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# The DAWN

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# Giving Thanks

*“Whatsoever ye do  
in word or deed,  
do all in the name  
of the Lord Jesus,  
giving thanks to  
God and the  
Father by him.”*

—Colossians 3:17

## **THIS YEAR PEOPLE FROM**

all over the United States will again celebrate the annual Thanksgiving Day holiday on Thursday, November 24, 2011. It will be a special day for many people, and church services will be held

in various communities to give thanks to our loving Heavenly Father for his bountiful blessings to them. Some will observe the day with a true spirit of thanksgiving. Others will simply accept it as another holiday, and a time to gather with friends and relatives, but with little thought of giving thanks to our Lord. Those who truly reverence him are wholeheartedly thankful for their many blessings.

## **PAUL’S LETTER**

In his letter to the church at Colossae, the Apostle Paul took the opportunity to encourage and strengthen his brethren to a deeper sense of thankfulness and appreciation to our loving Heavenly Father for all of his bountiful blessings. He told them, “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly

in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Col. 3:15,16) Then, as recorded in our featured scripture concerning giving thanks, he reminded them, “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”—vs.17

While it is honorable and appropriate to set aside a special day for thanksgiving to the Lord, those who are genuinely dedicated to him and to the doing of his service, should consider every day as being one of thanksgiving. The blessings that are provided by the Lord, which we value so highly and cherish so fondly, are showered upon us on a daily basis. Therefore, our thanksgiving for these blessings should not wait, but be expressed to the Lord before the close of every day in which they have been received. We read, “It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.” (Lam. 3:22,23) Because our Lord’s mercy is manifested toward us every day, it is our privilege to express our thanks to him daily.

## **THE COMING KINGDOM**

For those who may not be acquainted with the wonderful plan and purpose of God concerning the future reconciliation for the sin-sick and dying world, there may be a slackness in rendering thanks to God. Some may be distracted with the many problems and difficulties of everyday life. However, the truth-enlightened and consecrated child of God is not discouraged with the many acts

of violence and inhumanity that we see all around us. They recognize these events as being part of the foretold pattern of trouble with which this present Gospel Age is now coming to a close. They see this great time of trouble as a time of preparation for Christ's future kingdom, and that mankind is being prepared to welcome that kingdom of righteousness that will soon be established over all the earth. Therefore, the storm clouds of trouble do not dampen our spirit of thanksgiving, but rather increase it.

One of the great causes of our thanksgiving is that the Lord has opened the eyes of our understanding to recognize the significance of what is now taking place all around us. We are thankful that we are living at such a time, and can witness to our friends and neighbors concerning the rapidly approaching kingdom of Christ. This is in harmony with what the Psalmist David wrote. "All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom."—Ps. 145:10-12

## **GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY**

In addition to being thankful that the Lord has given us the Truth, we can also be thankful that in his love and mercy, and by the power of his Holy Spirit, he has kept us in his loving care through another year, and from falling away from our faith in our High Calling in Christ Jesus. If we have been living up to all of our blessed privileges, this Thanksgiving Day, 2011, will find us standing more firmly

in our consecrated walk than ever before. Truly, we have much cause for giving thanks to God.

It is through the Truth of God's wonderful plan that is revealed to us through his precious Word, that we have come to catch a glimpse of some of the glory that is manifest through his marvelous character—his love, wisdom, justice, and power. How precious indeed is this knowledge. The prophet Jeremiah wrote, "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."—Jer. 9:23,24

## **THE BLESSED ASSURANCE**

God assures us that he delights in exercising his "lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness" to those who love him. Through our knowledge of the message of Truth, we realize that God has displayed his great love toward the human family by sending his only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus, to be the Redeemer and Savior of the sin-sick world of mankind. We are told in the Scriptures that ultimately this wonderful gift will be appreciated by all people, and its untold blessings will lead to the restoration of life to all who will then accept the provisions of his divine love and obey the laws of the righteous kingdom that is now drawing near.

Concerning God's gift of our Lord Jesus, the Apostle Paul proclaimed, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." (II Cor. 9:15) We, too, are

thankful for Jesus because of what his ministry means to us who are striving to follow in his footsteps of sacrifice during the closing years of this present Gospel Age. We also give thanks for the knowledge of what his ministry and ultimate sacrifice will mean for the whole world of mankind during Christ's future kingdom. He will then be earth's new king who will be manifest in power and great glory. Under his rulership, all the enemies of God and of man will be destroyed, even the greatest enemy death. "He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—I Cor. 15:25,26

## **RESTORATION TO LIFE**

When the human creation are awakened from the sleep of death during that future time, and in keeping with the ultimate plan of God, each one will be given the opportunity of being restored to perfection and to live forever on a perfected earth. The people will then understand that, while temporarily they have suffered as a result of the reign of sin and death, the plan of God through Jesus has been steadily progressing for their everlasting joy. They will learn, too, that God delights to exercise his loving-kindness on their behalf, for which they will gladly give thanks.

The true followers of our Lord Jesus during this present Gospel Age have the great joy and privilege of suffering and dying with him, with the promise that, if we remain faithful to our covenant of consecration, we shall also live and reign with him in his future kingdom. In the second letter to his beloved Timothy, the Apostle Paul said, "It is a faithful saying:



For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.”—II Tim. 2:11,12

### **COMFORTED BY THE ROD AND STAFF**

One of the most important aspects of our Christian faith for which we may give thanks, is our Lord Jesus—our sympathetic and loving High Priest who was touched with a feeling of our infirmities. He is also our Good Shepherd who tenderly leads us. The Psalmist David wrote, “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”—Ps. 23

Jesus is our Head and we are members of his body. As our Head, he directs us in the way in which we should go, and in the manner in which we may serve him. If we walk in his steps faithfully and are subservient to him, we will no longer exercise our own wills, or seek to walk in our own ways. We will seek to know the will of God and watch for his guidance in our lives.

