

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

"ALL NATIONS SHALL
COME AND WORSHIP
BEFORE THEE."

--Revelation 15:4

April 1964

THE DAWN

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The Exploding Population in the Plan of God

"Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else."—Isaiah 45:18

WORLD economists who are devoting attention to the rapidly increasing population of earth are becoming fearful lest this planet on which we live become overpopulated. While the situation is not yet critical, if something isn't done the end of the twentieth century might well find more people on the earth than present potentials could properly feed, clothe, and house.

The permanent solution to this problem is to be found in the Word of God; but if this is to give us any satisfaction we must be prepared to accept the Bible's record of the length of time man has been on the earth, and the purpose of the Creator in having him here. The chronology clearly set forth in the Bible brings us down to a point which can be coupled with secular history to give us a period of a little more than six thousand years since the creation of man. Jewish chronology gives a period which is even shorter than this.

By the beginning of the Christian era, which was approximately 4,000 years from man's creation, earth's population is estimated as being not more than 250 million, or a quarter of a billion. Sixteen more centuries had passed before the population reached the half-billion mark. But in the next 250 years, or by 1850, the one billion mark had been reached. Today, a little more than a century later, the population of the earth is three billion.

We are now told by the United Nations demographers that by the close of the century, thirty-six years from now, the population of the earth will be close to seven billion. They say that in less than 150 years the population will be fifty billion, or more than sixteen times what it is today.

But let us take the seven billion figure which will be reached within the lifetime of millions now living on the planet. This is more than double the present population. This would mean that all our cities must become double in size in less than forty years, and the rural population become twice as dense. New cities may well be built, but no matter how the increased population may be apportioned, this factual look at the situation is rather awesome. And if we project our thinking 150 years into the future the situation becomes seven times as acute; and from the standpoint of human wisdom, this would not be the end.

As compared with many countries, especially those of Asia and South America, the population situation here in the United States is very favorable. There is already overcrowding in many areas of the earth. Much effort is being made by those in positions of influence and whose responsibility it is to do something about the population explosion, to acquaint the people of earth with adequate methods of birth control, especially those in backward countries where the increase is the most rapid. So far as worldly wisdom is concerned, this seems to be the only solution, short of a hydrogen atomic war, which would wipe out most of the present population of earth—and no one wants this.

God's Plan

To those who understand God's plan for his human creatures, the present population explosion is not a surprise. Instead, it is one of the evidences of the forward march of his plan, and of the fact that it is soon to reach its glorious consummation in the enlightenment and blessing of all the families of the earth. The first statement in the Bible pertaining to God's plan for his human creatures is found in the Book of Genesis. We quote:

“God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [**Heb. fill**] the earth, and subdue it: and have

dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”—Gen. 1:27, 28

The Genesis record also says, “The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” (Gen. 2:8, 9) This garden was but a model from which man could work as, in fulfilment of the Lord’s command, he pursued the project of subduing the whole earth.

And we can easily imagine how this would have been progressively accomplished. Obeying the Creator’s command to multiply and fill the earth, Adam’s family soon would have outgrown that comparatively small garden “eastward in Eden.” Then its borders would need to be extended. This process would continue, until what started out to be but a small area of productive land would have encompassed the whole earth, and would thus have become a world-wide paradise.

This earthly paradise would then have been filled with God’s happy human creatures, knowing nothing of sin, sorrow, pain and death. There would have been no danger of overpopulation, for God’s command was to fill the earth, not to overfill it; and we may assume that at the proper time the Creator would have co-operated with his obedient humans to end the bringing forth of further children. The Bible does not give us the details of this, but the fact is clearly implied by the nature and limitation of the command.

Sin Entered

But matters did not work out in the obvious manner which we have outlined. God had placed a condition, not upon populating and filling the earth, but upon continuing to live under the favorable conditions provided in Eden. Speaking of the forbidden fruit of the garden, God said to Adam, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. 2:17) We all know the story of Adam’s disobedience, of his being sentenced to death and driven out of Eden to die.

But this did not change the divine purpose in the creation of man, although human philosophy has made it appear as though it did. This philosophy got its start in a lie told to mother Eve by the serpent, which impersonated the Devil. He told her that death would not be the result of disobeying God. Just what this meant to her we may not be sure, but later the philosophy developed that there is no death. This would mean that Adam and Eve did not really die, as God said they would; that what seemed to be death was merely passing through a gateway into another life in some faraway "isle of somewhere."

Death, however, is a reality. Our first parents were not transferred to another abode at death. They died; for "the wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23) "The dead know not any thing." (Eccles. 9:5) The simple fact is that man was created to live on the earth, but he lost the privilege of living forever because he transgressed divine law. However, this did not change the divine purpose in the creation of man. As our text declares, God did not create the earth in vain, but formed it to be inhabited—not by a dying race, but by a living race.

It is a well-known fact that Jesus died to save the world from sin and death. But those who do not accept the testimony of the Bible concerning the reality of death suppose that Jesus' death was to provide a way for converted sinners to go to heaven when they die. In reality, however, the great redemptive program centered in Christ Jesus provides for the human race to be restored to life on the earth as humans. This means that eventually, and in God's own due time, God's original purpose concerning man will be accomplished. The whole earth will become one vast paradise, filled with perfect and happy humans, freed from sickness and death, and all the other evils which now afflict the dying race.

True, Jesus said to his disciples that he was going away to prepare a "place" for them, and that he would come again and receive them unto himself. (John 14:2, 3) This and other promises of the Bible warrants the followers of Jesus to expect a heavenly reward in the resurrection. But this provision is not for mankind in general. It is only for that little flock who follow in the footsteps of Jesus, laying down their lives in sacrifice as he did. These will be exalted to "glory, and honor and im-

mortality," to live and reign with Christ a thousand years.—Rom. 2:7; Rev. 20:4, 6

Restitution

The main purpose of Jesus' first visit to earth was the giving of his life in sacrifice in order that condemned humanity might be released from that condemnation and be restored to life. The Bible teaches that his second visit, which lasts for a thousand years, will be for the purpose of restoring the people to life. The Apostle Peter described the period of Christ's second visit to earth as "the times of restitution of all things, which," he declared, "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts. 3:19-21

This means, according to the testimony of all God's holy prophets, that that which would have been, had sin not entered the Garden of Eden, is yet to be. And the restoration of the human race to life will include not only those who are living at the time this great feature of the divine plan begins for the Bible reveals clearly that all the dead are to be awakened from the sleep of death, and given an opportunity to share in the blessings of health and life provided by the death of Jesus as man's Redeemer.

This would seem to make the exploding population problem even more serious. Some have mistakenly supposed that there would not be room enough on the earth for those who have died, but this is not true. A simple way to prove this is to multiply the present daily death rate by the number of days since creation, add to this the present population of earth, and one will find that there would still be room on earth for the total number. It is obvious, however, that this method of estimating gives us many times what the total actually will be.

Limited

It is true that if nothing is done about the present population explosion the earth would soon become overpopulated. But something will be done about it. As we have noted, the command to our first parents was to multiply and fill the earth, not to overfill it. We may rest assured that the providences of God will overrule in this matter in a way to bring to an end any further increase in population. Even now the publicity that is

being given to this subject is preparing the people for the change which must inevitably come.

The Bible makes it very definite that those resurrected from the dead will not continue to have children. This is brought out in a discussion between Jesus and the Sadducees of his day. The Sadducees did not believe that there would be a resurrection of the dead, their thought being that death was the end of everything. So they propounded what they expected would be a difficult question for Jesus to answer. They mentioned the case of a woman who had married seven brothers in turn, one after another having died. Then they asked, "In the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her."—Matt. 22:23-28

From the standpoint of human reasoning this would seem to be a real problem, but not so for Jesus, for he understood the great plan of his Heavenly Father concerning the human race. His reply was, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."—Matt. 22:29,30

Jesus meant that restored mankind would be as the angelic host, in that they would no longer propagate. There is endless variety in the creative works of God. The angels were created individually, and are not able to reproduce their own kind. Man was given this power, but only until a sufficient number of humans should have been born to properly fill the earth, and then it was to cease. In the great plan of God this change takes place for millions when they are resurrected.

Jesus said to the Sadducees, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." Those who know the Scriptures know that it is God's purpose to restore the dead to life on the earth; and those who know this, and have faith in the unlimited power of the Creator, are assured that he is abundantly able to take care of every necessary detail in his plan, even to bringing about the necessary changes in human anatomy to prevent the further increase of earth's population. Medical science even now has the knowledge for controlling the birth rate, but we can be assured that God's way will be much better.

Still Room

There is still much unused land surface on the earth. There are the vast deserts which today are producing nothing. The Scriptures assure us that during the "times of restitution of all things" "the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." (Isa. 35:1) We are also promised that "then shall the earth yield her increase." (Ps. 67:6) There are also the large areas of land near the North Pole and at the South Pole which might well in due time, with the change of climate, become available for cultivation.

We are reminded also of the ever-increasing knowledge related to land utilization. On the average, much more food is being produced per acre than was true fifty years ago. And this increase continues. Modern farm machinery enables a few to cultivate vast areas of land. We simply remind our readers of these various details to emphasize that the earth is quite capable of taking care of the existing population, and also those who will be brought back from the dead.

Kingdom Near

There are many prophecies in the Bible pertaining to the day of preparation for Christ's kingdom, which will be the agency used for restoring mankind to life on the earth. These prophecies are being fulfilled in a remarkable manner, which proves that the long-promised kingdom of the Messiah is close at hand. One of these prophecies pertains to the great increase of knowledge and rapid means of travel peculiar to the present time. (Dan. 12:4) The increase of knowledge manifests itself along many lines, and particularly in the increased production of all the various commodities needed by man.

Under present conditions, and particularly aside from the vast amount of energy utilized in maintaining and increasing machinery of war, this increased production potential is posing a labor problem for the world. The industrial world is now able to produce much more than the people can possibly use. However, this situation will not continue, for soon there will be not only the living generation for which provision will need to be made, but also the vast numbers returning from death. Thus

God, in his wise foresight, has timed these events to coincide for the good of his human creatures.

And speaking of God's timing, the population explosion points up another aspect of divine wisdom. While at present, and for a short time into the future, the total number of humans born will have ample room here on earth, and can be well provided for, the present arrangements cannot continue too long, for if they did, as the statisticians point out, there will not be room on earth for even the living population, to say nothing about the millions who have died.

What has so comparatively suddenly brought about this population crisis? A simple, and we believe a well-known illustration, reveals the answer to this question. Two germs are placed in a bowl to propagate. These germs double in number every second. At the end of one hour, the bowl is full of germs. At what point in the hour is the bowl half filled? The answer is, at the end of the fifty-ninth second of the sixtieth minute in the hour. It would be the last doubling that would fill the bowl.

We can hardly apply this illustration with exactness, for there is no way of determining now just how many people the earth will actually support under perfect conditions. However, it would appear that humanity has reached a point in its increase of population which about compares to the last second in that hour during which the germs filled the bowl. This is why thinking people of the world are suddenly becoming alarmed. The doubling of the present population of three billion by the end of the century is a startling thought, but what about the doubling of that number a few years beyond the turn of the century?

And what does it mean so far as the outworking of the divine plan is concerned? Simply that God's time is near to call a halt to human propagation, for enough people will have been born to fill the earth. This means that Messiah's kingdom and the time of restoration is near—that restoration, or restitution, which was spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began.

Distribution

Today seventy-five percent of the human race is underfed and underclothed. Millions, particularly throughout Asia, never have

a roof over their heads from the time they are born until they die. Even now, however, the productive countries of the earth could produce enough for all. One of the problems is distribution. Back of this problem is human selfishness. The "have" nations simply do not want to give up any of their luxuries in order to raise the standards of the "have not" nations. If the spirit of unselfishness and of genuine interests in the welfare of all people prevailed, the distribution problem would soon be solved.

But here again the Lord will step in and do for man what he cannot do for himself. One of the prophecies concerning restitution pictures men as being given hearts of flesh, and the Lord's law of love being written in their hearts. (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 11:19, 20; 36:24-28) What a difference this will make in human behavior, especially in the attitude of people toward other people, particularly the people of other lands!

With such an attitude prevailing, and with divine power intervening when necessary in the affairs of men, there will be no problem too great to be solved. Ways will be found to make the earth produce more abundantly. With irrigation all the present waste places will become fertile; more and better machinery will speed up the building trade so that "they shall build houses" in abundance, and "inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." (Isa. 65:21, 22) Let us rejoice in all the evidence with which we are surrounded assuring us that such a glorious new day of blessing is near!

SPANISH RADIO BROADCASTS

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Santo Domingo
Emisoras Unidas 910 kc. 7:00 p.m.

PARAGUAY

Asuncion
Z. P. 9 Comuneros 970 kc. 10:15 a.m.

PERU

Lima Radio America 7:00 p.m.

URUGUAY

Montevideo Radio Carve
Saturdays; 4:30 p.m.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles KWKW 1300 8:15 a.m.
San Diego XERB 1090 9:00 p.m.

TEXAS

Corpus Christi KCCT 1150 10:30 a.m.
San Antonio KUKA 1250 10:00 a.m.

THE BIBLE ANSWERS TV SCHEDULE

ALABAMA

Selma WSLA-TV Channel 8
Sundays, 4:30 p.m.

