

The DAWN

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1914 – 2014

A Century of Unprecedented Change

“Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”

—Matthew 24:21,22

Political, social, moral, religious, economic, and

AS WE BEGIN A NEW YEAR, 2014 promises to be one of continued distress and uncertainty throughout the world. Heads of state, ambassadors, and leaders within nations will continue to seek ways of easing tensions and resolving problems of every kind which grip the people of all countries. The problems and challenges facing the world in 2014 are indeed as diverse and complex as the population itself.

environmental issues of every imaginable kind plague mankind today.

Compounding the difficulty of dealing with these is that many of today's problems are interrelated. For example, attempts to resolve political conflicts in the world many times have ramifications in both religious and economic affairs. Dealing with social issues facing mankind today bears a direct relationship to the many difficult moral problems in present society, and the extremely diverse, but strongly held, viewpoints on these among the people. Attempts to solve the myriad environmental problems in today's world clearly have significant political and economic impacts.

Another compounding effect of today's problems relates to the availability of information and communication. In the world of 2014, the ability to obtain information and to communicate with others is instantaneous throughout nearly the entire earth. As a result, issues facing even just a small part of the world are given immediate global attention, and have ripple effects that never existed in earlier times—even as recently as the beginning of the twenty-first century.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

This year marks one hundred years since the outbreak of World War I. This properly gives rise to reflections on what has taken place throughout the earth during these ten decades. There can be no doubt that the changes that have taken place in the world from 1914 to 2014 are unprecedented when compared to any other one hundred year period in mankind's history. Added to this is the observation that the world which existed prior to

1914, which in many ways was little changed for centuries, is virtually unrecognizable now.

With the exception of the United States, the world of a century ago was largely one of great empires, with the British Empire being the largest of them all. Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, and Turkey also had their colonial possessions. The continent of Africa provides a prime example of how this has changed. In 1914, Africa had only two independent countries—Ethiopia and Liberia. The rest of the continent was ruled entirely by various European nations. Today, Africa is made up of fifty-five independent nations, a higher number than on any other continent, and nearly 30% of the total number of sovereign nations on earth.

By contrast, the continent of Europe has experienced the opposite trend during the past one hundred years. In 1914, the countries of Europe comprised a full 50% of the total number of independent nations in the world. In 2014, they make up only 23% of the world's total. In 1914, Europe dominated the world with 25% of earth's total population. In 2014, Europe's population represents a mere 10% of the world's total.

The mighty colonial powers of 1914 were ruled by kings, emperors, and czars. With the exception of Great Britain and the United States, the people had little to say in government. Where parliaments or congresses existed, they functioned largely as “rubber stamps” for dictatorial and despotic rulers.

At the outbreak of World War I the population of the United States was approximately 90 million, and this nation was far from being the leading nation of earth as it is today with a population of over 317

million. However, the United States did play an important role in helping to defeat Germany in that first war, thus bringing it to a close. This was also true with respect to World War II. Together, the United States' role in these two major conflicts in large measure thrust it into the forefront as a world superpower.

Following World War I, rapid changes began to develop in the old European world. There was the communist takeover in Russia, and the rise of dictators such as Hitler in Germany and Mussolini in Italy. Czars and emperors were gone, and while brave efforts were made to establish a republic in Germany, a democratic form of government soon succumbed to the rising power of Hitler. In due course, Hitler and Mussolini joined forces, ostensibly to combat communism, but in reality to bring the whole world under the heel of the rising power of Nazi-fascist dictatorship.

Meanwhile, Great Britain and the United States were helping to arm Germany against attack by Russia, only to find later, to their horror, that the arms were used against the ones who supplied them. Despite all the efforts of the United States and Great Britain, in 1939 the second World War broke out. One of the battle slogans used to encourage soldiers and others in the first World War was that it was "a war to end wars," but in this regard the 1914-1918 war was a dismal failure. Not only did the world witness the most devastating of all wars in the one which began in 1939, but other armed conflicts have been going on in one or more countries continuously ever since. According to recent statistics, a total of 150 wars—some major and others of a smaller scale—

have taken place, or are still occurring, since the end of World War II in 1945.

CHANGES IN WARFARE

One hundred years ago, the first World War was fought largely by soldiers who faced other soldiers, across trenches at times, and at times in open fields. This sort of warfare is less practiced today. In more advanced nations such as the United States, soldiers still take up arms, but many of the major military “battles” are now fought remotely by the use of computer technology. Such technology is able to pinpoint specific targets from far distances, remotely launch rockets, and guide them to hit the targets precisely—all without a single soldier stepping foot on the “battlefield.”

Following World War II, and for several decades thereafter, the biggest fear concerning warfare was the possibility of a full-scale war using nuclear weapons. Indeed, the two major superpowers of that time fought a “cold war” of threats, propaganda, and rhetoric, each knowing full well that they both had nuclear arsenals sufficient to destroy the entire population of the earth many times over. However, when the cold war ended with the fall and breakup of the Soviet Union, now nearly a quarter-century ago, those fears eased. In fact, the superpowers have spent much time and effort in the years since to jointly dismantle their nuclear weapon stockpiles. It is perhaps ironic that today, in 2014, the biggest fears with regard to nuclear weapons are not from those which remain in the hands of the superpowers, but from those of small rogue nations such as Iran and North Korea.

The fears associated with the face-to-face fighting of World War I, the thousands upon thousands of bombs dropped during World War II, and the threat of nuclear holocaust during the cold war, have been replaced during the early years of the twenty-first century by the fears and realities of a new insidious kind of warfare—Terrorism. As we have witnessed with our own eyes, the warfare and horrors of terrorism are unique in many ways. Although weapons may still include guns, anything that causes widespread destruction or loss of life is also a weapon of choice—whether it be hijacked airplanes used as exploding bombs; booby-trapped automobiles; men, women, and even children acting as suicide bombers; or crudely made—but effective—improvised explosive devices (IED's).

Another unique characteristic of terrorism is that it typically does not involve a military objective or even seek military targets. Rather, it targets innocent civilians, and attempts to cause as many deaths, injuries, and as much disruption of society as possible. Additionally, terrorism strikes great fear in man because those who perpetrate such warfare have no regard for human life whatsoever. Certainly they do not regard of any value the lives of their perceived enemies, nor do they have regard for the lives of their own people, families, and even themselves. They are willing to kill and be killed in order to continue waging such warfare.

ECONOMIC CHANGES

The rise of the United States to superpower status during the past one hundred years has not come without severe economic impacts. The Great

Depression of the 1930s had disastrous consequences for millions, and likely would have continued much longer had it not been for the events surrounding the outbreak of World War II. Much more recently, who can forget the near financial collapse of the world's monetary systems in the fall of 2008, and the resulting "Great Recession" which followed? Trillions of dollars in 401(k) accounts, real estate holdings, and stock and bond investments were lost in just a matter of weeks.

Let us consider some comparisons of today with 1914. The United States total national debt in 1914 was a little over \$1 billion. In 2014, it is projected to rise to \$18.2 trillion. To put this in more understandable language, 2014's total national debt will be 18,200 times more than it was one hundred years ago, an astounding increase by any measurement. The buying power of the United States dollar now, as compared with its 1914 value, is a little more than four cents.

While one hundred years ago only a small percentage of the people of this country indulged in buying on credit, it is now the general rule. The whole country does business on a seemingly endless supply of credit. According to recent statistics, total consumer debt in the United States is currently over \$11 trillion, and growing. We may recall the time when a reasonable down payment was expected on the purchase of household appliances, automobiles, and homes, but now many sellers are offering to deliver their goods and close sales transactions without a down payment, even assuring the purchasers that there will be nothing to pay for several months. The

2014 world is truly a world of credit and debt, both among consumers and government itself.

The United States federal income tax rate in 1914 ranged from 1% to a high of 6%. However, these modest rates applied only after a liberal exemption, which left the average worker with no tax at all to pay. In fact, less than one percent of the United States population paid any income tax in 1914. The peak federal income tax rate in 2014 will be just under 40%. The lowest tax rate in 2014 is 10%. Not surprisingly, the attitude of the people toward income taxes of any sort has not changed. The small percentage of people who had to pay taxes in 1914 were just as unhappy paying 1% to 6% as those today paying 10% to 40%.