If we do the will of God as he called of him, all things will work together for our good and we will have peace of mind and heart. What a blessing this

is in this world of chaos and fear. It is the peace of God which rules in the hearts of all those who, through Christ, trust in the merit of his sacrifice as a robe of righteousness. We thus yield ourselves fully to the doing of the Heavenly Father's will as expressed through his unspeakable gift. Paul said, "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. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."—Heb. 2:10,11

## **THE LORD'S SOLDIERS**

As soldiers under Jesus our Captain, we must avoid the entanglements of this present evil world. "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."—II Tim. 2:2,3

The Apostle Paul thus admonishes, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."—Eph. 6:11,12

The apostle has also outlined the necessary armor that we will need to fight a good fight of faith. He says, "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore,

having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”—vss. 13-17

## **OUR CAPTAIN**

We are very thankful that we have, as the Captain of the great salvation to which we have been called, our dear Lord Jesus. By following his leadership and by keeping on the whole armor of God, as we have been admonished to do, we will be kept from falling. We continue to rejoice in the glorious hope that is set before us in the Gospel. Another important feature of that great hope is that in due time, if we are faithful unto death, we will be associated with Jesus as our heavenly Bridegroom. As prospective members of his bride, we will have the blessed privilege, through the power and authority of Christ's future kingdom, to invite the poor groaning creation to partake of the wonderful blessings that have been prepared for them. We read, “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”—Rev. 22:17

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We should be thankful for the ministry of the Holy Spirit on our behalf. Having been begotten by God's Holy Spirit to a new life as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, we are anointed by the Spirit to

proclaim the glad tidings of the kingdom. The witness of the Holy Spirit assures us that we are now the children of God. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:16,17

The seal of the Spirit is God's assurance that if we do our part he will not permit anything to hinder us from attaining that to which he has called us through Christ Jesus. Paul thus encourages, "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."—Eph. 1:12,13

The Holy Spirit ministers to us through the word of Truth as set forth in the Scriptures, and we give much thanks for the precious Word of our loving Heavenly Father. Without that Word we would know nothing concerning the glorious Truth in connection with the divine plan. Let us always cherish the Bible because it is the bread and water of life that continues to sustain us. Its prophecies enlighten us concerning the times in which we are living, and its promises inspire and encourage us to continue on in the narrow way of sacrifice faithfully, even unto death. The Bible also outlines the divine will for us, and explains the meaning of our trials. The psalmist wrote, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—Ps. 119:105

The Word of the Lord and his abundant providence in our lives are great causes for our thankfulness

to him. “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.”—Ps. 119:97-100

## **THE ENDURING WORD**

God’s wonderful Word gives new meaning and purpose in the lives of his people. Its perfect law, the testimonies, its statutes, and commandments are guidelines of Truth. In this connection, the Psalmist David wrote, “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.” (Ps. 19:7,8) To this, he adds, “The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.”—vss. 9-11

Let us all be thankful for the privileges of service that we have enjoyed during the past year. It is a joy to make known the glad tidings of the kingdom, and to lay down our lives for the brethren. It is by this labor of love that we demonstrate to our Heavenly Father the genuineness of our desire to know and serve him. It should be a great cause for giving thanks that we have been given opportunities to

demonstrate that we are dedicated to service and to the doing of his will in our lives.

Faith will permit us to move mountains of difficulties that could otherwise hinder us from letting our light shine out for the blessing of others. We want a faith that will not permit us to hide the light of truth under a bushel with the spirit of indifference.

## **PRAISE AND THANKFULNESS**

Praise and thanksgiving are closely associated in the Bible. Thanksgiving is an expression of appreciation to God for all the rich blessings which he showers upon us from day to day. We can express our thanksgiving to him in the privacy of our own minds and hearts, and in the presence of his people. We can also praise God in our prayers, and we can also praise him by making known the virtues of his glorious character.

Peter wrote, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises [virtues, Margin] of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."—I Pet. 2:9

We show forth the Lord's virtues by speaking of his wondrous works, and as shown in the precious doctrines of the divine plan. We praise him by bearing witness to his love, as exemplified in the gift of his Son, and to what this unspeakable gift means to us now and will yet mean in terms of the blessings and joys soon to come for all mankind.

While it is thus appropriate to express our thanks to the Lord in our prayers and to praise him for his goodness, we also demonstrate our appreciation

for all he has done for us by faithfulness in doing his will. We give thanks to God for his loving care when we demonstrate by our attitude that we have faith in his promises of grace to help in every time of need. This is a rich blessing which the Lord showers upon those who give themselves wholly to the doing of his will. Our words of thanksgiving would lack vital meaning if our hearts were not fully surrendered to the Lord and were not trusting him completely to supply all of our needs.

Paul wrote, “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.”—Phil. 4:4-9

Let us take the opportunity to give much thanks to our loving Heavenly Father who has called us out of darkness and into the marvelous light of Truth. The Apostle Paul expressed it well in our featured scripture. “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”—Col. 3:17 ■

# Forgiving as God's People

**Key Verse:**

***“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”***  
—Matthew 5:23,24

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Matthew 5:17-26**

world which otherwise would be even more depraved than it is. Since Jesus was that great light that came into the world (John 8:12), individually and collectively believers must let their light shine and, by their good works, emulate the character of the Master and glorify their Heavenly Father.—Matt. 5:13-16

The scribes and the Pharisees may have believed Jesus was attempting to nullify the Law that had been

**JESUS' SERMON ON THE**

Mount covers a wide range of guidelines and behaviors associated with Christian living during this Gospel Age. It commences with a series of beatitudes illustrating the transformation of character to be manifested by those who would be acceptable to God as participants with Christ in bestowing blessings to the human family during God's kingdom.—Matt. 5:1-12

These disciples of Christ are to be “the salt of the earth.” Their lives should have a preservative influence upon the



given to Israel through Moses as a basis for the covenant relationship they had with the Creator, but such was not the case. Jesus' teaching magnified that Law by acknowledging its righteousness. Through his faithfulness in keeping every feature of the Law perfectly, and by laying down his humanity in sacrifice benefiting the Jews first and later the Gentiles, all who accept the terms of discipleship have an opportunity to become a part of the spiritual seed of Abraham through whom all the families of the earth will receive restitution blessings. (Gal. 3:27,29) A high standard of righteous living is required to participate in this arrangement. "I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. 5:20

It was evident that Jesus' teachings were of a different order than those proclaimed by the self-righteous Pharisees. They held to the letter of the Law, knowing that killing others was forbidden. Jesus, however, equated anger and hatred with murder even if actual killing did not occur. Additionally, the calling of one's brother a fool was an extremely serious matter that could lead to dire consequences for the offender.—vss. 21,22

Our Key Verse underscores the fact that it is of even greater importance to be reconciled to a brother first before attempting to perform some service which otherwise would be acceptable to God. Each true believer who appreciates God's mercy in forgiving him time and again after confessing his sins, and who then earnestly strives to be more diligent in thought, word, or conduct, will surely have as a priority in life the maintenance of a warm and loving relationship with other members of the body of Christ. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."—Rom. 12:18 ■

# Loving as God's People

**Key Verse:** *"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."*  
—Matthew 5:44,45

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Matthew 5:43-48*  
compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."—Matt. 5:39-41

**ACCORDING TO THE MO-**saic Law, the judges of Israel were to follow the principle of "an eye for an eye" or strict justice for offenses that were committed. (Exod. 21:24; Deut. 19:21) This concept was applied by some of the people to individual relationships unwarrantedly, which tended to cultivate a hardness of heart or a lack of mercy.

