

In the Old Testament the prophets were not only proclaimers, forthtellers, preachers of God's Word, but particularly preachers or proclaimers who foretold future events. Peter wrote concerning them, "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven."—I Pet. 1:12

In the New Testament sense of the word, prophecy usually simply means to speak God's message. When the Holy Spirit came upon our Lord at Jordan he was anointed to preach the Gospel of salvation unto the meek. (Isa. 61:1) This was his divine authorization and incentive to proclaim the good news.—Luke 4:1, 14

When the same Holy Spirit came upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost, we are told that they prophesied. They "began to speak . . . as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:4) And the groups of devout Jews gathered at Jerusalem for the feast, many from distant parts of the Roman Empire, heard them speaking in their own language "the wonderful works of God." (Acts 2:11) Later, when the disciples were driven from Jerusalem by persecution, we read that they "went everywhere preaching the Word."—Acts 8:4

Church Also Anointed

This same Holy Spirit has remained with the church throughout its generations even to this end of the age; and today the feet members who have been given a special revelation of the Gospel of the kingdom are constrained by the anointing of the same Holy Spirit to make it known to others. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that publisheth

peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation." (Isa. 52:7) Peter and John said: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."—Acts 4: 20

For our further guidance Paul says, "He that prophesieth [makes use of the gift of prophecy] speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." (I Cor. 14:3) We all need to be edified or built up in knowledge of the truth; therefore, preaching or prophesying of this kind is most helpful, and very important.

As there is a race to be run and work to be done, we need exhortation to run with patience the race set before us, and not to become weary in well-doing. (Gal. 6:9) Further, in view of the trials and difficulties of the narrow way, we need comfort by being reminded of the Father's great love wherewith he loved us. (Eph. 2:4) We also need to be reminded of the fact that we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and that the precious promises are all ours if we are in Christ: that they all are "yea and amen" in Christ Jesus. Heb. 2:16-18; 4:15

At times we may feel we have small ability to edify, exhort, and comfort others; yet we know that the Master, the great Head of the church, can use the weakest of his children, if in love and humility they seek to call attention to his Word. These things are not of our-

selves—our ability, or wisdom—but as Paul suggests, it is the result of the operation of the Holy Spirit in and through us. He says, "To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;" to another a faith-stimulating word; to another the gifts of healing, etc. —I Cor. 12:8, 9

We have come a long way since the days of physical healing in the church. These outward gifts, it would seem, were only given through the laying on of the apostles' hands. (Acts 8:18; 19:1-6) Hence, when the apostles had fallen asleep in death, these outward gifts soon thereafter ceased to be enjoyed by the church. (I Cor. 13: 8-10; 14:3-5, 22) After the first introduction of Christianity, miracle-working power gradually left the church because it was no more needed as an introduction, and because "the times of restitution," of healing and refreshing of the world, had not yet come.

However, there are, here and now, opportunities of using a "healing" balm on a higher plane—healing the brokenhearted. (Isa. 61: 1) And perchance healing differences among the Lord's people as we sound forth, by one means or another, precious divine truths, in the Spirit of truth, that the living stones of God's temple showing a tendency to fall apart may be cemented together again in love and by love.

While the Lord had graciously

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distributed various gifts among his people (Ps. 68:18), the Apostle Paul further exhorts, "Covet earnestly the best gifts." (I Cor. 12:31) Foremost among these he places the gift of prophecy. "Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues." (I Cor. 14:5) The value or importance of a gift, Paul intimates, is dependent, not upon the extent to which it may dazzle the multitude, or give ourselves personal satisfaction, but upon the amount of blessing it can bring to others.

Some of the gifts, Paul would remind us, may be to our personal advantage or edification, "but he that prophesieth, edifieth the church." (I Cor. 14:4) Again Paul says, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." (II Cor. 4:5) That is to say, we desire only that you may see that we are your servants; that in what we say, we are merely desirous of serving your spiritual interests unto edification, exhortation, and comfort. Paul exhorts the brethren at Corinth, and us through his epistles, "Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."—I Cor. 14:12

"Covet," be zealous for gifts that are best in the sense of being the greatest blessing to others. If we value our gifts from this standpoint and in this proportion, there will be little opportunity for pride or complacency to develop in the heart. The spirit of love would delight to use that which would bring edification and comfort to others in the narrow way. By continually thinking of things from this angle, we will at the same time be finding a more excellent way, the way that leads to the development of the fruit of the Spirit, and specially the spirit of love.

"Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? Have all miraculous powers? Have all ability to cure diseases? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But always seek to excel in the greater gifts. And now I will point out to you a way of life which transcends all others." (I Cor. 12:29-31, **Weymouth**) In chapter 13 the apostle deals very beautifully with the quality of "love." And then he adds: "Be eager in your pursuit of this love, and be earnestly ambitious for spiritual gifts, but let it be chiefly so in order that you may prophesy."—I Cor. 14:1, **Weymouth**

"Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of thy tone;
As thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thine erring children, lost and lone.

"O, use me Lord, use even me,
Just as thou wilt, and when, and where;
Until thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, thy joy, thy glory share!"

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Serving the Lord

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." —Romans 12:1

DURING the Law dispensation, which preceded the first advent of Christ, the priests of Israel offered animal sacrifices to the Lord. These offerings pointed forward to the sacrifice of Christ, and also to the sacrifices of his footstep followers. These antitypical offerings are identified in Hebrews 9:23 as "better sacrifices." Jesus did not offer a bullock, but sacrificed his own perfect humanity. He gave his own flesh for the life of the world. (John 6:51) Surely his was a "better" sacrifice. Likewise, as his disciples, instead of offering an animal, we are admonished to present our own "bodies" in sacrifice, with the assurance that through the blood of Christ they will be acceptable to God.

The motive which moves the followers of Jesus thus to sacrifice themselves in divine service is the mercy and love of God. "By the mercies of God" I "beseech" you to do this, wrote Paul. How different this is from the attempts so often made today to frighten people into serving the Lord through fear of being eternally tortured in a fiery hell! The "mercies" particularly referred to by Paul in our text were those mentioned in the preceding chapter, mercies which, in the divine plan, would extend an opportunity of salvation to those unbelieving Jews who rejected Jesus at his first advent.—Rom. 11:32, 33

Paul explains that presenting our bodies a "living sacrifice" is a reasonable "service." It is not that a disciple of Christ is called upon to sacrifice and suffer without an objective. We are invited to be "workers together" with the Lord, in the accomplishment of his purposes, and faithfulness in this service involves sacrifice of all that we have—time, strength, means—everything. ((II Cor.

6:1) And this, Paul explains, is our "reasonable service"—the only reasonable course in life in view of the mercies of God which have been revealed to us.

Basically, this dedicated life of Christ's disciples is one of unselfishness. Paul continued, "And be not conformed to this world." (vs. 2) Selfishness is the motive for practically all that is done in the world; not necessarily vicious selfishness, but self-interest. There are noble exceptions on the part of individuals; but as a whole the spirit of the world is a selfish spirit. So Paul would have us realize that our "reasonable service" to the Lord calls for separation from the world and its spirit, that instead of being conformed to the world, we are to be "transformed by the renewing" of our minds, that we may "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

While in the first verse Paul explains that to present our bodies a living sacrifice is "acceptable" to God, he wants us to realize that this is possible only upon the basis of "renewing" our minds, and "proving" through the study of the divine Word all the various details involved in the "perfect" will of God. The Greek word here translated "perfect" is the same one translated perfect in Jesus' admonition, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) The word means "complete," or "completeness."

In Matthew 5:48 this Greek word describes the completeness of the Heavenly Father's love in bestowing blessings upon both the just and the unjust. And Paul is using the word to describe the "complete" will of God in contrast with only a part of that will. The "perfect" or "complete" will of God includes many things. We could be faithful in conforming our lives to some of these, but negligent or unfaithful with respect to other aspects of his will. Beginning with chapter 12 and continuing into chapter 15, Paul mentions one after another of the details of the "complete" will of God. To be conformed to all of these should be our goal as Christians.