ARIZONA

Yuma KLUB-TV Channel 13
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

ARKANSAS

El Dorado KTVE-TV Channel 10
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)
Little Rock KTHV-TV Channel 11
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

CONNECTICUT

New Haven WNHC-TV Channel 8
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

INDIANA

Fort Wayne WANE-TV Channel 15
Sundays, 11:30 a.m.
Lafayette WFAM-TV Channel 18
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.
Muncie WLBC-TV Channel 49
Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

KANSAS

Wichita KAKE-TV Channel 10
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

KENTUCKY:

Lexington WKYT-TV Channel 27
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

LOUISIANA

Monroe KLSE-TV Channel 13
Mondays, 12:30 p.m.

MANITOBA

Thompson CESM-TV
Sundays, 5:30 p.m.

MASSACHUSETTS

Springfield WHYN-TV Channel 40
Sunday, 8:30 a.m.

MICHIGAN

Jackson WILX-TV Channel 10
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.
Kalamazoo WKZO-TV Channel 3
Sundays, 8:30 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Alexandria KCMT-TV Channel 7
Alternate Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

MISSISSIPPI

Columbus WCBI-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 7:30 a.m.
Laurel WDAM-TV
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

MISSOURI

Kansas City WDAF-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 10:30 a.m.

NEW YORK

Binghamton WBJA-TV
Sundays, (Time and channel to be announced.)
Buffalo WKBW-TV Channel 7
Sundays, 9:00 a.m.
New York WOR-TV Channel 9
Sundays, 8:30 a.m.
Rochester WROC-TV Channel 8
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.
Syracuse WNYS-TV Channel 9
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

TV BROADCAST

NORTH CAROLINA

Asheville WISE-TV Channel 62
Saturdays, (Time to be announced.)
New Bern WNBE-TV
Sundays, (Time and channel to be
announced.)

NORTH DAKOTA

Fargo WDAY-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 12 noon

OHIO

Cleveland WEWS-TV Channel 5
Saturdays, 8:30 a.m.
Columbus WLWC-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.
Lima WIMA-TV Channel 35
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)
Zanesville WHIZ-TV Channel 18
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

OKLAHOMA

Elk City KSWB-TV
Sundays, 5:30 p.m.
Oklahoma City KOCO-TV Channel 5
Sunday, 8:30 a. m.
Tulsa KVOO-TV Channel 2
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

ONTARIO

Peterborough CHEX-TV
Sundays, 12:00 noon.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia WHYY-TV Channel 35
(Time and day to be announced.)
Pittsburgh WTAE-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.
KDKA-TV Channel 2
Sundays, 8:30 a.m.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia WCCA-TV Channel 25
Sundays, 3:30 p. m.
Spartanburg WSPA-TV Channel 7
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

TEXAS

Big Spring KWAB-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 10:30 a.m.
El Paso KTSM-TV Channel 9
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.
Odessa KOSA-TV Channel 7
Sundays,
Temple KCEN-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.
Wichita Falls KAUF-TV
Sundays, (Time and channel to be
announced.)

UTAH

Salt Lake City KUTV Channel 2
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

VIRGINIA

Bristol WCYB-TV Channel 5
Sundays, 12:00 noon.

WEST VIRGINIA

Oakhill WOAY-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 7:30 p.m.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee WITI-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 7:30 a. m.
WUHF-TV Channel 18
Sundays, 3:30 p.m.

"Frank and Ernest"

BROADCAST SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------|------|----------------------|----------------------|
| ALABAMA | | | | INDIANA | |
| Decatur | WMSL 1400 | 12:15 | p.m. | Gary-Hammond | WJOB 1230 8:30 a.m. |
| Haleyville | WJBB 1230 | 10:05 | a.m. | Indianapolis | WIBC 1070 10:30 a.m. |
| | | | | Muncie | WLBC 1340 8:45 a.m. |
| ARIZONA | | | | IOWA | |
| Phoenix | KUEQ 740 | 8:30 | a.m. | Clinton | KROS 1340 7:15 p.m. |
| ARKANSAS | | | | KANSAS | |
| Jonesboro | KBTM 12:30 | 10:05 | a.m. | Goodland | KLOE 730 7:45 a.m. |
| CALIFORNIA | | | | KENTUCKY | |
| Chico | KPAY 1060 | 10:35 | a.m. | Bowling Green | WLBJ 1410 12:05 p.m. |
| El Centra | KICO 1490 | 10:30 | a.m. | Louisville | WAVE 970 8:15 a.m. |
| Los Angeles | KGLM 740 | 10:00 | a.m. | Newport | WNOP 740 9:00 a.m. |
| Los Angeles | KBIG(fm) 104.3 | 9:00 | a.m. | Winchester | WWKY 1380 10:30 a.m. |
| Marysville | KMYC 1410 | 10:35 | a.m. | MAINE | |
| Napa | KVON 1440 | 10:35 | a.m. | Bangor | WABI 910 12:00 noon |
| Redding | KVCV 600 | 7:45 | a.m. | MASSACHUSETTS | |
| San Diego | XERB 1090 | 9:45 | a.m. | Marlboro | WSRO 1470 12:05 p.m. |
| Tulare-Visalia | KCOK 1270 | 10:35 | a.m. | New Bedford | WBSM 1420 10:45 p.m. |
| | | | | Orange | WCAT 1390 9:15 a.m. |
| COLORADO | | | | MICHIGAN | |
| Denver | KIMN 950 | 9:30 | a.m. | Detroit | CKLW 800 7:15 a.m. |
| Fort Collins | KZIX 600 | 10:05 | a.m. | Grand Rapids | WMAX 1490 9:00 a.m. |
| Pueblo | KDZA 1230 | 10:05 | a.m. | Saginaw | WSGW 790 10:30 a.m. |
| DELAWARE | | | | MINNESOTA | |
| Wilmington | WTUX 1290 | 10:15 | a.m. | Duluth-Superior | WQMN 1480 12:00 noon |
| DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA | | | | MISSISSIPPI | |
| Washington | WOL 1450 | 11:00 | a.m. | Biloxi | WLOX 1490 10:05 a.m. |
| FLORIDA | | | | Waynesboro | WABO 990 2:00 p.m. |
| Palatka | WSUZ 800 | 11:05 | a.m. | MISSOURI | |
| Tampa | WFLA 970 | 9:30 | a.m. | Joplin | WMBH 1450 6:05 p.m. |
| HAWAII | | | | Farmington | KREI 800 9:00 a.m. |
| Honolulu | KTRG 990 | 10:00 | a.m. | Joplin | WMBH 1450 10:05 a.m. |
| IDAHO | | | | Kansas City | KCMO 810 9:35 a.m. |
| Lewiston | KRLC 1350 | 9:35 | a.m. | MONTANA | |
| ILLINOIS | | | | Miles City | KATL 1340 9:15 a.m. |
| Chicago | WEAW 1330 | 10:00 | a.m. | NEBRASKA | |
| LaSalle | WLPO 1220 | 9:45 | a.m. | Grand Island | KRGI 1430 10:15 a.m. |
| West Frankfort | WFRX 1300 | 9:15 | a.m. | | |

BROADCAST SCHEDULE

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|------|------------|----------------------|------|------|------------|
| NEW JERSEY | | | | TEXAS | | | |
| Newark | WJRZ | 970 | 10:00 a.m. | Livingston | KVIL | 1220 | 8:45 a.m. |
| NEW MEXICO | | | | Lubbock | KDAV | 580 | 9:45 a.m. |
| Silver City | KSIL | 1340 | 10:05 a.m. | Pampa | KPDN | 1340 | 10:45 a.m. |
| NEW YORK | | | | San Antonio | KBOP | 1380 | 7:15 a.m. |
| Albany | WEEE | | 8:00 a.m. | Sherman-Dennison | KRRV | 910 | 11:45 a.m. |
| New York | WJRZ | 970 | 10:00 a.m. | Wichita Falls | KWFT | 620 | 10:15 a.m. |
| NORTH CAROLINA | | | | UTAH | | | |
| Beaufort | WBMA | 1400 | 9:00 a.m. | Brigham City | KBUH | | 12:05 noon |
| Belmont-Charlotte | | | | Logan | KLGN | | 9:05 a.m. |
| | WCGC | 1270 | 12:30 p.m. | Salt Lake City | KSOP | 1370 | 9:30 a.m. |
| Elizabeth City | WGAI | 560 | 11:05 p.m. | VERMONT | | | |
| Leaksville | WLOE | 1490 | 12:05 p.m. | Bottleboro | WTSA | 1450 | 12:05 p.m. |
| OHIO | | | | VIRGINIA | | | |
| Akron-Canton | WHLO | 640 | 7:30 a.m. | Richmond | WLEE | 1480 | 10:10 a.m. |
| Cincinnati | WNOP | 740 | 9:00 a.m. | WASHINGTON | | | |
| Columbus | WBNS | 1460 | 10:05 a.m. | Bellingham | KPUG | 1170 | 11:15 a.m. |
| Piqua | WPTW | 1570 | 11:30 a.m. | Centralia-Chehalis | KELA | 1470 | 10:35 a.m. |
| Zanesville | WHIZ | 1240 | 11:45 a.m. | Olympia | KGY | 1240 | 10:35 a.m. |
| OKLAHOMA | | | | Seattle | KAYO | 1150 | 9:45 a.m. |
| Oklahoma City | KLPR | 1140 | 12:05 p.m. | Tacoma | KMO | 1360 | 9:45 a.m. |
| OREGON | | | | WEST VIRGINIA | | | |
| Astoria | KAST | 1280 | 10:35 a.m. | Wheeling | WVVA | 1170 | 9:30 a.m. |
| Lebanon | KGAL | 920 | 9:00 a.m. | WISCONSIN | | | |
| Portland | KGON | 1520 | 10:00 a.m. | Fond du Lac | KFIZ | 1450 | 11:05 a.m. |
| The Dalles | KODL | 1230 | 9:15 a.m. | Janesville | WCLO | 1230 | 11:05 a.m. |
| PENNSYLVANIA | | | | WYOMING | | | |
| Allentown | WHOL | 1600 | 10:45 a.m. | Cheyenne | KVWO | 1370 | 10:05 a.m. |
| Connellsville | WCVI | 1340 | 12:05 p.m. | CANADA | | | |
| Pittsburgh | WWVA | 1170 | 9:30 a.m. | Calgary, Alta. | CKXL | 1140 | 8:15 a.m. |
| Pottstown | WPAZ | 1370 | 8:30 a.m. | Corner Brook, Nfld. | CFCB | 570 | 10:30 a.m. |
| PUERTO RICO | | | | Dauphin, Man. | CKDM | 730 | 10:30 a.m. |
| Aguadilla (Fri.) | WGRF | | 8:00 p.m. | Oshawa | CKLB | 1350 | 9:45 a.m. |
| SOUTH DAKOTA | | | | Prince Albert, Sask. | CKBI | 900 | 10:30 a.m. |
| Yankton | KYNT | 1450 | 11:05 a.m. | Vancouver, B. C. | CJOR | 600 | 9:00 a.m. |
| | | | | Winnipeg | CKY | 580 | 7:15 p.m. |

RADIO TOPICS FOR APRIL

5—"This Melting Earth"

19—"Our Day in Prophecy"

12—"Miracles of Healing"

26—"The Harmony of the Bible"

LESSON FOR APRIL 5

This Is God's Universe

GOLDEN TEXT: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."—Psalm 24:1

ISAIAH 40:21-26

THE supremacy of the great Creator throughout all the universe is a fact upon which we would all do well to meditate. It means that nothing can happen anywhere in the universe contrary to the will of the Creator. With the restricted ability to reason which our small minds impose upon us, it is not easy to understand why God allows certain things to happen. When we find ourselves in this position we need to exercise a strong faith in the Creator, his wisdom, justice, love and power, and believe that there is a good and sufficient reason for the things which we cannot understand.

It is God that "sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." (vs. 22) This language carries the thought of God's dominance over the affairs of the earth, and emphasizes how insignificant we are by comparison with him. The expression, "circle of the earth," suggests the truth that the earth is indeed round, not flat, as some thought it to be at the time Isaiah wrote these

words. It indicates the revealing power of the Holy Spirit operating upon the mind of the prophet.—II Pet. 1:21

God has no equal, as emphasized in the query of verse 25. He is the Almighty One. Nothing can interfere with the accomplishment of his purposes. This should be a great assurance to those who put their trust in him. This same Prophet Isaiah wrote, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isa. 55:8-11

Not only do we have this assurance that God's purposes in

the earth shall not fail, but in his Word he has revealed what his plan is for his human creatures. Our Golden Text declares that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." In Psalm 115:16 we read, "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men." Both these statements are true.

God gave man dominion over the earth, and the privilege of living forever in this paradise home. This was conditional upon obedience to the divine will. God in his wisdom did not create man blindly to obey him. He allowed man to exercise his own free will. He could obey divine law, or he could disobey. If he obeyed, he would be rewarded; if he disobeyed, he would be punished. Adam chose to disobey, so he was driven out of Eden into the unfinished earth to die.

Since that time sin and death have reigned in the earth. God could have prevented this, but his plan is for his human creatures to gain a knowledge of sin and its results through experience. That is why it appears to many that God is not interested in the affairs of men, and is doing nothing about human suffering. But God does care! He is now allowing man the freedom of the earth in running his own affairs, that he might learn the terrible results of sin, and also realize that he cannot continue to rule himself apart from God.