To the worldly wise, one of the peculiarities of Jesus' admonitions is the principle of personal non-retaliation for evil and injustices. "I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall

Thus, if a believer is insulted, exacting revenge should be resisted. The bearing of such offenses in a patient manner, trusting God for the strength to

willingly suffer for righteousness as did the Master, would be an evidence of increasing Christlikeness. If a believer should unjustly sustain a loss of personal property or experience physical injury, he would be well within his rights to seek redress through any lawful means.

Our Key Verse contradicts the tradition of the elders that only neighbors should be loved but enemies hated. On the contrary, one of the evidences of a regenerated heart is the ability to love one's enemies. Additionally, believers are called upon to do good to those who persecute them. Such an attitude would be virtually impossible to attain without receiving divine aid through an increasing measure of the Holy Spirit, prayer, and by patiently endeavoring to imitate Christ by a willingness to suffer reproach for his cause. By studying the principles of Truth outlined in scripture, and noting the selflessness of Jesus in laying down his life to benefit all mankind, disciples who obediently follow the Master will take increasing pleasure from each evidence that they are overcoming the spirit of the world, the flesh, and the adversary. Such growth will motivate them to fulfill these commands as evidence of their supreme love for God.

Jesus concludes this lesson by setting forth the highest of ideals for which we must strive. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (vs. 48) This seemingly impossible admonition can only be achieved in us as it pertains to our heart attitude under the influence of the Holy Spirit. We must exhibit love and sympathy in our characters towards others while remembering it is God's province to mete out justice according to the principles of righteousness. How thankful we should be that the Creator is willing to accept our sincere intentions for actual perfection, because of our heart loyalty and appreciation of this glorious standard! ■

# Praying as God's People

**Key Verse:** *“Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”*  
—**Matthew 6:6**

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Matthew 6:5-15**

with God, although there are occasions where public prayer during worship is appropriate in acknowledgment of blessings received or anticipated, as well as an expression of thanksgiving.

Jesus also gave an example of a proper form of petition that is commonly called “The Lord’s Prayer.” It is characterized by simplicity, brevity, and reverence. It acknowledges the sovereignty of God and ascribes honor and praise to the Creator. This is followed by an

**ONE OF THE GREATEST** privileges enjoyed by the people of God is access to our Heavenly Father through the medium of prayer. “When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.” (Matt. 6:5) Thus prayers must be sincere if they are to be acceptable to God.

Our Key Verse emphasizes that prayers should be an occasion of personal communion

expression of confidence that divine authority will be manifested in the establishment of a kingdom on earth with conditions that are in harmony with the righteousness existing in the heavenly domain. After giving priority to God's interests, personal needs are presented, acknowledging dependence upon the Heavenly Father for sustenance. Although "daily bread" is usually associated with temporal provisions, the need for spiritual food to sustain believers should be the main intent of this request.

In requesting forgiveness, emphasis is again placed upon the quality of mercy that should be manifested by Christians toward others who may offend. The inability of the Lord's people to perform perfectly in their actions, and a continual need to seek divine forgiveness for transgressions, should cultivate compassion and sympathy for others in their hearts. In view of personal weaknesses and failings under trial, believers may pray not to be abandoned in such situations, but to receive grace sufficient for the occasion and not lean on their own strength. Similarly, recognition that there is an evil one is a reminder not to trust self, but to call upon the Lord for safety and deliverance.—vss. 9-15

Jesus also denounced another form of religious hypocrisy. "When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." (vs. 16) Sincere believers would not resort to fasting in an outward and ritualistic manner to be seen of others as an attempt to appear holy, but instead, should do so in secret that thus they might experience closer communion with the Heavenly Father.

Let us ever heed the Master's following admonition in our approach to the Almighty. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him."—John 4:23 ■

# Facing Life Without Worry

**Key Verse:** *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”*  
—Matthew 6:33,34

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Matthew 6:25-34**

**AN IMPORTANT ASPECT** of Christian spiritual development is the establishment of priorities that will enable one to have confidence that his temporal necessities will be met. (Matt. 6:25) Nevertheless, other scriptures imply personal effort is required on the part of each believer to secure various material needs, as opposed to having an expectation that God will furnish everything for us without any labor on our part.—Eph. 4:28; I Tim. 5:8

As an impetus to prevent anxious care on our part, Jesus gave as an example the birds of the air; they did not worry whether God would provide for their needs. (Matt. 6:26) The concept of taking extraordinary means to obtain future personal security apart from God, however, seems well illustrated in the parable of the rich man who knew no limits to his desire and ultimately lost all in death. (Luke 12:16-21) In another illustration, Jesus said the beauty

of the lilies exceeded that of Solomon's elegant apparel. (Matt. 6:28,29) "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."—vss. 30-32

The foregoing portion of Jesus' words admonishes us not to have anxieties concerning what tomorrow will bring in our lives. Those who are not true followers of Christ would have many fears and concerns about the future. As we look at news events on a global basis today, it is apparent that a sense of gloom with regard to the economic well-being of nations and individuals is rampant. Those who have fully devoted themselves to the doing of God's service will joyfully continue to proclaim the message of his coming kingdom of righteousness, justice, and equity as being the only solution for the problems that exist in society at present.

Our Key Verse addresses a promise that believers who put God's interests and plans first in their lives will never be plagued by anxious cares and worry, but may be confident that if we live one day at a time and focus our energies upon serving the Creator, he will never leave us nor forsake us.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. 3:1-4

May we faithfully fulfill our covenant of sacrifice and share in blessing the human family when God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.—Luke 11:2 ■

# God's Everlasting Covenant

***“He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.”  
Psalm 111:9***

## **GOD HAS REVEALED HIS**

loving plan of salvation through covenants that he has made with his people. He has promised to do certain things for them and these promises constitute a “covenant” or an agreement.

If we are to participate in this divine arrangement and receive the blessings promised to those who are faithful coworkers with the Lord, then we must abide by the conditions attached to God's promises.

A covenant implies an agreement and harmony between those who enter into it. The prophet Hosea wrote, “They like men [Adam, *Marginal Translation*] have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.” (Hos. 6:7) Adam was therefore in covenant relationship with the Creator before he transgressed the original divine law. God's people, the Israelites, also transgressed the Law Covenant into which they had entered with God.



The terms of Adam's covenant with God are partially set forth in Genesis 2:15-17. These terms were simple, but exacting. They called for Adam's obedience which was based upon the simple test of not eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Thus Adam's part in this covenant was to obey. Clearly implied in the record is God's promise to bless Adam with a happy and continuous life. Had Adam remained obedient to God, the beautiful harmony which existed between him and his Creator would have continued, and his understanding of a loving Creator would have been an ever-expanding one.

