

The Dawn

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HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

GOD AND CREATION SERIES, Part 10

Redeemer and Redemption

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

—John 1:14

NO DISCUSSION OF God's promised deliverance of his human creatures from sin and death would be complete without taking into consideration the one chosen to be the Redeemer and Deliverer. Who is this great one, and from whence did he come? Why was he above all others, qualified to be the Savior of a condemned and dying race? The Bible alone furnishes us with the answers to the questions, and if we do not attempt to be wise above that which is written, we will find the testimony of the Bible on this subject marvelously harmonious and satisfying.

In our text the Apostle John tells us about Jesus, referring to him as the "Word" (Greek, **Logos**). In verse 1 of this opening chapter of John's Gospel we are informed that the "Word", the **Logos**, was with God "in the beginning," and that he was a god—a mighty one. Although the English translation does not show it, the Greek text reveals a distinction between "the" God—the great Jehovah of the Old Testament—and the **Logos** who is indicated to be "a" god. If this basic fact of truth is ignored we are at once confronted with the incongruous idea that the Father and the Son are one in person, which in turn would mean that much in the life and teachings of Jesus was merely farcical. His prayers, for example, would be to himself and not to his Heavenly Father, for he would be his own Father. Actually, the thought is too inharmonious for serious consideration.

The name **Logos** means 'Word', or 'mouthpiece'—in a broader sense, 'one who speaks for, or represents, another'. This was the relationship of the **Logos**, the Son of God, to his Father, the Creator. John explains that the **Logos** was in the beginning with God. In Revelation 3:14 Jesus is referred to as "the beginning of the creation of God." John informs us that "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:3) Paul confirms this in Colossians 1:15-17, where we read concerning Jesus, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."

Since the **Logos** was the beginning of the creation of God, it is obvious that he is excepted in the statement that 'all things' were made by him. The harmony of this combined testimony is seen when we recognize that the **Logos**, being the 'beginning' of God's creation, was also his only exclusive creation, the **Logos** being his Father's agent or representative in all the remaining works of creation. This illuminates the expression in Genesis 1:26, "Let US make man in OUR image." This is evidently the Father addressing his Son, the **Logos**, giving him directions concerning the creation of man.

Jesus, then, had a prehuman existence. This is indicated in Micah 5:2, in a prophecy showing that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, and concerning him it adds, "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting"—that is, from the beginning, when there existed only his Father and the **Logos**. Jesus himself declared, "I came down from heaven." And again, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven." (John 6:38,51) To the Pharisees Jesus said, "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." (John 8:42) Jesus also said, "Before Abraham was, I am," that is, I existed.—John 8:58

"Made Flesh"

Our text states that the **Logos**, the only begotten of the Father, was made flesh. The Apostle Paul says, "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor." (II Cor. 8:9) John observes that Jesus was "full of grace and truth," and Paul calls our attention to the glorious virtue of humility possessed by Jesus, saying, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped [*Revised Standard Version*], but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."—John 1: 14; Phil. 2:5-7

Paul adds, "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:8) David testified that man was made a "little lower than the angels," and Paul writes concerning Jesus that he "was made a little lower than the angels [made flesh, that is] for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."—Ps. 8:5; Heb. 2:9

Paul wrote, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (I Tim. 2:5,6) The word ransom used here by Paul means a 'corresponding price'. This gives meaning to the great emphasis which the Bible places on the fact that the **Logos** was 'made flesh'. It was a fleshly being, Adam, whose transgression of the divine law brought death upon himself and upon his offspring, and only another fleshly being could be a corresponding price in death for Adam.

But more than this, Adam was a perfect man when he sinned, and therefore none of his imperfect offspring could be a corresponding price for him. Speaking of the members of the fallen and dying race, the psalmist wrote, "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Ps. 49:7) In order for Adam and his children to be redeemed from death, a perfect man would have

to be provided and one who would be willing to lay down his life in sacrifice for this purpose. The Heavenly Father, in his love, made this provision, for he “so loved the world” that he gave his “only begotten Son,” and the Son was humbly “obedient unto death,” giving himself a “ransom for all.”—John 3:16; Phil 2:8

Not An Assumed Body

Our text emphasizes that Jesus was ‘made flesh’. The point here is that he did not merely assume a body of flesh. His body was developed as all human bodies are. God had previously sent angels to perform various missions and while in some instances they materialized as humans, it was different with the **Logos**. Concerning him Paul wrote, “When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.”—Gal. 4:4

“Holy, Harmless, Undeified”

God, in his limitless power and infinite wisdom could have created a perfect man to redeem Adam, even as he originally created Adam. But he chose not to do this. God also could have created a wife for Adam without removing a part of Adam’s body. Adam, knowing the circumstances under which Eve was created, said of her, “This is now one of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” (Gen. 2:23) Concerning Jesus we read, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” (Heb. 2:14) And again, “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.”—Rom. 8: 3

Just as God, in creating Eve, designed the vital relationship that should exist between her and Adam, in his wisdom also decreed that the one who was to redeem the children of men should likewise become a vital partaker of sinful flesh which he came to redeem. That God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh does not mean, however, that Jesus was himself sinful. He proceeded forth and came from God. His human organism was received from his mother, but in the

divine arrangements he did not partake of her imperfections. Thus it could be said of him that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."—Heb. 7:26

How the life of the **Logos** was transferred to the womb of Mary to be born as a babe in Bethlehem is beyond human comprehension. There is much in the outworking of the divine purposes which we can neither explain nor understand. Life itself is a mystery to us. The begetting and birth of a child in a so-called natural way is a miracle so far as we are concerned. But the Creator of all life and its functions can easily change the normal procedure of nature, because he designed them in the first place. In order to appreciate God's plan of salvation through Jesus it is necessary to believe that he was raised from the dead by the power of the Creator, but we cannot explain how it was done, only that it was a miracle, even as his being 'made flesh' by being born of a human mother was a miracle.

Nor is it necessary to believe that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was herself free from Adamic imperfection. The doctrine of the 'immaculate conception' of the mother of Jesus is not taught in the Bible. The virgin birth of Jesus *is* taught, which means that by the power of God's Spirit, and without the necessity of a human father, the life of the **Logos**, through Mary, was transferred to the human plane, and, as the Apostle Paul writes, was "found in fashion as a man," but free from any taint of sin because decreed so by the Creator.—Phil. 2:8

Offered In Sacrifice

When Jesus was thirty years of age he entered upon the ministry for which his Heavenly Father had sent him to earth. David penned a prophecy descriptive of Jesus' spirit of devotion at this time, which reads, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."—Ps. 40:69

Under the great lawgiver, Moses, and in connection with the services of Israel's Tabernacle, certain animal sacrifices were required. These could not actually take away sin. In Hebrews 10:1 we read, "The Law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." Jesus, and the sacrifice he was to offer instead of the typical bullock, was one of the 'good things' foreshadowed by the Tabernacle and its services.

Jesus himself knew this. Realizing that the animal sacrifices under the Law did not take away sin, but that they foreshadowed a sacrifice which he had come to earth to make, gladly said, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of me [that is, as the Old Testament foreshadowed and foretold]. I delight to do thy will, O my God." These words describe Jesus' attitude of consecration to his Heavenly Father when he presented himself to John at Jordan to be baptized.

John the Baptist at first declined to baptize Jesus, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee." (Matt. 3:14) John recognized the purity of Jesus, and said, "He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." (John 1: 27) In John 1:29 we read, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The title, "Lamb of God," as applied to Jesus, is most significant. In Eden God had said that there would come a "seed" which would "bruise" the serpent's "head." Probably Eve supposed that this would be one of her children, perhaps her firstborn, for when Cain was born she said, "I have gotten a man from the LORD." (Gen. 4:1) Then Abel was born. In due course the two men brought sacrifices to the LORD. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground," and Abel "brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering." (Gen.

4:3,4) In Hebrews 11:4 we read, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." How Abel knew that a lamb for sacrifice would be more excellent we may not understand, but evidently the LORD's hand was in the matter, and we can see a connection between this and the promised 'seed'.

We have noted in a previous article that the promise of the seed was in reality an assurance of deliverance from sin and death for Adam and his race. But sin had brought God's just condemnation upon humanity, and for this penalty to be set aside, sin must be remitted. So, having indicated his purpose to provide deliverance, the LORD also began to point forward to the method by which it would be accomplished—that it would be by a flesh and blood sacrifice. In Hebrews 9:22 we are informed that "without shedding of blood" there can be no remission of sin.

When God made promise to Abraham that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed, the patriarch doubtless believed that Isaac would be that seed of blessing. But when Isaac was grown to manhood, God directed his father to offer him in sacrifice. Abraham proceeded to obey, and had Isaac bound on an altar and his knife raised to slay him when an angel intervened, directing him to use a ram, a male lamb, which he would find in the bushes nearby as a substitute for Isaac. In this way the LORD first tells us that before all the families of the earth could be blessed through a seed, a loving father must give up in sacrifice his beloved son. In reality it is the Heavenly Father who does this, giving his only begotten Son, that through his sacrifice the world might live. The lamb being used as a substitute for Isaac indicates that the beloved Son of God would become known as the Lamb of God, which, as John the Baptist announced, 'taketh away the sin of the world'.

In Isaiah, chapter 53; we are presented with a stirring account of the suffering and death of Jesus. In verse 1 he is referred to as the "Arm" of the LORD. Verse 10 of the preceding chapter also refers to Jesus as the Arm of the

LORD. This verse reads, "The LORD hath made bare his holy Arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." What a gloriously reassuring promise this is! The thought of making bare this holy Arm suggests that his glory and saving power will be revealed worldwide. As the promise states, "All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

But with the opening of the next chapter the question is raised, "To whom is the Arm of the LORD revealed?" Instead of being revealed in his glory and saving power "he is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him. . . . We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." (vss. 3,4) Continuing the description of Jesus' rejection, affliction, and death, verse 7 reads, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."

Thus was foretold that Jehovah's Arm, who was to bring deliverance and salvation to 'all the ends of the earth' must first of all be led as a Lamb to the slaughter. So it was that when John the Baptist announced the presence of Jesus he said, "Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:29), this is the one foretold in the Old Testament by both type and prophecy. He is the one who will take away the sin of the world and open the way for all mankind to return to health and life.