TRAVEL

In 1914 the world was still in the “horse and buggy” days. The automobile had put in its appearance, but there were very few on the roads. Indeed, there were few roads suitable for automobiles one hundred years ago. So seldom was an automobile seen, especially outside of the cities, that many accidents were caused by frightened horses bolting off the road to get away from these strange, new, and noisy contraptions.

In 2014, in the United States and much of the world, automobiles are the order of the day. In 2010, the total number of automobiles in use throughout the world surpassed 1 billion for the first time, and in 2012, world automobile production exceeded 60 million vehicles. It is no wonder that in many parts of the world, streets and roads are so congested with traffic that movement comes to a standstill on a

daily basis for hours at a time, and resulting air pollution is stifling. New superhighways are being built throughout the world, but the construction of these new roads does not keep pace with the millions of new cars which are appearing each year.

A century ago airplanes were used almost exclusively on reconnaissance missions as the eyes of the armies at war, but not in a commercial way, as there were no commercial airline companies one hundred years ago. In 1914, railroads were the principal means of long-distance travel and for the adequate transportation of freight. While railroads continue to have an impact today in the transportation of freight, airplanes and automobiles have greatly reduced the use of railroads so far as passenger travel is concerned, and transportation of goods by trucks has taken away a large portion of freight revenue from the railroads.

Who could have envisioned one hundred years ago that today there would be thousands of planes in the air at all times, night and day, traveling from city to city, and from country to country at 600 miles an hour? According to the Bureau of Transportation statistics, commercial airline passengers totaled over 813 million people worldwide in 2012, on a total of 9.8 million flights. That is over 2.2 million passengers per day, taking over 26,800 separate flights per day—staggering numbers indeed. Truly the world of travel has changed in the past one hundred years.

COMMUNICATION—THE BIGGEST CHANGE OF ALL

One hundred years ago the telegraph and telephone were the primary means of communicating quickly. The telegraph was relied on mostly for long-distance

messages. Telephones were used largely for local communications. Communication of the news to the general public was limited to newspapers and magazines. Think of how the world has changed in this respect since 1914, or even in the last fifty years! Who could have foreseen in 1914 that fifty years later, in 1964, people generally could sit in their own homes and watch news of important happenings on television—oftentimes the same day that they had occurred.

Fast-forwarding another fifty years to 2014, communications technology has so far surpassed that of even fifty years ago that any comparison to the past is nearly pointless. Men, women, and children, living in even the remotest areas of the planet, have the ability to communicate with any other part of the world literally in the palm of their hand by means of cell phones, smart phones, and a myriad other forms of portable communication devices. Consider these staggering statistics: 2014 will be the first time in history when the number of mobile phones in the world will surpass the world's population. Additionally, as 2014 begins, over 91% of the total population of the earth (this percentage includes children) owns at least one mobile phone of some kind. These are changes of monumental proportions from 1914 to 2014!

UNIMAGINED CHANGES

We believe it would be safe to say that there is no government on earth that has not undergone radical changes in the last one hundred years—even among those nations who have existed throughout this entire period. Think of the changes involving

such countries as Russia, Germany, Italy, France, England, and even the United States, which have taken place since 1914. In the United States, programs such as Social Security and Medicare were not even thought of one hundred years ago, although today they are struggling to survive. Who would have thought, one hundred years ago, that a Civil Rights Bill could be enacted into law in the United States, as occurred fifty years ago in 1964? The current debate in this country over health-care reform and medical insurance coverage was unheard of in 1914, simply because there was no such thing as health insurance at that time. Such changes were unimagined in the 1914 world.

What do all these changes mean? It is natural to expect that the population of the world would greatly increase in one hundred years, but even this has been greatly accelerated by the progress which has been made in medical science, particularly as related to the health of children and infants, as well as huge advances in the treatment of cancer, heart disease, and stroke. In this, as well as in many of the other changes already noted, we have visible evidence of the prophetic statement that “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” (Dan. 12:4) Surely, there has never been a hundred-year period in the world’s history like the one from 1914 to 2014.

Many times, when endeavoring to call attention to the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, the remark will be made that everything which is happening now is simply a matter of history repeating itself. There have always been wars, it is said, and revolutions, and upheavals of other sorts, and there always

will be. Yet, most of the outstanding events of the last one hundred years, only a few of which we have briefly discussed in foregoing paragraphs, are quite new and different from anything that has ever happened before. One hundred years ago, many of today's "commonplace" aspects of daily life were unheard of, but today they represent the complex and confusing shape of the hectic, fear-filled world in which we live.

DIFFERENT WORLD SCRIPTURALLY FORETOLD

We are surely living in a different world today than that which existed one hundred years ago. With all the marvelous creations produced by science, invention, and technology, it would seem this should be a much better world than it is. However, greed and selfishness wield such a powerful influence in human affairs that the enjoyment of the good things of the world resulting from the "increase of knowledge" in this "time of the end" is often spoiled by the realization that the progress of this day of science and invention might well lead to the destruction of the human race itself. It is not surprising that thoughts such as this come to the serious-minded who do not know the prophetic meaning of the times in which we are living.

As students of Bible prophecy, we realize that the changed world of today is but a phase of the transition from an old world order into God's new world of tomorrow. While the pre-1914 world has come to an end, what has happened in the one hundred years since is not the complete fulfillment of the Bible's prophecies relating to the end of man's selfish social order. What has thus far occurred is

merely a part of the necessary “time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation” (Dan. 12:1), which eventually will lead to the complete breakdown of human efforts to maintain peace and security. Fallen man’s failure, however, will be followed by divine intervention on his behalf through the establishment of Christ’s kingdom of righteousness.

In this connection, it is revealing to note that while marvelous progress has been made along many lines to make the world in which we live a better place, during the last one hundred years there has been a decided loss in man’s ability to rule himself. Law and order have crumbled on every hand, both within nations and internationally. Crime of every description is rampant in every nation. Internationally, there are almost endless distressing situations for which even the noblest minds in the political world are unable to find solutions. The increase of knowledge has not helped man to rule himself properly, with the result that the spirit of anarchy is increasing. Expanding on the prophetic words of Daniel, Jesus spoke of this time, in the words of our theme text, as a period of “great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.” He then assures us that “those days shall be shortened.”—Matt. 24:21,22

Thus, while the world of today is in some respects a better one from the standpoint of its many material advantages over the world of one hundred years ago, it is a crumbling world. The elements of peace, security, righteousness, and respect for fellow man, all of which are essential for the people in any world

society to be truly happy, are lacking. There is a mad rush for pleasure and riches on the one hand, and riotous demands for freedom from inequality and oppression on the other, and very few are satisfied with the results in either case.

THE FUTURE

What can we say about the future? Human wisdom sees the next hundred years as a period in which man must continue his attempts to solve, or at a minimum “patch up,” the many problems of the world if he is to continue to survive. Yet, as the history of the past one hundred years clearly points out, these efforts will simply create more, and likely greater, challenges than exist even now. As one problem is patched, a string of new ones will likely develop. Jesus illustrated the futility of such a course in this way, saying, “No one ever mends an old cloak with a patch of newly woven cloth. Otherwise, the patch put on would tear away some of the old, and a worse hole would be made.” (Matt. 9:16, *Weymouth*) The “old cloak” is equivalent to the old order of things, ruled by sin and selfishness. Putting patches on this cloak only makes the entire garment worse, until eventually it is in rags, with no hope of being saved. Only a completely new “garment”—Christ’s righteous kingdom—will have the qualities and strength necessary to properly “clothe” mankind with the “garment of praise.”—Isa. 61:3

We cannot say what the next one hundred years will hold for mankind. It is very possible that within that period Christ’s kingdom will be established, once and for all doing away with the old, sinful order of things. In this, however, we must “wait on the

Lord,” in faith, knowing that he has all matters well in hand. The Bible does not provide the specific details of year-by-year developments in this chaotic Time of Trouble. Indeed, we do not even know what to expect for the year which we have just entered. The Scriptures, however, assure us that whatever the events of 2014 and beyond may be, they will accomplish God’s purpose, and that the oft repeated prayer, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth,” will be answered.—Matt. 6:10

That kingdom, the Scriptures indicate, will begin to exercise its authority in the ancient Holy Land—the land of Israel. Its visible representatives will be the resurrected ancient faithful servants of God, beginning with righteous Abel and ending with John the Baptist. If we think of the marvels of human accomplishments, even in a sinful world, what about divine accomplishments through the agencies and power of Christ’s kingdom? Startling indeed will be the announcement which will one day go out from Jerusalem that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets, together with all the faithful of that ancient time, have been raised from the dead, and are assuming the rulership of Israel, and preparing to extend the control of the kingdom to all nations.