Proper Self-appraisal

The first item of the Lord's will which Paul mentions is the importance of knowing ourselves. He writes, "I say, through the

grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (vs. 3) This is a heart-searching admonition, and quite contrary to the selfish, worldly viewpoint. In the world, men and women are encouraged to think of themselves as possessing special capabilities of one sort or another. We must have confidence in ourselves, we are told, and in our ability to do things. Nor do the worldly hesitate to proclaim their virtues and abilities to others. A man running for political office makes every effort possible to impress the people with his superior talents.

But the followers of Jesus cannot properly do this. They recognize that of themselves they can do nothing. They have no confidence in the flesh. They realize that anything they accomplish in the service of the Lord which is really to his glory and to the blessing of his people, is possible only by divine grace.

However, the Lord has endowed every Christian with some talents, or abilities, which can be used in his service. We are not to think of ourselves as being of no value at all. It is simply that we are not to think of ourselves "more highly" than we should. We are to "think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." We should sincerely endeavor to recognize what our capabilities are, and then have faith to believe that the Lord will give us grace to use them to his glory, and that through Christ our imperfect works will be acceptable to our Heavenly Father.

Many Ways of Serving

Paul continues: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: [operation, action, function] so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given unto us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth [presideth], with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."—vss. 4-8

Here the apostle mentions some of the "gifts" or talents with

which the Lord had blessed his people in the Early Church. The Lord's people today possess some of these same "gifts." Some are able to "prophecy," or publicly expound the truth. Others are qualified to instruct. Some are especially good in exhorting the brethren.

All, it seems to us, are properly designated as "ministers" if we take the broader meaning of this word into consideration, which simply is to be a servant. There were various ways of serving in the early days of the age, and there are many varieties of service now; but one who serves in any capacity whatever is a "minister," a servant.

The "increase of knowledge" foretold for this end of the age has opened up opportunities of service which were not enjoyed by the Lord's people in the Early Church. For an up-to-date illustration of the principle involved in Paul's lesson, let us think for a moment of a meeting to which the public is invited to hear a presentation of some phase of the Gospel. Here, perhaps, we are too inclined to think largely of the brother who presents the message from the platform. Actually, however, this is but a small part of that service.

Let us consider some of the activities which help to make a public meeting possible. First, consideration must be given by a few, or many, brethren as to whether such a meeting should be arranged, and when. This calls for careful and prayerful thought and discussion. The decision reached, one or more brethren must locate and negotiate for a suitable auditorium in which the meeting can be held.

With the time and place of the meeting decided upon, then there is further thought and deliberation given to ways and means of advertising the meeting, and how much money shall be spent to advertise it. This, again, takes time, not on the part of one brother alone, but in most instances by many. Today, the usual methods of advertising a public meeting are the use of the "Frank and Ernest" mailing list, tract distribution, use of newspapers, and, if there is a "Frank and Ernest" radio outlet in the city, announcements in connection with the broadcast.

Such a meeting was recently held in New York City, sponsored by the Bible Students of Greater New York. Here the brethren have ten thousand names of those who have written to "Frank and Ernest" for literature. It was decided that an invitation be sent to

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all of these. This called for the addressing and "filling" of ten thousand envelopes. Think of the hours of labor this entailed!

For this meeting there was also the printing and distribution of thousands of circulars. Many additional hours of "ministering" were involved in this effort—happy hours, too, as is always the case in serving the Lord. Then there was the newspaper advertising, and the radio announcements. Additional thought and time were given to these.

Arranging the details of the meeting itself required further time and effort. Probably as many as two hundred and more "man hours" are consumed in any such public effort. The brother who delivers the message from the platform contributes only one of these, unless, perchance he has participated in some of the preparations for the meeting.

The point is that every thought given to a co-operative effort to serve the Lord, and every hour spent is important. And Paul's lesson is that if we do not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, we will gladly accept and use any opportunity of service which comes to us and which is reasonably within our capabilities to perform.

Paul mentions another opportunity of service which was enjoyed by many in the Early Church, and is still a very definite part of the Lord's work—"He that giveth [margin, "or, imparteth"], let him do it with simplicity." Every aspect of the Lord's work is a matter of giving. We give our time. We give our strength. We give our thought to the effort in hand; and we also give our means. In suggesting the estimated "man hours" required to hold a well advertised public meeting, we did not include the hours required to earn the necessary funds which are donated to make such an effort possible.