Meanwhile the loving Creator has been preparing for man's recovery from the condemnation of sin and death. He sent his Son into the world to be the Redeemer and Savior of mankind. (John 3:16) Throughout the present age he has been selecting from the world a little company of people who are willing to follow in Jesus' footsteps of sacrifice, suffering, and of death. These will be exalted to a heavenly plane of life to live and reign with Christ during the thousand years of his messianic kingdom.—Rev. 20:4, 6

During the time of God's preparation for the recovery of the world of mankind from sin and death, God has allowed evil to flourish and increase, except where it may have interfered with the outworking of his plans and purposes. Now we are near the end of that age. The kingdom age is dawning. Man is being permitted to destroy his own institutions, but the kingdom of Christ will take control. Then the great work of restitution, spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets, will begin.

QUESTIONS

Why is it important to know that God is in control of his universe?

How do we know that God's plan will not fail?

In what sense has God given the earth to his human creatures?

Explain briefly God's plan of redemption and restoration through Christ.

Man's Place in God's Universe

GOLDEN TEXT: "Thou madest him [man] to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet."—Psalm 8:6

PSALM 8

THE Creator gave man the high position of king in his earthly domain. This was man's place in God's universe. Many students of the Bible have lost sight of this basic truth, and think of man's present brief existence on earth as being preparatory for a later home in heaven. But nothing even remotely suggesting this idea is mentioned in the Genesis record of creation. According to this record man was created in the image of God, commanded to multiply and fill the earth, and have dominion over it.—Gen. 1:26-30

The 8th Psalm enlarges somewhat upon this truth, and explains why God is sufficiently interested in man as to continue being "mindful" of him, and to "visit" him. "When I consider thy heavens," David writes, "the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

David then reminds us that man is not an ordinary creature. He may seem to be insignificant, compared with the mighty works of creation as a whole. But, after all, he was created in God's

image, and was given dominion over the earth. This makes man important from the Creator's standpoint. True, man sinned and lost his dominion, and his life. But God still loved him, and in his plan made provision for his recovery from sin and death.

An important aspect in the divine plan to restore man to that which he lost is suggested in the word "visitest." This visit is carried out by God's beloved Son, whom he sent into the world to be man's Redeemer and Savior.—John 3:16

In Hebrews 2:6-10 Paul associates the coming of Jesus with the 8th Psalm, which he looks upon as being in part a prophecy outlining God's future plan for man, showing it to be the same as his original design in the creation. As noted, while man was originally given dominion over the earth, he lost that dominion through sin. Because of this Paul observes, "We see not yet all things put under him," that is, under man. (vs. 8) In other words, the ultimate divine purpose in the creation of man has not yet been attained.

But the plan which will lead to the full accomplishment of this purpose is moving forward.

Paul notes that while we do not yet see man restored to his lost dominion, "we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (vs. 9) In Jesus' first visit to earth he came as a man, a perfect man. It was his humanity which he gave in death as a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam. (John 6:51; I Cor. 15:21,22) This was a necessary step, looking toward the final and complete recovery of man from sin and death.

So, while we do not now see man properly exercising his dominion over the earth, and while at present he is a dying creature, with little of the original divine image remaining, it will not always be thus, for there is a second part of Jesus' "visit," during which, through the agencies of his messianic kingdom, man will be restored to that which was lost—his life, home, and dominion.

This work of restoring man to his lost dominion, and to life, will be accomplished during a period described by Peter as "the times of restitution of all things" which, he declared, God had "spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21)

This is God's arrangement for his earthly creatures in general. In the outworking of his plan for

the accomplishment of this purpose, there has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age the selection from mankind of a "little flock" to be associated with Jesus in the work of restoration to be accomplished during the thousand years of his kingdom. (Luke 12:32) Jesus said that he would go away and prepare a place for these. (John 14:2, 3) Paul refers to them as participating in a "heavenly calling."—Heb. 3:1

There are many promises of God in the Bible which apply exclusively to these who are called to discipleship during the present age to prove their worthiness of living and reigning with Christ during the Millennial Age. These promises emphasize the spiritual, or heavenly nature of their calling. Many students of the Bible have failed to recognize, however, that these heavenly promises to the footstep followers of the Master do not reflect his purpose for mankind in general. Man's destined position in God's universe continues to be on earth, where he will eventually exercise his original God-given dominion.

QUESTIONS

What provision did God make for his human creatures?

What is implied by the word "visitest" in Psalm 8:4?

Explain the basis upon which man is redeemed from death.

Do the heavenly promises of the Bible apply to mankind as a whole?

The Christian Faces Family Tensions

GOLDEN TEXT: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."—Ephesians 5:21

EPHESIANS 5:21—6:4

NOTHING is more beautiful than a well-ordered family and home. Since all are fallen and imperfect, there are sure to be differences of viewpoint on minor matters. These differences could well cause annoying tensions in a family. But where the spirit of Christian love and understanding prevail, these tensions are greatly reduced, so that the prevailing atmosphere in the home is one of peace and good will.

The divine arrangement for the family is that the husband should be the head. But this does not mean that he is to be arbitrary and domineering. It is not a dictatorship. It simply means that the husband—and if there are children, the father—should direct the affairs of the home, particularly in matters pertaining to the spiritual interests of the family. He should himself set a good example of devotion to the Lord, and encourage his family to follow his example.

In our lesson Paul is using this ideal arrangement of the home as an illustration of the relationship between Christ and his church.

"Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church," he wrote. There can be no proper headship of the husband apart from the true spirit of love. Paul indicates the type of love he is referring to when, carrying his illustration further, he reminds us that Christ's love caused him to lay down his life for his church.

Paul speaks of the relationship between Christ and his church as a "great mystery." Until this mystery was revealed by the Holy Spirit it was not known that the foretold Christ, or Messiah, would have associates in the outworking of the divine plan. There are various illustrations used in the New Testament to help us grasp this larger aspect of the messianic purpose.

Jesus is likened to the Head over his church, which, as Paul explains, is his body. (I Cor. 12: 12; Eph. 1:22, 23) This illustration is closely allied with the one in which the church is shown as becoming the bride of Christ. We read in Revelation 19:7 of the marriage of "the Lamb," and that his "wife" shall have made herself ready. Paul suggests this

preparation for the marriage, saying that she is sanctified by Christ through the washing of water by the Word, "that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."—vss. 26, 27

The bride of Christ is symbolically described in Psalm 45:13, 14. We quote: "The King's daughter within the palace is all-glorious; her clothing is inwrought with gold. She shall be led unto the king in brodered work." (R. V.) The reference here is to the time when the church is complete, raised from the dead in the first resurrection, and presented to her Lord, the Heavenly Bridegroom. It is then that the marriage of the Lamb will come. It is then that the prophecy concerning the marriage of the Lamb will be fulfilled.

While the church in the flesh is referred to in the Bible as the body of Christ, she will not be the bride of Christ until complete and glorified with him. It will not be until then that the beautiful statement of Revelation 22:17 will have its fulfilment, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

It is a mistake to suppose that

this wonderful text of Scripture is now having its fulfilment. The whole world is not now being invited to partake of the water of life referred to in this text. This is the water composing the river of life which is pictured as flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It will not be until the bride class has all been selected from mankind, made ready for her Heavenly Bridegroom, and actually glorified with him, that the kingdom of the Lord, here symbolized as the "throne," will be fully established in the earth.—Rev. 22:1, 2

On either side of this promised "river of water of life" are shown the "tree," or trees, of life. These trees yield their fruit every month, and the leaves of the trees will be for the healing of the nations. What a beautiful symbol this is of the blessing of all the families of the earth with health and life! And how wonderful to realize that love is the motive behind it all!

QUESTIONS

What is implied by the divine arrangement for the husband to be the head of the home? Should he be a dictator?

What is the "great mystery" set forth by the husband and wife illustration?

Is there now a "bride" of Christ? How is the bride made ready?

When will the statement, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come," be fulfilled?

The Christian and His Neighbors

GOLDEN TEXT: "And this commandment we have from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."—I John 4:21

I JOHN 4:16—5:3

IT IS important in the consideration of this lesson to determine just who are Christians. The expression, "Christian world," is often used in contrast with "the heathen world." Under such a classification a Christian could be almost anyone who is not a heathen, a Jew, or an avowed atheist. The Scriptures use the word "Christian" only three times. Its first use is when we are told that the brethren at Antioch were first called Christians. (Acts 11:26) Peter speaks of one who suffers for the name of Christ as a Christian.—I Peter 4:14-16

In our lesson John does not use the word "Christian." However, he describes what a Christian is by the statement, "Who-soever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." (ch. 5:1 R. V.) First there is the necessity of accepting Jesus as the Christ of promise. This is done upon the basis of faith, or belief. This, however, is more than a casual acknowledgment of the fact that Jesus came in fulfilment of God's messianic promises. True belief expresses itself in action, and the action called for in this case is the full dedication of oneself to do the will of God.

No one can be a Christian in the full sense of the word without being fully consecrated to the Lord.

To become a Christian one must first be drawn to Christ by God. Then we must exercise faith in Christ and the power of his redeeming blood, and upon the basis of this faith surrender ourselves to the doing of the divine will. But before we are truly Christians God must further act. John refers to saying that believers are "begotten of God." This is the Revised Version translation, and it is correct. No one is "born" of God until the first resurrection.

In the Greek language the same word is used both for "born" and "begotten." The context in which it is used determines which is meant. Jesus explained to Nicodemus that those who are born of the Spirit, or of God, can come and go invisibly, like the wind. (John 3:8) Obviously this is not true of Christians while they are still in the flesh, so the present status of believers is referred to in the revised translation as "begotten."

The will of God for all consecrated believers is that they might be emptied more and more

of self, and be filled with the Spirit of God, which is the spirit of love. These are to deny self, and to walk in the way of sacrifice, the footsteps of Jesus. (Matt. 16: 24) The spirit which motivated Jesus to lay down his life for us, and for the whole world of mankind, was love. So the Lord's will for us is that we also be so filled with love that we will lay down our lives for one another, and for mankind, even as Jesus did.

The devoted followers of the Master, in their love for God and for his people, should stand out as examples in any community in which they live. They will not be self-seeking, but ever on the alert to do good to those around them. While there are many noble people in the world who are not Christians, on the whole the people of the world are more inclined to take a selfish viewpoint of life than are the followers of the Master.

Living exemplary lives of unselfishness and helpfulness will not itself, however, convey the Gospel of the kingdom to our neighbors. In addition to our exemplary living, the Word must be spoken, the Gospel explained. That is the reason we are exhorted to hold forth the Word of life amidst a crooked and perverse generation.—Phil. 2:15, 16, R. V.

The general view is that the world is to be converted by the preaching of the Gospel during the present age. But this view is not supported by the Word of God. Jesus commanded his dis-

ciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel as "witnesses." (Acts 1:8) This witnessing of the Gospel will reach those whom God is drawing to Christ for the purpose of being associated with him in the future kingdom work of blessing the world, but the world will be little influenced by it. (John 6:44) When we witness to our neighbors we may expect that few, if any of them, will manifest any great degree of interest.

If we are filled with, and controlled by love, we will not fear bearing witness to the truth, even though at times we may discover that those to whom we witness are very much opposed to us. In John's day, the opposition was very severe, often leading to imprisonment and death. For this reason his explanations and admonitions were of great concern to those early believers. But they apply in principle to us. Although violent persecution is not so general today, we still have the opportunity of proving faithful through our witness work.

QUESTIONS

Explain what constitutes a Christian.

What is the difference between being "begotten" of God and being "born" of God?

What is the will of God for all true believers?

How should Christians appear to their neighbors?

How can Christians bear witness to the Gospel of the kingdom?

Will witnessing to the Gospel in this age convert the world?

THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

A Consideration of Catholic Doctrine—Section X

Veneration of Saints and Images

BEFORE proceeding with our study of this subject, it would be well to establish what is meant by the term "saint." In Catholic usage there is both a general and a specialized meaning given to the word: "All human beings whose souls are in heaven are saints. . . . But we cannot give public veneration to one who is not canonized or beatified. . . . To one who is beatified, only a limited public devotion is permitted. One who is beatified is called 'blessed;' one who is canonized is styled 'saint.' " ⁵⁸

To most Catholics the term "saints" instinctively calls to mind those past followers of Christ who were especially noted for their faith or acts of heroism, and later officially recognized and canonized by the church. "Ordinarily the inquiry into the question whether a person has practiced heroic virtue, which inquiry must precede beatification, is not begun until fifty years after his death. But of recent years there have been some remarkable exceptions to this rule. . . . Before beatification two certain and unquestionable miracles must be worked at the intercession of the person whose cause is being considered; and after beatification, before canonization, two additional miracles must be proven." ⁵⁹

This, however, is not the sense in which the word "saints" has been used in this treatise, because it is not so defined in the Scriptures. In the New Testament the word is used synonymously with those who compose the church, the footstep followers and disciples of Jesus Christ. The term is used with equal propriety to describe those still striving to serve Christ in this life, or those who have passed beyond. The necessary qualifications are faithfulness and obedience to God amidst the adversity and persecution inherent in the real Christian life.

To bear out this thought, let us notice some purely scriptural

⁵⁸Cassilly, *op. cit.*, p. 69

⁵⁹*Ibid.*

usages of the word. Turning first to I Corinthians 1:2 we find the Apostle Paul introducing his letter in this way: "To the assembly of God existing in Corinth, purified in Christ Jesus: to the chosen saints." (Fenton) And in Philippians 1:1 he wrote: "To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi." Yes, Paul realized that all true Christians who were called out of this world were also considered to be saints of God.