Paul asked a Roman governor if he thought it should be considered a thing incredible that God should raise the dead. It should not! The fact is that God’s kingdom plan for the salvation of the human race during the thousand years of Christ’s reign is predicated on the fact that he will restore the dead to life. The death of Jesus would have no

value to redeem the world from death if he had not been raised from the dead. His faithful footstep followers of the present Gospel Age are likewise to be raised from the dead in the “first resurrection” to “glory and honour and immortality.” (Rev. 20:6; Rom. 2:7) In due course, the Ancient Worthies also will be awakened from the sleep of death.

The followers of Jesus will be exalted to live and reign with him in the spiritual, heavenly phase of the Messianic kingdom. The Ancient Worthies will be given authority as the human representatives of that kingdom. After establishing peace among those still living at the close of the great Time of Trouble, there will begin the general resurrection of all the remaining billions who are asleep in death. What a stupendous work that will be, and how the name of the Creator will be glorified as one generation after another is brought forth from the great prison of death, enlightened concerning the true God and his will for them, and given an opportunity to travel over the “highway” that leads to holiness and life.—Isa. 35:8

As students of prophecy, we continue to watch the events that take place in the world in 2014 and beyond, realizing that soon Messiah’s kingdom will be set up in power and great glory, and that through its agencies all the distressing problems of the world will be permanently solved. Soon there will be peace on earth, because God’s good will toward men, having been demonstrated nearly two thousand years ago through the gift of his Son to be man’s Redeemer, will be plainly evident in the establishment of that kingdom which will bless “all families of the earth.”—Gen. 12:3; Acts 3:25 ■

Honoring the Sabbath

Key Verse: *“Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?”*
—Luke 6:9

Selected Scripture:
Luke 6:1-11

OUR LESSON TAKES PLACE

at a time when the Jewish Law was still in force. In this lesson, we are given the true interpretation of the fourth commandment—“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.” (Exod. 20:8) It is this understanding, given by our Lord, which the followers of Christ today are to follow, rather than the extreme, literal interpretations given to it by Jewish and even some Christian teachers.

Jesus had just entered the synagogue, and, as he taught, he saw a man with a withered right hand. He then asked those around him the question posed in our Key Verse. He did so because he perceived their evil thoughts as well as their lack of understanding. After looking around at those gathered there, he said to the man, “Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.”—Luke 6:10

As our Lord’s healing was done not by manual labor, but by the word of his mouth, the evil motive of his adversaries is most evident. In an earlier verse, we read, “The scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.” (vs. 7) They had been desiring to condemn him on some matter, and they took advantage of the situation to make their accusations against him.

The scribes and Pharisees appreciated only the letter of the law, rather than the deeper spiritual import of it. For this reason, they “added” specific methods and traditions of outward observances of the Law, while mostly overlooking and neglecting its real sentiment and spirit.

Just prior to this latest encounter with those who opposed him, “certain of the Pharisees said, . . . Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?” (Luke 6:2) Our Lord then responded to them with these words, “The Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.” (vs. 5) He showed to them, both by word and action, that to do the will of God is never contrary to his ultimate purpose, which is centered on having love and compassion for those in need. Thus, by healing the man in the synagogue, he was showing that he was fulfilling God’s law in the true sense of the word, and not violating its letter or its spirit in any way.—vs. 36; II John 6

A powerful demonstration was given by our Lord in the words of our Key Verse—so much so that his questions could not be answered nor challenged by the Jewish religious leaders. On another occasion, we are told that even some of the leaders commented that “Never man spake like this man.” (John 7:46) He was clearly far superior to any member of the fallen race. (Heb. 7:26) Jesus had previously told his disciples that he was fully aware of the importance of the Law and its proper observance. He said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”—Matt. 5:17

The Jews had gradually lost sight of God’s perfect law and had filled their minds with certain traditions and observances which were more or less contrary to it. By his words and actions, Jesus was assuring them, and us, that his purpose was to set aside human traditions. Rather, he sought to “establish the law” and “make it honourable,” as originally intended when it was given by God to Israel through Moses.—Isa. 42:21; Rom. 3:31, 7:12 ■

How to Live as God's People

Key Verse: *"I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you."*
—**Luke 6:27**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 6:17-31

WHEN LOOKING AT THE

law given to Israel, one of the important requirements that they were to live up to is given in the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Lev. 19:18) Jesus had declared of himself, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 8:12; 9:5)

Jesus knew, however, that he would not personally remain in the world, and that the work of God entrusted to him would be continued by his representatives—his ambassadors. With this in mind, he added the aspect of love shown in our Key Verse—love for our enemies—as another important element of being pleasing to the Heavenly Father.

If we are striving to fulfill this ultimate aspect of love in our character, it will require that we be pleasing to God to the greatest extent possible with our whole heart, mind, and being. Only thus can we make significant progress against the resistance of our flesh to sacrifice and to love those who may be considered our enemies. (Rom. 12:1,2) This language describes the giving up in sacrifice of our life, personal preferences, and our own likes and dislikes, in the service of Jesus and our Heavenly Father. During the Gospel Age, such faithfulness leads to sacrificial death, and we are encouraged by the

promise, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

In the beginning of the Gospel Age, miracles were employed which demonstrated the glory of God and his authority given to the apostles. After the apostles fell asleep in death, the Lord’s people throughout the age since have been called upon to walk entirely by faith. They have been witnesses of Jesus, in that they have been faithful in proclaiming the “gospel of Christ,” which, as Paul asserts, is “the power of God unto salvation.” (Rom. 1:16) These dear ones who are called of God are to “walk as children of light.” (Eph. 5:8) What better way to do this than to show love and mercy for others, as exemplified by their Master.

The commission given to these by Jesus was that they should be his witnesses in the entire world by preaching the Gospel. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19; Acts 1:8) In proclaiming this Gospel, they tell not only of the mighty miracle of Jesus’ resurrection (Eph. 1:18-23), but also of the resurrection of those who will live and reign with him. The full Gospel message additionally calls for a declaration of the great awakening of all the dead and the restoration of the willing and obedient to full perfection of life as human beings on the earth.

To be a “witness of Jesus, and for the word of God,” we must go forth with a song of praise upon our lips—praise to God for his love in sending Jesus to be the Redeemer and Savior of the world, praise for the divine wisdom which designed such a loving plan, and praise for divine justice which made provision to wash away Adamic sin by the blood of Christ. Thus we can rejoice that the Spirit of God has authorized us to be witnesses of Jesus, and privileged to explain the plan of God, both as to the spiritual phase of his kingdom, as well as to proclaim the glorious hope of “restitution” for all mankind during the thousand years of Christ’s reign.—Acts 3:19-21 ■

Jesus Teaches about Relationships

Key Verse:
*“Whosoever
exalteth himself
shall be abased;
and he that
humbleth himself
shall be exalted.”*
—**Luke 14:11**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 14:7-18,22-24
As believers in Christ Jesus, it includes the realization of the great value of the robe of Christ's righteousness. Such realization should result in a condition of mind which enables us to always keep the Lord fully in view and ourselves out of sight to the greatest extent possible.