Certainly all funds contributed for the perpetuation and furtherance of the Gospel do represent time-consuming work of mind or body, and usually both. That is why the Lord appreciates this phase of the ministry; for those who give their means, give themselves, just as much as those who serve in other capacities. This is true both with respect to the "widows" who give their "mites" and also those who, by the Lord's grace, have more to give. (Mark

12:42; Luke 21:2) The Lord blesses this and all other forms of ministering in proportion to the faith exercised in the service.

And it does require faith to serve the Lord. When we present our bodies a living sacrifice it means that we give up the usual aims and pursuits of life. Our chief concern is no longer to "make a living" but to sacrifice our lives. Without ignoring the necessities of life, we realize that now we are to "seek first" the kingdom of God and "his righteousness." (Matt. 6:33) It is this "first" consideration in life that regulates the thinking, the outlook, and the activities of every truly consecrated disciple of the Master.

Love the Motive

Paul adds, "Let love be without dissimulation." (vs. 9) The thought here in the Greek text is that our love should be sincere. It is the same Greek word that is translated "unfeigned" in II Corinthians 6:6, where Paul is admonishing us to render a service approved by God, "by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit," and, "by love unfeigned." This is not merely a profession of love, but a genuine love for God, for the people of God, for the truth, for the world of mankind, and even for our enemies. Love is to fill and control our every thought, word, and deed.

Unless our "unfeigned" love is thus the motive for our service, all our efforts are in vain. Paul expressed the matter clearly when he wrote, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing."—I Cor. 13:1, 2

But if we do have love, in the sense of being filled and controlled by it, then we have that which will enable us to "suffer long," and be "kind," as we continue to present our bodies a "living sacrifice." Being emptied of self and filled with love, we will neither be envious of others, nor of the privileges of service which they enjoy. Nor will we "vaunt" ourselves by making a spectacular display of what we are doing in the Lord's service. If the Lord graciously permits us to enjoy a measure of success in his service, we will not be

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"puffed up" by it. Nor will we be troubled or offended if our special abilities are not acknowledged by the brethren and due "recognition" given.

How strange it would seem for the Lord's people to be seeking "recognition"! True, every child of the Lord appreciates an occasional kind word of encouragement. "A word fitly spoken," how good it is! (Prov. 25:11) But to seek "recognition" for the service we render in the Lord's vineyard is not the way of love. We are certain that the widow of old who cast her two mites—all that she had—into the treasury of the temple was not seeking recognition. But the Lord saw her, nevertheless, and she was given recognition, not by name, but as an example of the true spirit of sacrifice and service, an example that has been publicized throughout the centuries, an example which has served as an incentive to faithfulness on the part of thousands who may otherwise have supposed that they had nothing to give to the Lord that could be used by him and blessed in his service.

Love "doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth [*Diaglott*, "covers"; Dr. Strong, "to roof over, cover"] all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth." (I Cor. 13:5-8) How wholesome and blessed are the co-operative efforts of the people of God, whether in a local group or in a larger field of activity, when the true spirit of love permeates their hearts and lives, and motivates all that they do!

Paul expresses the thought beautifully: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." (Rom. 12:10,11) When we make a proper appraisal of ourselves, and then endeavor to use faithfully the abilities and opportunities the Lord has entrusted to us, rejoicing also in the service being rendered by others, how blessed indeed is our lot!

This affectionate, brotherly spirit in which we serve is one of the important aspects of that "perfect" or complete will of God for those who have presented their bodies to him as a living sacrifice. Let us, by divine grace, keep it this way, to the end that the Lord may be glorified and his people blessed.

The Victory Won

Many of our readers throughout the United States, Canada, and the British Isles will be surprised to learn that our Brother William E. Pampling, of England, has finished his course in death. As most of the brethren know, Brother and Sister Pampling were in America from the latter part of June until the end of October last year. Brother Pampling served many of the ecclesias throughout the East, the Middle West, and on the West Coast. He also served at a number of the large conventions during the summer, including the General Convention at Bloomington. The hearts of thousands of the brethren are, we are sure, still rejoicing as a result of Brother Pampling's encouraging ministry.