Many other examples could also be cited. Before Paul's conversion it was written of him: "How much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem." (Acts 9:13) As Peter was bearing witness to the truth, the scripture reads: "He came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda." (Acts 9:32) In every case where "saints" is used, we are made to realize that all true followers of the Master who are living up to their privileges of sacrifice and service to God are considered as such, and therefore should appropriate this term to themselves.

In comparison with the Scriptures, Catholic usage of "saint" appears very limited, since it can only be applied to Catholics themselves, and never during their own lifetime upon earth. "The Catholic Church declares only Catholics to be saints. . . . The heroic and integrally Christian life which makes a person a saint can be lived only within the Catholic Church. . . . There and there alone are found those who qualify as saints."⁶⁰

But now let us move on to a consideration of the place which the saints, the angels, and their images hold in the worship and devotion of Catholics. Why does the Catholic Church hold up the saints and the angels to veneration? We will let a Catholic source provide the answer: "That we may be encouraged to imitate their virtues and that we may be helped by their intercession."⁶¹

Here is some of the reasoning advanced to justify and encourage the offering of prayers to the saints: "In heaven the saints know about conditions on earth. . . . We can pray to them, and . . . God enables them to know our prayers. . . . They want to help . . . and they can help. . . . They have influence with

⁶⁰Knights of Columbus Religious Information Bureau, **But Why Don't You Pray to the Saints?**, p. 1

⁶¹Cassilly, *op. cit.*, p. 68

God; and that influence is at our disposal. It becomes effective through prayer.”⁶²

“It is natural for us to approach persons in authority through mutual friends. If we desire a favor from a king or president, instead of going to him directly, we frequently ask one who has influence with him to speak for us. In a similar way, when we consider our own unworthiness, we feel that we have a better chance to obtain a spiritual favor, if we ask the saints who are so close to God to intercede for us.”⁶³

Prayers to the saints may be formal or informal. An example of the former is a prayer taken from the liturgical act of the Mass which is said on the sixth of December: “O God, who didst honor the holy pontiff Nicholas with countless miracles, we ask that through his merits and intercession we may be freed from the flames of hell.”⁶⁴ In addition, “each Catholic usually has some special saints whom he admires in a particular way. . . . These he is urged to imitate and to call upon frequently.”⁶⁵

The entire foundation of praying to the saints is thus seen to be based upon purely human conception and reasoning. Sometimes, as we have shown, and we believe in this instance as well, these human ideas not only find no basis in the Scriptures, but actually run counter to the Bible’s teachings. All that was said previously in connection with Mary’s alleged intercessory abilities applies here as well. Not in all the Bible is there a single admonition for the believer to offer a prayer to Mary, to a saint, or to an angel. Always the exhortation is, “In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God,” and we might add, only through the merits of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.—Phil. 4:6

However, even within the sphere of the Catholic Church there have been outstanding spokesmen who cried out against reliance upon the saints. Notice how St. Ambrose demolishes the chief argument that is raised to justify the need for saints as inter-

⁶²Knights of Columbus Religious Information Bureau, **But Why Don't You Pray to the Saints?**, pp. 41, 42, 44

⁶³Cassilly, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁴Vila, *op. cit.*, p. 31

⁶⁵Knights of Columbus Religious Information Bureau, **But Why Don't You Pray to the Saints?**, p. 44

cessors: "He writes that to address God through his creatures, and to compare him who sees everything with the kings of the earth, whom we can't approach except through their courtiers, is a crime of divine lese majesty (Epistle to Romulus, 1)." ⁶⁶

The Catholic Church endeavors to justify the worship of Mary, the saints, and angels by teaching that there are different degrees or quality of worship. The highest form of worship is "latria," reserved only for God. Next comes "hyperdulia," properly rendered to Mary, slightly inferior in quality. Finally, there is "dulia," properly offered to saints and angels, somewhat more inferior, yet still part of worship. Let us see how this is delineated in the Catechism of Christian Doctrine, used in England: "Divine honor or worship . . . belongs to God alone. We should pay to the angels and saints an inferior honor or worship, for this is due to them as the servants and special friends of God. We should give to relics, crucifixes and holy pictures a relative honor, as they relate to Christ and his saints and are memorials of them." ⁶⁷

Here, then, is a system of worship which includes as its principal objects God, Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, the saints, the angels, and images of holy things. It is the way that Catholics are taught to carry out their devotions and add to their own sanctity. But the vital question becomes, is it the way taught in the Scriptures?

Worship of God the Father and worship of his Son Jesus Christ are both clearly illustrated and called for in the Bible. Concerning the Father, Jesus said: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matt. 4:10) Of the Son it is written: "Let all the angels of God worship him," and "All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." (Heb. 1:6, John 5:23) There is no question of propriety whatsoever when it comes to rendering grateful worship to the Almighty God, the Creator and Sovereign of the universe, and to his only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Here we are in wholehearted accord.

However, this is the sum total and full extent of acceptable

⁶⁶Vila, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 34

⁶⁷"Veneration of Images," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, VII, 672

worship as described in the Scriptures. The kind of worship that is offered to God and to Christ is of the same order of magnitude, and no other kind of worship is shown to be proper. Search as we might, we will not be able to find a scriptural breakdown of worship into various degrees for different beings or objects. There is no support whatsoever for the Catholic hypothesis that an inferior kind of worship should be granted Mary, the angels, the saints, and images of holy things.

To the contrary, the divine disapproval of rendering reverence and worship to any but God or Christ is shown over and over. Turn first to Acts 14:8-18, where Paul and Barnabas are depicted on a missionary journey into Asia. At Lystra, Paul noticed a man who had been a cripple all his life, and observed also that he had the faith necessary to be healed of his affliction. Paul therefore commanded, "Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.

"Then the priest of Jupiter . . . brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth. . . . And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them."

What an exciting experience for these early missionaries! But it was more than this, because we believe its recording in the Scriptures was meant to provide us with a valuable lesson. Notice that under no circumstances did Paul and Barnabas desire to have worship directed to themselves, even if it meant forcibly restraining the people from doing so.

In another account, found in Acts 10:25, 26, Peter is shown reproving the first Gentile convert for endeavoring to worship him: "And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up,

saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man." Then in Revelation 22:8, 9, as a result of John's experience, we have a clear-cut indication that not even angels are to receive our worship: "When I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, . . . worship God."

In endeavoring to pinpoint the origin of worshiping of saints and martyrs, we are led to the very same conclusions as those that apply to the Virgin Mary. Catholics are led to believe that the custom is as old as the Church itself: "It has been the immemorial practice and tradition of the Church to venerate the martyrs and other saints, to institute feasts and dedicate churches in their honor."⁶⁸ But in investigating this area we find it is not possible to establish a Christian basis for this custom, for the simple reason that it was not, in fact, Christian to begin with. Its adoption occurred only after the simplicity of the original Christian doctrine was abandoned. Evidently it was incorporated into the faith of the later Church to simplify the forced conversion of the masses of heathen. The saints and angels were given the same exalted positions that the great number of gods and demigods previously had held in the minds of such converts.

"The Christian Theodoret openly rejoiced that martyrs had been substituted for the pagan gods and given their glory. Sometimes, as did Gregory Thaumaturgos, officials of the Church encouraged the practice. . . . It is natural to assume an historic connexion between pagan ceremonies on the one hand and on the other the offering of lamps and flowers to the saints, the placing of food before the dead, the feasts in memory of the martyrs, and visits paid to them deep in the night."⁶⁹

The Place of Images

We come now to an area of Catholic practice which many Protestants consider to be verging upon the superstitious and sacrilegious—that of venerating images. The official Catholic position was stated by the Council of Trent in 1543: "The Holy

⁶⁸Cassilly, *op. cit.*, p. 68

⁶⁹Latourette, *op. cit.*, pp. 319-321

Synod commands that images of Christ, the Virgin Mother of God, and other saints are to be held and kept especially in churches, that due honor and reverence are to be paid to them, not that any divinity or power is thought to be in them for the sake of which they may be worshiped, or that anything can be asked of them, or that any trust may be put in images . . . but because the honor shown to them is referred to the prototypes which they represent, so that by kissing, uncovering to, kneeling before images we adore Christ and honor the saints whose likeness they bear.”⁷⁰

Here is an area where Catholics find extreme difficulty in attempting to harmonize the teachings of the Church with the clear statements of Scripture. Compare the foregoing Catholic view with the second of the well-known Ten Commandments, for example: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.”—Exod. 20:4, 5

These Bible verses are so plain and the instructions so explicit that for many years the Catholic Church has been reluctant to make them well-known. In the official Church catechisms it is standard practice to group the first two commandments together, under the general heading of the First Commandment. The over-all number of commandments is kept the same by dividing the Tenth Commandment into two parts.⁷¹ By doing this it is possible to minimize the import of the Second Commandment, and to include only a partial quotation of it along with the entire First Commandment. Thus, many Catholics who rely heavily upon their catechism for scriptural understanding are prevented from having the complete instructions of God relative to the making and honoring of images. We would urge our readers to verify this by carefully comparing the listing of the Ten Commandments as they appear in the twentieth chapter of Exodus with that in a Catholic catechism.

When confronted with the complete statement of the Second

⁷⁰“Veneration of Images,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, VII, 671

⁷¹Deharbe, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-29; Vila, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 18

Commandment as it appears in the Bible, Catholic authorities offer several different explanations. Two are suggested in the footnote for this verse in the Douay Bible: First, it is stated that this passage forbids only images which are made to be worshiped with divine honor, implying that images which receive a lesser degree of worship are allowable; second, that images in the house of God were expressly authorized in the Old Testament, as shown in the Jewish Tabernacle arrangement.⁷²

The first allegation has already been answered from the Scriptures, which were found to tolerate only one kind of worship—the true worship of God and Christ. Statements of other Catholic authorities also help to defeat this argument: “The First Commandment would seem absolutely to forbid the making of any kind of representation of men, animals, or even plants. . . . The people are not only told not to adore images nor serve them; they are not even to make any graven thing or the likeness—it would seem—of anything at all. . . . In distinction to the nations around, Israel was to worship an unseen God. . . . Any attempt to represent the God of Israel graphically is always put down as being abominable idolatry. Except for the human heads of the cherubim, we read nothing of statues of men in the lawful cult of the Old Testament. In this point at least, the Jew seems to have understood the commandment to forbid the making of such statues.”⁷³

With these sentiments we are in complete accord. But what about the second allegation concerning the images of cherubim which stood on both sides of the ark in the most holy compartment of the tabernacle? (Exod. 25:18-20) Were these used as objects of inferior worship such as Catholics today employ for their variety of images?

In studying the matter we find that the Israelites in general never even saw these cherubim. Though encamped about the tabernacle, they were never permitted to enter it. A high linen fence prevented them from seeing into the court which surrounded it. As a matter of fact, only the high priest was allowed to enter into the most holy compartment to carry out the rites

⁷²The Douay Bible House, *The Holy Bible*, footnote p. 85

⁷³“Veneration of Images,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, VII, 664, 665

of his priestly function. Nor were these cherubim designed to be worshiped at all, but rather, to serve as representations of certain of the attributes of the Almighty God, who manifested the glory of his presence in the most holy. Thus, another effort to defend the worship of images upon the basis of Scripture is seen to fall utterly short of its mark.

Catholic authorities are always careful to point out that when they advocate the veneration of images it is not because they feel that any special powers or abilities are inherently present in them, but only because they are reminders of the true persons whom they represent. But again let us notice how completely contrary to the teachings of Scripture even this qualification is found to be. As already verified from Catholic sources, the second commandment forbade the making and possessing of any kind of graven image, whether it be of false gods, men, or even of the true God himself. This is brought out very forcibly in Deuteronomy 4:15-18, where it is stated that God purposely refrained from showing himself to the Israelites in any form, so that they would have no basis for making a graven likeness to him:

“Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast, . . . any winged fowl, . . . any thing that creepeth, . . . any fish.” Hence, not only does God forbid the idolatrous worship of images or false gods, but he is equally as displeased with the making of graven images of the true God, if such a thing were possible to do!

Observe how the inspired words of Paul reveal that the wrath of God is kindled against those who insist on making such images or representations of the true God: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men . . . because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God. . . . but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible

man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. . . . Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more [margin, or, rather] than the Creator, who is blessed forever.”—Rom. 1:18, 21-23, 25

The second commandment of God, in the all-inclusive manner in which it is stated in the Bible, leaves no room for exceptions or compromise. When all else fails, the only way Catholics really can reconcile it with their practice is by rejecting it altogether with the assertion that it was a Jewish ordinance and is no longer binding upon Christians today: “The clause: ‘Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image,’ etc., . . . is clearly not natural law, nor can anyone prove the inherent wickedness of making a graven thing; therefore it is divine positive law of the Old Dispensation that no more applies to Christians . . . It was once for all abrogated by the promulgation of the Gospel.”⁷⁴

However, again we must identify this view as a purely human conception which is not supported by Scripture. Jesus said: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” (Matt. 5:17) Paul said: “The law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good.” (Rom. 7:12) We recognize that the Jewish Law consisted of two basic parts—moral and ceremonial. It is true that the carrying out of the ceremonial features has been done away with and is no longer obligatory upon Christians. But the moral features, as represented in the Ten Commandments, continue forever. Surely, what was holy, just, and good in one dispensation does not become modified in another, from God’s eternal viewpoint of what is beneficial to his creatures. Therefore we should not try to use such reasoning in an effort to justify the neglect of keeping these straightforward commandments of God.