Having humility means the possession of the mind of Christ. We must, as he did, let God enter into our mind, and into our heart. To do so means we must be teachable, which is an aspect of humility the Scriptures identify as meekness. Our Lord invites us to “learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” (Matt. 11:29) As a child of God, it is necessary that we develop “a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”—I Pet. 3:4

It is a humble disposition of heart which has allowed us to make an acceptable consecration of ourselves to do God's will. Having humbled ourselves to this extent, we

HUMILITY IS OF THE UT-
most importance to the follower of Christ, especially when we consider that the other fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit cannot be properly developed without it. (Gal. 5:22,23) True humility is that condition of mind and heart which causes us to have a proper appreciation of our own worth and that of others.

are then enabled to begin working on the development of the New Creature. Consider these words from Paul: “If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye have put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt . . . And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man.” (Eph. 4:21-24) These verses sum up the work of the transformation of our character. As New Creatures, we are to have new hopes and goals, which emanate from our Spirit-begotten mind. Thus are we able to follow our Lord’s instructions, given through the Apostle Paul: “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”—Col. 3:2

As our Lord Jesus became obedient unto death, we are to be crucified with him daily—baptized into his death, having offered our all to God in consecration. “If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.” (II Tim. 2:11,12) The way that we do this is to follow our Lord’s example in every aspect of our life. Because he was perfect, he has provided for us the best example possible. We are witnesses that he was “full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14) Thus we have much to accomplish in our Christian walk, as embodied in the words, “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”—Rom. 12:2

Only a handful of these witnesses for Jesus ever actually saw him. However, all who have made an acceptable consecration to God during this Gospel Age have believed the testimony of Paul when he proclaimed that Jesus was raised from the dead and was highly exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Eph. 1:18-23) These also accept and preach the further testimony of Paul, who declared that ultimately “every knee should bow, . . . And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”—Phil. 2:10,11 ■

Jesus Teaches Compassion for the Poor

Key Verse: *“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”*
—**Luke 16:10**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 16:10,19-31

FAITHFUL SERVICE TO THE

Heavenly Father can be demonstrated in many ways. Faithfulness in the small opportunities which come our way is especially emphasized in our Key Verse. This lesson points out to us the importance of living our lives in an unselfish manner, even in the small things. Such should be the aim of one who truly desires to daily be a willing sacrifice.—Rom. 12:1

Faithfulness in that which is least will of necessity involve the use of the seemingly mundane earthly things of life in God's service. Indeed, this is what is meant by the giving of our all in sacrifice. We are to ever realize that everything we have rightfully belongs to the Lord, and that this includes our time, talents, energy, and finances—these and many other things are all a part of our stewardship. “Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.” (I Cor. 6:20) Having such a desire to lead a life pleasing to the Heavenly Father will help us to become “an odour of a sweet smell,

a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God,” as we continually look for ways to please and serve him. (Phil. 4:18) We are to then view any opportunity of service to our Heavenly Father, great or small, as a prize and a great privilege—which indicates the true attitude of our heart. Paul sums up this attitude with the words: “By love serve one another.”—Gal. 5:13,14

When we look at the experiences of those such as the Apostle Paul, we realize that he was faithful in adhering to the words that Jesus spoke in our Key Verse. He was constantly looking for ways to encourage, help, and uplift his brethren “in that which is least” and also “in much.” He was led by his faith in God, and knew that this would be the key to gain the prize that he so desired. Paul knew that “without faith it is impossible to please him.” (Heb. 11:6) He further knew, however, that it that was necessary to apply the words, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness” (Matt. 6:33), and by seeking to actively demonstrate his faith by works.

We should, through faith accompanied by works, be inspired by the example of Jesus and the apostles. We are to likewise seek daily to be faithful “in that which is least” and “in much” as we run “the race that is set before us.” (Heb. 12:1) “Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.”—II Cor. 4:14,15

The proper outlook concerning the way that we are to view our privilege of leading a life full of compassion for others—in least and in much—can be found in the words spoken prophetically concerning our Lord and his faithful followers. “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings; . . . he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”—Isa. 61:1 ■

The Mind of a Servant

***“Let this mind be
in you, which was
also in Christ
Jesus: Who . . . took
upon him the form
of a servant, and
was made in the
likeness of men.”
—Philippians 2:5-7***

IT IS AN HONOR TO BE A servant, for the Christian who serves in the proper spirit is emulating the example of Jesus. He came to earth to be man’s Redeemer, and thus became servant of all. Jesus, whom we should endeavor to emulate, copied the example of the Heavenly Father, who always has been, and ever will be, the greatest of all servants. While it is noble to serve, yet the true spirit of service is that which prompts one humbly to do for others without hope of recognition or reward.

It is clear from our opening text that there is a direct connection between being a servant and developing the “mind of Christ,” the only begotten Son of God. Jesus, in his prehuman existence, was a servant of his Heavenly Father, having been his active agent in all the creative work. “Without him was not any thing made that was made,” declares John. (John 1:3) There was no loss of reputation or

no need for him to be humiliated in this service. However, his humility was exhibited in his willingness and desire always to cooperate with his Heavenly Father, no matter what was required of him. Lucifer, at that time, was also a servant of God. However, unlike Jesus, he aspired to a higher position in the universe than that designed for him. He said in his heart, “I will be like the most High.”—Isa. 14:14

Perhaps Paul had in mind the ambitious course of Lucifer when he wrote concerning Jesus, saying, “Who, though being in God’s form, yet did not meditate a usurpation to be like God.” Rather, as Paul continues, he was willing to make himself of no reputation, and take upon himself the form of a servant, “having been made in the likeness of men.” (Phil. 2:6,7, *Emphatic Diaglott*) What a different attitude was thus manifested by him who is now exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on High.

Man was created to be the king of earth, hence was no more a servant than were those created on the various planes of spiritual existence. The reason that the humble servitude of Jesus is associated with his becoming a man is because of the erroneous viewpoint adopted by the human race. Man has come to believe that those who serve are less noble than those who are served. Seldom has any servant been considered to be equal with those whom he serves. Jesus became a “servant” in the sense that his service was disesteemed by men—its importance not being recognized by them.

The viewpoint of fallen man with respect to servants is reflected in the attitude of the disciples prior to Pentecost. On the night before Jesus was

crucified a dispute arose among them as to which one would be the greatest. They believed that their Master was to be a great ruler over men and that they were to be closely associated with him in his kingdom. There was “strife” among them as to which one was to be the greatest with him in this position of rulership.—Mark 9:33-37; Luke 22:24

Jesus observed their wrong attitude—wrong because it was the attitude of the world. He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.”—Luke 22:25-27

Here Jesus acknowledged that from the standpoint of the world those who are served are esteemed more highly than those who serve, but that he was establishing a new viewpoint, the true viewpoint—namely, that those who serve are truly the greatest. Applying the lesson to his disciples, he made it plain that the greatest among them would be the one who served most faithfully. Adherence to this principle is one of the things that separates the true followers of Christ from the world and causes them to pursue a course contrary to the spirit of the world.

The erroneous viewpoint of the world with respect to the matter of servants is due to man’s fall into sin and selfishness. Created to be a king, the rulership

instinct has become over-dominant in the fallen human nature. Man's dominion was to be over the lower forms of earthly creation, but men endeavored to lord it over each other. Those who succeed in establishing themselves in high positions of authority are looked upon by many as the benefactors of the race.

This is not God's viewpoint. One of the outstanding characteristics of the Creator is that he is a servant of his creatures. He is, indeed, their most faithful servant. His greatness in the hearts of those who are loyal to him is not because he is their ruler, but rather that he serves them. For thousands of years he has continued to serve even those who have been in rebellion against his will. All the material blessings which make life possible upon the earth are enjoyed by fallen man because the Creator continues to be a servant.

When Jesus humbled himself in becoming a servant he was exemplifying the spirit of his Father. God's esteem for him was exalted as the Master humbled himself in the sight of men and served them. The secret of Jesus' ability thus to place himself in an ignoble position before men, was because he highly valued the esteem of his Father as a most priceless possession. He took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh in order that he might condemn sin in the flesh. One of the ways in which he condemned sin was when he spoke against the distorted viewpoint of what constitutes greatness. Along with giving his life as a ransom, he set an example of true godliness for all who turn from a state of rebellion against God to one of reconciliation with him.