Jesus Gives His Flesh

Through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit Jesus knew that he was to give his flesh, his humanity, for the life of the world, and said so. John 6:51 reads, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: . . . the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." It was for this purpose that Jesus was "made flesh," born into the world as a perfect human being. In Matthew 20:28 we read, "The Son of man came not [into the world] to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

In the text last quoted the title "Son of man," is used. This title does not imply that Jesus was the son of Joseph, but the "Son of man" in the sense that he is the seed of David, and of the seed of Abraham. He was also the seed of Adam, through Mary his mother, hence, the seed of the woman. (Gen. 3:15) As we continue our examination of Jesus and his high position in the plan of salvation we will find that many titles are applied to him, and that each of these calls attention to a particular aspect of his work as the Redeemer and Deliverer of the sin-cursed and dying race. Thus the title, Son of Man, identifies his humiliation in taking on the form of a servant, and 'being found in fashion as a man'.

And this title will ever belong to Jesus, although he gave his flesh, his humanity, in sacrifice. It is a title of high honor and a perpetual reminder of his great victory in humbling himself in obedience to all the Heavenly Father's arrangements for him, including his death, even the death of the cross. And this was indeed a glorious victory. We read, "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." (Heb. 12:3) This contradiction of sinners against Jesus is manifested more or less throughout the entire course of his faithful ministry, but is particularly apparent at the close, when he was tried, condemned, and crucified.

He was the glorious Son of God, but charged with blasphemy because he acknowledged this fact. He was born to be the greatest of all kings, but in irony a crown of thorns was cruelly placed upon his head. He was spat upon, and beaten. He was nailed to a cross over which was placed the inscription, "This is Jesus the king of the Jews." While hanging there in agony his enemies shouted, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." (Matt. 27:37,40) And again, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." (vs. 42) How little did they realize that by refusing to save himself he was providing salvation for them, and for all the families of the earth.

So Jesus died. On the cross, and quoting from Psalm 22, Jesus cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken

me?" (Ps. 22:1; Matt. 27:46) In death Jesus took the sinner's place. What an agonizingly painful moment this must have been for Jesus! He drew his last breath amid jeerings and contradictions of his enemies.

But despite this, Jesus' faith and confidence rallied, and his dying words were, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit [my life]." The record is that having said this, "he gave up the ghost [his breath]." (Luke 23:46) While the English translation of this text is faulty, causing the meaning to be ambiguous, the thought simply is that Jesus surrendered his life, placing himself entirely in the hands of his Heavenly Father. Jesus knew he had been promised a resurrection from the dead, and he was willing to trust his Father to fulfill his promises.

While hanging on the cross Jesus also used the expression, "It is finished." (John 19:30) Jesus knew that the purpose of his having been made flesh had been served. Since the death of his humanity was now a certainty, he could very well feel that he had given his flesh for the life of the world, even as he had previously said he would. It was by this willing sacrifice of his perfect humanity that he became "the propitiation, the satisfaction, of our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—I John 2:2

"In this," wrote John, "was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (I John 4:9,10) Jesus' love was equally manifested in this sacrifice for sins, because he gladly acquiesced in his Father's plan for him. "I and my Father are one," he affirmed. (John 10:30) When Philip requested, "Lord, show us the Father," Jesus replied, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."—John 14:8,9

Jesus did not mean by these statements that he and his Father were one in person. It was his way of emphasizing his complete oneness with his Father's plans and purposes. The words he spoke, the works he did, were not his own, but the

Father's. No one can actually see the great Creator of the universe, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, our Heavenly Father, and live. Just as the perfect Adam had been created in the image of God, so the perfect man Jesus was in the divine image; and besides, so fully devoted to his God that his every word and act were just what God would have said and done.

Therefore, those who saw Jesus, and were acquainted with his words and ways, saw the characteristics of the Heavenly Father manifested in him. Thus they saw the Father in the only sense it is possible for a human to see him. That Jesus' oneness with his Father was merely a oneness of purpose is revealed in his prayer when he asked his Father that his followers be made one with him, even as they were one. Notice the similarity of language, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."—John 17:21

Love and Justice

As we have seen, it was divine love that provided a way for setting aside the just penalty for sin, which was death. Worldly wisdom is prone to take a wrong view of this. It is claimed that a loving God would not demand the bloody sacrifice of his Son. In their opposition to the Bible's teachings on the subject of redemption through the blood of Jesus, some insist that a loving God overlooks sin, and all that is necessary to obtain divine forgiveness is to repent of sin and seek God's forgiveness.

But think where such a liberal viewpoint leads! We believe all will agree that God has a right to establish laws for governing his creatures. It was proper that he should expect Adam to obey his law. It was proper also that a penalty be attached to disobedience. But after having given Adam his law, and warning him as to the penalty for disobedience, what would have resulted had the Creator not enforced the penalty? If, after having disobeyed, our first parents would simply have said to God, We are sorry, please forgive us, and forgiveness had been granted, how much dependence could they there-

after have put in their Creator? Both men and angels soon would have realized that the infraction of divine law was of little consequence, and there would have been chaos and rebellion throughout the universe. Besides, if the foretold punishment for sin was not imposed, how would anyone know that God's promises of blessing would be fulfilled?

The penalty for sin was not merely a few years of confinement in a prison, or of isolation from friends. Such a penalty could be paid by the individual involved and then he could justly go free. But, the penalty for sin was death—not merely dying, but death, eternal death. The only way anyone could pay that penalty himself was to remain dead forever. If he were ever to be released from the great prisonhouse of death, the penalty would have to be paid by another. And this was the loving arrangement the Creator made through Jesus.

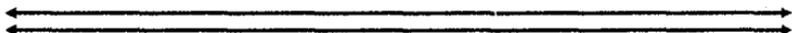
Herein both the justice and love of God are manifested. His justice could not free the sinner from death; so at great cost to himself, he gave his Son to be the Redeemer. No one can say that God changed his mind about the penalty for sin. All that could be said is that he had such great love for his human creatures he was willing to give the dearest treasure of his heart as a payment of the penalty which his wisdom decreed was just. No wonder the Bible says that "God is love."—I John 4:8

And, as we have seen, God's beloved Son willingly and gladly cooperated with the Father in this plan of redemption, at great cost to himself. And why should we not adore and worship the Son for his great sacrifice? Today, the world over, one who rescues another from death through an act of heroism, risking his own life, is properly honored. From this standpoint, Jesus was the greatest hero of all time. He did not merely risk his life, but gave his life, and under the most trying circumstances.

We might imagine a brave man entering into a burning building to rescue a friend, with the crowds on the street shouting their approval and their words of encouragement.

But it was not so with Jesus. Even his few friends thought he was making a mistake by surrendering to his enemies and allowing them to crucify him. And his enemies only added to his hardships with their sarcasm, their jeers, their contradiction and stripes. But he was supported until the end by his Heavenly Father's hand! What a hero Jesus was to die under such circumstances that all mankind might have an opportunity to live!

What modernist can properly say that this was anything else than an outstanding manifestation of divine love on behalf of a sin-cursed and dying race? And think not that the Heavenly Father did not himself suffer while Jesus was thus painfully laying down his life! He did suffer, and thus together our Heavenly Father and his beloved Son, who was made flesh for the suffering of death, demonstrated their great love for those of whom the Father spoke, when to his Son, the **Logos**, he said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Gen. 1:26) Together they had created man, and now, through the death of Jesus, their love had provided for release from the just penalty of death which had come upon him, when the Creator said, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—Gen. 3:19 ■



Art thou filled with eager longing for the night to pass away?
Art thou weary of the watching for the dawning of the day?
Have faith in God! He is our stay; soon, soon, will come the



perfect day!

Art thou hoping, waiting, praying for the presence of the LORD? Art thou waiting for the kingdom and the glorious reward? Have faith in God! Our King is here, and soon his glory will appear!

The Sum of All Grace

"The greatest of these is love."

—1 Corinthians 13:13

Why is the quality of love made so prominent in the Word of God? Because it is the first thing, the most important thing, the principle thing. It is the fulfilling of God's law; and indeed, the sacrificial love enjoined upon God's saints of this age goes even beyond the requirements of the perfect law.

But why is love put first? It is because no other quality of character is so lovely, so beautiful, so productive of happiness and joy, so great a blessing to all upon whom it operates. It is the very essence of God's character. **GOD IS LOVE!**

This quality particularly represents his personality. While God is all-just, all-powerful, all-wise, we do not say that God is Justice, or that God is Power, or that God is Wisdom—but that God is Love.

He uses his great power only as love dictates and approves. He uses his justice only in fullest harmony with his glorious attribute of love. Love is the mainspring of all his doings. Whoever, therefore, would be godlike must be loving, must have love as the dominating quality of his character and life.

Love and righteousness are inseparable. Love is to continue to all eternity, and only those who become the active embodiment of this gracious quality of character will live eternally.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 5

Good News for Us

KEY VERSE: *“The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” – Luke 3:4*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Luke 3:2-4, 7-17*

BY HEREDITY JOHN the Baptist was of the priestly tribe of Israel. His father, Zacharias, was himself a priest, of the family of Abla, or Abijah. Elisabeth, his mother, was of the daughters of Aaron. John's birth was by the special overruling of God, which indicates the importance of the mission he was to perform. When John was eight days old he was duly presented at the Temple and circumcised, but after that we hear nothing of his activities until he offered himself to Israel as a servant of the LORD.

The chief ministry of John the Baptist was to prepare the people of Israel to receive their Messiah, who was Jesus. This mission had been prophesied concerning him. John preached a message of repentance to Israel, described in a prophecy of

Malachi as the turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. Malachi refers to John as “Elijah.” (Mal. 3:1; 4:5) Evidently the reason this title is ascribed to him is because the Prophet Elijah also conducted a work of reformation in Israel.

However, we are not to understand that John the Baptist completely fulfilled this prophecy, although his ministry was conducted in keeping with it. It is true that John's ministry led to the repentance of many in Israel, but the nation as a whole was not prepared to receive the Messiah. Nationally, John's ministry was not successful. The proof of this is that when Jesus presented himself to the nation of Israel as king and Messiah, he was rejected. Jesus explained

that to as many as received John the Baptist, implying a repentance and turning to God under the influence of his ministry, to them he was the foretold Elijah. (Matt. 17:12) This meant that John had accomplished an Elijah work of repentance and reformation in their lives.