It is difficult to comprehend how Catholic authorities on the one hand could have such a clear understanding of why God forbade the Israelites to make images, and on the other hand fail to appreciate that the very same reasoning holds true for Christians of today. For example, here is their comment on Exodus 20:3-5, partially referred to earlier: “The people are not

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 670, 671

(Continued on page 34)

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DAWN PUBLICATIONS

East Rutherford

NEW JERSEY

(Continued from page 31)

only told not to adore images nor serve them; they are not even to make any graven thing or the likeness—it would seem—of anything at all. One could understand so far-reaching a command at that time. If they made statues or pictures, they probably would end by adoring them.”⁷⁵

Yes, the recurring facts of Jewish history bear out this supposition. When the Israelites proved unfaithful to God and made various god-images for themselves, they did fall into the error of adoring and worshipping them. But, we ask, is this not exactly what has taken place in Catholic circles also, as admitted by Catholic scholars? Notice the extremes to which encouraging the veneration of images has led in the past:

“One must admit that just before the Iconoclast outbreak, things had gone very far in the direction of image worship. Even then it is inconceivable that anyone, except perhaps the most grossly stupid peasant, could have thought that an image could hear prayers, or do anything for us. And yet the way in which some people treated their holy icons argues more than the merely relative honor that Catholics are taught to observe towards them.

“In the first place, images had multiplied to an enormous extent everywhere; the walls of churches were covered inside from floor to roof with icons, . . . they hung in a place of honor in every room, over every shop; they covered cups, garments, furniture, rings; wherever a possible space was found, it was filled with a picture of Christ, our Lady, or a saint. . . . Icons were crowned with garlands, incensed, kissed. Lamps burned before them, hymns were sung in their honor. They were applied to sick persons by contact, set out in the path of a fire or flood to stop it by a sort of magic. In many prayers of this time the natural inference from the words would be that the actual picture is addressed.”⁷⁶

Thus fallen man’s inclination to adore that which is made by his own hands, instead of the true and living God, is shown to be

⁷⁵*ibid.*, p. 664

⁷⁶*ibid.*, p. 668

no less a problem in the Christian dispensation than in the Jewish. Do not these excerpts from the history of catholicism dramatize the same need to heed the commandments of God along these lines as was in evidence when the divine dealings were more directly with the Israelites?

If history is to be of any value to us today, certainly Christians should profit from the experiences of God's ancient people. Let us recall that it was for this very reason—the making and adoring of graven images—that Israel was cast off from God's favor and scattered into all the world: "When . . . ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of anything, and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God, to provoke him to anger: . . . ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land . . . And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen."—Deut. 4:25-27

Because of her unfaithfulness, Israel lost the opportunity to become members of the royal priesthood or body of Christ—that select company which God will use in blessing all the nations of earth. The Apostle Paul, in his masterful sermon recorded in the eleventh chapter of Romans, tells us that it was as a result of Israel's fall that the great salvation could come unto the Gentiles. The natural branches of the olive tree were broken off because of unbelief, and wild branches from among the Gentiles were permitted to be grafted in, to partake of the glorious promise made to Abraham.

But notice Paul's grave warning to all who come into this close relationship with God: "If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."—Rom. 11:21, 22

Now, then, if the making and venerating of graven images contributed directly to Israel's downfall and prompted the severity of God to descend upon her, what shall we say for Christians engaged in this very same practice today? We simply do not believe it is possible to merit a share of God's goodness and favor if this displeasing practice is continued. Disobedience can lead only to the cutting off which Paul predicted.

Origin of Image Worship

Let us now explore the origin of this practice of venerating pictures and statues in the Christian church. Catholic scholars themselves freely concede that there is no evidence to show that this was engaged in by the Early Church: "For the first period we have no information. There are so few references to images at all in the earliest Christian literature that we should hardly have suspected their ubiquitous presence were they not actually there in the catacombs as the most convincing argument. But these catacomb paintings tell us nothing about how they were treated. We may take it for granted . . . that the first Christians understood quite well that paintings may not have any share in the adoration due to God alone."⁷⁷

Once again we find the Catholic Church making an appeal to works of art in an effort to establish a doctrine. But we are not supplied with a single scrap of evidence which even implies that these pictures were considered sacred, or that any kind of worship was accorded to them.

The earliest Christians, of course, were of Jewish vintage. They were all thoroughly familiar with the Old Testament and the earlier commandments which God had given their nation. In practicing and propagating their new Christian faith, the furthest thing from their minds would have been to return to the forbidden act of constructing and venerating images. This was what they observed in all the pagan lands around them; this was what their faith in the one true God caused them to reject; and their nonconformity in this respect was one of the chief causes of their persecution.

For those prepared to approach the study of church history in an objective manner, it is a fairly simple matter to determine the attitude of the early Christians toward images. One source writes plainly: "Images were unknown in the worship of the primitive Christians; and this fact was, indeed, made the ground of a charge of atheism on the part of the heathen against the Christians."⁷⁸

Coming to the writings of the Early Church fathers, we find

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, p. 667

⁷⁸McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia*, IV., 503

there is no question where they stand on this matter. Throughout the course of the church's development, there were men of God who "feared the ever-growing cult of images and saw in it danger of a return to the old idolatry. We need hardly quote in this connection the invectives of the apostolic fathers against idols (Athenagoras, Theophilus, Minucius Felix, Arnobius, Tertullian, Cyprian) in which they denounce not only the worship, but even the manufacture and possession of such images. . . .

"Eusebius of Caesarea (d. A. D. 340), the father of Church history, must be counted among the enemies of icons. . . . They are a 'heathen custom'; he wrote many arguments to persuade Constantine's sister Constantia not to keep a statue of our Lord. A contemporary bishop, Asterius of Amasia, also tried to oppose the spreading tendency. . . . Epiphanius of Salamis (d. A. D. 403), tore down a curtain in a church in Palestine because it had a picture of Christ or a saint." Philostorgius, as late as the fifth century, and Serenus, Bishop of Marseilles, were also prominent in opposing the veneration of images as a Christian practice."⁷⁹

There is also preserved in the historical records an example of an Early Church resolution which was passed in an effort to maintain the purity of the Christian faith and practice: "Canon XXXVI of the Synod of Elvira is important. This was a general synod of the Church of Spain held . . . about the year 300. . . . The canon reads: 'It is ordained that pictures are not to be in churches, so that which is worshiped and adored shall not be painted on walls.'"⁸⁰

But the vigorous admonitions of the church fathers and the efforts of various individual churches were powerless to quell the tide surging toward the adoption of images in the church. Again we are faced with the question, if image worship was not a part of the early Christian faith, from where did it emanate? And was the decision to adopt the practice based truly upon Christian principles, or was it merely part of an over-all program designed to simplify the conversion of the pagan masses?

In searching for the true origin of image worship, we discover

⁷⁹"Veneration of Images," **The Catholic Encyclopedia**, VII, 669

⁸⁰*ibid.*

before going very far that here is another area where Catholic scholars find it difficult to avoid confirming a pagan link. Observe, for example, what is said concerning the current Catholic practice of crowning statues and pictures of the Virgin Mary:

“The coronation of images is an example of an old and obvious symbolic sign of honor that has become a fixed rite. The Greek pagans offered golden crowns to their idols as specially worthy gifts. St. Irenaeus (d. A. D. 202) already notices that certain Christian heretics crown their images; he disapproves of the practice. . . . The offering of crowns to adorn images became a common practice in the Eastern Churches. . . . At Rome, too, a ceremony evolved out of this pious practice. . . . The Chapter of St. Peter have a right to crown statues and pictures of our Lady since the seventeenth century.”⁸¹

What a clear and revealing outline, tracing the development of this practice to its origin! First it was the Greek pagans who delighted in offering gifts to their idols. In the second century certain Christian heretics were observed to have copied the custom, employing images of Christian saints instead of the pagan idols. They were severely reprimanded for doing so by a prominent spokesman of the Early Church. Nevertheless, the custom spread and finally was adopted by the church at large. Today, it is common practice in the Catholic Church and considered a special privilege to crown statues and pictures of the Virgin Mary!

By the fourth century the church had become so thoroughly saturated with pagan customs that the new converts were permitted to continue their old practices under Christian guise: “Philostorgius says that in the fourth century the Christian Roman citizens in the East offered gifts, incense, even prayers (!) to the statues of the emperor. It would be natural that people who bowed to, kissed, incensed the imperial eagles and images of Caesar, . . . should give the same signs to the cross, the images of Christ, and the altar. So . . . there grew up traditions of respect that gradually became fixed, as does all ceremonial. Such practices spread in some measure to Rome and the West, but their home was the Court at Constantinople.”⁸²

⁸¹Ibid., p. 670

⁸²Ibid., p. 667

But it remains for the Catholic scholar Cardinal Newman to make the clearest admission in this regard: “. . . images at a later date . . . are all of pagan origin and sanctified by their adoption into the Church.”⁸³ Some Catholics have even viewed with pride their church’s incorporation of various pagan rites, in the belief that a greater universality is thus expressed.

For our answer to this we turn to the words of our Master, who taught that only truth can sanctify, and in particular, God’s written Word of truth, the Holy Scriptures: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth.” (John 17:17) If we accept Jesus’ testimony, the act of adopting pagan error into the church is seen in its proper light. The mere approval of a religious practice by certain officials of a church does not serve to sanctify it, if it is not also in harmony with God’s will as revealed in the Bible. The Christian church was commissioned to pass on in their purity the eternal truths left by its founder, not to compromise them with pagan error.

Worshipping in Spirit and in Truth

In bringing this subject to a conclusion, we would like to point out some of the dangers that are present in image worship. First there is always the possibility of confusing the object with what it is supposed to represent. This problem is especially acute among the lesser educated in both Catholic and pagan lands. The Apostle Paul counseled us against falling into this error when he said: “Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.”—Acts 17:29

Next there is the danger of thinking that the sacred image possesses inherent grace or special powers which can benefit the believer. We have already seen the extremes to which this belief led in earlier times. In our own day we are all familiar with the practice of wearing or carrying small images of the saints, considered by many to bring blessings and good fortune. But hear the sober words of the prophet Habakkuk: “What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth

⁸³Cardinal John H. Newman, **An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine**, p. 373

therein, to make dumb idols? Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it."—Hab. 2:18, 19

Undoubtedly the greatest danger of all in the practice of venerating images is that it serves to detract from the true worship of the one Almighty God and his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Paul wrote: "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (I Cor. 8:6) The church father Cyprian wrote: "Why do you bow your body captive before foolish images and creations of earth? God made you upright, . . . your countenance is raised upwards to heaven and to God. Look thither, lift your eyes thitherward, seek God in the highest." ⁶⁴

Our Lord Jesus himself also described the nature of true worship when he said: "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." (John 4:23) We have a partial insight into what Jesus meant by this from the words of Clement of Alexandria: "For, in sooth, the image is only dead matter shaped by the craftsman's hand. But we have no sensible image of sensible matter, but an image that is perceived by the mind alone—God, who alone is truly God." ⁶⁵

Yes, when we examine Christianity in contrast with heathen religions, we find that it is unique in not requiring idols or images to assist in worship. The Christian's conception of God is not based upon the forms or likenesses which his art is capable of producing. It is a purely mental image which is given life, form, and reality by the revelation of Scripture. It is from a study of God's written word that we perceive the wisdom, justice, love, and power of our God. As shown earlier, the deeper appreciation of God's plans and purposes is revealed to those who humbly ask of him, who have given their lives in consecration to him, and who are granted the guidance of his Holy Spirit.

The true worship of God is based upon faith—faith both in his existence and in his ability to bring to pass all that he has

⁶⁴Vila, *op. cit.*, p. 23

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 22, 23

spoken. Faith, by the very definition of the word, does not require pictorial representations or images, since it is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1) This evidence of the reality of spiritual and heavenly things is provided for us in God's Word, the Holy Scriptures.

If we have the Bible, and the correct understanding of it as provided by the Holy Spirit, we have all the ingredients necessary to carry out the true worship of God. If we are careful in using this means of grace to exercise our spiritual senses, there will be no need to turn to graven works of art or any other source. Through an appreciation of the character and plan of God, we will desire to render worship which will be acceptable to him, the true worship which is "in spirit and in truth."—John 4:24

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

APRIL 2—"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."—Galatians 6:10 (Z. '03-121 Hymn 254)

APRIL 9—"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain."—I Corinthians 9:24 (Z. '95-93 Hymn 310)

APRIL 16—"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."—

Malachi 3:17 (Z. '03-223 Hymn 58)

APRIL 23—"That on good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."—Luke 8:15 (Z. '03-408 Hymn 198)

APRIL 30—"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."—I Peter 2:9 (Z. '03-165 Hymn 322)

THE PARABLE SERIES

Article XX Matthew 22:1-14

The Wedding Garment

THIS is another of our Lord's parables in which experiences in connection with a feast are used to illustrate valuable points of truth. The beginning of the parable is similar to the one recorded in Luke 14:16-24, but there are several differences. In the parable recorded by Luke "a certain man" arranges for the feast, whereas in the Parable of the Wedding Garment the arrangements are made by "a certain king," in connection with his son's marriage. But in both parables there is the failure on the part of the originally invited guests to appear at the feast, so finally the servants are sent into the highways to invite others to the feast.