It was truly at great cost that he set this example. It was not merely a case of cold indifference by the world, but hate and derision were active against the Master until his death was accomplished. As the apostle explains, he “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2:8) This was obedience by means of humility—that is, by demonstrating that to be a servant is, from the divine standpoint, to be esteemed as the highest form of obedience, and worthy of greatest exaltation.—vss. 9-11

Jesus suffered “even the death of the cross.” This was the death of criminals in Jesus’ day. It was a slow, painful death. From the Master’s standpoint, even worse than the physical pain was the ignominy attached to it. Here was the Son of God, who was daily the delight of his Father, who was sent into the world to be a great king, being crucified upon the charges of blasphemy and sedition. All the scheming ability of fallen human hearts and minds, aided by Satan, the fallen Lucifer, was employed to shame and deride him. Yet, in his deepest humiliation, Jesus was rendering a service to his accusers which yet will provide them with an opportunity for everlasting life. In a challenge of his greatness, the deriding chief priests, scribes and elders cried out, “He saved others; himself he cannot save.” (Matt. 27:41,42) How little they realized that by refusing to save himself in the manner they challenged him, Jesus was providing salvation for them, and for the entire fallen race. Truly, this was the highest form of service which could be rendered on fallen man’s behalf!

SERVICE FIRST—EXALTATION LATER

To Jesus, the bitterness of man's misunderstanding and disapproval was more than over-balanced by the sweetness of his Father's understanding and approval. Jesus humbled himself to serve fallen men, and they, because of their debased, selfish viewpoint, humiliated and killed him. His humiliation in the eyes of fallen flesh, however, was dignity and greatness to his Father. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:9-11

This is a fundamentally important lesson for all who profess to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, for the apostle introduces it by saying, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2:5) Lest we lose sight of the very simple and practical manner in which we should manifest the mind of Christ, he also explains, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."—vs. 4

The basis of "strife" among the disciples at the last Passover supper was the question of who would be greatest among them. Each one was looking to his own interests, disregarding the interests of others. This was the wrong way, the selfish way, Satan's way of seeking greatness. The ultimate, utter failure of this "self-first" way is well illustrated by the contrasting experiences of the prehuman Jesus [Greek: *Logos*] and Lucifer. *(Continued on page 36)*

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(Continued from page 31) Lucifer, looking to his own interests only, meditated a usurpation to be as God. His course will finally end in everlasting ignominy and eternal death. The *Logos* humbled himself, becoming lower in nature than originally created, and continued in the course of humility even unto the death of the cross. He is now exalted to the divine nature, and to a position at the right hand of the throne of God.—Phil. 2:6, *Emphatic Diaglott*; Heb. 12:2

The disciples had not yet learned this lesson. They wanted to be great, and knew of no other way of attaining greatness except at the expense of others. They did not understand, and could not, until enlightened by the Holy Spirit, that the true path to greatness and glory was that of service—considering the interests of others even before their own. This is a hard lesson for even the Spirit-begotten followers of Jesus today to learn, and even harder to practice.

Many are the cunning sophistries of selfish human reasoning, which attempts to convince New Creatures in Christ that the way of self-denial, service, and sacrifice is extreme and unnecessary. These reasonings tend to influence us both as individuals and as groups. We may, for example, try to convince ourselves and others that the time is now too short to be interested in others, that we should devote all the remaining days of our earthly pilgrimage to preparing ourselves for exaltation in the kingdom without regard to others. What subtle reasoning, and how it appeals to the viewpoint of the flesh. In reality, the entire life of Jesus was spent serving the interest of others, rather than in

preparation for exaltation. The climax of his life, fully spent for others, was reached upon the cross, and there he qualified for his present high position by giving himself a ransom for all—the ultimate act of his life of service.

The time can never be so short that it is too late to serve others. While Jesus was hanging on the cross, he delivered a message of hope to the dying thief, telling him of the hope of restitution in the restored paradise. Had Jesus, even at this last moment, decided that he would think only of his own interests, and turned a deaf ear to the inquiring thief, would it not have been contrary to the true spirit of service for which he came into the world? Even during those last hours upon the cross he served by forgetting self and thinking of others.

The matter of being a servant to others enters into and helps to make godlike every phase of a Christian's life. It helps to smooth out difficulties that may arise in our fellowship. Many problems that arise among brethren in Christ exist because one or more individuals in a congregation display too much self-interest in disregard of the interests of others. A brother, for example, may seemingly be imbued with the spirit of service, yet regard it only from the standpoint of being prominently before the brethren as a teacher. Such an attitude is not the true spirit of service, but what Jesus described as the spirit of the Gentiles who, by ruling over others, consider themselves to be benefactors. This is an attitude, furthermore, which can engender strife and rivalry among the people of God.

The spirit of true humility in service prompts one to sacrifice himself for the good of others, and

without respect to any present reward in the way of appreciation, praise, or positions of honor. It is a spirit in which one is willing to serve unnoticed and unknown, and if need be, even at the cost of misrepresentation and persecution. It is just such an example that we have in Jesus, who made himself of no reputation, but in due time was exalted, not by himself, but by his Heavenly Father. Let us “humble [ourselves] therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt [us] in due time!”—I Pet. 5:6 ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JANUARY 2—“Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”—I Corinthians 6:19,20 (Z. ’97-35 Hymn 191)

JANUARY 9—“Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?”—I Corinthians 4:7 (Z. ’03-430 Hymn 21)

JANUARY 16—“Instant in prayer.”—Romans 12:12 (Z. ’95-215 Hymn 298)

JANUARY 23—“Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.”—I Corinthians 7:24 (Z. ’99-155 Hymn 259)

JANUARY 30—“Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.”—Luke 18:1 (Z. ’95-214 Hymn 65A)

Nehemiah

“Then said I unto them, . . . Let us build up the wall of Jerusalem. . . . And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.”

—*Nehemiah 2:17,18*

as shown earlier in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision.—Dan. 2:31-33,38,39; 8:2-4,20

NEHEMIAH WAS THE SON

of Hachaliah, of the tribe of Judah, and a member of one of the prominent Hebrew families of the Babylonian captivity. The Medes and Persians had conquered Babylon, and now occupied the place as the second universal empire of the Gentile world,

Nehemiah occupied a confidential position with Artaxerxes, the Persian king, somewhat similar to the office held by Mordecai under King Ahasuerus, the father of Artaxerxes. His official title does not give the proper conception of the dignity of his position as “the king’s cupbearer.” (Neh. 1:11) In those days, kings needed to be continually guarded against poisons, which could be easily mingled without detection with their liquid refreshments. Consequently, the cupbearer was one whose loyalty was esteemed irreproachable. They became confidants of royalty and court advisors, and many times occupied the position of Minister of State.

As a confidential officer and counselor to the king, it was Nehemiah's duty to be acquainted with the mood and temper of the people, in order to be able to advise the king of any potential threat to the empire. To this end, it appears to have been his custom to mingle, unrecognized, with the people in the marketplaces, and especially among those of arriving caravans who could tell of conditions in other parts of the realm.

WORD FROM JERUSALEM

Here are Nehemiah's words as recorded in Nehemiah 1:2-4: "Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven."

From this account it seems apparent that young Nehemiah identified himself very closely with his people and with Jerusalem, even though he had never seen Israel's Holy City. All he knew about its former glory was from nostalgic accounts by his parents and others of the captivity. Yet he was deeply moved and distressed to hear of the devastation and degradation of Jerusalem, so much so that he wept. It is an evidence of his great faith in the God of his fathers, that in his distress he immediately turned to prayer.

NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER

Let us consider some aspects of this beautiful and effectual prayer: "I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments." (Neh. 1:5) The phrase translated "great and terrible" is better rendered "greatly to be revered." It was this proper concept of the supreme majesty of God which Nehemiah had come to appreciate. The rest of verse 5 is nearly a direct quote from Deuteronomy 7:9, and showed Nehemiah's familiarity with the Scriptures.