Malachi mentions an alternative fulfillment which **will** be successful. It speaks of a worldwide reform which will be carried on during the Millennial Age by the greater antitypical Elijah, the Christ, who **shall** turn the hearts of the children to the fathers, and the fathers to the children. (Mal. 4:6) Jesus referred to this aspect of the Elijah type when he told his disciples that "the Elijah shall first come and restore all things." —Matt. 17:11

John was the last of the prophets. One of his most significant prophecies was concerning the destruction of the Jewish nation. In this prophecy the repentant and faithful ones of Israel are likened to 'wheat'. The unrepentant are symbolized by 'chaff', indicating that which

was of no immediate value to the LORD.

John knew that he was to be supplanted by Jesus, whose presence he announced. He explained to his disciples that Jesus must increase, while he would decrease. John knew that he was not to become one of the disciples of Jesus and share in the blessings of the new dispensation. He referred to Jesus as the Bridegroom, and himself as the 'friend' of the bridegroom, and expressed his joy over this friendship.

John was imprisoned for his rebuke of Herod. While languishing in prison he began to wonder if, after all, Jesus truly was the Messiah. He sent messengers to Jesus to ask him about it, and Jesus' reply was simply that he should be reminded of the mighty works he was performing, and that the poor were having the Gospel preached to them. The prophets of Israel had foretold that the Messiah would do all these things, particularly during his glorious kingdom here upon the earth, for which we daily pray. ■

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 12

Saying 'Yes' to God

KEY VERSE: *"Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the LORD; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her."*—Luke 1:38

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Luke 1:26-38*

THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO Mary by an angel that she was to be mother of the long-promised Messiah of Israel must have been a very wonderful experience. The account states that when she saw the angel, "she was troubled [excited] at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be." (Luke 1:29) But the angel assured her, stating that she should call her son Jesus, and said, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the LORD God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (vss. 32,33) Then he said to her, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee; and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing

which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."—vs. 35

The angel's explanation of the unusual circumstances of Jesus' impending birth could well have brought misgivings to Mary as to how his birth would appear to her family and friends, and to the Jews in general. But she obviously had great confidence that the LORD would take care of the matter, and quickly gave her consent, "Be it unto me according to thy word."

After meeting with the angel, Mary visited her cousin, Elisabeth, who was to be the mother of John the Baptist, who indicated that it was because of Mary's faith that this blessing came to her. She said: "Blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the LORD." (vs. 45) Mary, in expressing her

joy, also indicated that she had an accurate knowledge of the prophecies concerning the lineage of him who was to be the king over Israel.

Mary's statement was, "He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. . . . He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever."—Luke 1:48-55

God had promised David that "thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever." (II Sam. 7:16) When he died the promise passed to Solomon and the LORD spoke to him saying that if he would be obedient as was his father David, the kingdom and the lineage would pass through him. (I Kings 9:4,5) But, on the other hand, if he was unfaithful, he would be cast off as far as the promise was concerned. We know that,

despite a good beginning, Solomon was unfaithful, and the kingdom was wrested from him. (I Kings 11:11) And so the lineage passed through Nathan rather than Solomon. God fulfilled his promise and the line of succession had come through the more faithful line, of Nathan, of which Mary was the heir. (See the genealogy given in Luke 3:23-38, especially verse 31.)

On the day the Savior was born, the angels made their announcement of this event. (Luke 2:10-14) Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, in his prophecy in Luke 1:66-75, tells why the news of Jesus' birth was tidings of great joy to all people. We quote in part from this text: "He has raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began: . . . to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham." ■

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 19

God's Gift of a Savior

KEY VERSE: *"The angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."*—Luke 2:10,11

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Luke 2:4-20

THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING Jesus' birth are, in a way, paradoxical. While he was born in a stable, an angel announced his birth. It would be supposed that the birth of one important enough to have it announced by an angel from on high, would first of all have been made known to the religious rulers of Israel; but God chose humble shepherds instead as the ones to whom the angel would proclaim that happy message.

The song in the night sung to the shepherds of Bethlehem's fields, tells of our Father and the gift of his Son. These are thrilling words for they speak of eventual peace on earth—peace which will be established by God through a great divine king who

though invisible, will be recognized by all as the one born in Bethlehem; who throughout the thirty-three and one-half years of his short life was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; who healed the sick, caused the lame to leap, the blind to see, and the deaf to hear; who wept over the impoverishment of men and their rejection of him; who poured out his life unto death; who voluntarily offered his perfect human life on the cross to ransom us from the power of the grave; who said while he lived on earth, that like as the Father had power to give life, so also he had given the Son power to give life, and because of this, the hour would come "in the which all that are in the graves shall hear

his voice and shall come forth.”—John 5:28,29

Surely a ruler with such power and proven love for man can restore peace to the earth; and so says this prophecy from Isaiah: “Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God [ruler], the Everlasting Father [lifegiver], the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will perform this.”—Isa. 9:6,7

This promise of God to bring peace to the world is yet to come. But it will surely come, because the great gift which he gave nearly two thousand years ago was an expression of his goodwill to have it accomplished! “Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth

peace, good will toward men.” (Luke 2:13,14) Notice this says goodwill **‘toward’** men, not **‘among men’**. The thought is that through the birth of Jesus, God’s goodwill was being expressed toward men. First, Jesus died to redeem men; and during his second presence he will reign over men to give them peace and life.

The name, Jesus, signifies ‘Savior’. It is the Greek form of Jehoshua, or Joshua. How appropriate is this name when we realize that Jesus came to be the Savior of all mankind—a savior from sin and from its penalty, death. The title “Christ,” as in Jesus Christ, signifies ‘anointed’. Applied to Jesus, it denotes that he is the one sent and authorized by Jehovah to fulfill all the wonderful promises recorded by the Old Testament prophets pertaining to the redemption and restoration of the world from sin and death. “Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.” See Acts 3:19-24 ■

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 26

Choose to Serve

KEY VERSE: *“Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the LORD thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”—Luke 4:8*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Luke 4:1-15*

WHEN JESUS WAS baptized the Holy Spirit came upon him and the ‘heavens’ were opened unto him. This suggests the revealing to the Master’s mind of the great spiritual truths concerning himself that had been set forth in the Old Testament. It is reasonable to conclude that it was the sudden filling of his mind with these truths which moved him to seek a secluded spot where he could meditate on them and grasp their full import, particularly as they applied to his own ministry which was just beginning.

Apparently Jesus became so engrossed in his meditations that he had not eaten for forty days and was very hungry. It was then Satan suggested that he use his newly endowed power to turn stones into bread for satisfying his hunger. But

one thing Jesus had learned through meditation was that he was to lay down his life in sacrifice. So he knew that it would be wrong to use the special power in this way, and that he should use it to heal the sick and raise the dead, thus extending blessings to others. But for himself, his ministry was to be one of sacrifice which eventually would lead to death. So he replied to Satan, “It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.”—Luke 4:4

At the time Jesus was baptized he received assurance from his Father that he was indeed the Son of God. He heard his voice saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:17) Indeed, Jesus realized that to do what Satan suggested simply to

prove that he was the Son of God to himself, or even to the people, would be presumptuous. So he replied to Satan, "It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy God." (Luke 4:12) We notice that in each temptation Jesus relied upon God's Word to point out to him the proper course.

The third and last of this series of temptations is a very significant one. Satan took Jesus, in his mind, "to an high mountain" (Luke 4:5) and gave him a view of all the kingdoms of the world. He offered the Master: "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."—vss. 6,7

This was a subtle temptation. Jesus knew that he had come to be the king of earth and that the time would come when all the kingdoms of the world would be subject to him. (Ps. 2:6-9; Rev. 11:15) But he also knew that before this aspect of the divine plan would be carried out it was necessary for him

to suffer and to die as the world's Redeemer. This suggestion by Satan to Jesus was a temptation to accomplish the divine purpose of rulership without the necessity of suffering and dying. But Jesus did not propose to accept rulership over the kingdoms of this world on Satan's terms, so he replied, "Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the LORD thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."—Luke 4:8

However, many of Jesus' professed followers have yielded to these temptations, which Satan has likewise presented to them. Many have yielded to the temptation to use their spiritual advantages to further their own selfish ends. Others have endeavored, through spectacular works, to convince their fellows that they are the favorites of heaven. And still others, and a larger number, have yielded to the temptation to receive from the Devil the kingdoms of this world. One example of this has been the rulership of Christians in the church-state systems of government. ■

“Unto Us a Son Is Given”

Isaiah 9:1-7

OUR STUDY RELATES to a subject which has thrilled the civilized world for centuries—a subject which will never grow old—a subject which, on the contrary, shall to all eternity be a theme of angels and of men. The birth of Jesus, to be rightly understood and esteemed, must be considered from the standpoint of a gift of love divine. Any other view of the matter is merely the casket without the jewel. The Scriptures give us the key to the thought, saying: “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John 3:16

The world was under sentence of death; mankind had been dying for more than four thousand years. God had pitied humanity from the first. Yes, before sin entered, divine wisdom saw the end, and would not have created man, or would not have permitted the condition which led to sin and the sentence of death, had divine wisdom not foreseen its matchless benefits, and arranged in advance for human redemption.

God had purposely arranged the matter so that it would require the death of a perfect man to redeem Adam and the race which lost life in and through him. God knew from the beginning that no such perfect man could be found coming from Adam's loins, because all men were of Adamic stock and had a share in Adamic weakness, imperfection, and condemnation. In the divine plan, God contemplated from the beginning that the only begotten of the Father, the **Logos**, the active agent of divinity in the work of Creation, should be granted the great privilege of being man's Redeemer and thereby securing a great reward—“Glory, honor, and immor-

tality," the divine nature, through a resurrection from the dead.

The First Step of Redemption

The primary step in man's recovery necessarily was that the **Logos** should be made flesh and dwell among us and taste death, by the grace of God, for every man. (John 1:14; Heb. 2:9) It is this first step that we celebrate at this season of the year—the birth of Jesus. He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be reclaimed.

Today's study points out that the ministry of Jesus would be in Galilee; that those people of the Jews who at the time were supposed to be in greatest darkness would see the great light of divine truth, as represented in Jesus and his ministry. This had a primary fulfillment in Galilee, where the major portion of the mighty works of Jesus were performed. But its real fulfillment lies in the future, when the great light of the millennial kingdom, "the Sun of Righteousness, shall arise with healing in its wings." (Mal. 4:2) Before that glorious Sun, sorrow and sighing will flee away; ignorance and superstition will vanish; sin and darkness will be no more; every knee will bow and every tongue confess.