Obviously the parable in Matthew is a different parable, for other details are given. The bidden guests in this parable who refuse to attend the feast are again urged by the servants to do so. But instead of accepting the invitation they spitefully treat the servants, and we are informed that this results in their master, the king, sending forth his armies and destroying the murderous guests.

It is not difficult to see in these

circumstances of the parable that which actually occurred in the outworking of the divine plan beginning with the first advent of Jesus. The "king" in the parable seems clearly to be Jehovah, and the "son" for whom he made a marriage, his beloved Son Christ Jesus. Jehovah is indeed the great King of the universe, and we know that in his plan for the redemption and restoration of the human race he has arranged that his beloved Son will have a "bride," and that there shall be a marriage supper of the Lamb, who is Jehovah's Son.—Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2, 9; 22:17

It is indicated in the parable that it had been predetermined who would be invited to the marriage and have the privilege of participating in it. The Scriptures show that these "guests" were the Israelites, particularly those living at the time of our Lord's first advent. The record also reveals that the majority of these, even as shown by the parable, not only declined the invitation, but evilly entreated those who called it to their attention, bitterly persecuting many of these faithful servants of the Lord, both before and after Pentecost.

It is also historically true that a few years later the Jewish nation was destroyed, thousands of Israelites individually being killed. This was in A. D. 70-73. But this did not interfere with the King's plan for the marriage of his Son, for invitations have since gone out into the highways; that is, to the Gentiles, giving opportunity for other guests to prepare themselves for the feast and for the marriage.

The parable states that in sending out the general call to the marriage and feast both the good and the bad were to be brought in. This does not imply that the servants were arbitrarily to bring to the supper those whom they knew to be wicked, or unworthy. The thought is, rather, that as the Gospel call has gone forth throughout the world all sorts of people have responded to it. In most instances, no doubt, all who respond are sincere, but many fail later to measure up to all that is required of them.

The closing verse of the parable states that "many are called, but few are chosen." This is one of the important lessons of the parable. It is a point that is emphasized in the Scriptures. The Apostle Peter speaks of making our "calling and election sure." (II Pet. 1:10) It is not enough simply to be called. If we are to enter into the marriage of the Lamb, and to the marriage supper of the Lamb, we must make our calling sure by faithfulness

to its terms. The same thought is mentioned by the Revelator when he speaks of those who are with the Lamb as the "called, and chosen, and faithful."—Rev. 17:14

The Wedding Garment

IN THIS parable special wedding garments are provided for the guests by the king. After all the guests are present there is an inspection of them, and it is found that one present is not wearing the garment. It seems that the custom of the time was for hosts on such occasions to provide a special robe for each guest to wear. It is assumed, therefore, that this one man must have accepted and donned the robe in order to be within and mingle with the guests, but later removed it.

When the king observed this man without a robe he gave orders to bind him hand and foot, and to cast him into outer darkness where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth, denoting a condition of great chagrin and disappointment. It would seem reasonable to conclude that this one man might well represent a class who would remove their robes after appearing at the feast, or in the outer chambers of the king's home, waiting for the marriage and the feast to take place.

Fortunately, as in most cases of interpreting symbols, we do not need to theorize as to what is represented by this robe. A robe

is, of course, a covering, and in this case, a covering which made the individual acceptable in appearance to the host. This symbolism is used in many places in the Scriptures. In Revelation 19:8 the entire Christ company, spoken of as the "wife" of the Lamb, is shown to be given fine linen robes, clean and bright (Greek) which are described as "the righteousness of saints."

Every individual who eventually becomes a member of the "bride" class was a member of the fallen adamic race. (Rev. 21: 2, 9; 22:17) The personal righteousness of all these has been but as "filthy rags," and not pleasing to the Lord. (Isa. 64:6) The imperfections of all the guests in the parable must, therefore, be covered by a robe which the King provides. This is the robe of Christ's righteousness. (Isa. 6: 10) The righteousness of the saints is not their own, then, but the righteousness provided by the Lord, the righteousness of Christ.

It seems clear that none could become even a probationary guest at the Lord's marriage feast who did not accept Christ as Redeem-

er, and upon the basis of this make a full consecration to do the Father's will. Wearing the robe of Christ's righteousness would denote an acceptance and appreciation of the great ransom feature of the divine plan, a belief that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" and made acceptable in the sight of God.—Acts 4:12

Taking off of the wedding garment would therefore imply a loss of appreciation for the ransom. It could be an outright denial of the fact that Christ gave himself as a corresponding price for our sins and for the sins of the whole world; or it could be a gradual cooling of zeal, and an ignoring of this feature of the divine plan. The Lord is, of course, the judge as to all that might be implied in this. Our privilege and intent in connection with it is to maintain our keen interest in the ransom, and ever to remember that apart from the righteousness of Christ we could have no part in the divine plan, and no hope of being at the marriage and the marriage feast of the Lamb.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever.

Hebrews 13:20-21

He Loves and Cares

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isaiah 40:28-31

THE Apostle Peter wrote, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (I Pet. 5:7) How reassuring are the many texts of Scripture which affirm the fact that our loving Heavenly Father, the Creator of heaven and earth, is abundantly able to care for his people. He is all-powerful, and is never weary. He watches over us, and his ear is ever open to our cries for help in time of need. He will not withhold any good thing from those who love him sincerely, and who have devoted themselves wholly to his service.—Ps. 84:11

Man was created in the image of God, but we do not understand this to refer to a bodily image. However, in order that we may grasp to some extent the unlimited capabilities of the Creator, the Scriptures refer to his various senses of sight, hearing, smelling, etc. By this use of language we are able to understand that our loving Heavenly Father enters into our feelings, and is sympathetic to all our needs, and will, through his unlimited agencies, care for us. The Psalmist inquires: "He that planteth the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?"—Ps. 94:9

And he does "see" and "hear" his people. In Psalm 34:15 we read: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." And again, "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflic-

tions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."—Ps. 34:17-19

In the 7th verse of this psalm we are informed that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." This is an indication of one of the means the Lord uses in the care of his people. Jesus spoke of these angels, and said that they "do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 18:10) Thus they have an accurate knowledge of the Heavenly Father's will for each of his people, and can shape the divine providences in their lives in exactly the right manner for the accomplishment of his will.

This, however, calls for a right attitude of heart and mind on our part. The Lord's delivering power is exercised only on behalf of those who are of a "contrite spirit," and of a "broken heart." The proud of heart, and those who resist his providences in their lives, have no assurance that the Lord's ear is always open to their cry. Nor should we expect that his power exercised on our behalf will necessarily deliver us from our trials and difficulties. The Lord in his wisdom may "see" that certain hardships—mental, physical, or both—are among the experiences we need in order that we might be more fully developed as new creatures in Christ Jesus. But while he may not deliver us from our trials, we are assured that he will provide strength to bear them.

On the other hand, the Lord's faithful people are assured of ultimate deliverance from all their afflictions, the deliverance which will be theirs in the first resurrection. It is important, therefore, that in noting the Lord's providences in our lives we maintain this regard for the ultimate, which is the Lord's viewpoint. He is not working in us merely for the accomplishment of what might be his good pleasure for today or tomorrow, but more particularly to prepare us for the glory of the future, when, if faithful, we will have the privilege of living and reigning with Christ.

The Apostle Paul presented the proper viewpoint in this connection when he wrote that our "light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (II Cor. 4:17) If we are of a contrite spirit, and fully submissive to the manner in which the Lord is working in

us, then we also will realize that whatever our trials may be, they are in reality to be considered but "light afflictions" by comparison with the eternal "weight" of glory which they are helping to work out in us. And the Lord knows just how to shape our experiences to accomplish his purpose in our lives as new creatures.

In Psalm 101:6 we read, "Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me." Here, again, we are reminded that it is only those who faithfully serve the Lord who are the objects of his special watchcare. These, the Lord declares, "may dwell with me." How precious is the thought that if we are endeavoring with all our might to know and to do the Lord's will, it means that we are to dwell with him, in the secret of his presence. And this, after all, is where we should always delight to be. The Psalmist speaks of dwelling in "the secret place of the most High," and of abiding "under the shadow of the Almighty."—Ps. 91:1

God's Foreknowledge

God's love for his people, and his watchcare over them, can be seen in a more wonderful light when we take into consideration the exercise of his foreknowledge. In Psalm 139:16 we read, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." In this psalm David declares that he was "fearfully and wonderfully made." (vs. 14) It is quite possible that David is representative here of Jesus, the Head of his church, which is his body, and that the "members" known in advance, even before they "were fashioned," are the members of Christ's body.

In any case, whether the reference be to the natural body, or to Christ and his body members, the lesson is the same, in that it reveals the infinite wisdom of the Creator in being able to know in advance the outcome of the mighty works which he sets out to accomplish. Nor does this in any way destroy our free moral agency. Our finite minds could not determine what another would do tomorrow unless we controlled his actions, and compelled him to take a certain course. But God is able to know

what we will do without controlling our actions. This is because his "eye" is able to discern that which goes quite beyond our comprehension. The best we can do is to understand the meaning of what is taking place in our lives today, and the experiences through which we passed yesterday, and even here our understanding is quite limited. However, many of the Lord's people can look back in their lives and note the wonderful way in which the Lord was overruling their experiences, frequently even before they knew him. And this is still more true of his wonderful providences in our lives since we dedicated ourselves to the doing of his will.

But how wonderful that the Lord's wisdom was shaping our affairs, even in our being drawn to him, when as yet we possibly had no definite knowledge of him, or of his plans and purpose for us and for the world. Yes, we can trace his overrulings which brought us in contact with his Word of truth, and with Jesus, and with the brethren. And after we made a full consecration of ourselves to do his will, his providences in our lives have been still more outstanding. To realize this is to strengthen our faith, for we should find it easy to realize that he who led and blessed us in the past will continue to do so, and that the darkness which may surround us today will, in his due time, be dispelled, and once again the sweet smile of his presence will be revealed.

Proverbs 15:3 reads: "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." This is most comforting, for it assures us that no matter where we are, or what the circumstances might be, the Lord "sees" both the good and the evil; that is, he knows the circumstances which are favorable to us as new creatures, and sees the evil influences which are arrayed against us. This means that the Lord is always aware of the difficulties which confront us, and of any efforts which might be made by the Adversary to hinder our progress in the narrow way, and will use his power to prevent any evil befalling us.

How wonderful this is! In moments when our faith might not be as strong as it should be, we might temporarily wonder if the Lord really knows about the complexities of our trials, and is actually caring for us in each situation. But we have the

assurance of his Word that he "sees" in every place, and understands every situation, and is abundantly able to care for us regardless of what the circumstances may be, and will care for us if we continue faithfully to walk in the narrow way, and put our trust fully in him. David, the man after God's own heart, was assured that the Lord was with him in every experience of life. He wrote:

"O Lord, thou has searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell [the grave], behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."—Ps. 139:1-12

How beautifully David emphasizes the fact of God's love and care regardless of the situation or place in which he might find himself, and this can be true also of us. No matter where we may be, even if we fear that our mistakes may have taken us away from the Lord and his care, we can still be assured that he leads us, and that he upholds us. If conditions seem dark around us, and we are uncertain of the direction in which we should go, we can be assured that the darkness is as the light to our Heavenly Father, that he is never confused by the complex situations which may baffle and perplex us.

We can know that our God knows and understands our every need, that he is sympathetic to our every ache and pain, whether they be heartaches or bodily pains. We may not be able to "see" him immediately in every changing circumstance of life, but by faith we can know that his providences are directing, that his mighty power is sustaining us, and that he will not permit us to

be tested above that which we are able to bear; and if our burdens become too great he will provide a way of escape.—I Cor. 10:13

We have in Job a wonderful example of faith in God's love and care. Job did not understand why the Lord had permitted such severe experiences to come to him. Everything in his life which he had treasured, and which he had accepted as having been given to him by the Lord, was removed—even his health. Job did not understand this, but he continued to believe that the Lord knew all about it, and would overrule his experiences for his good. While passing through these deep shades of sorrow Job explained his search for God, saying:

“Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: but he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”—Job. 23:8-10

This is a wonderfully true description of experiences which the Lord permits to come to all those who are faithful to him. The purpose they serve is to test our fidelity to the Lord, and our faith in the fact that he knows exactly what is best for us as new creatures. How we have all searched for the Lord in trials which have come upon us! Job says that he looked in every direction, symbolically describing his attempts to understand the meaning of the calamities which had come upon him, and why his God, whom he trusted and had served faithfully, had permitted them.

But at the time Job failed to comprehend. He did not “find” God. But Job's anchor of faith held secure. He remained assured that while he could not see God in his experiences, the Lord could see him, and his conclusion was, “He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.” He knew the Lord was testing him and understood all about his troubles, and that if he maintained his faith and his integrity he would pass the test, and come forth as gold.

Job trusted the Lord even though he could not understand why his providences had so harshly frowned upon him. Job's faith enabled him to be convinced that God's love and care were being manifested in his life, even though his own reasoning on the

matter would lead him to believe otherwise. The Apostle Peter described a situation like this as "the trial of your faith," which, he explained, is "much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire."—I Pet. 1:7

The reason we can trust in the Lord, and know that he is caring for us, regardless of circumstances which might indicate otherwise, is our faith in his ability to see beyond the immediate present, and therefore to shape our experiences in a manner to accomplish the ultimate purpose he has in mind for us in his great plan of the ages. And when we remember that God's design for us is that we might attain "glory and honor and immortality," and a place of joint-heirship with Christ in his kingdom, we will realize that the trials of the present are not worthy to be compared with the glories of the future; and since the Lord is using them to test our fidelity to him, and to work out in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, we will rejoice in his love and wisdom which permits them, and continue to believe that he is caring for us in every vicissitude of life.—Rom. 2:7

The Psalmist wrote: "The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine." (Ps. 33:18, 19) There is little or nothing in "this present evil world" that is favorable to the sustenance and growth of the Lord's people as new creatures in Christ Jesus. (Ga. 1:4) We could well say, as new creatures in Christ Jesus, that we are surrounded with famine conditions which, apart from the Lord's love and care, would lead to our death.