Although not many were aware of it, Brother Pampling's health was poor during the time he was with us here in America, and after his return to England it failed rapidly—a complication of maladies which rapidly sapped his strength physically and mentally. After his return to England Brother Pampling wrote a letter of appreciation for the privileges of fellowship they had both enjoyed, from which we quote:

"Our visit with the brethren in the U. S. A. and Canada was a wonderful experience of joy unspeakable in the Lord's service. It was a wonderful exhibition of the blessed tie that binds together the hearts of the Lord's people. We thank God and take courage when we look back upon our pilgrimage and realize how many brothers and sisters are loyal to the Lord and to the truth, and how faithful they are in laying down their lives for the brethren and in bearing witness to the truth. We do sincerely thank all the brethren for their willing service on our behalf. May we all continue to rest in, and rely upon, the exceeding great and precious promises as we daily journey toward our heavenly home, where we shall be forever with the Lord and with each other. Sweet will that meeting be."

Brother Pampling served the Lord, the truth and the brethren faithfully for many years. He was an elder in the Brentwood, England, Ecclesia at the time of his death. We rejoice with him, but will miss him. He is survived by Sister Pampling, to whom our sympathy goes out in her great loss. Let us remember her in our prayers.

Report from Germany

THE following report of activities in the Lord's vineyard has recently been received from our office in West Berlin. Arrangements are now being made to transfer the office for the work in the German language from Berlin to Freiburg—a city in West Germany near the French border. The brethren in Berlin write:

"We rejoice, and are very grateful to the Lord for all his providences and blessings, and for all the privileges of service we have enjoyed during this past year. Through the co-operation of our brethren in America we have been provided with literature, and the radio activities have been made possible. We have many zealous brothers and sisters in Germany, Austria, and in Switzerland who are devoted to the spreading of the truth, through the distribution of literature and otherwise. During the past year we have noted a greater joy also in financial sacrifices.

"The pilgrim service continues to be richly blessed by the Lord. Brother Lorenzen spends his full time in the service, and in addition we have a number of brethren who serve on week ends. The pilgrim service was augmented last summer by Brother Woodworth's visit.

"The radio programs over the Luxembourg station brought many more requests for literature than ever before, and were a means of contacting many brethren who found their way back to the truth people. As a result of the radio a new Ecclesia was formed in the western part of Germany.

"We have much cause for joy and gratitude in the fact that the service of the German Dawn—"Tagesanbruch"—has had increased success this year. May the Lord continue to bless this ministry so that in spite of the critical times we may continue to be the light bearers of the truth, and to give comfort and confidence to the brethren. Greetings to all in the bonds of Christian love. Your brethren in Christ."

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

From East Africa

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Will you please send me a full set of "Studies in the Scriptures." I would also like a copy of the booklet, "Hope Beyond the Grave." Postal order attached. I always find The Dawn Magazine very interesting. May God bless you and your work. Yours sincerely.—Kenya

From South Africa

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Will you please send me a copy of the booklet entitled, "The Church," in which baptism is discussed. I listened to your programme and received much blessing. May the Lord continue to bless you, and your important work for him. Yours faithfully.—Natal

Confesses the Truth

Dear Brethren: Greetings in the name of our Redemer and Lord! We are glad to report that as a result of the radio work here, we had a request for a visit and a meeting at Portugal Cove, a town about ten miles from St. John's. We found a man and wife who are regular listeners to the radio message. The man, particularly, seems to be well established in the truth. He has many of our booklets, and volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures." He has been publicly confessing that

he is a Bible Student. We were delighted to make this contact, and by the Lord's grace there will be further opportunities to serve them. We rejoice in every service, and we pray that the Lord will continue to use us to his glory. The radio work is going on here without interruption. Your brother and co-laborer in Christ.—A. H., Newfoundland, Canada

From Sweden

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I am so glad for your radio programmes. I thank God, and I thank you. Your broadcasts are so inspiring. I am a young man. My wish is to learn and understand the Holy Bible, and to be able to use it. Will you kindly send me your booklet, "The Day of Judgment," and any other publications which will help me to understand the Scriptures. Yours faithfully—Gottenborg