Jesus is the great center of that Sun of Righteousness, but, as he points out, the bride class, in process of selection during this age, is to be with him in the morning, shining forth in his glory. They shall sit with him in his throne. After the "wheat" of this age is gathered into the "garner" by the power of the first resurrection, the bride of Christ will shine forth with the bridegroom, to heal earth's sorrows and to scatter earth's night. (Matt. 13:43) All this will come to us because "unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given"; because "the government shall rest upon his shoulders"; because "his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isa. 9:6

The Fall of Babylon

We are to understand Isaiah 9:2-5 as referring not to natural Israel, but to spiritual Israel—nominal spiritual Israel. The holy nation has phenomenally increased without increasing the joy. There are many 'tares' in the wheat field. But in the harvest time of this age there will be joy; the faithful "will rejoice as they that divide the spoil." The burdensome yoke of the creedal superstitions will be broken, and the rod of the oppressor, Satan, will be broken as in the day of Midian, when Gideon with his little band put to flight the army of the Midianites and set the people free. Verse 5 intimates that the fall of Babylon and the breaking of the yoke and the rod will be in the great "time of trouble." (Dan. 12:1) "For all the armor of the armed men and the turmoil and the garments rolled in blood shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire."—Isa. 9:5

Messiah's Many Titles

Our great Redeemer, highly exalted, is eventually to bear many titles in commemoration of the variety of wonderful offices he will fill and services he will accomplish. But these are yet future. His great work in the past, the redemption work, was the foundation of all his future work. On account of his faithfulness he will have a right to assume these numerous offices and use these several powers; and as each comes into exercise it will be used by Jesus. The right to govern the world is his since he died on our behalf, but he awaits the Father's time for taking to himself his glorious power to reign; and the government must come to him before he can begin to fulfill any of the numerous titles.

First of all, his revelation to the world will be as the Wonderful One, the embodiment, the expression, of divine justice, divine love, divine wisdom, and divine power. As yet the world knows him not. He will be revealed to mankind in flaming fire, in the time of trouble, and subsequently, in the rescue work of his millennial kingdom.

He will be the world's Counselor, to give assistance, guidance, direction, whereby they may return through restitution

into harmony with Jehovah and to the enjoyment of the blessings provided through redemption. As the Head of the church he has been her Counselor, but our text refers to him as the Great King or Governor of the world, and as the world's Instructor, the Great Prophet, or Teacher, whom God promised through Moses.

His title, The Mighty God, or Mighty One, will be recognized then, on earth, as well as in heaven—"that him hath God set forth to be a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance and remission of sins to Israel," and "to all that are afar off."—Acts 5:31; 2:39

The title, the Everlasting Father, will apply to him as the lifegiver of the world, during the thousand years of his reign. In all that time he will be giving abundant life to mankind—everlasting life to all who will obey him—therefore his title, the Everlasting Father, or the Father who will give everlasting life to humanity. All the world of mankind, regenerated on the human plane, will obtain their right to everlasting life as human beings in an earthly paradise from their Redeemer, who will then be their King. Not so the church, for Jesus is not the church's Everlasting Father. On the contrary, the Apostle Peter declares, "The God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ hath begotten us again to a lively hope [hope of life]."—I Pet. 1:3

Jesus' title, The Prince of Peace, will not apply to him at the beginning of his reign, when he will be breaking in pieces as a potter's vessel every human system out of accord with the divine standards (Rev. 2:27; Ps. 2:9), but true peace shall speedily be established, and he shall be known as the Prince of Peace, and one whose reign will be undisputed and unmolested. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end"; there will be no rebellion; his kingdom will not pass away. When his reign shall terminate finally, at the close of the thousand years, it will be because "He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father . . . that God may be all in all."—I Cor. 15:24,28

"Upon the Throne of David"

Messiah's kingdom is styled "the Throne of David" for two reasons: First, the name of David signified Beloved; and the Messiah, as the Beloved of God, of the Father, is the anti-type of David, even as Messiah's kingdom will be the antitype of David's kingdom. David merely "sat upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD"; it was not his. So the greater than David will sit upon the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah, to order it and to establish it to completion, during the thousand years of his reign. Then he will deliver it up. "The zeal [love] of Jehovah of Hosts will perform this," operating through Messiah.—Isa. 9:7

Our Savior's Birth

*Oh, happy Natal day of old!
When humble shepherds there were told,
That unto us a child is born,
To bring to earth a better morn;
That "unto us a son is given,"
To bless the world with strife so riv'n.*

*Portentious news of long ago
"Good tidings of great joy;" we know
The multitude of heav'n did sing
Of time prophetic yet to bring
God's kingdom to the earth—and then,
Its "Peace on earth, goodwill to men."*

*Why doth delay God's Word of yore?
While peace seems further than before.
The reason for the need delay,
That first the ransom Jesus pay,
And from the world his church shall call,
Then will God's blessings flow to all* ■

The Shepherd and the Sheep

*"The LORD is my Shepherd;
I shall not want."
—Psalm 23:1*

IN THE SCRIPTURES our Heavenly Father has often illustrated his thoughts with word pictures. This wise method helps his children to better understand his care and protection. For example, in Psalm 91:2 we read, "I will say of the LORD, he is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust." Actually the expressions 'refuge' and 'fortress' are not merely words, they are word pictures, which carry messages of assurance implicit in their meanings.

A fortress is a place of protection, and immediately we realize that in our God we have a place of safety, a refuge into which none of our enemies can enter. It is an impregnable fortress, a veritable 'Gibraltar', within which we are secure as long as we abide under the shadow of the Almighty. How wonderful is this word picture—and many others—used in the Bible, and how clearly they teach us what our Father wants us to understand!

In the Twenty-third Psalm we have another of these word pictures. Here the LORD God is pictured as a shepherd, and we as the sheep of his pasture. Immediately as we contemplate the LORD as our shepherd, we can see him walking beside us as we journey along in the 'narrow way'. We see him with a shepherd's crook in his hand, and we know that through his providences he is directing our paths lest we go astray.

When comparing himself to a shepherd, the LORD gave us a very apt illustration—an illustration of the care that he gives to his people—care which is solicitous of our welfare—care that is concerned with our spiritual interests—care that is

patient toward us because of our fallen condition and inexperience—and care that is untiring in its love, its sympathy, and understanding of us. As we look back upon our lives, we know that we have needed the Shepherd's care. And as we look forward to each of life's experiences still ahead of us, we are cognizant of the fact that we also will always need our Shepherd's care.

The LORD, in designating us as his sheep, gave us another very appropriate word picture, calling attention to the characteristics he desires to see manifested in us. These include meekness, docility, obedience to the Shepherd's voice, as well as unflinching loyalty. These are all Christ-like qualities.

As human beings striving to walk in Jesus' footsteps, we are not able within the limitations of our own strength to compete with the world and the things of the world. We are not qualified to compete with the wayward 'goats', the roaring 'lions', the vicious 'bears', and the subtle 'serpents', which we encounter in this world.

The Master said: "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." (Matt. 10:16) We know that we are not qualified to engage in battle with 'wolves', yet we have no reason to be afraid. We need not fear because, the LORD is our Shepherd, and we are under the tender Shepherd's care.

All things are of the Father and by the Son; so Jesus is our "Good Shepherd." We know that our Lord Jesus loves us. We even know how deeply he loves us. The record is clear—he laid down his life for the sheep. He loved us enough to die for us. There is a phrase in the parable of the sheepfold which is significant. It is the one that says: "He calleth his own sheep by name." (John 10:3) This means that he knows our names; that he is interested in us not merely as a flock, but also as individual sheep.

Just as God loves the flowers he created and cares for those which bloom in the desert unseen by anyone, and are as beautiful and as fragrant as those that grow in a garden, so it is with the sheep. Whether we are in the wilderness apart from other sheep, or not, we know that the Shepherd is

there to care for us. The isolated sheep are tended with just as much care and just as much devotion as are the sheep that dwell in the green pastures of Christian fellowship.

The LORD guides and protects and guards all of his flock. Another text declares: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." (Isa. 40:11) This is a promise which should remain with us constantly. No matter where we are, or what project we are engaged with during the work hours, or leisure hours of our day we can still get encouragement from the realization that "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." And we know that "he . . . neither slumbers nor sleeps."—Ps. 121:4

The LORD is our Shepherd,
Our Guardian, our guide,
Whatever we need,
He will kindly provide.

To the sheep of his pasture,
His mercies abound,
With care and protection
His flock he'll surround.

The story is told that the shepherds of the East, in Bible times and even now, often at night during the colder part of the year will bring their flocks to a central place and put them in a sheepcote for the night. A sheepcote—a safe enclosure—sometimes is made only of bramble bushes designed to keep out marauders or destructive animals. Throughout the night there may be several flocks of sheep mingled together in this enclosure. But in the morning the shepherds come for their sheep. When the porter, or watchman, opens the gate, each of the shepherds gives his own peculiar call, calling many of the sheep by their names. Then each shepherd starts toward the pasture knowing that his sheep will follow him. And there they go—one here, one there—jumping over the others, each

(Continued on Page 37)

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Tacoma KAMT 1360 10:15 a.m.

WEST VIRGINIA

Wheeling WWVA 1170 6:30 p.m.

WISCONSIN

Jackson WYLO 540 5:15 p.m.
Milwaukee WNOV FM 85.6 7:00 a.m.

NOTE CHANGES WHICH
OCCUR FREQUENTLY

WORLDWIDE RADIO BROADCASTS

Canada

ALBERTA

Banff	CFHC 1340	11:45 a.m.
Brooks	CIBQ 1340	9:00 a.m.
Canmore	CFNC 1450	11:45 a.m.
Stettler	CKFQ 1400	7:45 a.m.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Duncan	CKAY 1500	9:00 a.m.
	CKAY 1500	7:30 p.m.
Grand Forks	CKGF 1340	9:00 a.m.
Nanaimo	CHUB 1570	9:30 p.m.
Qualicum- Parksville	CHPQ 1370	9:30 p.m.

MANITOBA

Winnipeg	CKJS 810	9:00 a.m.
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ONTARIO

St. Thomas	CHLO 1570	10:45 a.m.
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SASKATCHEWAN

Rosetown	CJYM 1330	9:45 a.m.
Weyburn	CFSL 1190	8:45 a.m.
Estevan	CJSL 1280	8:45 a.m.