His prayer continues: "Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee." (Neh. 1:6) This reference to the ears and eyes of God is not at all presumptuous. It is entirely in harmony with one of the precious promises God has given his people: "The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." (Psa. 34:15) Solomon, in his prayer made at the dedication of the Temple, said, "Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be [attentive] unto the prayer that is made in this place."—II Chron. 6:40

RECALLING GOD'S PROMISE

Continuing his prayer, Nehemiah made a confession, not only for himself, but for all Israel. He said, "We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor

the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.” A confession of sin should be a part of every prayer. Then Nehemiah recalled in his prayer certain promises God had made to his people: “Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.”—Neh. 1:7-9

By these words Nehemiah was reminded that Israel’s God was a covenant-keeping God—one who will surely perform what he has promised. Nehemiah in faith claimed this promise. Then he concluded his prayer by specifically referring to the distressed inhabitants of devastated Jerusalem, who desired to return to God and prosper. He said, “Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. O LORD, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.”—vss. 10,11

NEHEMIAH’S PRAYER IS ANSWERED

The answer to Nehemiah’s prayer came suddenly and perhaps unexpectedly. The one referred to in his prayer as “this man” was Artaxerxes, the king of Persia. He had prepared a banquet for his nobles,

at which the queen also was present. We can imagine that the guests were all attired in their best garments, and were joyful to be in the king's presence. Nehemiah, as usual, was at the king's right hand, so that he might taste of the food and wine before it was served to the king. As he served the wine, the king noticed the contrast between Nehemiah and the happy guests. He saw a sadness he had never seen before.

Artaxerxes placed his hand on Nehemiah's arm. The king inquired, "Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart." "Then I was very sore afraid," Nehemiah wrote. (Neh. 2:2) He feared perhaps lest his sadness of heart be misconstrued by the king. It might indicate a spirit of discontent, and loss of interest in his duties—even disloyalty and treachery. In faith, however, Nehemiah quickly recovered his poise.

A COURAGEOUS REQUEST

Nehemiah then realized the king's inquiry might be God's doing, providing just the opportunity he sought. He said to the king, "Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven." (vss. 3,4) The exact words that he should speak to Artaxerxes now came readily to his lips, as though prompted from above. He continued, "I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send

me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time." (Neh. 2:5,6) Indeed, it was to be no short time that Nehemiah set. We know from Nehemiah 5:14 that he asked for, and was given, a twelve-year leave of absence from his duties on behalf of the king.

It took great courage for Nehemiah to make his request. The king could easily have considered the rebuilding of the walls and gates of Jerusalem an act of rebellion against his rule—a desire by Nehemiah to set up the nation of Israel as a separate and rival government, with himself as king. When Nehemiah asked for what he did, he laid his life on the line. However, God had answered his prayer—"Grant [me] mercy in the sight of this man."

Nehemiah had faith that his prayer would be answered, although he did not know just how or when. He had planned in advance what he would need for the success of his undertaking if the opportunity presented itself—knowing what he would request of the king. This is evident from the next two verses: "Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; And a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me."—vss. 7,8

Thus we see that Nehemiah had the necessary materials needed for the work laid out in his mind, showing his full faith that God would somehow direct the matter. This also indicates how closely he had previously questioned his kinsman as to the details of the damage which needed to be repaired. Such foresight, thoroughness, and wisdom were pleasing to God, and also impressed the king, who not only granted Nehemiah's requests, but gave him more than he had asked. Artaxerxes appointed him governor of Judah, and gave him a strong military escort of cavalry, befitting a governor.—Neh. 2:9;5:14

NEHEMIAH BEGINS HIS NEW WORK

A four-month journey brought them to Jerusalem, where Nehemiah was welcomed by the desolate city's inhabitants. Initially, he did not reveal the object of his coming, nor the fact that he had been appointed their governor. To them he was simply a visiting dignitary, a wealthy young Hebrew who had attained high office in the Persian government. This they could see from his military escort, and the richness of his caravan. He wanted to first make a personal appraisal of the situation.

After three days of mingling with the people, and becoming well acquainted with them and their tribal leaders, he secretly made an inspection of the ruined city. He waited until everyone was asleep, and then, on horseback, accompanied by a few trusted servants on foot, he toured the broken walls by moonlight. We read his own words in Nehemiah 2:12-16: "I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had

put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned. And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work."

This moonlight ride was a distressing experience for Nehemiah. If, in the past, he had wept when he had merely heard of the plight of Jerusalem, how overwhelmed he must now have been to see it with his own eyes. However, now he had firsthand knowledge of the facts. What he had seen confirmed the feasibility of his plan for rebuilding. The next morning he called together the elders and prominent representatives of the people and explained the real object of his coming. He showed them his authority from the king of Persia and told them God had heard his prayer, and how wonderfully he had prospered him in this undertaking.

Then he outlined to them a method whereby the repair work could begin immediately. We read his words in Nehemiah 2:17,18: "Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with

fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work."

How quickly Nehemiah was able to inspire the people. He had done so by the example of his own zeal. After the people said "Let us rise up and build," they went to work, and Nehemiah worked with them. He, no doubt, worked with his hands as hard as any of them, carrying stones and heavy timbers, and mixing mortar for the walls.

WHY REBUILD THE WALLS?

The rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem was considered very important, not merely as a symbol of the city's identity, but also for a very practical reason. With the city walls broken down, the enemies of the Israelites raided and robbed them regularly. They were at the mercy of every nomadic tribe that chanced to come that way. However, if the walls were repaired, it would be a different story. A Bible historian has written concerning the original walled city: "Jerusalem was an almost impregnable Gibraltar. The steep sides of the ravines on the east, the south, and the west provided bulwarks against siege. The north was the only direction from which a foe could attack the city, under the conditions of ancient warfare." No one knows how high the original walls were, or those rebuilt under the leadership of Nehemiah. In A.D. 1542, the leader of the Ottoman empire built the walls which exist today in Jerusalem. They range from twenty to sixty feet high. It

is believed by some that the original walls formed an irregular quadrangle, a little more than four miles in circuit.

In the third chapter of his book, Nehemiah lists fifty families as participating in the building work. This would mean an average of about four hundred and eighty linear feet of wall for each family to repair. It was Nehemiah's plan that each family would work on that portion of the wall nearest its home quarters. This was a wise plan. Each would be especially interested in having the wall strong in his own neighborhood. There would also be a certain degree of proper pride of workmanship—each family making their portion of the wall a monument to their skill and diligent effort.

Through many trials, difficulties and discouragements, the work progressed. Every adverse circumstance was overruled by God, and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, using the original stones, was completed in the incredibly short time of fifty-two days.—Neh. 6:15

LESSONS FROM NEHEMIAH

Let us now consider some of the valuable lessons to be learned from this account. Although Nehemiah was a very young man, he was held in high esteem by the king as possessing rare ability. This reminds us of Paul's words to Timothy: "Let no one think slightly of you because you are a young man; but in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, be an example for your fellow Christians to imitate." (I Tim. 4:12, *Weymouth*) The younger brothers and sisters of our fellowship should not be underestimated. It must not be presumed that they are immature in

Christ because of their age. This would be a serious mistake. We recall that Stephen, too, was a young man. However, in just a very short period of time he made his calling and election sure. The Lord held Stephen in such high esteem that he was accounted worthy of the honor of being the first to follow in his Master's footsteps even unto death as a martyr.

The fact that Nehemiah was so carefully reared in the faith of his fathers has a lesson for those of us who are the parents of young children. Just as Nehemiah was born in Persia and received his formal education in that heathen nation, our children are subject to the influences of this present evil world. However, these influences can be counteracted by godly parents. Nehemiah's intensity of feeling for the welfare of Jerusalem indicated that this had been accomplished in his case.

Similarly, it is our privilege and duty to teach our children the Truth, and to instill in them a love for the Lord and for his people. As Nehemiah was taught the Hebrew language by his parents, we can teach our children the "language" of the Scriptures. Who knows if God will draw them, and use them for exalted service, as he did with Nehemiah? Let us prepare them for the Master's possible use.

As Nehemiah was in Persia, but was not a Persian, the Christian is in the world, but not of the world. Jesus said of such, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:16) No matter what our positions in the world, whether high or low, our primary interest should be the welfare of spiritual Zion. We should have an intensity of feeling for the Gospel message and its service,

praying for opportunities, and being ready to act when the Lord opens the way.