However, Adam did not remain faithful to his part of that original covenant agreement. As the prophet Hosea wrote, Adam "transgressed the covenant." This meant that instead of continuing in a friendly relationship with God, he was alienated from him. God's disfavor was manifest toward him in that he pronounced the sentence of death upon him. He was cast out of the Garden of Eden into the unfinished earth to die. Adam's transgression affected his entire progeny in that they all came under the same manifestation of disfavor. The Apostle Paul explains this, saying, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—I Corinthians 15:21,22

## **COVENANT WITH NOAH**

Because of Adam's transgression, God was no longer in covenant relationship with his earthly creatures as a whole. From time to time, however, he made covenants with certain individuals from

among mankind. These individuals, through their faith and obedience, were pleasing to him. The first one of these mentioned in the Bible is Noah. Noah had demonstrated his faith in God by his obedience in building the ark in preparation for the flood. Noah's family held the same faith as their father and later shared in the covenant which God made with him.

God's covenant was made with Noah after the flood. The covenant promised that all flesh would never again be destroyed by the waters of a flood. The covenant reads, "God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."—Gen. 9:8-11

This is a very important covenant in connection with God's ultimate plan for the recovery of the human family from the sentence of sin and death. While the promise assured Noah and his family that the human race would not again be completely destroyed by water, it is a reasonable implication that God did not intend that it would be destroyed in any other way. God's plan for man was that he was to multiply and fill the earth. The command to do this was given to Adam and repeated to Noah and his family. He created the earth to be man's home, and we can be assured that neither the

earth nor the human race will ever be destroyed.—  
Isa. 45:18

The fulfillment of God's promises relative to the redemption and recovery of his earthly creatures from the divine penalty for sin and death, is based on the promise of the resurrection of the dead. This means that all the pure Adamic stock which died in the flood did not perish forever. God's covenant with Noah and his family is a wonderful reminder that he created man to live, not to be destroyed. Through his other covenants, God's great love for his human creatures is revealed, a love that has provided an opportunity of salvation from death for all mankind.—John 3:16; 5:28,29

### **COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM**

A few hundred years after the flood, God made a covenant with Abram, whose name was later changed to Abraham. He told him, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And 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. 12:2,3) Two points are mentioned in this promise. One is that the descendants of Abraham would become a great nation. The other is that in him "all families of the earth" would be blessed.

This promise was reiterated to Abraham later, the last reference to it being Genesis 22:1-18. God tested Abraham's faith in connection with his son Isaac, whom he believed was the first of the "seed" which God had promised. Isaac was born when Abraham and his wife Sarah were very old. They

both doubtless recognized that God had performed a miracle to give them this child of promise. When Isaac was grown, however, God asked Abraham to offer this miracle child in sacrifice.

This was a severe test of Abraham's faith, but he demonstrated his willingness to obey. In the New Testament, it is revealed that Abraham believed God would raise Isaac from the dead in the event he was sacrificed as a burnt offering. (Heb. 11:17-19) When Abraham demonstrated his faith by placing Isaac on an altar and preparing to slay him, his hand was stayed by an angel who instructed him to use a lamb which God had provided as a substitute. God was very pleased with Abraham because of this marvelous demonstration of faith. He said to him: "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 the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; 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

## **NEW SEED OF PROMISE**

Turning to the New Testament, we read, "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. 3:8) Furthermore, the apostle 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.” (vs. 16) Thus, from the scriptural record, it is made clear that when God promised Abraham that his “seed” would bless all the families of the earth, the one whom he would choose to carry out his will was his beloved Son Jesus. Thus Jesus was the Christ of the New Testament and the Messiah spoken of in the Old Testament.

The apostle also gives us further information concerning the “seed” of promise. “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 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.”—vss. 27-29

This means that the faithful followers of Jesus during this present Gospel Age are the children of the covenant which God made with Abraham. Paul further states, “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise.” (chap. 4:28) The Apostle Paul again associates the followers of Jesus with God’s oath-bound covenant with Abraham. He wrote, “When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who

have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” (Heb. 6:13-20) Paul closely associates the Gospel Age church with the Abrahamic Covenant.

## **THE LAW COVENANT**

God entered into a covenant relationship with the natural descendants of Abraham. This is known as the Law Covenant because it was based upon God’s law as shown in the Ten Commandments. Moses served as its mediator between God and the Israelites. During the time of the Early Church, there were some differences of opinion as to whether or not the followers of Jesus were bound by the terms of the Law Covenant.

In connection with this, the Apostle Paul explained that the Law was “added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.” (Gal. 3:19) Further, he states, “The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” (vs. 24) It is therefore true that Christians are not under the Law Covenant, although they are in harmony with all its righteous requirements.

For the natural descendants of Abraham, the Law Covenant served a good purpose. First, as Paul explains, “it was added because of transgressions till the [promised] seed should come.” God knew that it would be many centuries before his due time for bringing forth the true faith-seed of Abraham.

It was in his plan that the head of this faith-seed should come from the nation of Israel. Because of the transgressions of the Jewish people, and the time until the Messiah would appear, the nation would wander completely away from God without something to hold it together. As a result, the Israelites would lose their identity as the typical people of God. The Law Covenant served as a deterrent to this trend. While the Israelites were not faithful in keeping the Law, it did hold them in check so that there was a small group of true Israelites among which Jesus was born. It was to these that he presented himself as their Messiah.

Paul further explains that the Law Covenant was a “schoolmaster” to bring us to Christ. It demonstrated the need of a Redeemer. As Paul explained, “Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” (Rom. 5:14) Adam’s transgression was willful because he could have refrained from partaking of the forbidden fruit and the sentence of death upon himself.

Adam’s progeny came under condemnation to death through him, and not because of any willful sin of their own. As Paul states, these died although they had not “sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” This continued until Moses and the time of giving the Law. It was then that a change took place in the case of the one small nation of Israel.

This change was brought about through the Law Covenant in which God promised the Israelites that if they would keep his law they could live. “He that doeth these things shall live by them.”

(Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:12) This meant that any Jew who lived up perfectly to the terms of the Law Covenant would no longer need to die because of Adam's transgression. When the rich young ruler asked Jesus what he must do to receive eternal life, Jesus referred him to the law as summed up in the Ten Commandments.—Matt. 19:16-20; Luke 18:18-27

The young man realized that he was not gaining life by keeping the Law although he had been making a sincere effort to do so. The reason for his failure is the fact that no imperfect, fallen human can measure up to the perfect standard of the divine law. He realized that, like all others, his life would end in death. The failure to gain life by keeping the Law caused the young man to go to Jesus.

However, the rich young ruler was not ready to meet the terms of discipleship, and neither did he learn the manner in which he could receive life through Jesus. He did, however, learn that he could not gain life by keeping the Law. As explained by Paul, the Law served as a schoolmaster to emphasize the need of Christ and the provision which God has made through him. Before the plan of God shall have accomplished its full purpose, all will be fully enlightened, and only those who willfully turn against the provisions of grace will fail to gain everlasting life.