Angola and Zambia

Radio Africa #2 (Thurs.)	9:00 a.m.
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Argentina (Spanish)

Buenos Aires (Sat.)	FM Malvinas 91.5 MHz	10:00 a.m. & 10:00 p.m.
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Brazil (Portuguese)

Curitiba	Radio Capital 1270 kHz	8:45 a.m.
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British West Indies

Grand Cayman	Radio Cayman	9:30 a.m.
Trinidad	Radio Trinidad 610	10:30 p.m.

Chile (Spanish)

Concepción	Unica FM 105.5	10:15 a.m.
Santiago (Sat.)	Radio Panamericana CB 142	10:00 a.m.

China

Hong Kong	Radio Villa Verde (Fri.)	6:00 p.m.
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Costa Rica (Spanish)

San José	Radio Sonora 105.9 FM, 700 AM	6:15 a.m.
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Kenya and Uganda

Radio East Africa	4:00 p.m.
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Mexico (Spanish)

Culiacán Ranchera	XECQ	8:30 a.m.
Guadalajara	XEWK 1130	8:30 a.m.
Monterrey	XHSR FM	
Torreón	XETB 1350	8:15 a.m.
Tuxtla Gutierrez	XEON 720	7:30 a.m.

New Zealand

Whakatane	IXX	8:10 a.m.
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Nigeria

Radio Africa (Thurs.)	7:45 p.m.
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Panama (Spanish)

Panama City (Fri.)	HOQ 1250	6:15 p.m.
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Peru (Spanish)

Trujillo	105.7 FM	9:30 a.m. & 10:00 p.m.
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Philippines

Manila (Sat.)	DZAM 1026 kHz	7:15 p.m.
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Portugal (Portuguese)

Vila Nova de Gaia	Radio Minute	8:45 a.m.
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Russia (Russian)

Novgorod	FM 71.3	10:00 a.m.
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Sri Lanka

Columbo (Sat.)	Radio Sri Lanka	7:15 p.m.
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Tonga

Nuku' Alofa (Mon.)		10:15 a.m.
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Uruguay (Spanish)

Montevideo	Radio El Espectador 810	6:15 p.m.
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THE BIBLE ANSWERS TV PROGRAMS

UNITED STATES: *New Jersey Cable TV*—Programs are shown every Sunday evening at 6:00 p.m. E.T.

Nostalgia Network—Programs are shown every Sunday afternoon at 1:30 p.m. E.T.

Pittsburgh, PA, WNEV TV 63—Programs are shown Sundays at 9:00 a.m. E.T.

CANADA: Programs are shown every Sunday morning. Consult your local newspaper for the station in your area.

Atlantic Time—10:30 a.m. Eastern Time—9:30 a.m.

Central Time—8:30 a.m. Mountain Time—7:30 a.m.

Pacific Time—6:30 a.m.

Keystone Inspirational Network Every Sunday Morning

CALIFORNIA

Hemet TV 53
Palm Springs TV 20
Sacramento TV 62
Twenty-nine Palms TV 25

DELAWARE

Wilmington TV 14

FLORIDA

Pensacola TV 12

GEORGIA

Rome TV 56
Tifton TV 5

IDAHO

Cottonwood TV 39

LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge TV 52
Crawley TV 65
Lake Charles TV 63

MARYLAND

Leonardtown TV 52

OHIO

Bucyrus TV 54
Findlay TV 6
Marietta TV 26

PENNSYLVANIA

Coudersport Cable 66
Lancaster TV 49
Williamsport TV 5
York TV 49

SOUTH CAROLINA

Monks Comer Cable 6

SOUTH DAKOTA

Sioux Falls TV 48

TENNESSEE

Union City TV 9

TEXAS

Corpus Christi TV 55
Fallurus TV 7

NEWFOUNDLAND

Harvour Grace TV 25

Eastern Time—11:30 a.m.

Mountain Time—9:30 a.m.

Central Time—10:30 a.m.

Pacific Time—8:30 a.m.

(Continued from Page 31)

trying to get behind his shepherd. First there is a thin line, and then a larger group, as each follows his own leader in the direction of the pasture he has chosen.

It is said that even now this scene is enacted by the shepherds as it was in the days of our Lord. Against this background we are better able to understand the words of the Master when he said: "When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." —John 10:4,5

The voice of the LORD is the voice of truth. The LORD said that false shepherds would come and will call to the sheep, hoping to find followers. Some of them call with a message that the majority of mankind are going to eternal torment, that they will suffer the pangs of eternal fire unless they follow them. That does not sound much like the Christian message. That does not sound much like "peace on earth, goodwill toward men." (Luke 2:14) That does not sound much like "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." —Luke 2:10,11

Is it not strange that glad tidings are preached only one Sunday a year, and the rest of the year a different Gospel is offered? Oh that the Christian message—the message of the coming glorious kingdom—should be given to the world every day of the year!

Another 'strange shepherd' calls. He says the way of salvation is far removed from the idea of a child being born in a stable, or of a man being crucified on a cross. He may say that the message of salvation has nothing to do with one man being the Savior of the world, that the atoning blood of one man has no efficacy. Salvation, he says, is through a process of evolution. It is the fittest who survive. Faith has nothing to do with it. There is no original sin. There never was a fall from Adamic perfection. There was no need for a Christ to come as the Savior of the world.

How far removed from the evolution theory is the comforting message, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." (Isa. 9:6,7) We hear the message of the kingdom in those words.

This is our message to the world: it is the message of the kingdom. It is the message which, in its fulfillment, is that the kingdom shall extend from sea to sea, and from the rivers even unto the ends of the earth. Yes! We hear the true Shepherd's voice speaking this message, and as we hear it, we agree with the words of the hymn that "Jesus has satisfied, Jesus is mine."

But the sheep whom the Shepherd is now calling to follow him to the safe and bountiful, peaceful pasture, caring for, calling by name—those who know his voice are, after all, but a 'little flock'. They are few, but the sheep in this little flock do not constitute the only sheep in the LORD's great kingdom. No, the Master said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."—John 10:16

This text of Scripture has puzzled many. Who are the 'other sheep?' The parable of the sheep and the goats identifies these other sheep. It tells us that in the Millennial Age there will be another flock of sheep separated from the goats. This will be a flock of sheep to whom the LORD said: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. 25:34

After the 'little flock' is complete and gathered to their heavenly fold, then the other sheep—the willing and the obedient of the Millennial Age—all the families of the earth—will be delivered from the power of death into the kingdom of God. They shall hear his voice, and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.

In Ephesians 3:15 Paul wrote concerning, "the whole family in heaven and earth." One family in heaven and in earth! One family, one fold, one Shepherd. It is in this same vein that the Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 1:10, "In the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one, all things in Christ both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." Hallelujah, what a Savior!

In Matthew 18:11 and on, we read: "The Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, . . . and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray."

The 'ninety and nine' represent the various others of God's creation, including the angels, the archangels, the cherubim, the seraphim, and all the heavenly hosts. The sheep that was lost, the sheep that left the fold, the sheep that went astray, represents the human race which became estranged from God. The Shepherd is Jesus, who left the ninety and nine—the heavenly courts, the heavenly hosts—to go down to the earth as the babe in Bethlehem's manger.

Jesus said that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. At Calvary our Lord Jesus purchased the right to find that lost sheep, and to restore him again to the fold of God. And, at the end of his thousand-year kingdom the human race, which was lost and estranged from God, again will have been brought into the sheepfold. Those who now hear his voice and follow him wheresoever he leads them will become part of the family of God in heaven, united with all the other heavenly hosts; the world of humanity will remain here upon earth—they will comprise the earthly phase of the family of God. Certainly, when this has all been accomplished, there will be rejoicing in heaven, for the Shepherd will have found the lost 'sheep' and restored it to the fold. Then will God's will be done in earth even as it is in heaven. Then will be fulfilled the promise of glad tidings of great joy

to all people, because there was born in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

At the time of Jesus' birth the angels sang. In the fulfillment of this kingdom story, that runs throughout the Scriptures from one end to the other, not only the angels, but men also will sing. Yea, all of the created beings who have been found worthy of eternal life will sing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men," because he who was called Emmanuel, which means, 'God with us', had saved his people from their sins."—Matt. 1:23,2 ■



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DECEMBER SPECIAL

On Sunday, December 19th, "**Frank and Ernest**" will discuss a Biblical topic of interest to many: "**Peace through Christ's Kingdom.**" Free circulars are available announcing the December special on the radio station in your area. You are invited to send for as many as you can use. Write to:

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CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

Armor of God Series, Part 2

The Sandals of Peace

*“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the LORD,
and in the power of his might. 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. 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.”*

—Ephesians 6:10-17

SANDALS WERE WORN to protect the wearer's feet from the rough, stony pathways that served as roads at the time of our Lord. Some Bible commentators think that Paul was in this reference speaking of military shoes worn to protect the feet during battle, rather than the ordinary sandals of those days which were open to the weather. Since he is describing the battle dress of the Christian, this is quite probable. But our theme Scripture does describe them as “the preparation for the Gospel of peace.”

How can sandals be preparation for the Gospel of peace? Let's look at several translations of Ephesians 6:15. We have

just quoted the **King James Version** ; **Knox's Version** reads, "In readiness to publish the Gospel;" **Rotherham** says, "In readiness of the glad message of peace;" and, finally from the **Twentieth Century Translation**, "With readiness to serve the good news of peace as shoes on your feet." Notice that all these translations agree that the covering for the feet is the preparation of peace. When we leave our homes, we put on our shoes to prepare for whatever mission we have in mind to accomplish. If we were soldiers, it would be even more important for us to protect our feet before leaving for the battle. Our sandals, or shoes, are indeed important parts of our dress, and without them we might not be successful.

What was the message given so many centuries ago to Abraham? Was not the message, as recorded in Genesis 22:18, a glad message—a Gospel of peace? "In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." What comfort it brings to our hearts to realize that God has had a plan for the recovery of mankind from the thralldom of sin and death, and that it will bring blessings to every one of his human creation. What a wonderful message for us to publish abroad as the 'feet' members of the body of Jesus Christ. This is a message with which we are delighted to go forth, spreading to others the message of the kingdom—"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven,"—the time when there will be peace between God and men, as well as peace among men.

To herald forth the message having our feet shod with this great Gospel of peace, the LORD's people have become God's ambassadors—ambassadors of the Heavenly King! An ambassador is a public minister sent from a sovereign government. Therefore God's ambassadors have been appointed by him to declare his will and ways, plans and purposes, to promote his standards of righteousness to men, so that eventually a spiritual alliance with him will be consummated.