THE ANTITYPICAL CITY WITH BROKEN WALLS

That which particularly distressed Nehemiah was the condition of the walls of Jerusalem. As previously quoted, while in Persia it was reported to him that the walls were broken down and the gates had been burned with fire; and hearing of this condition caused Nehemiah to sit down and weep. Without walls, Jerusalem was no city. It had no cohesion, no integrity, no honor. Enemies could invade, rob and plunder at will. It was a byword and a laughingstock. In Nehemiah's own words, the city and the nation were "a reproach."—Neh. 2:17

The Christian church, as established by our Lord and the apostles, is symbolically referred to as the city of God. Paul says, "Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:22,23) The primitive church could be likened unto a city that had walls. It had integrity and cohesion. It was held together by a strong faith in the Gospel of Christ, "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3) God's great plan of salvation was understood. As Isaiah 60:18 expressed it prophetically: "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." This "most holy faith" was its protection against the assaults of the Adversary. The walls of sound doctrine kept the church apart and safe.

However, soon after the apostles fell asleep, the walls of spiritual Jerusalem began to be broken down. Paul foresaw this, saying, “I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things.” (Acts 20:29,30) False doctrines and evil practices began to be introduced into the church. Paul’s prophecy of II Timothy 4:3,4 was also fulfilled: “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

As the great antichrist system developed, the walls of Zion were broken down more and more, until, during the Dark Ages, little remained of the original structure of sound doctrine. Even the great foundation stone of the ransom was lost amid the rubble. Then came the reformation, and some of the walls began to be rebuilt, in spite of great opposition. David’s prayer of Psalm 51:18, echoed by faithful Christians, began to be answered, “Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.” Truths long lost sight of, were gradually rediscovered, and placed in their proper settings. The work of rebuilding accelerated. Then Christ returned, and by the hand of a “faithful and wise servant” (Matt. 24:45), the structure of sound doctrine was rebuilt to completion. We also must not forget that Nehemiah used the old stones which had been knocked down to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He did not quarry new ones. It was the old, old story—“the faith . . . once delivered unto

the saints”—which was restored for the benefit of spiritual Israel.

There is another meaning to a city with broken-down walls. It is a more personal application, and is given in Proverbs 25:28: “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.” The “spirit” referred to here is the disposition of mind, the thoughts which control our actions. We must rule our thoughts and imaginations, and cast out anything unprofitable to us as New Creatures. Our warfare is in the mind. The New Creature is developed in the mind. The New Creature must use its fleshly mind as its instrument, making it a captive of the new will, the mind of Christ. This is concisely stated by the Apostle Paul: “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (II Cor. 10:5) This is not something which is easily accomplished, just as the repairing of stone walls is not easy.

Nehemiah was undoubtedly one of the faithful ones referred to prophetically who will be “princes in all the earth.” (Ps. 45:16) He fits the description which says that they “wrought righteousness, obtained promises, . . . escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, . . . (Of whom the world was not worthy),” and finally “obtained a good report through faith.” (Heb. 11:33-39) Nehemiah’s hope in these future promises of God, based on faith, was shown in his last recorded words—a fitting conclusion to our lesson: “Remember me, O my God, for good.”—Neh. 13:31 ■

Statistical Report

For the year ended September 30, 2013

THE DAWN IS pleased to provide this annual report to our readers. It is a pleasure to have continued the work in which so many have cooperated during the past year. During 2013, the Dawn was once again able, by the Lord's grace, to maintain its witness work as compared to the prior year, and increase its efforts in the areas of radio and Internet media. Total revenues during the fiscal year were 19% below budget. However, this was offset by total operating expenses, excluding contingencies, which were 20% below budget. In total, we had a net loss, excluding bequests, of (\$274,725) in 2013, compared to a 2012 loss of (\$215,438). The table on the next page shows receipts and expenditures for the 2013 fiscal year.

We have budgeted to increase witnessing expenditures in 2014 by an aggregate of 29%, excluding contingencies, but to limit to no more than \$400,000 any reduction in total cash and reserves during the year, including contingency spending. Further increases in witnessing expenditures, beyond the planned 29% increase noted above, will be considered if additional opportunities arise, and for which necessary resources are available.

The Truth which was first preached by our Lord, the apostles, and others in the Early Church is still being declared today. We rejoice that the Harvest

Income	Receipts	Expenditures
All revenue, excluding bequests	<u>\$210,094</u>	
Expenses		
Radio (domestic and foreign)		\$ 88,437
TV (includes spots and recordings)		14,301
Internet and Other Media		64,911
Pilgrim Service (domestic and foreign)		9,946
Other Foreign Support		10,712
Shipping/Mailing (domestic and foreign)		69,558
Outside Printing		26,331
Shop Operating Expense		35,114
Plant Operating Expense		121,864
House Operating Expense		<u>43,645</u>
Total Expenses		\$484,819
Less Income	<u>210,094</u>	
Net Operating Loss, excluding bequests	<u>\$(274,725)</u>	

work continues, and for the share we are privileged to have in that work. The “most holy faith . . . once delivered unto the saints” is proclaimed by faithful children of God who are willing to sacrifice time and energy witnessing it far and wide.

The Dawn utilizes various media to proclaim the Gospel message—including television, radio, 30-second commercial spots, recordings, the Internet, streaming electronic media, and a variety of magazine, almanac, and other printed media advertising and available publications. The value of these efforts is attested to by the fact that many responses continue to be received. The Dawn processed nearly 5,000 literature orders during the past year from these responses. Individually, these orders ranged from just one booklet in some cases to hundreds of pieces of literature in many others.

The Dawn continued to increase its overseas and foreign language witness work during the past year. *The Dawn* magazine is now available in ten languages. Other literature offerings of various kinds are now available in thirteen languages in addition to English. We expect to have literature available in two additional languages soon—Croatian and Ukrainian. The Dawn greatly appreciates all those who provide assistance with the translation work into these various languages.

The Dawn recorded lecture service and Dawn video service continue their work, and the Dawn web page brings in many requests for literature from around the world. *Hope* booklets continue to be provided to funeral directors in the United States, as well as to individual ecclesias, bringing a message of comfort to those who have lost their loved ones in death. The *Dawn Devotional Radio* Internet radio station at Live365 continues to provide witnessing and Truth programs 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, around the world. Since its launch in November 2006, the station has had thousands of hours of listenership, with each listener tuning in for an average of just under one hour per occasion.

In 2013, the Dawn continued its Internet keyword advertising on Google and Microsoft for 35 booklets in English and 12 booklets in Spanish. During the past year, the number of “clicks” to these keywords, which brings the user to the Dawn’s ad page for viewing, was 208,878 for English and 151,714 for Spanish. Three additional English booklets have just been added, bringing this total to 38. In 2013, booklets in two additional languages—5 in French and 2 in German—were added to our Internet keyword

advertising for the first time. The number of “clicks” to these keywords was 20,055 for French and 4,339 for German (begun in May 2013). Additional booklet offerings in Spanish, French, and German are planned for 2014 as additional translation work is completed.

Orders continue to come in for the newly reprinted *Daily Heavenly Manna and Songs in the Night* book, which was completed in 2012. Each day’s “Manna,” “Songs in the Night,” and lined area for recording birthdays and other special occasions, appear on facing pages throughout, so that the day’s morning and evening readings are conveniently located together. These match the format and style of the library edition of six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures*, including *Tabernacle Shadows*, completed in 2011. All of these are available at nominal prices.

In 2014, the Dawn plans to produce two new books, titled *The Search for God’s People* and *Searching the Scriptures*. In addition, two existing booklets—*The Light of the World* and *The Future of Israel and the World*—are being reprinted. They will both have new covers and larger, more readable, type. Other existing booklets will be reprinted in the same fashion as the need arises and manpower resources are available.

Various improvements were made at the Dawn’s facilities during the past year. At the Dawn Home, a number of large trees were either trimmed or removed for safety reasons during the spring of 2013. At the Dawn Plant, a new furnace was installed in September in order to more adequately heat the shop and shipping areas.