Letting Light Shine

Dear Brethren: Greetings! Will you please send me twelve copies of the booklet, "God and Reason." I want ten of these for one person who belongs to a class of young men at a local Sunday School. I have been passing tracts to people at the place of my employment. The majority do not have much interest. One man, however, was rather interested, so I gave him a

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copy of "God and Reason." He took it to his young men's class and read parts of it for the lesson. As a result, ten of the young men wanted a copy of the booklet. I have now given this man copies of your other booklets, which I hold for use as opportunities come along. Your brother by his grace.—F. M., England

Liked the Message

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I just heard you in the radio, and I am surely glad that I tuned in. My husband and I have been searching for the truth for a long time. We have talked to a lot of ministers from various faiths and they do not seem to have a great deal of Bible knowledge. What caught my ear was when you said that there will be people resurrected to live on the earth, as well as others to live in heaven. I liked what I heard, and would appreciate all the information you can send us on your beliefs. We are sincerely searching for the truth.—Michigan

Book of All Books

Dear "Frank and Ernest": We have just finished listening to another of your fine programs, and have enjoyed it very much. We are enclosing a donation to help you spread the marvelous truth. I never dreamed that the Bible is the book it really is. It is the Book of all books, when one begins to understand it, I thank God that through

his servants he is opening the eyes of some who are willing to receive the true light. Please pray for me and my husband that we will always be teachable, and that we will be what the Lord would have us to be. Yours in Christ.—Indiana

It's True

Dear "Frank and Ernest": My husband and I have just listened to another of your fine discussions, and believe me, we really do enjoy them. It is truly a wonderful thing to know that the real truth of the Bible is coming out. At first it was such a shock to us, being so different from what we had been taught, and it was really hard to believe. But when we got to digging right down into the Bible we found that it was true. People most everywhere are preaching that God is a harsh monster, but God himself says that he is love. God bless you! —Indiana

Appreciates Dawn

Gentlemen: I have been a subscriber to your monthly magazine for over a year, and I want to tell you how much help it has been to me in understanding the Bible, and God's plan for his children. Your sympathy card in our recent bereavement was a beautiful expression of hope and comfort. It was such a card that started me reading your literature. May God richly bless your efforts to reach those in need. Yours faithfully.—Indiana

CONVENTIONS

For Mutual Fellowship, Edification, and Service

The following conventions are sponsored by local ecclesias. Full information concerning room reservations and the convention program can be obtained by writing to the name listed.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, February 8—The Southern Hotel, South High and East Main Streets. Mrs. Josephine Ewing, 273 South Algonquin Avenue.

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

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

SAGINAW, MICHIGAN, February 15—The Woman's Club, 311 North Jefferson Street. Mrs. C. A. Sundbom, 207 Alice Street.

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

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, February 22—912 North La Salle Street. Mr. Edmund M. Jezuit, 4327 South Christiana Avenue.

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, February 22—Macca-bees Building, Woodward Avenue at Putnam. Mr. Raymond Rawson, 19050 Addison.

WATERBURY, CONNECTICUT, March 15—Waterbury Women's Club, 74 Central Avenue. Miss Anna Tsimonis, 227 Willow Street.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, March 22—Henry Hudson Hotel, 353 West 57th Street. Mr. Russell Dean, 166-05 89th Avenue, Jamaica 32, New York.

GARY, INDIANA, March 28, 29—YMCA Building, 5th and Adams. Mr Theodore Trzeciak, 2444 W. 10th Place, Gary.

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

FLORIDA BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION: Lakeland, April 4-6. All sessions of this convention will be held in the Civic Center Theatre, in Lakeand. This gathering of the brethren is sponsored jointly by the Miami, Orlando, and St. Petersburg Ecclesias. It takes the place of the two conventions which for a number of years have been held in Florida during the winter months. Full details as to cost of rooms, etc., will appear in later annauncements. Hotel and Motel rates will be much less than during the winter seasons. Mr. George O. Jeuck, 1436 Wilton Avenue, Orlando, Florida.

PORTRUSH, NORTH IRELAND, Whitsun, May 16-18. Write to Mr. T. R. Lang, 41, Clooney Terrace, Waterside, Londonderry, North Ireland, for accommodations and other details.