This is the work that we have been given to do; We have the privilege of promoting this blessed message of peace to all who will listen to it. We read in Isaiah 52:7: "How beauti-

ful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publishes peace that bringeth good tidings of good, that publishes salvation." It is impossible for us to truly appreciate the privilege we have been offered—that of going forth as God's ambassadors.

This message of peace among the nations, peace within families, peace between friends, and co-workers, peace between rival company's, peace between neighbors, peace between husbands and wives, and especially, peace between God and man, is even more appropriate today than ever, because we are in a time when unrest, discontent, and disharmony is rife! Just as we have been prophetically warned concerning the discord and strife which would prevail on earth all throughout the Gospel Age, even until now—its harvest time—so we find it to be true. (Jer. 6:14; Matt. 24:6-9) We, the feet members of Christ's body, have a responsibility as God's messengers to give out the good news of God's kingdom which will institute peace and harmony among men through the rulership of the Prince of Peace.—Isa. 9:6

In Malachi 2:7, God said to Israel long ago, "The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law of his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts." And again in II Corinthians 5:20, "Now we are ambassadors for Christ." Our feet are to be shod always with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. In other words, we are constantly to be prepared and ready to promote peace. We are to be the very embodiment of peace, as was our Savior, our example. But how is this accomplished? First we must make a full, complete consecration, to the doing of God's will, just as our Lord Jesus did. We read in Proverbs 23:26: "My son give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." Paul quoted from the "volume of the Book" concerning our Master, "Lo I have come to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 9:7-9) He is our exemplar in all things. When we have followed in his steps, and have given our hearts fully to the LORD, we will have taken the first step of preparation to be ministers of peace.

Along these lines we have the Apostle Paul's words recorded for our admonition, when he encouraged us saying: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Rom. 12:1 Yes, a life of sacrifice begins with the heart, the will, and extends outward to every avenue of our lives. One of these avenues is our time, and one beneficial use of our time is the study of God's Word. To be prepared as ministers of peace, we need to study what is acceptable behavior in the sight of the LORD. We are told in II Timothy 2:15, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."

Ephesians 5:15-16, reads "See then that you walk circumspectly not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." And we will certainly agree that we live in evil times. There are many voices calling us out into the world, demanding our time. Many are worthy causes, fighting this or that form of evil in the world. But, as Christians, we cannot spare our time to 'push back the tide with a broom', despite our instincts to do what we can now to fight against the evils we see all around us. We know that a day, specifically designed for that purpose, is coming when the great Prince of Peace, the Lord of righteousness, will right all wrongs, and conquer and destroy all evil.

So we must walk circumspectly, being aware of the allurements to join with these well-meaning but unenlightened folk, knowing that life is very short and we have only been given a very short time to know and do his will, proving that we will be worthy to be the ministers of peace in his kingdom. We must spend as much time with Jesus as we possibly can by sacrificing some of life's pleasures and interests, toward learning more of God's will and ways. Paul advised, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time." (Col 4:5) We are to 'search the Scriptures', and speak to one another of Jesus, his life, and his message. (Acts 17:11) We are told that we have been called for this purpose, "because

Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps.”—I Pet. 2:21

Learning what it means to be a disciple of Christ is part of putting on the sandals of peace. It is necessarily the first preparation for our proclamation of the Gospel of peace. Our message is a message of peace. We are to be peacemakers. Our anointing is to bring the message of peace and comfort, and therefore we must be examples of these beautiful qualities. Isa. 61:1,2 says: “The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; 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; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.” This is a message of peace between God and man.

The word peace brings beautiful visions to our minds. It means ‘rest’ or ‘quietness’. It means different things to different people. Our Lord spoke to his disciples, saying, “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) This is true heart peace! This is peace that is not dependent upon outside forces. The Apostle Paul knew where this peace came from. He said, “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Rom. 15:13) Peace always comes to us through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a message or tribute from the Heavenly Father of his acceptance of us through Christ Jesus, our Lord. Without the Holy Spirit, we would not know the way to follow in his steps.

True peace in the church and among the brethren starts with each individual member of the body of Christ. If we do not have peace ourselves and among ourselves, how can we share it with others? “We beseech you brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the LORD and admonish you: and to esteem them very highly

in love for their works sake. And be at peace among yourselves.”—I Thess. 5:12,13

How do we go about spreading this message of peace? In Matthew 10:11, we are told, “Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.” This is a message that is appropriate for all God’s people, to be used in their endeavors to preach the good news of the kingdom. This describes concisely what we try to accomplish. We have follow-up privileges, calling on those who have shown an interest in the good news presented to them by means of The Bible Answers TV programs, or “Frank & Ernest.” radio programs, or possibly by reading about the glad tidings of salvation on a tract.

In the apostles’ days, the message went forth from city to city, and from synagogue to synagogue, and later on, at the village square. Their message sometimes fell upon deaf ears, but it was never forced upon their listeners. Of their efforts we read: “They shook the dust off their feet and left,.” if none were interested. If the message falls on ‘deaf’ ears, we move on to ears that are tender and open, ones that God is working with. If the message is received, we rejoice to pass on our peaceful message to the hungry, weary ones, with ears to hear.

We do not speak the truth without having given our presentation a great deal of thought. We must know which scriptures we wish to share on a particular subject. We must take time to search them out, and sort them into an orderly fashion in our minds. Having done this, we should take the matter of witnessing to others to the LORD in prayer. With the aid of the Holy Spirit we will clearly sound forth the message of peace and goodwill.

This is the harvest time. This is the time for gathering the ripe wheat. The Scriptures tell us that the harvest is the end of the age, and we know that there is but a little time left to seek out the remaining grains of wheat before the close of the Gospel Age. Let us go forward, shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. May God help us to this end! ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

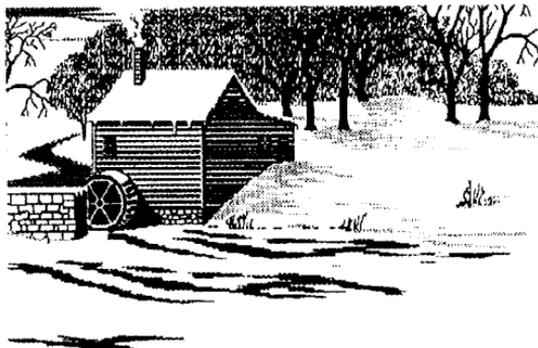
DECEMBER 2—"Why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized."—Acts 22:16 (Z. '01-186 Hymn 160)

DECEMBER 9—"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the LORD hath promised to them that love him."—James 1:12 (Z. '98-41 Hymn 78)

DECEMBER 16—"How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, follow him."—I Kings 18:21 (Z. '02-42 Hymn 238)

DECEMBER 23—"A word in season, how good it is! A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."—Proverbs 15:23; 25:11 (Z. '02-381,2 Hymn 315)

DECEMBER 30—"Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness."—Psalm 65:11 (Z. '00-365 Hymn 34) ■



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.

—Psalm 23:2,3

YOUNG ADULTS BIBLE STUDIES

THE GOLDEN THREAD SERIES, Part 45

From Jerusalem to Rome



TOWARD THE END of his life, the Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the Christians in the city of Corinth, declaring the fact that he was indeed an apostle of Christ. Some there were questioning whether or not he was truly the apostle who replaced unfaithful Judas. Paul answered their doubts by saying, "I was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles!" Then, carefully, he listed the many injustices he had joyfully suffered in his lifetime as a Christian: "I have served prison sentences! I have been beaten times without number! I have been beaten times without number! I have faced death again and again! I have been beaten the regulation thirty-nine stripes by the Jews five times! I have been beaten with rods once! I have been stoned once! I have been shipwrecked three times. I have been in constant danger from rivers and floods, from bandits, from my own countrymen [the Jewish leaders who constantly hunted him to kill him], and from pagans. I have faced danger in the city streets, danger in the desert, danger on the high seas, danger among false Christians. I have known exhaustion, pain, hunger, and thirst, doing without meals, suffering cold, and lack of clothing. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever, knows that I speak the simple truth!"—II Corinthians 11:5,23-28,31, *Phillips*

During his lifetime, Paul went on three long missionary journeys. In every city that he entered, he preached the Gospel of Jesus, convincing many that Jesus, the Son of God, had died on the cross for their sins, had been resurrected to life, and would one day return to establish his kingdom here on earth. These believers became Christians. And so, due in a large way to the giant efforts of this faithful apostle to the Gentiles, the Early Christian Church was established throughout Israel, Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy.

God guided and directed him in all of his travels, leading him by the Holy Spirit from city to city in quest of those whom God desired to become special members of his family, his sons. Paul was always ready to go where God led him, even when he knew he could be captured, beaten, imprisoned, or even killed. Sometimes his friends warned him that he was heading for danger, and he answered them, "I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus!"—Acts 21:13

On one of Paul's journeys, he came to the seacoast city of Troas in the northern area of Asia Minor. There Paul met with the brethren for seven days. On the last evening before he planned to leave, Paul had so many things he wanted to tell them that he talked with them past midnight. Although there were many lights where they were gathered together in the upper chamber, one young man could not stay awake. He sat on a windowsill, and fell fast asleep. As he sank over in his slumber, suddenly he fell out the window—down, down—three stories down! They rushed to his side, but he was dead. Paul went to him, and fell on him, and embraced him, and by God's miraculous power, he returned to life!

The disciples were comforted; they thought they had lost their young friend. They were so stimulated by this event that they ate and talked together with Paul all night long, even until dawn, when Paul left them on his journey.

Paul performed many other miracles, healing the sick and raising the dead to life. (Acts 19:11,12) His preaching and miracles accomplished the will of God by reaching the hearts

of many people. "So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed."—Acts 19:20

At one time Paul was worshipping God in the Temple at Jerusalem when a great crowd of Jews seized him. They dragged him out of the Temple, beat him, and were just about to kill him when help arrived from the chief captain of the Roman soldiers based in Jerusalem. He sent a band of soldiers to rescue Paul and to bring him into the castle or garrison for safe-keeping. But the wild mob continued to follow the soldiers, crying out, "Away with him! Away with him!" They became so violent the soldiers had to carry Paul to keep him from being badly injured.—Acts 21:31-36

Even then, Paul was not thinking of his own danger, but of spreading his wonderful news of salvation to the very people who were trying to kill him! He asked the soldiers, when they reached the top of the stairway to the building, if he could just speak a few words to the people. When they had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps, motioning to the crowd for quiet so he could speak to them. And when there was a great silence he gave a marvelous speech, telling how he had been converted to Christianity, how he was stricken blind by the great light from heaven, and how Jesus called him to be an apostle to the Gentiles!—Acts 21:4-22:6-30

When he mentioned the Gentiles, the Jewish crowd immediately became irrational and out of control! They began to scream, rip off their clothes, throwing dust into the air! Quickly, the soldiers swept Paul inside the castle. The next night, more than forty men organized a conspiracy against the apostle, and swore they would neither eat nor drink until Paul was dead! What hatred these Jews had for their own countryman because of his zeal for following in the footsteps of Jesus!