But our loving Heavenly Father watches over our every interest, and makes every necessary provision to deliver us from the death from which there would be no awakening. He provides "meat in due season" in his Word. He provides the fellowship and comfort of his people. He provides just such experiences as will best serve to accomplish his divine purpose. He can turn unfavorable circumstances into assets for the new creature if we but put our trust in him, and continue to allow him to work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.

The fact that we feel weak and inadequate for the tasks before us merely gives our Heavenly Father an opportunity to use his mighty power on our behalf. As our text declares, "He giv-

eth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." When Paul prayed for the removal of his "thorn in the flesh," and his request was not granted, he accepted the Lord's will in the matter, explaining that the Lord said unto him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." To this Paul added, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."—II Cor. 12:7-9

Our text indicates that even those who by nature are usually strong, become "faint" and "weary," and that "young men shall utterly fall." Thus is emphasized that even those who might be inclined to think they are strong are not really so when it comes to walking in the narrow way, for actually none are able to maintain their faithfulness to the Lord, and their zeal for his cause, without divine help. There are too many opposing forces arrayed against the children of God for any of them to suppose that they can win in the struggle except as they wait upon the Lord, looking to him at all times for grace to help.

But how blessed the assurance that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength"; that "they shall mount up with wings as eagles"; that "they shall run, and not be weary"; that "they shall walk, and not faint." How blessed, indeed, is the privilege of waiting on the Lord, knowing that in his own way and time he will provide strength; that he does love and care in all the circumstances of life. Sometimes, indeed, the experiences which seem difficult for us may, and usually are, evidences of his love, for he knows our needs better than we do, and will see to it that when the need is for bitterness, that need will be supplied, even as he also supplies the sweetness that so fills our hearts and lives with joy.

The Apostle Paul admonished us to "consider" Jesus, who endured such "contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Heb. 12:3) We know that our Heavenly Father loved his Son Jesus. We know that Jesus never displeased his Father, yet he did suffer. He was allowed to die on Calvary's cross. The Father did not deliver him from these experiences, but did give him strength to bear them. And we are to think of him, and remember his prayer in which he affirmed that the Father loves us even as he loved him. (John

17:23-26) Let us rejoice in the richness of the Father's love, and not faint when his love permits trials which are difficult for the flesh to bear, for he knows just what is best for us.

"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Jesus said to Peter when he became fearful of the storm which was swirling about him. And how quickly that storm was calmed when the due time came. (Matt. 14:22-33) So with the storms in our lives. They cannot harm us, but should only help to increase our faith as we note the Lord's power in bringing us through these tempests of the soul. And may our faith continue to increase in our Father's love and care, enabling us to trust him fully until he brings us all the way into that desired haven of perfect rest and peace beyond the veil.



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Things to Remember, Things to Forget

IT SHOULD be remembered that the New Testament is not particularly addressed to the world, but to those the Father has specially given to his well-beloved Son out of the world; namely the Christian church. (John 17:6-9) True, a time is coming (the period of Messiah's kingdom) when God will specially deal with the world, or as Paul says, will "judge the world in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) Then, as our Lord said, speaking of this time, the world will believe that God sent his only begotten Son to die for their sins. (John 17:21) Jesus came, not "to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."—John 3:17

However, speaking of the work our Lord in association with his disciples, begun at his first advent, he said in substance: I am not come at this time to save the world, but to gather and bring the church into at-one-ment with God and myself. Hence we hear

him say, "I pray not for the world." (John 17:9) But as soon as the church has been gathered and perfected, our Master tells us how he will be lifted up as earth's new King, and "will draw all men unto me." (John 12:32) It is then that Jehovah, addressing his well-beloved Son, will say, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Ps. 2:8, R. V.

It is important, therefore, to keep in mind these two salvations: (1) the heavenly salvation of the church, as Jesus said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am" (John 17:24); and (2) the salvation of mankind in general, as we read, "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost" in Adam. (Luke 19:10, Matt. 18:11, R. V.) To make this possible, Jesus, as a perfect man, gave himself "a ransom for all, to be testified [to all] in due time."—I Tim. 2:4-6

Our Heavenly Father, through his Word, addressing those called out from the world to be associated with Jesus in the heavenly phase of his kingdom, tells them that in walking this narrow way, or, to use another illustration, in running the race for the prize of

the high calling (Phil. 3:13, 14), there are some things important to remember, while others are equally important to forget, and put them from us.

"Thine Own People"

In addressing the church called out from the family of Adam to be the bride of Christ—"the bride, the Lamb's wife"—the Lord says through the Psalmist, "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." (Ps. 45:10; Rev. 21:9) Just as a proper bride is willing to leave her father's and mother's house and her family to go away to a new home and to be joined to another, so the Master said of those called with the high calling, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."—Matt. 10:37

The Things Behind

Paul states that he forgot the things that were behind, and that we should do likewise; the things on the human plane which one might be inclined to value—earthly interests, hope, and ambitions—for to gain the pearl of great price all the little pearls in our possession must be given up, while we reach forward to the things which are before—the glory of the heavenly inheritance and the great privilege of being of the seed of Abraham to bless all the families of the earth.—Phil. 3:13-17; Gal. 3:29

Speaking of the narrow way in which the Lord's followers are

called to walk, Paul says that it is a path which brings much tribulation: "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) And because there is a danger of losing sight of some of the difficulties of this narrow way, the Scriptures exhort: "For consider him attentively who has endured such opposition from sinners, so that you may not be wearied, being discouraged in your souls. You did not yet resist to blood, contending against sin. And have you forgotten the exhortation which reasons with you as with sons? 'My son, slight not the discipline of the Lord, neither be discouraged when reprov'd by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines, and he scourges every son whom he receives.' " (Heb. 12:3-6, **Diaglott**) Rather than be discouraged by the Lord's disciplines, may our hearts' sentiments be, "I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me."—Psalm 119:93

The Grace of Humility

One of the primary requirements of those called to be a part of the glorified church to be associated with our Lord in his kingdom is humility. Jesus said to some who had begun to follow him, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." (Matt. 11:29) And emphasizing in another way this same thought, Paul says, "Wherefore remember, that you being in time past Gen-

tiles in the flesh, . . . that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”—Eph. 2:11-13

It is well ever to remember our lowly origin, that by nature we were a part of the Gentile world which up to the first advent of our Lord had never enjoyed divine favor, for God had said to Israel, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.” (Amos 3:2) Hence the called from among the Gentiles during the Gospel Age were not only previously separated from Christ, but were even alienated from the commonwealth of Israel—not being even a part of the nation which God did favor for a time.

Our only door for acceptance by God is through the atoning work of our Redeemer and Lord: “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” It is also the only way which gives us access into “this grace” wherein we stand as children of God, and in the call which enables us to rejoice in the hope of sharing the glory of God.—Rom. 5:1, 2

God is Faithful

Another important feature to remember is the faithfulness

of God toward all those whom he has “called according to his purpose.” (Rom. 8:28) Hence we do well to remember all the way the Lord our God hath led us. Further, we should note, as even the great Apostle Paul observed for his own encouragement, the faithfulness of others of the called ones, walking the same narrow way. Note, for example, the inspiration even this loyal and faithful servant received from the example of the brethren at Thessalonica: “We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . how that our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; . . . so that ye became an example to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.”—I Thess. 1:2-7, R. V.

Our Manifold Favours

Addressing the church in Sardis, the Lord exhorts them to remember how much had been done for them: how many manifestations of his love they had received, that it might create in their hearts an earnest desire to be faithful. He said, “Remember therefore how thou hast received and didst hear,” understand. (Rev. 3:3, R. V.) In other words, they were exhorted that they

“receive not the grace of God in vain.”—II Cor. 6:1

Toward the close of our Lord's ministry, he saw it to be the Father's will for him to perform a typical cleansing of the temple, overturning the tables of the money-changers, and driving out those using the temple as a place of merchandise by selling doves and other animals for sacrifice. We read that after Jesus had performed this most unpleasant duty, “his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.”—

Indeed, our Lord's whole ministry was an example of his zeal and faithfulness, and this was specially manifested in the work of finding, assisting, and encouraging those called to be a part of God's true temple of living stones, whatever the sacrifice, whatever the misunderstanding of his motives. May his example be our inspiration along similar lines!

The Sufferings of Christ

In Luke 22:19 Jesus not only reminds us from what is written concerning his great sacrifice on our behalf, and our covenant to suffer with him, and drink of his cup of experiences, but also, in order to make this great truth more impressive and lasting, he arranged that his followers should keep an outward memorial of the same, to be kept annually. In connection with this great truth of the divine plan

which shows how the Lord's consecrated followers are privileged to share in the sufferings of Christ, Paul says, “I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, This is my body which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup . . . saying, This cup is the New Covenant in my blood; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”—I Cor. 11:23-25, R. V.

Thank God that the deep significance of the great truths depicted in the Memorial ceremony are still preserved to us! Indeed, they are better understood today than at any period since apostolic times—a corroboration of our Master's assurance, “The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.”—John 14:26, R. V.

Brings to Remembrance

In our day, too, we have the written Word in far more convenient form than it was the privilege of God's people in earlier centuries to enjoy, particularly in the days before the invention of printing. Yet, with all our modern conveniences in this respect, we are such leaky vessels as to be quite unable to remem-

ber all we have so frequently read, or studied, together with those of like precious faith. Hence even in our day we are dependent upon the Holy Spirit to bring to our remembrance the various portions of the Word of God, and especially the teaching of our Master concerning every important step which must be taken in our endeavor to follow him. By looking for the leading of his Spirit in the foregoing directions, we may enjoy the fulfillment of the prophetic Word written aforetime for our learning: "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." (Isa. 30:20, 21, R. V.) This blessing of the spirit's guidance is always given when most needed.

The Blessings of Giving

Another statement of the Master—but this time an unrecorded one apart from the apostle's mention of the same—is given in Acts 20:35: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." While this is a principle generally applicable to the day-to-day affairs of the Lord's people, it is particularly true in spiritual things.

It is, of course, always a blessed thing to meet together frequently with others for the study of the Word, and to have the experiences to be enjoyed by so doing. But it is still more blessed—especially if at some sacrifice to ourselves—to pass on the Lord's message to others, and especially if they seem to be hun-

gering and thirsting after righteousness, and thus are in a condition to receive what we have to give them.

To Grow in Grace

The apostle, in II Peter 1:12, after speaking of some of the most important graces of the Spirit to be added to our faith, writes, "Wherefore I shall be ready always to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and are established in the present truth." (See R. V.) And in verse 15 Peter makes a very interesting and important statement: "Moreover I will endeavor that you may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." It seems obvious that the only way open for Peter to do this would be for him to make a record of his message. And what could be more encouraging than to have a record of those all-important requirements, as well as the warnings such as Peter has given, concerning the dangers and difficulties of the narrow way—a record always at hand for our reading and study.

Past Experiences

It is good from time to time to remember some of our past experiences, and especially some of our early ones, when we were perhaps making special efforts to serve the Lord and the interests of his truth, and even suffering for so doing. These experiences brought with them quite positive

evidence of the Lord's presence and blessing. Hence we read: "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; and partly, whilst ye . . . became companions of them that were so used."—Heb. 10:32, 33

These verses seem to imply that those addressed had a great deal of confidence in the Lord's goodness and love in their earlier days in the narrow way. In

those days they felt they were being specially helped and encouraged to prove faithful. And now, if special trials come, let us not be discouraged into thinking the Lord is not favoring us as much as formerly, for "we walk by faith, not by sight." (II Cor. 5:7) "Ye did run well; who did hinder you" from running as in former days? (Gal. 5:7) "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."—Heb. 10:35

BRITISH SPEAKERS—PAGE 64

VINEYARD ECHOES

The Witness in Nigeria

SOME time ago we reported the witness efforts of the Liverpool, England, Ecclesia in Nigeria, Africa. The Liverpool brethren have found that they can use the newspapers in Nigeria to announce the booklets, and the response to these announcements has been very good indeed. The following recent letter from the Liverpool Ecclesia is very encouraging:

"Loving greetings in our Lord! We would like you to know something about further witnessing in Western and Eastern Nigeria. We have a brother attending the Liverpool Class who a few years ago spent much time among the people of Nigeria, and who gave them instructions concerning God's Word while he was a resident there. This brother now has the truth and is desirous of spreading the message abroad in Nigeria. He has informed us that the people of Nigeria are of a studious type and will read the booklets we send them, and will talk to others

about the truth; so we have placed advertisements in both Eastern and Western Nigeria.

"The booklet advertised is 'Hope for a Fear-filled World.' Thus far we have received 170 requests. Altogether there have been 181 copies of this booklet sent out to Nigeria. We have also sent four copies of 'The Divine Plan of the Ages,' and we have received three Dawn subscriptions, and an order for a Bible and a concordance. Besides, we have sent many personal letters giving advice and encouragement.