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

—Hebrews 10:25

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

SAMUEL BAKER

Saginaw, Mich.	February	15
Detroit, Mich.		16
Jackson, Mich. ..		17, 18
Toledo, Ohio		19
Cleveland, Ohio		20
Akron, Ohio		22
Warren, Ohio		23
Erie, Pa.		24
Buffalo, N. Y.		25
Rochester, N. Y.		26
Pulaski, N. Y.		27
Syracuse, N. Y.	March	1

GEORGE BALKO

Monessen, Pa. (Morn.)	February	1
Connellsville, Pa. (Even.)		1

MIKE BALKO

Akron, Ohio	February	15
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JOHN BARACOS

Washington, Pa.	February	15
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NICK BARACOS

East Liverpool, Ohio	February	8
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JULIUS BEDNARZ

Milwaukee, Wis.	February	8
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FRED A. BRIGHT

Reading, Pa.	February	8
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J. BURTON BROWN

San Diego, Calif.	February	8
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DAVID A. BRUCE

Yuma, Ariz.	February	8
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BERTRAM C. COOPER

Whittier, Calif.	February	1
Santa Ana, Calif.		22

ORLANDO D. DEIFER

Wilmington, Del. (Morn.) ..	February	8
Seaford, Del. (Aft)		8

EDWARD E. FAY

Sonora, Calif.	February	15
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IRVING C. FOSS

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

EARL L. FOWLER

Whittier, Calif.	February	22
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G. HOMER HAMLIN

Sacramento, Calif.	February	1
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ARTHUR H. KRUMPOLT

Wallingford, Conn. (Morn.)	February	15
Bridgeport, Conn. (Afternoon)		15

RAYMOND J. KRUPA

New Haven, Conn. (Morn.)	February	15
Waterbury, Conn. (Aft.)		15

LUDLOW P. LOOMIS

Groton-New London, Conn.	February 14, 15	
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EDWARD G. LORENZ

Bakersfield, Calif.	February	22
Tehachapi, Calif.		22

JOHN Y. MAC AULAY

Boston, Mass.	February	1
Paterson, N. J.		8
Pottstown, Pa.		20
Wilmington, Del. (Even.)		21

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Baltimore, Md. (Morn.)	22
Philadelphia, Pa. (Aft.)	22
Wilmington, Del.	23, 24
Richmond, Va.	25
Lynchburg, Va.	26
Blue Ridge, Va.	27
Roanoke, Va.	March 1

CLIFFORD R. MILES

Chico, Calif.	February 1
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ADAM MISKAWITZ

La Salle, Ill.	February 1
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MARTIN C. MITCHELL

York, Pa. (Morn.)	February 8
Lancaster, Pa. (Aft.)	8

ROY E. MITCHELL

Allentown, Pa.	February 22
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DANIEL J. MOREHOUSE

Gary, Ind.	February 15
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KENNETH M. NAIL

Bakersfield, Calif.	February 8
Tehachapi, Calif.	8
Whittier, Calif.	15

HOWARD W. OSTRANDER

San Jose, Calif.	February 8
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NORMAN F. RICE

Whittier, Calif.	February 8
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BERT E. ROSE

Toledo, Ohio (Morning)	February 15
Adrian, Mich. (Afternoon)	15

WILLIAM W. RYBA

Flint, Mich.	February 1
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W. STROMBERG

Minneapolis, Minn.	February 8
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AUGUST SWANSON

Ventura, Calif.	February 15
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J. I. VAN HORNE

Duquesne, Pa.	February 1
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W. NORMAN WOODWORTH

Paterson, N. J.	February 15
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HOWARD YOUNG

Steubenville, Ohio	February 8
Monessen, Pa.	22

LOUIS ZBIK

London, Ont. Can.	February 8
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WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

FEBRUARY 5—"This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification."—I Thessalonians 4:3 (Z. '99-4 Hymn 8)

FEBRUARY 12—"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—James 1:4 (Z. '93-295 Hymn 312 A)

FEBRUARY 19—"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are

defiled and unfaithful nothing is pure; but both their mind and conscience are defiled: they profess to have known God, but by their works they renounce him, being abominable and disobedient, and as to every good work worthless."—Titus 1:15, 16 (Diaglott) (Z. '00-214 Hymn 145)

FEBRUARY 26—"Let your moderation be known unto all men."—Philippians 4:5 (Z. '03-7 Hymn 240)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

CROSS & CROWN PINS

We are able to supply small, German made Cross & Crown pins. They are in two styles—broach and stickpin. Both styles are available in either silver or gold plating. The price is one dollar each.