This was the plan they had devised to kill him: in the morning, when Paul was brought before the council for questioning, these forty and more men would be lying in wait, ready to strike him down. Paul's nephew overheard their

scheme. He went to Paul and told him what he knew of their conniving to ambush him on his way to the council chamber. Paul called one of his guards, requesting him to take the lad to the captain. He did; the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, "What is that thou hast to tell me?" After the boy had told him of the plot against Paul, the captain sent him home, saying, "See thou tell no man that thou hast showed these things to me!"—Acts 23:16-22

Without delay the captain commanded that two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, two hundred spearmen, as well as a horse for Paul, be made ready to leave in the middle of the night. A letter explaining the situation was to accompany the procession to Caesarea, where Felix, the governor of the province would have to decide what to do with Paul.

Whatever happened to the more than forty men of Israel who vowed never to eat nor drink until Paul was dead, we do not know! But since it was God's will, Paul escaped their evil purpose. For two years he was kept in protective custody to safeguard him from the Jews. He was granted certain liberties, however. His friends could come and go, and they could take good care of all Paul's needs.

After the two years had passed, a newly appointed governor decided to send him to Rome to be judged by Caesar, since Paul was a Roman citizen. Now the prophecy was about to be fulfilled, "As thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome!"—Acts 23:11

Before he left for Rome, however, he had an audience before King Agrippa who was visiting the new governor, Festus, at his palace in Caesarea. The king was very curious to see and hear Paul because the Jews at Jerusalem were still, even after two years, demanding his death! So on the day appointed, King Agrippa and Queen Bernice, entered into the place of the hearing, with great pomp and ceremony! The chief captains and all the principal men of the city were also gathered there. At Festus' command, Paul was brought in.

King Agrippa said to him, "Thou art permitted to speak for thyself!"

Fearlessly, Paul told the remarkable story of the day when Jesus spoke to him from heaven, saying, "Rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness of these things which thou hast seen, to open the eyes [of the Gentiles], and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins." "Whereupon, O King Agrippa," said Paul, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

As Paul spoke, the governor, Festus, cried out, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad!" But Paul answered, and said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness!" On the other hand, King Agrippa was very impressed, and said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian!"—Acts, chapter 25

Neither the governor nor the king, after conferring together, could find any reason to put Paul to death, or even to keep him in prison. So they decided to send him under guard to Rome, as Paul had requested.

Paul's adventures were not over, by any means. Agrippa and Festus decided to send Paul to Rome by ship along with some other prisoners. A centurion named Julius was put in charge of the prisoners. He was very kind and considerate of Paul, but it was a bad journey from the very start! The winds were contrary, causing the ship to sail so slowly that it lost a great deal of time. Because of this, the season for good sailing weather slipped away, and dangerous winter storms began to buffet the ship. After many days they came to an island. They found a river flowing into the sea from the island, and the sailors thought perhaps the ship could stay safely anchored upstream until the winter passed. But as they sailed toward shore, the waves ran the ship aground and it started to break into pieces. The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners at once, to keep them from escaping. When Julius

heard this, he kept them from their plan; he especially did not want any harm to come to Paul. Eventually, everyone aboard made it safely ashore—some by swimming, others by floating on pieces of the broken ship. This was one of the times that Paul had been in a shipwreck!—Acts, chapter 27

Read Acts 28:1-11 for several interesting experiences Paul had on this island of Melita.

The next spring, when favorable sailing weather arrived, Julius, the centurion, and all his prisoners, including Paul, once again set out for Rome. Although Paul was still a Roman prisoner, he was allowed to live in his own rented home, and to receive visitors. Soon after Paul arrived in Rome, he called together the chief men of the Jews to his house. Paul spoke to these Jewish leaders, telling them about the coming kingdom, and inviting them to become footstep followers of Jesus. Some believed, but as you may imagine, most did not. After a long time, a decision was made that it would be useless to continue the discussion. Paul spoke some final words to them. he quoted from Isaiah 6:9, and then he said, "Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles; and that they will hear it."—Acts 28:28

Yes, as Paul had written to the Corinthians, he was indeed the apostle chosen to witness to the Gentiles, and nothing could keep him from his work. His life showed that his words were true when he said, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"—Romans 8:38,39

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the Apostle Paul list the many experiences he had during his lifetime, and the many things he had suffered?
2. Can you name some of them?

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3. In what way did the Apostle Paul establish the Early Church all over the then-known world?
 4. Can you tell the story of what happened in Troas during the Apostle Paul's visit there?
 5. Was Paul causing any trouble in Jerusalem when the Jews dragged him out of the Temple to kill him?
 6. How did he escape from their hands? Was he safe after he escaped? What plot did the forty men of Israel plan, and how did it fail?
 7. Festus, the new governor, and Agrippa, had different opinions of Paul's message. What were their opinions?
 8. Where did Paul go next? How did he get there? What happened to him on the way?
 9. Did Paul try to avoid the Jews to save his life when he arrived in Rome?
 10. After he had witnessed to the Jews in Rome and found the ones who believed his message, who did he preach his message to after that? ■

JESUS, OUR SAVIOR

*"Thou shalt call his name Jesus:
for he shall save his people from their sins."
— Matthew 1:21*

OUR TEXT SUMS up the entire work of our Lord Jesus and indicates that it is all implied in the meaning of the name, Jesus, Savior. We sometimes refer to our Lord as the Savior of sinners, and properly so, because we are all sinners through our share in the Adamic fall. We sometimes speak of him as the Savior of the world, and properly so, because the whole world was lost through Adam's disobedience, and the whole world was redeemed and is to have the glorious opportunity of reconciliation to the Father through their Redeemer. But it is also appropriate that we note the statement of this text, "He shall save his people from their sins." Only those who will ultimately become his people will attain to life everlasting, the gift of God to all those who obey him, and no others.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Delighted to Hear Message

Dear Sir: Please send me your booklets "Plan" and "Judgment." I learned about your religion at an early age and attended meetings with my grandmother and also with my music teacher. I am now retired and of course these two wonderful folks passed away years ago. Last Sunday I accidentally came across your broadcast on a York television station and enjoyed it. I had lost contact and was delighted to hear your message. I was raised in a Christian home, but with no religious affiliation. Thank you. Sincerely.—PA

Literature of Great Value

Dear Brethren: I greet you in the name of Jesus, with peace from God the Father. I was once again delighted to hear from you and more so to receive the books and booklets you sent me. I thank God for the opportunity of being exposed to this ministry, particularly at a period of time such as this. The literature you present is

of great value for the development and preparation of those who read it.

Fifteen years ago I thought I was enlightened and was surprised after reading your books that that thought was confounded. Nevertheless, nothing happens before the time and I am so glad that God has helped me and brought me into contact with this ministry. Its advent into my life is timely as I was growing tired of 'milk' and I needed a change of diet. I am also glad and grateful because of the kindness you've displayed by sending me all those books free of cost. I know that it is very costly producing so many books and pieces of literature without making demands on subscribers, yet by some strange miracle you do it. I am humbled to know that you have never solicited so much as an offering in any of your letters. How can I say thanks! In this country the U.S. dollar is like a 'pearl of great price' to the less fortunate, and to the wealthy and cruel it is a means of controlling

the system and the people. However, my God is bigger than infinity and my desire is that before our change is effected I may be able to give an offering to this great work. I trust you will continue to send me those truths as God releases them. Stay sweet in Jesus. Sincerely.—
Guyana

Program Lifted Spirits

Dear “Frank and Ernest”: I just praise and thank the LORD for you who are responsible for the broadcast of “Frank and Ernest” over DZAM Radio. While confined at a hospital I struck upon your program. It came to me during a time of dryness in prayer and at a time when I felt lukewarm in my love for the LORD. Your broadcast really helped me. It lifted my spirits up. From now on I will never fail to listen and will tell all my friends about it. More power to you! Sincerely.—*Philippines*

“A Profound Impact”

Dear Sir: A friend introduced me to your programme over Radio Africa about two months

ago. I have been listening ever since and your message has made a profound impact upon my whole being. I changed my perspective towards life itself. Thanks to you and your wonderful programme. May God richly bless you. Faithfully yours.—
Zimbabwe

More from Zimbabwe

Dear Friends: Your Bible teachings have unexpectedly changed my life style. Realistically I’m now a different person altogether. I used to be very rude and uncooperative in everything I did. I had a ‘don’t care’ attitude and most people avoided me. However, it was one day when I listened to your radio programme that I decided to ask for forgiveness. I knelt down and talked to God. “I hate all my wrong doings. Please forgive me for all the wrong things I have done.” I am now a Christian—something I never thought I would one day achieve. Your radio programmes are good and very educational. Keep the spirit up Frank and Ernest. May the LORD bless you all.—*Zimbabwe*

From a Young Sailor

Hello. As I was reading an old copy of the "Readers Digest" (February 1989), I came across an ad, "Archeology Proves the Bible." I would be glad to receive your free copy of this booklet if it is still available. I would like to inform you that I am a sailor who is serving in the Merchant Navy. Recently I had been to Tampa in Florida for about a week, then our ship sailed for London. I am a young man who hails from Goa.—*India*

Booklet "Timely and Helpful"

Dear Brethren: May the peace and grace of God be with you. We are always happy to hear from you. We have written to the brethren in Canada telling them we received the van and how we have been able to use it. We are happy to have had the privilege of benefitting from your brotherly love even though we are thousands of miles away, but this love knows no boundaries. We hope some day to be able to

meet you and share this with you personally.