As we begin 2014, the Dawn is excited to be embarking on two new major projects. One will be visible to our readers and interested public—the other will be “behind the scenes.” Behind the scenes, computer hardware and software used to produce all English and foreign language literature, including *The Dawn* magazine, is being upgraded. This is needed so that all users, regardless of where located, are using the most current version of InDesign, the publishing software used for all literature produced in-house. This will help create many efficiencies, and allow all users to electronically “communicate” with each other as literature is produced. It will also allow for greater consistency in the appearance of literature—size, typeface, and even content.

The other major project which we are excited to announce is that beginning in February 2014, the Dawn will begin publishing a digital edition of *The Dawn* magazine. Features of the “Digital Dawn” will include:

- Subscribers receive their digital edition via an e-mail, containing a link to open the latest digital edition
 - Viewable, printable, savable on computers
 - Viewable on mobile devices (tablets and smartphones)
 - Simply clicking on the title of literature listed in the digital edition instantly displays the full text of the literature.
 - Direct links to *Bible Answers* video and *Frank & Ernest* audio programs will be included each month
 - The e-mail received by the subscriber contains a “Forward to a Friend” button, allowing subscribers to forward that month’s digital issue to friends

As an introductory offer, a free 3-month subscription to the *Digital Dawn* will be available, and an annual subscription will be offered at a nominal cost.

It is important to note that the *Digital Dawn* will not in any way take the place of the printed *Dawn* magazine which you are used to receiving each month. However, it will allow the magazine and its many related links to be made available to a whole new audience of readers in electronic format—a format which is becoming increasingly used, and even preferred, among the public in recent years. It will also provide a way of promoting *The Dawn* magazine to thousands of new readers who have provided their e-mail contact information to us over a period of the last several years. In short, the *Digital Dawn* will have the potential, over time, of attracting tens of thousands of new readers and interested public by a means which is becoming more and more popular all the time.

In summary, we are thankful for the many willing hands and hearts of brethren throughout the world which have assisted directly and indirectly with the work of the Dawn during the past year. Without this help, the work could not continue. Let us rejoice in whatever privilege of service our Heavenly Father may entrust to us, individually and collectively. We continue to ask for your prayers on behalf of the work of the Dawn, as we continue to look for the Lord's guidance, and as daily we seek to proclaim the Gospel message throughout the earth in the many ways, and by the various methods, that God's providence has made available. ■

General Convention Bulletin

July 19-24, 2014

THE 2014 GENERAL CONVENTION returns once again to the facilities of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Air conditioned hotel-like rooms with private bathrooms in the Living-Learning Center (LLC), family-style air conditioned apartments with private bathrooms (APTS), and housing with two rooms sharing one bathroom (not air conditioned) in other facilities will be available on campus. A child may sleep on a bedroom floor at no charge in his own sleeping bag if both beds are occupied.

All room and meal costs for children 12 years old or younger will be paid by the convention. In addition, 100% of the cost of those from ages 13 through 17 will be refunded if the young person attends at least 75% of the studies for his or her age group. This subsidy does not cover meals paid in cash at the door.

The convention theme text is Colossians 1:10: "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Additionally, a special discourse will consider the subject "In your patience possess ye your souls" (Luke 21:19); dialogues will be held on various aspects of truth which relate to 1914 and 2014, one hundred years

later; three short talks will be presented on “the path of life, . . . fulness of joy, . . . pleasures for evermore” (Ps. 16:11); and a discussion will take place on the topic “Ordering Harvest Prophecies.”

A complete pricing table and registration form is provided for your convenience immediately following this announcement. Beginning this year, there will be a \$10 charge per person each way for taking the airport shuttle.

We encourage you to register early. Advance payment is not required. We hope that you will begin to make plans now to attend this year’s General Convention. ■

	Ages	18 & up	***13-17
Breakfast		\$7.00	\$6.00
Lunch		9.00	8.00
Dinner		12.00	11.00
Total, three meals		\$28.00	\$25.00
Lodging (per night)			
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)		\$35.00	\$30.00
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)		\$30.00	\$28.00
**single occ (LLC)		\$65.00	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)		\$35.00	n/a
PKG: 7 nights, 18 meals			
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)		\$360*	\$325*
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)		\$230*	\$195*
**single occ (LLC)		\$520*	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)		\$270*	n/a
If no breakfasts, deduct—*\$35 **Air conditioned ***100% of these costs will be refunded if the young person attends 75% of the studies for his/her age group			

General Convention Registration

330 Jasmine Road—Casselberry, FL 32707

E-mail: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com (407) 670-4189

	Brkfst	Lunch	Dinner	Bed
Friday, July 18, 2014				
Saturday, 19th				
Sunday, 20th				
Monday, 21st				
Tuesday, 22nd				
Wednesday, 23rd				
Thursday, 24th				

Check for package: 7 nights, all 18 meals ☐
or 7 nights, 12 meals (no breakfasts) ☐

Check: ☐ private bath **or** ☐ shared bath
☐ double occupancy ☐ single occupancy
☐ interested in APTS

Names and ecclesia name (age if under 18)

Address:

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

H. Montague

Phoenix, AZ January 18-20

T. Ruggirello

Los Angeles, CA January 26

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 Vera Blicharz, Detroit, MI—December 9.
Age, 85

Sister Ellen Allers Freeman, Boise, ID—December 9.
Age, 51

*“When this corruptible shall have put on
incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on
immortality, then shall be brought to pass
the saying that is written,
Death is swallowed up in victory.”*

*“Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

—I Corinthians 15:54,57

2014 MEMORIAL SUPPER DATE

The proper time for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after 6:00 P.M. on Sunday, April 13, 2014.

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.

PHOENIX CONVENTION, January 18-20—LaQuinta Inn Phoenix North, 2510 W. Greenway Road, Phoenix, AZ 85023. For room reservations, contact the hotel. Phone: (866) 527-1498. Specify “Phoenix Bible Students” for special rate. Other information, contact J. Zardja. Phone: (602) 363-2612

LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, January 26—Burbank Auditorium, 406 Irving Drive, Burbank, CA 91605. Contact J. Wojcik. Phone: (818) 438-1086 or E-mail: jrbwojcik@yahoo.com

SACRAMENTO CONVENTION, February 14-16—Holiday Inn Express, 2224 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821. Contact J. Freer, 8012 Vintage Way, Fair Oaks, CA 95628. Phone: (916) 879-4655

FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 1-3—Howard Johnson Hotel, 230 West State Road 436, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714. For room reservations, contact the hotel. Phone: (407) 862-4455. Specify “Florida Bible Students” for special rates, which expire on February 17, 2014. Other information, contact S. Jeuck. Phone: (407) 834-7592 or E-mail: sjeuck@aol.com

NEW YORK SPRING CONVENTION, March 23—Doubletree Hotel Mahwah, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NJ. Phone: (201) 529-5880. Contact A. Williams. Phone: (718) 261-3053 or E-mail: austin@osnetinc.com

GREATER NEW LONDON PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, March 30—East Lyme Community Center, 37 Society Road, East Lyme, CT. Contact V. Grillo. Phone: (860) 823-7099 or E-mail: millennialview@sbcglobal.net

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 5,6—Quality Inn-Troy, 2537 Rochester Court, Troy, MI 48083. Hotel Reservation, phone (248) 689-7500. Specify “Detroit Bible Students” for special rate. Contact P. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588 or E-mail: nemeshfp@aol.com

ALBUQUERQUE CONVENTION, April 18-20—Sheraton Albuquerque Airport Hotel, 2910 Yale Blvd. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. Group subsidized rate is \$69.00/room per night, up to four people in a room. This rate will apply if reservation is made by the Convention Secretary, S. Thomassen. Phone: (505) 268-8170 or E-mail: srbt@juno.com

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

*Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tender care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use Thy fold prepare.*

*We are Thine, do Thou befriend us,
Be the guardian of our way,
Keep Thy flock, from foes defend us,
Let us never go astray.*

*Fully let us have Thy favor,
Fully we would do Thy will;
Blessed Lord and only Savior,
With Thy love and likeness fill.*

*Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Thou hast loved us, love us still;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Thou has loved us, love us still.*

—*Hymns of Dawn*