## **AN ALLEGORY**

Paul presents a further aspect of the covenant that God made with Abraham, and the Law Covenant into which he entered with Israel. He said, "It is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by



a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” (Gal. 4:22-26) The Jerusalem which is the “mother of us all” was represented by Sarah, the freewoman. Thus Paul refuted the argument of those who desired to be in bondage to the Law Covenant.

## **THE NEW COVENANT**

Another of God’s promises is brought to our attention in Jeremiah’s prophecy. It is referred to as a New Covenant and that it will be made with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, *(Continued on page 35)*

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*(Continued from page 31)* Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”—Jer. 31:31-34

At the time this promise was made, the Hebrew people were divided. One segment was known as the house of Israel, and the other as the house of Judah. God included both to emphasize that his promise applied to all the natural descendants of Abraham. The promise to Abraham was that all families, or nations, of the earth are to be blessed, and will also have an opportunity to receive the blessings of the promised New Covenant.

The Lord explains that the New Covenant will not be made according to the covenant which he made with ancient Israel. It will be different because the law of the New Covenant will not be written on tables of stone as was the original Law Covenant. It will be written in the inward parts of the people, in their hearts.

The Law written on stone and read to the people did not bring about a change in their inward selves. They remained imperfect and sinful, and little real effort was made by the people to keep the Law. There were noble exceptions to this by a small class who, upon the basis of their faith and sacrifice, looked for “a better resurrection.”—Heb. 11:35

Adam was created in the image of God, and God’s law was a part of his being. A test of obedience was given to him that he had the ability to pass had he not willfully yielded to other influences. So it will be with those with whom God enters into full covenant relationship under the promised

New Covenant. That future Law will be written in the inward parts and in the hearts, as man was originally created.

## **BLESSINGS FOR ALL**

The restoration blessings that will be made available under the terms of the New Covenant will be worldwide. "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD." When the law of the New Covenant is fully written in the inward parts of men, there will be no more need for the services of teachers to instruct people in the ways of the Lord, nor to call upon any to obey and serve him. All those who will have passed those tests will obey and serve the Lord from their hearts.

The Heavenly Father's promises are enlightening as recorded by the Prophet Jeremiah. "It shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the LORD." (Jer. 31:28) This is one of the promises of the restoration of Israel and a sign of the nearness of the establishment of the New Covenant over the earth.

Then, we read, "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." (vss. 29, 30) Then will come to pass God's promise of the New Covenant and its blessings, emphasizing that when the time comes for its fulfillment there will be a complete change in the position of the human

family so far as its relationship to sin and its consequences are concerned.

Figuratively speaking, it was Adam who ate the sour grape of disobedience to divine law many centuries ago. Not only were his own teeth set on edge, but the result of his disobedience was passed on to the entire human creation—his children's teeth have also been set on edge. In preparation for the making and ultimate establishment of the New Covenant, Christ gave his life to redeem Adam and all mankind from death. That provision will grant all men an individual opportunity to obey the divine law. This opportunity will reach the Israelites and the people of all nations in connection with the making of the New Covenant.

Jesus spoke of his shed blood as a symbol of his sacrificed human life. "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matt. 26:28) It is his blood that ratifies God's promise of the New Covenant, and makes possible its fulfillment. The New Covenant will give life to all of those with whom it is made. All mankind are members of the condemned and dying race. It is only through Jesus and his sacrificial death on behalf of Adam and his children, that they will have an opportunity to gain everlasting life under the arrangements of God's everlasting covenant.

As followers of our dear Lord Jesus, we surely enjoy this wonderful hope. It is the hope of sharing with Jesus as the promised seed of Abraham in the future work of blessing all the families of the earth. It is the hope of sharing with him in the work of mediating the New Covenant over all of earth's

people. The knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth and reach the people through “The Christ.”

Let us rejoice in the hope of glory and in the future work of sharing in reconciling the sin-sick and dying human family to God. “He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.”—Ps. 111:9 ■

*And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.—Isa. 2:2,3*

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**NOVEMBER 3**—“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”—Matthew 26:41 (Z. ’01-80 Hymn 166)

**NOVEMBER 10**—“Love . . . rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.”—I Corinthians 13:6 (Z. ’03-57 Hymn 37)

**NOVEMBER 17**—“He shall give his angels [messengers] charge concerning thee, to guard thee in all thy ways.”—Psalm 91:11, *Leeser Translation* (Z. ’04-75 Hymn 361)

**NOVEMBER 24**—“Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.”—Acts 24:16 (Z. ’00-360 Hymn 136)



# Paul's Good Fight of Faith

*“I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”*

—II Timothy 4:6,7

shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”—II Tim. 4:8

## WHEN THE APOSTLE WAS

near the end of his earthly course, he wrote the words of our theme text to his beloved Timothy from his prison cell in Rome. To these words, he then added, “Henceforth 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

Years before this, Paul was on his way to Damascus carrying papers of authorization to persecute the Christians of that city, when the resurrected Jesus appeared to him. The account reads, “As he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord

said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”—Acts 9:3-6

Saul, or Paul as he was later called, was sufficiently acquainted with God’s dealings with his servants of past ages to realize that an experience of this kind could mean only that he was being apprehended by the Lord for some special service. In relating this experience to King Agrippa later, Paul quotes Jesus as saying, “I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”—chap. 26:16-18

When the Lord appeared to Paul on the Damascus road, his immediate response was, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” He further expressed his witness before Agrippa, saying to the king, “I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.” (vs. 19) This spirit of obedience continued to be manifested in all of Paul’s experiences. Certainly obedience is one of the important characteristics of all soldiers, especially “good soldiers of Jesus Christ.” Paul was one of these.

Paul wrote to Timothy, “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” (II

Tim. 2:3) Paul knew from the beginning that fighting the good fight of faith steadfastly would result in suffering and thus call for endurance. At the time of his conversion, the Lord said to Ananias concerning Paul, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:16) It was not long before these sufferings began.

He preached the gospel in the synagogues in Damascus. Immediately, the religious leaders rose up against him and he was forced to flee from the city, the brethren letting him down over the wall in a basket. A short time later in Jerusalem, he also encountered persecution. Temporarily, he returned to his home city of Tarsus. It was here that Barnabas sought him out and invited him to participate in the ministry at Antioch. Again, Paul was quick to obey what he believed to be the leadings of the Lord. He accompanied Barnabas to Antioch. From that time forward, his life was one of continuous sacrifice and service for the Lord.