Regarding the literature, we are very thankful to you for printing the booklet, "The Kingdom of God." It is very timely and helpful to understand the truth. We purchased 100 New Testaments at a low cost. Letters from the radio programs aired in Nowgorod are coming to us from Krakow, Poland. Many of the responses share their opinions with us in connection with what they heard and are asking for literature to be sent to them. In closing I send you all my warm Christian greetings and trust the LORD's care will continue with you.—*Ukraine*

Accurate Dissemination

Dear Sir/Madam: I have been listening to your programme on the radio and I must say that I find it very interesting and informative. I wish to thank you for your concern about disseminating accurate information to the public at large. I feel that I can do the same in my home town. I would very much appreciate it if you can kindly send me the "Creation" book. Thanking you in

advance. Yours in Christ.—
West Indies

A Constant Inspiration

Dear "Frank and Ernest":
Listening to your spiritual broadcast over Radio DZAM is a constant inspiration for me. You gave me hope for the sufferings we are encountering nowadays in our country. Thanks to the battery operated transistor radios, we can still listen to your program uninterrupted, even with 'brownouts'. I just hope that you don't cease giving us your inspirational talks as we won't get tired listening to them. Thank you and may God shower you with his constant blessings. Very truly yours.—*Phillipines*

A True Gospel

Dear Dawn Bible Students:
This is just a note to express my appreciation of the wonderful job that you are doing in teaching the Word of our LORD. For too many years men have been preaching a "false gospel" in Jesus' name. It is a good and warm feeling to know that there are those in the world who know the truth, what the Scriptures actually say and

mean, and are doing everything possible to get the word out for everyone to hear and understand. May God's blessings and Holy Spirit be with you always in all that you do. Sincerely.—
FL

Praises God

Dawn Bible Students: Greetings in the precious name of our Lord Jesus! The greatest transformation has been taking place in me as a result of reading *The Dawn* magazine. I personally praise God Almighty after reading *The Dawn* for now a number of months. I realized that Christ has gotten hold of my heart and your magazine has helped me and my friends. Please continue sending it. Thanks! God bless you. Yours in the Lord—*Lome-Togo*

Thankful for "Meat in Due Season"

Dear "family" in Christ: It is with a warm heart that I report to you the news of my recent immersion at the Wilmington Convention, symbolizing my consecration to the LORD and his service. I want to thank you for your

ministry—your many years of service to me. My original contact with the truth and the work of Bible Students was the wonderful writings of Pastor Russell, that faithful and wise servant. I had the pleasure of meeting with several of the brethren from *The Dawn* at the convention. Thank you for continuing to provide meat in due season for the household of faith during this last dispensation period. I'd love to visit at the Dawn building sometime. Thank you sincerely.—*PA*

An Avid Listener

Dear Frank and Ernest: May the joys of the Yuletide season be yours and your loved ones'. I should have written you earlier but it's only now during this Christmas vacation that I got the time for it. Since I heard of your radio program I have become an avid follower of it. I also thank God it's aired every Saturday so that I can listen to it without interruption because that's one particular day when there are no 'brownouts'. May God bless you more for such a meaningful mission. Yours very truly.—*Philippines*

Desires to Share Truth

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Please send me three more copies of the *March Dawn*. I would like to share it with my friends who are searching for truth and would benefit greatly from reading this issue. I know they will be enlightened with the truth of the Word of God of which they have very little or no knowledge. I deeply appreciate the enlightenment I receive by reading *The Dawn* and I want to share it with others. Thank you so much. With love in Christ.—*PA*

From A Pastor

Dear Sirs: May I honestly tell you that your ministry through *Radio Africa #2* has blessed us very much as we listen to you. I believe that God has chosen you at these last days to bring across to a corrupt world the word of truth. We will always listen to your program as it has brought many changes in our congregation. May God bless your ministry richly. Yours because of Calvary.—*Zimbabwe* ■

YOUR QUESTIONS

Did God Create Sin?

In Isaiah 45:7 Jehovah says, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things." Does this mean that God created sin?

NO! THERE IS a vast difference between evil and sin.

True, all sin is evil, but there is much evil in the world that is not sin. Sickness and death are evils, but not sin. Calamity is an evil, but not sin. However, we are not to take from the text that God is the creator of all evil, but rather only that evil which serves his purpose in the outworking of his will and plan.

God entered into covenant relationship with the nation of Israel, and on his part the covenant called for the rewarding of faithfulness and the punishment of unfaithfulness. God punished his people by bringing evil upon them in various ways. Concerning the nation of Israel, the LORD said, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up, and

to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them."—Jer. 18:7,8

In Micah 1:12 we read that "evil came down from the LORD unto the gate of Jerusalem." There are many instances in the Scriptures similar to this, in which the LORD is credited with bringing evil upon a country, or upon a people, as punishment for wrongdoing. This is why the LORD says, "I make peace, and create evil." It does not mean that he is the author of sin.

Prove All Things

Is it wrong to question what we are being taught?

IT WOULD BE wrong if we did not examine the Scriptures carefully in order to ascertain whether or not what we are being taught was supported by the inspired Word of God. If we did not do this we would be shirking our responsibility before the LORD. We should appreciate

those who help us to understand the Bible, but we should not accept their teachings without proving them by the inspired Word of God. Paul was one of the inspired servants of God. He spoke and wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, yet he did not expect anyone to accept his teachings without proving them by the inspired Word of God.

In connection with Paul's ministry in Berea, we read, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. (Acts 17:11) This is the only proper attitude to take if we would be truly taught by God.

The Earth Established

Is the end of the world near, as some preach?

WITH THE QUALIFICATION to this question, "as some preach," we would answer that the end of the world is certainly not near, nor will it ever take place. "As some preach," the end of the world means the destruction of the earth, and

of all things earthly. The Bible denies that this is a part of the divine plan. On the contrary, the Bible declares that "the earth abideth forever." (Eccles. 1:4) The LORD also assures us that he has "established" the earth, that he created it not in vain, but "formed it to be inhabited."—Isa. 45:18

In the Bible's prophecies pertaining to the "end of the world" the reference is, not to the earth, but to man's selfish and sinful social order. The "fire" referred to in these prophecies is symbolic of a "time of trouble" which comes upon the nations, and by which the whole social structure is weakened and finally destroyed. For a more detailed discussion of this aspect of the divine plan, we refer the questioner to the booklet, "God and Reason." When we understand the matter correctly we will realize, not that the end of the world is near, but that it is already in process. This is the real meaning of what is now taking place throughout the earth.

A God of the Living

Matthew 22:32 reads: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Does this not prove that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not really dead, that although they seemed to die, they are still alive?

NO THAT IS not at all the thought of the text. Jesus' explanation is contained in the preceding verse, where he says that it was "touching the resurrection of the dead" that Jehovah had said he was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In other words, it was because God intended to raise these patriarchs from the dead, thus giving them life, that he still referred to them as his people, and himself as their God.

Luke's report of this statement by Jesus makes the meaning clearer. Jesus explained that his Father was not a God of the dead, "but of the living: for all live unto him." (Luke 20:38) Through the redemptive work of Christ, provision was made for awakening the dead to life. Because of this,

the Bible speaks of the dead as being asleep. From God's standpoint they are not eternally dead—they live unto him—because divine power will restore them to life. But this does not change the fact that the "dead know not anything." See Ecclesiastes 9:5

Wants to Serve

I have been forced to retire, but am in reasonably good health and would like to use my time in serving the LORD. Could I distribute literature? What would you suggest?

THE DISTRIBUTION OF truth literature is one of the most effective ways of bearing witness to the Gospel of the kingdom. We are sure the LORD's name would be glorified by your participation in this work. We would like to cooperate by furnishing free material, tracts, labels, envelopes, etc., as many as you can use, for you to stuff and return to us for mailing. Of, if you prefer, you can distribute tracts by hand to friends or neighbors, or from door to door in your neighborhood. These appeal to us as good ways to serve the LORD. ■

OBITUARIES

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian courses. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to the families and friends in the loss of these dear ones. We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.

- Sister Dora Michalyca, Melfort, Sask—May 6. Age, 88.
Sister Marie Anderson, New York, NY—June 17. Age, 90.
Sister Emma Ratica, Pittsburgh, PA—June 23. Age, 74.
Sister Gladys Zehner, Topeka, KS—September 28. Age, 96.
Sister Mary Rusinko, Turtle Creek, PA—September 29. Age, 85.
Sister Helen Waytina, North Brookfield, MA—October 20. Age, 75.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of the Dawn, or by classes associated with the Pilgrim Service. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

J.B. Brown & G.M. Jeuck		R. Gorecki	
Auckland, New Zealand	December 26-30	Middletown, NY	December 19
Melbourne, Australia	30-January 6	S. Mengos	
		Fresno, CA	December 12
		J.R. Shahan	
		Clayton, DE	December 5

1993 General Convention Video Tapes

The video tapes of discourses given at Newberg, OR General Convention last June are now available for purchase. They cost \$6.00 each, or can be borrowed free from the Video Tape Library. Send for a free list of tapes by title to Video Tape Department, P.O. Box 4355, North Hollywood, CA 91617

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed at the request of the classes who sponsor them. In order to ensure your convention being accurately placed in these columns, please make your request IN WRITING and mail it to this address at least two or three months before the date of the convention: The Dawn, Convention Listing, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

PHOENIX, AZ, December 31-January 3, 1994—Wyndham Garden Hotel, 427 N. 44th St., Phoenix, 85018 (602) 220-4400. Contact the secretary for all requests: Mrs. Esther Bachorski, 13223 Palmwood Dr., Sun City West, 85375
Phone: (602) 546-0430

ST. PETERSBURG, FL, January 9—Majestic Park Homes, 8300 Seminole Blvd. (Alt. 19), Seminole, FL. Contact: Stella Slavich. 3847

Tarpon Pointe Circle, Palm Harbor, FL 34684
Phone: (813) 786-3795

SACRAMENTO, CA, February 18,19,20—The Beverly Garland Hotel, 1780 Tribute Rd., 95815. Contact: Betty Lankford, 6000 19th Avenue, 95820 for information and reservations.
Phone: (916) 457-0569 ■



NOTICE: The 1993 General Convention audio tapes are now ready for purchase at \$30. per set. This includes all the discourses given at the convention, as well as the Vesper Services. Place your order with the **Recorded Lecture Service Department**, The Dawn, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.



NOTICE: The 1992 bound Yearbooks of The Dawn magazine are ready for sale at \$3.00 each. Write to Dawn Publications, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073, to order your copy.



"I SAW IN the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."
— **Daniel 7:13,14**