YOU ARE INVITED

NOW that we are in 1959, the General Convention Committee takes this opportunity to remind the readers of The Dawn that the convention will again be held at the University of Indiana, in Bloomington. The date is August 8-14. All are cordially invited, and the Committee feels that it is not too early, even now, to begin making plans to attend.

The committee would appreciate receiving any suggestions the brethren may have concerning the preparation of the program. If any of the brethren would like to submit lists of proposed speakers for the convention, the Committee will be glad to receive them. It may not be possible to adopt all the suggestions made, nor to use all the speakers recommended, but hearing

from the brethren along these lines will be a guide. Address all communications to the Committee Secretary, Mr. Wilbur N. Poe, 1 West Ridge Place, Newport, Kentucky.

RECORDED LECTURE SERVICE

Lectures on doctrinal, prophetic, and devotional subjects, together with sacred music, are available free, on loan. Increasing numbers are using this service, for their own blessing and for witnessing to others. For full particulars write to Dawn Recorded Lecture Service, 37 Wilson Avenue, Rutherford, New Jersey.

In Canada—Write to Post Office Box 217, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

In British Isles—Write to 15 Southwood Gardens, Ilford, Essex, England.

In Australia—Write to 294 Hume Street, Toowoomba, Queensland.

In New Zealand—Write to Box 1358, C. P. O., Auckland.

These lectures are recorded on tape at a speed of 3 3/4 inches per second, on standard 7-inch reels. In the British Isles, New Zealand, and Australia, 5-inch reels are also available.

"MAN'S ETERNAL HOME"

To be discussed by

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

WMCK—1360 kc.—1:00 P. M.

Sunday, February 15

Where will you spend eternity? Do you know that the Bible presents a definite answer to this question? Hear it discussed by "Frank and Ernest," and send for a free copy of the February Dawn Magazine. Address:

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

Box 60, Dept. N, General Post Office
New York, N. Y.

For Your Newspaper

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

MARCH TOPIC: On Sunday, March 15, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss the topic, "How Christ will Solve World Problems." This timely subject should be well advertised. An abundant supply of circulars will be available for this purpose, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. They are suitable for distribution from door to door, for mailing, and for handing to friends and neighbors. Please order your supply as early as possible.

When the Earth Was Flat

Actually, of course, the earth has never been flat—it has always been round. The Bible refers to the "circle of the earth," (Isa. 40:22) The time was, though, when most people believed that the earth was flat. Columbus disagreed, and because he did, he discovered America. Now everybody knows that the earth is round.

In ancient times when people believed that the earth was flat they had crude ideas concerning many other things, and this was particularly true with respect to their religious beliefs: beliefs which in the main were mere traditions and superstitions. As Paul wrote, they "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."—Rom. 1:23

Soon after the apostles fell asleep the tendency toward superstition began to corrupt the pure teachings of Christianity. It was not long before those who believed that the earth was flat were also believing and teaching that God had created a place where he would eternally torture all unbelievers; that the time would come when the earth would be destroyed by fire; and that the promised judgment day of blessing would be one of horrible doom for nearly all of the human race, to name a few of their traditions. All these crude ideas were just as untrue as the belief that the earth was flat.

We rejoice that today the simple and beautiful teachings of the Bible are supplanting traditions and superstitions in the minds and hearts of many. No one today believes that the earth is flat. However, many continue to believe one or another of the religious traditions of the Dark Ages. There is even a larger number who wonder about those traditions, and would like to have them dispelled from their minds. This is your opportunity. Send one or more of your friends The Dawn Magazine for a year, particularly now, while "The Bible Versus Tradition" series is appearing.

"Preach the Word; be instant in season and out of season."

—II Timothy 4:2

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