Writing to the church at Corinth, Paul lists some of the results of his faithfulness in terms of sufferings. Instead of complaining about them, he cites these experiences as evidence of God's blessing and of his apostleship. "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false

brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”—II Cor. 11:23-28

## **IN PISIDIA**

The church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas on a missionary journey, and Mark accompanied them. One of the first cities visited was Antioch of Pisidia. Here a good witness was given by Paul in the synagogue on the first Sabbath they were there. The people of the city learned about this and the next Sabbath day there “came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.”—Acts 13:44

“When the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.” (vs. 45) Additionally, “the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Spirit.”—vss. 50-52

Here again, Paul realized what it would mean for him to continue being a “good soldier of Jesus Christ.” Their next stop was Iconium. Here also, they felt the cruel hand of persecution and were forced to leave the city, although not until after they had given a good witness for the Truth. This reminds us of an important facet of the good fight

of faith. Had Paul, when receiving that “vision” on the Damascus road, simply rejoiced in the fact that he now knew that Jesus was the Messiah and done nothing about it, he could have escaped a life of persecution. The fact that he did not choose this course is indicated by his experience in Iconium and most of the other places he visited. It was his bearing witness to the Truth that brought the persecution.

### **STONED AT LYSTRA**

From Iconium, Paul and Barnabas went to Lystra, “and there they preached the Gospel.” (Acts 14:7) They found a man there who had never been able to walk. Through the power of the Lord, Paul healed him. Naturally, the people of the city were happy over this and had no inclination to persecute those who had performed such a wonderful miracle. In fact, they wanted to worship these two Christian soldiers, but Paul restrained them from so rash an action.—Acts 14:6-15

Then, however, “certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium” appeared on the scene and persuaded the people to stone Paul. Then they “drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead,” (Acts 14:19) but Paul was not dead. As the disciples stood around him he rose up, “and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.”—vs. 20

Paul and Barnabas had not been intimidated by the persecutions which had come upon them in Lystra and Iconium and Antioch, for they returned to these cities and ministered to those who had become interested in the Gospel as a result of their first visit. Paul was an ardent evangelist who

faithfully proclaimed the Gospel to the public upon every possible occasion. He also was just as faithful in laying down his life for the brethren, building them up in the most holy faith.

The remaining visits made by Paul and Barnabas on this first missionary journey are mentioned, but no details given. They returned to Antioch and reported to the brethren who had sent them out. Not much information is given concerning this report. It simply states that “they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.” (vs. 27) We gather from this brief statement that their report dwelt more on the manner in which the Lord had blessed their ministry rather than on the persecution and other difficulties they had encountered. Already Paul realized that the way of the cross was one of weariness and suffering. He had learned by experience the truthfulness of Jesus’ words, “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” (John 16:33) He had learned also that he could maintain good cheer in his suffering, knowing that the Lord would help him in his every time of need.

## **THE MACEDONIAN CALL**

It was on Paul’s second missionary tour that he received the call, “Come over into Macedonia, and help us.” (Acts 16:9) Responding to this call, he was used by the Lord to establish the first congregation of Jesus’ disciples in Europe. This was at Philippi. It was here that Lydia, the seller of purple, accepted the Gospel and was immersed. After that, it was in Lydia’s home that Paul and his companions stayed while in Philippi.

As in so many cases, though, the great joys experienced in the service at Philippi were accompanied by trouble. Paul and Silas, who was now his traveling companion, were hauled before the rulers, and the charge was made, “These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.”—Acts 16:20,21

The reaction to this charge was swift and cruel both by the rulers and the people. We read, “The multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.”vss. 22-24

Paul and Silas were not discouraged. Locked in that “inner prison” with their feet made fast in stocks, at midnight they “prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.” (vs. 25) Here were Paul and Silas fighting the good fight of faith under most difficult circumstances. Probably their backs were bleeding from the beatings they had received. They were in a dungeon and their feet ached from the stocks. What did they do? Did they complain? Did they intimate that had they known that they would be subjected to treatment of this kind they would have stayed in Antioch? No, they held a prayer meeting!

“Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed. And the keeper of the

prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.” (vss. 26-28) The Lord had brought Paul and his companion through another trial and they rejoiced. As a result of this experience, the jailor accepted the Gospel as well as his family.

### **TROUBLES CONTINUED**

Paul finished his third missionary tour at Jerusalem. Through all three of his journeys he experienced the fulfillment of the Lord’s word to Ananias concerning the many things he would suffer for the name of Christ. On his way to Jerusalem it was made plain to him by the Holy Spirit, through a brother by the name of Agabus, that he would be bound at Jerusalem and would be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles. (chap. 21:11) One less devoted to the Lord and to his cause might well have understood this as an indication that the Lord did not want him to go to Jerusalem. Rather, Paul was of the firm conviction that this was not so. Rather, he saw that it was the Lord’s will for him to go to Jerusalem on this occasion. He saw that the testimony of the Holy Spirit through Agabus was designed to test his faith and courage. He showed that he was willing to die at Jerusalem if this was what the Lord wanted.

He said this in so many words. “None of these things move me,” Paul said, “neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of



the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” And again, “What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”—Acts 20:24; 21:13

Paul was not killed at Jerusalem, but he did experience some very severe trials. He was seized upon by his Jewish brethren according to the flesh. He would have been killed by them except that he was rescued from their hands by Roman soldiers. Thus, true to the prophecy of Agabus, he found himself in the custody of Gentiles. Even this he knew was by the Lord’s design. Nor did the Lord withhold from Paul what his design was. We read, “The Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.”—chap. 23:11

This information served both as an encouragement and as a guide to Paul. As a prisoner of the Romans, he was taken from governor to governor. At the proper time, when they might have released him, he appealed his case to Rome. Under Roman law, this made it mandatory that he be taken to Rome at the expense of the Roman Empire and under the protection of Roman soldiers. It was necessary that he have this protection because the Jews, in essentially every area, were opposed to Paul. Except for the fact that he had the protection of Roman soldiers, it is doubtful that he would ever have reached Rome. It was the Lord’s will that Paul go to Rome, and the Lord had his own way of making the journey possible.

There were trials on the way to Rome, including a shipwreck. When it was apparent that the ship

on which they were traveling would be wrecked, Paul said to the crew and passengers, "I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."—chap. 27:22-25

The ship was wrecked and there was a long wait on the Island of Melita—until spring. Then the company embarked on another ship. Arriving in Italy, Paul and Silas continued their journey to Rome on the Appian Way. Some of the brethren learned that Paul and his party were on their way to Rome and went out to meet them, "whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." (chap. 28:15) It had been a long and wearisome journey. Nothing could have given Paul more comfort and encouragement at the time than to meet some of his brethren, those who had enough concern for him to travel a distance to meet him.

## **TO PRISON**

For Paul to take courage under such circumstances was in itself no small accomplishment. He was not going to Rome to be honored by the Roman authorities. He was going there to be imprisoned until his turn for trial came up. He did not know what the result of his trial would be—whether he would be set free, or be convicted and executed. He took courage because he had the Lord's word which confirmed that he wanted him to go to Rome and

there to bear witness to the Truth. Under most hazardous conditions, the Lord had taken Paul to Rome. Now, this illustrious apostle could take courage and wait patiently as the further providences of the Lord unfolded.

As it turned out, Paul was treated a little better than some by the Roman authorities. He was held in custody, but he was not cast into the dungeons. He was allowed to live in his own hired house for two years. While his every move was doubtless supervised by Roman guards, he was given the privilege of receiving guests to whom he bore witness to the Truth. He used whatever opportunities came to him to witness also to those who were guarding him. Concerning this, the *New English Translation* reads, “Friends, I want you to understand that the work of the Gospel has been helped on, rather than hindered, by this business of mine. My imprisonment in Christ’s cause has become common knowledge to all at headquarters here, and indeed among the public at large; and it has given confidence to most of our fellow Christians to speak the word of God fearlessly and with extraordinary courage.”—Phil. 1:12-14

Paul knew that fighting the good fight of faith involved more than simply suffering for righteousness’ sake. He knew that it meant more also than preaching the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles, to Roman guards and fellow prisoners. He knew that to have the Lord’s approval in this sacrificing and suffering in his name, one must also have his mindset. From his prison home in Rome, he wrote to the brethren at Philippi, saying, “Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.”—Phil. 2:5-8, *Revised Standard Version*

Only if one carries on the good fight of faith in love and in humility before God can there be hope of attaining victory at the end. This is a humility that is manifested in obedience to all his righteous precepts. With such a victory, “a crown of glory that fadeth not away” is reserved in heaven for all those who endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ and endure in the strength and spirit of the Lord.—I Pet. 5:4

### **THIS ONE THING**

In his own prison house in Rome, Paul wrote further to the brethren at Philippi. He admonishes them to “rejoice in the Lord” and adds, “To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous.” (Phil. 3:1) According to the flesh, Paul had little in which he could rejoice. His years of hazardous service and persecution, though, had not dimmed his faith in the great Messianic cause for which he was laying down his life. It was not a hardship, as he says, for him to write to the brethren to “rejoice in the Lord,” for he himself was thus rejoicing.

Through his years of service, beginning with his conversion on the Damascus road, Paul had suffered and sacrificed much, especially his reputation and strength. His appreciation of the heavenly

vision had continued to increase, and he was now as determined as ever to be obedient to it. He wrote from prison, “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”—Phil. 3:8-14

Here was a soldier of the cross almost literally under the shadow of the executioner. He was in this precarious situation because he had been obedient to “the heavenly vision” given to him by the Lord. He had been faithful to a vision which called him into the service of the great Messianic cause. His obedience had cost him the loss of all things and untold sufferings. One with less faith and courage might well have decided that he would not continue in a way that offered, so far as the flesh was concerned, nothing but suffering.

Paul, however, was not this sort of person. He knew on whom he had believed and had recognized from the start that only by suffering and dying with Jesus could he hope to live and reign with him. So, in this final, crucial time of his life of sacrifice, “the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” was a great joy set before him. For the attaining of this, Paul was eager to press on and give up the last remaining impulses of his life. He was not weary in well-doing, but anxious to continue sacrificing in his great fight of faith.

When later Paul wrote to Timothy, evidently from a prison cell, he asked his beloved “son” to visit him and to bring his cloak. At this point, he seemed to know for a certainty that he would not be set free to continue his service of the Truth and the brethren, but was to soon be executed. Only now could he exult in the fact that he had continued to be faithful. He had fought the good fight and had finished his course. What a glorious and triumphant ending to the life of a good soldier of Jesus Christ. May his example encourage us to greater zeal in knowing and doing our Heavenly Father’s will. ■

## OBITUARIES

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

Sister Anne Diamond, Hampton, NH—September  
6. Age, 89

Sister Betty Hopper, Hamburg, NJ—September  
13. Age, 97

Sister Jackie Suraci, East Haven, CT—September  
16. Age, 81

# Walking with Christ

*“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”*

—*Philippians 3:10*

## **IN THIS SCRIPTURE, THE**

Apostle Paul clearly indicates that he was willing to give up all of the prospects of his earthly life and position of honor, that he might know and serve our Lord Jesus. In this letter to the brethren at Philippi, he further stated, “What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”—Phil. 3:7,8

## **OUR HIGH CALLING IN CHRIST JESUS**

Paul set aside everything that pertained to his former ambitions, which were based on human knowledge and understanding, that he might instead win Christ. He explained that this High Calling in Christ Jesus would include a resurrection from death to the highest of all spiritual planes of

life, the divine nature. It would also mean that he would have a share in Christ's future kingdom in which all of God's human creation would be blessed. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:11-14

Paul desired the kind of spiritual knowledge that would prepare him for a ministry in which he could preach this wonderful message of righteousness and truth to the sin-sick and dying world. He wanted us to also consider that the same principles he was adopting also apply to our spiritual growth and development. We, too, must have the spiritual food that is provided in God's Word of Truth concerning his ultimate purpose for the reconciliation of the human family.

## **OUR GUIDING LIGHT**

God's Word is described as a lamp and guiding light for our benefit as New Creatures in Christ Jesus. The psalmist wrote, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—Ps. 119:103-105

This wonderful light of understanding has been provided for us so that we, too, may walk in the path



of righteousness, and strive for the High Calling in Christ Jesus, even as Paul did. God's Word provides us with the proper spiritual nourishment to make us strong in the Lord. If we accept his spiritual teachings, and properly assimilate them, we will be transformed by the power of our loving Heavenly Father and his Holy Spirit.

In our present earthly condition, food is eaten to provide energy and strength for our fleshly bodies and to allow them to function efficiently. A similar application is true when we feed on God's Word. However, we also need to be rightly exercised by the spiritual energy that we have derived from the Word of God. For this, we look to Jesus as our perfect example. He diligently studied his Heavenly Father's Word of Truth and did everything in his power to serve him. He embraced every opportunity that came his way of doing good for others. The Apostle Peter testified to our Lord Jesus' earthly ministry. He said, "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him."—Acts 10:38, *New American Standard Bible*

## **A SOUND MIND**

Character development and a serious study of God's message of Truth are essential for all who seek to walk in newness of life and to share in the sufferings of Christ. In his letter to Timothy, Paul encouraged him by reminding him, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."—II Tim 1:7

If we put the Truth first, then service will find its proper place in the life of the consecrated Christian. We must seek to be balanced by obtaining a proper degree of basic and fundamental doctrine, character development in our lives, and service to God.

We are living in a very precarious time, and we are witnesses of disintegration all about us. In our present world, we see a great increase in sorrow and hopelessness among many people. We need to utilize the teachings of the Scriptures to comfort others whenever possible, and with the proper spirit of God. We have been anointed to preach the wonderful message of Truth as recorded in the Word of God, even as was our Lord Jesus, who said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."—Luke 4:18,19

## **SERVING GOD'S PEOPLE**

Some of the Lord's people who are enduring trying experiences could very possibly appreciate a word of comfort and encouragement from us, and we should be ready to serve them in this capacity whenever we have opportunity. We have not reached the point in time in God's ultimate plan and purpose where there is nothing for us to do but to wait upon him. As long as we are still here in the flesh, God has so arranged matters that there is always something we can do in the service for his people.

## **PEACE OF HEART**

If we trust in God and his arrangements, we will not worry about the increasing levels of violence and trouble that surround us. We have received a priceless legacy from our dear Lord Jesus who bequeathed the wonderful promise of comfort to his faithful followers. He said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."—John 14:27

We should all have this level of peace and, if not, it may be obtained by laying hold of it and praying for an abundant measure of faith. We must humbly submit our lives to God to receive the rest of faith that God has promised. Through the Prophet Isaiah, God assures us, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." (Isa. 26:3) It is through the strength of God's Holy Spirit, which activates our minds, that we may grow in the development of this peace which Jesus has left us.

## **STEADFAST AND UNMOVABLE**

Concerning Jesus, the Apostle Paul said, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." (I Tim. 1:12) Again, he said, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."—I Cor. 15:57,58

A person who is steadfast and unmovable, and is filled with the peace of God and has trust in him, will not be disturbed by the agitated and restless conditions around him, because he is filled with our Lord's eternal and glorious peace. If we only have this peace partially, we must pray for a greater infilling of it. He wants us to ask him because it shows our trust in him, and our faith in the promises of his precious Word of Truth. Let us pray as did David, who said, "As for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters. Let not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me. Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies."—Ps. 69:13-16

Our Lord hears our prayers and delivers us, even as he delivered his Son. We are to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. We see manifested in the earth many powers of natural phenomena such as the power of a raging sea, violent storms, and earthquakes; but none of these can compare to the power of God's might which protects us.

## **SEEKING THINGS ABOVE**

In his message to the brethren in Colosse, the Apostle Paul wrote, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection

on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”—Col. 3:1-4

In our featured scripture, the Apostle Paul spoke concerning God’s power to resurrect him when the occasion arose. This is illustrated when we consecrate our lives to our loving Heavenly Father, and when we are immersed into Christ’s death. We are lowered into the water, which represents the death of our old fleshly nature, and then we are lifted out of the water by the one performing the immersion service, which represents our being risen with Christ.

Those who are truly risen with Christ will seek those things which are above. Those who tear down, find fault, and do not seek to build up and strengthen the weak, cannot be risen with Christ. The “old creature” was to have died at the time of immersion, but if it asserts itself by such acts of the fallen flesh, we should be aware that these are not the ways of the New Creature in Christ Jesus. We are to seek those things which are above, and in so doing we will experience the power of his resurrection, and come to know the fellowship of his sufferings.

## **HIGHLY EXALTED**

We know that Jesus sacrificed his perfect humanity for the poor, sin-sick and dying world, and he is now highly exalted by the power of his Heavenly Father. Paul stressed, “If there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection

and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”—Phil. 2:1-11, *NASB*

Whatever we do for the Lord’s people we do for him. This is a solid principle. Had we been living at the time of our Lord’s first advent, we all would have no doubt wanted to serve him in every way possible. We would have wanted to give him gifts, help bear his cross, and to offer all the assistance we could. If we do these acts of kindness today during our own lifetime, even to the least of his brethren, we are doing it to him. Jesus taught this principle of Christian grace, and it is applicable to those who are now living during the closing years of this present Gospel Age.

## CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

The Apostle Paul said that he wanted to be made conformable unto Jesus' death. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. 2:20

We recognize this as a figure of speech to illustrate the sacrificial death. Jesus died on the cross willingly to become man's Redeemer. Those who would follow him must also be willing to die a sacrificial death, having given up all hope for a life here upon this earth. They are willing to be spent in his service, and this involves being made conformable unto his death. It is the new mind that now dictates to the flesh what it must do, and it is the new mind that receives the power of his resurrection.

## A NARROW WAY

As we draw nearer to the end of our walk in the narrow way, may we be strengthened, and not give up hope. May we become energized through this strength to fight the good fight of faith and to finish our course as faithful servants.

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."—Phil. 3:10 ■

*Let us rejoice when he sendeth,  
Some sorrow or hardship that tries,  
And be glad to be crushed as the rose leaf,  
That a sweeter perfume may arise.*

# SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

*The speakers listed below are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:*

**O. B. Elbert**

New Haven, CT    November 6

**J. Trzeciak**

Jersey City, NJ    November 20

**R. Gorecki**

New Haven, CT    November 6

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# CONVENTIONS

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

**NEW HAVEN CONVENTION, November 6**—Westwoods Italian-American Club, 85 Chase Lane, West Haven, CT. Contact A. Suraci, 171 Johnson Road, Hamden, CT 06518. Phone: (203) 248-3793

**JERSEY CITY PRE-THANKSGIVING CONVENTION, November 20**—The Loyalty Lodge, 1912 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ 07083. Contact S. Koterba. Phone: (718) 961-4437 or (917) 554-2348

**GREATER NEW LONDON PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, March 25**—Bayview Lodge, East Lyme, CT. Contact V. Grillo. Phone: (860) 823-7099

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*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.—Ephesians 5:20*

Yes, blessed be God, out of his abundant mercy these rich blessings are common to all—to the just and to the unjust—and it is well that the attention of all men should be called to mark and consider them. . . . And while the world thus marks and rejoices in, and in some cases returns thanks to God for the truly glorious common blessings which our loving and benevolent Father showers alike upon the evil and the just, let our hearts not only rejoice in these things, but also in the higher spiritual favors bestowed upon the sons of God.

—*Songs in the Night*, November 22

*"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."*

*II Corinthians 5:8,9*

### Looking for the Sunrise

I'm not looking for the sunset  
As the swift years come and go,  
I am looking for the sunrise  
And the golden morning glow,  
Where the light of heaven's glory  
Will break forth upon my sight  
In the land that knows no sunset  
Nor the darkness of the night.

I'm not going down the pathway  
Toward the setting of the sun,  
Where the shadows ever deepen,  
Where the day at last is done.  
I am walking up the hillside  
Where the sunshine lights the way  
To the glory of the sunrise  
Of God's never ending day.

I'm not going down, but upward,  
And the path is never dim,  
For the day grows ever brighter  
As I journey on with him.  
So my eyes are upon the hilltops  
Waiting for the sun to rise,  
Waiting for his invitation  
To my home beyond the skies.

—selected

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*To us the Scriptures clearly teach:*

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

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

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

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

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

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