"We are now advertising a complete course of Bible study, comprising the ten booklets which make up 'The Book of Books.' We are encouraging the interested ones to form study groups among themselves, appointing one of the number present to act as chairman to ask the questions, and to encourage his friends to discuss the questions and finally have the answer read as given in the paragraph.

"We enclose a few of the requests for your encouragement. They show the earnestness of the people. Among other questions we have been asked is whether or not the Dawn Bible Students Association is planning to open a branch office in Nigeria. How favored we are to know the truth as set forth in our Father's Word!

"We remember all the Dawn brethren before the throne of heavenly grace, and pray that he may bless you all abundantly with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. We feel deeply grateful to you for the service you constantly render to all God's people. Your brethren by his grace, T. E. Davies; R. Mealor; and and W. J. Mercer, for the Liverpool Ecclesia."

Surely the brethren in Liverpool have much cause to be encouraged by their efforts, and we all rejoice with them. Here are some of the letters from Nigeria mentioned in the Liverpool letter:

"I read in **The Daily Times** about the book entitled, 'Hope for a Fear-filled World,' and of your keen desire to share the contents of this book with all who are interested. I am registering my desire to receive a copy. I have ten out-stations under my parish, and I am sure if you would send eleven copies, so I could have one for myself

and one each to pass on to the other ten workers under my parish, it will be appreciated. May the Lord bless all you have planned for the promotion of the kingdom Gospel. Yours in Christ, Rev."

"Sir: I beg to apply for a free copy of 'Hope for a Fear-filled World,' as advertised in the papers. If possible, when sending it, you can help me by giving me more detailed advice on how to study the Bible properly, and with understanding. I am a citizen of Nigeria. May this, my application, serve as a medium through which closer relationship can be achieved."

"Your letter reached me today. I have covered your first publication, 'Hope for a Fear-filled World.' It is very helpful, and highly regarded by some of my friends here. Please send me also your 'Divine Plan of the Ages.' I should like to be a full member of your Bible Association."

"I am very happy to inform you that your free booklet reached me safely. I have gone through it twice before writing this letter to thank you and to let you know how much I have benefited from the booklet. The booklet is small but it contains facts about our present world which are valuable. I hope that the year to come will be fruitful for us, as you said in your letter that it was your desire to help me come to a better understanding of God's Word, and to a knowledge of the wonderful promises it contains for all. I am living with hope now. I have found you; you have enlightened me to seek God first. Yours in Christ."

"This is to let you know that I am one of those who spread the good news of the kingdom. I was glad to see 'The Divine Plan of the Ages,' and 'Behold Your King' announced in your magazine, and I am placing my order for them. Thank you, sirs! May the love of God enfold you and his power protect you through every moment of the day."

We rejoice with our brethren in Liverpool that the Lord is manifesting his blessing upon their efforts to make known the glad tidings of the kingdom in Nigeria. In this connection we would like to report that the British Dawn Committee is also active in this field of service; that is, in using magazines and papers for announcing the kingdom message. One of the outstanding efforts of the Committee was the insertion of a half-page announcement of the booklet, "When a Man Dies," in the British edition of **The Reader's Digest**. The Aldersbrook Ecclesia in England has also been active in this field.

The January issue of the French **Reader's Digest** carried an announcement of the booklet, "Hope Beyond the Grave," and up to the present time our office in France has received upwards of a thousand requests. We rejoice in this, and we are sure that the brethren in France and elsewhere will also rejoice with us.

The Greek brethren in America, in co-operation with the friends in Greece, continue to use newspapers in various parts of that small country to announce the literature, and with sustained good results. So far as quantities of requests for the amount spent is concerned, the Greek brethren have much for which to be thankful. Besides, there is a great deal of new interest in the truth throughout Greece as a result of this effort. The Lord has specially overruled to keep this work going in spite of the outspoken opposition of the Greek Orthodox clergy.

Spanish-language editions of **The Reader's Digest** will shortly be carrying an announcement of "Hope Beyond the Grave" in Spanish. As opportunity permits we will be using other foreign-language editions of this magazine. Meanwhile we are continuing this method of witnessing here in America. The January issue of **Ebony** magazine carried an announcement of "Life After Death." About 600 replies were received, and the February issue of **Farm Journal** likewise carried an announcement of the same booklet. This announcement brought about 2,000 requests.

When Moses doubted his ability to convince Pharaoh that the Hebrew people should be released from their slavery, the Lord asked, "What is that in thine hand?" (Exod. 4:2) He asks us the same question, as it were, and wants us to note all the various methods for witnessing which are available to us, and to use them as energetically as possible. Announcing truth literature through the public press is one of these methods the Lord is blessing richly.

The Lord has also blessed the many exhibits of literature at state and county fairs during recent years, and we are sure he will continue to do so. And now, in April, the Lord willing, we will have an exhibit at the New York World's Fair. The result of this effort we will, as in every instance, leave in the Lord's hands, knowing that he is abundantly able to bless the feeble efforts of his people according to the good purposes of his will.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

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|------------------------|---------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|---------|
| SAM BAKER | | O. D. DEIFER | | New Albany, Ind. | 17 |
| Rutherford, N. J. | Apr. 1 | Baltimore, Md. | Apr. 26 | Indianapolis, Ind. | 19 |
| Allentown, Pa. | 3 | Philadelphia, Pa. | 26 | Muncie, Ind. | 20 |
| York, Pa. | 5 | LEVI JACOBS | | Gary, Ind. | 21 |
| Lancaster, Pa. | 5 | Bridgeport, Conn. | Apr. 12 | LaSalle, Ill. | 22 |
| West Newton, Pa. | 6, 7 | A. H. KRUMPOLT | | Batavia, Ill. | 23 |
| Connellsville, Pa. | 8 | Catawissa, Pa. | Apr. 26 | Rockford, Ill. | 24 |
| Monessen, Pa. | 9, 10 | L. P. LOOMIS | | Chicago, Ill. | 26 |
| Pittsburgh, Pa. | 12 | Sayville, N. Y. | Apr. 5 | Grand Rapids, Mich. | 27, 28 |
| Steubenville, Ohio | 13, 14 | M. C. MITCHELL | | Saginaw, Mich. | 29 |
| Akron, Ohio | 15 | New Haven, Conn. | Apr. 19 | Bay City, Mich. | 30 |
| Cleveland, Ohio | 16 | Waterbury, Conn. | 19 | C. A. SUNDBOM | |
| Elyria, Ohio | 17 | H. W. PRICE | | Toledo, Ohio | Apr. 23 |
| Saginaw, Mich. | 19 | Kansas City, Mo. | Apr. 1, 2 | Cincinnati, Ohio | 24 |
| Bay City, Mich. | 20 | Wichita, Kans. | 3 | Allentown, Pa. | 27 |
| Flint, Mich. | 21 | Oklahoma City, Okla. | 5, 6 | Paterson, N. J. | 28 |
| Grand Rapids, Mich. | 22, 23 | Stigler, Okla. | 7 | Rutherford, N. J. | 29 |
| Jackson, Mich. | 24 | Fort Smith, Ark. | 8 | RICHARD SURACI | |
| Gary, Ind. | 26 | Fayetteville, Ark. | 9 | Groton, Conn. | Apr. 19 |
| LaSalle, Ill. | 27, 28 | Little Rock, Ark. | 10 | New London, Conn. | 19 |
| Batavia, Ill. | 29 | Brinkley, Ark. | 12 | STEPHEN SURACI | |
| Rockford, Ill. | 30 | Memphis, Tenn. | 13 | Wallingford, Conn. | Apr. 26 |
| OTIS R. BARRALL | | St. Louis, Mo. | 14, 15 | C. R. WEIDA | |
| Allentown, Pa. | Apr. 12 | | | Pottstown, Pa. | Apr. 26 |

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION

Plan now to attend this year's gathering.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Bloomington, Indiana
AUGUST 14-20

The listings in this schedule have been arranged by local ecclesias co-operating with The Dawn.

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|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| MIKE BALKO | San Francisco, Calif. 26 | HARRY PASSIOS | Connellsville, Pa. Apr. 12 |
| Duquesne, Pa. Apr. 19 | THOMAS C. FAY | Cleveland, Ohio 19 | |
| JOHN BARACOS | San Diego, Calif. Apr. 12 | G. R. POLLOCK | Fullerton, Calif. Apr. 19 |
| Washington, Pa. Apr. 19 | JOSEPH FENCHAK, JR. | Connellsville, Pa. Apr. 19 | |
| NICK BARACOS | Antioch, Calif. Ap. 19 | R. A. RAWSON | London, Ont. Apr. 12 |
| East Liverpool, Ohio | G. HOMER HAMLIN | Stockton, Calif. Apr. 4 | |
| Apr. 12 | GEORGE O. JEUCK | Sacramento, Calif. 5 | |
| WALTER BLICHAZ | Miami, Fla. Apr. 12 | ALBERT SHEPPELBAUM | LaSalle, Ill. Apr. 5 |
| Flint, Mich. Apr. 5 | EDMUND JEZUIT | Gary, Ind. Apr. 19 | |
| Adrian, Mich. 19 | Milwaukee, Wis. Apr. 12 | FRANK J. WEBBER | Fresno, Calif. Apr. 12 |
| J. BURTON BROWN | DANIEL KAZIAK | | |
| Riverside, Calif. Apr. 19 | Chatham, Ont. Apr. 19 | | |
| Ontario, Calif. 19 | EDWARD G. LORENZ | | |
| BERTRAM C. COOPER | Whittier, Calif. Apr. 19 | | |
| Whittier, Calif. Apr. 12 | | | |
| FRED J. DARROW | | | |
| Whittier, Calif. Apr. 5 | | | |

BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| A. BOYCE | Latchford Apr. 19 | W. F. READER | Portrush May 16-18 |
| E. HALTON | Liverpool Apr. 26 | | Liverpool 31 |
| | Dewsbury May 31 | J. RICHMOND | Portrush May 16-18 |
| | Portrush 16-18 | E. G. ROBERTS | Portrush May 16-18 |
| J. H. MURRAY | Portrush May 16-18 | CEDRIC SMITH | Latchford May 3 |
| E. T. NADAL | Portrush May 16-18 | | |

PORTRUSH CONVENTION, Whitsuntide, May 16-18—for accommodations and other details, please apply to Mr. T. Lang, 41 Clooney Terrace, Waterside, Londonderry, North Ireland.

CONVENTIONS

PATERSON, N. J., Apr. 4, 5—YWCA, 185 Carroll St. Mr. Michael J. Koterba, 22 Mt. Pleasant Ave., Wallington, N. J.

SAN ANTONIO, TEX., Apr. 4, 5—Crockett Hotel, 301 East Crockett, near the Alamo. Miss Ruth A. New, 122 Yale Ave.

PITTSBURGH, PA., Apr. 5—Roosevelt Hotel, Blue Room, Sixth and Penn Aves. Mr. Harry Passlos, 137 Crookside Lane.

SALEM, ORE., Apr. 11, 12—V.F.W. Hall, 630 Hood, N. E. Mrs. James Blackman, 3754 Felton, S.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Apr. 12—Brotherhood Bldg., Room 410, Court & Vine Sts. Mrs. W. N. Poe, 1 W. Ridge Pl., Newport, Kentucky

COLUMBUS, OHIO, Apr. 12—Southern Hotel, S. High and E. Main Sts. Mrs. Josephine Ewing, 273 S. Algonquin Ave.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Apr. 12—Mrs. Edward Borowiec, 224 S. Fifth St., Delano, Minn.

SAGINAW, MICH., Apr. 12—Saginaw Woman's Club, 311 N. Jefferson. Mrs. C. A. Sundboom, 207 Alice St.

CLEVELAND, OHIO, Apr. 19—Central YMCA Bldg., 2200 Prospect Ave. Mrs. Ian M. Cipperley, 1537 Genessee Rd.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., Apr. 19—YWCA Bldg., The Social Room, 329 N. Pennsylvania St. Mrs. Minnie F. Martin, 4620 Hinesley Avenue

TOLEDO, OHIO, Apr. 19—Bach Conservatory of Music, 2211 Jefferson Ave. Mr. F. C. Spielman, 1048 Scott St., Maumee, Ohio.

CHICAGO, ILL., Apr. 26—Central Masonic Temple, 912 N. LaSalle St. Mr. D. J. Morehouse, 4354 W. Cortez St.

DAYTON, OHIO, Apr. 26—The Terrace, Montgomery County Fairgrounds, 1043 S. Main St. Mrs. Alvin Raffel, 6720 Mad River Rd.

DETROIT, MICH., Apr. 26—McGregor Memorial Bdg., Second Blvd. and W. Ferry. Mr. Walter Ellicharz, 19300 Braille.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF., Apr. 26—Auditorium, 933 S. Hoover St. Mr. A. W. Abrahamsen, 700 S. Hobart Blvd., Apt. 207.

STUEBENVILLE, OHIO, Apr. 26—YMCA, 214 N. Fourth St. Mrs. Louise Williams, 1434 Sinclair Ave.

BOSTON, MASS., May 2, 3—Sat., Chapel of Arlington St. Church, 355 Boylston St. Sun., Sheraton-Plaza Hotel, State Suite. Miss Florence Child, 64 Thurston St., Somerville, Mass.

GARY, IND., May 2, 3—Indiana University Auditorium, Gory Center, 3400 Jefferson St. Mr. Theodore Trzeciak, 2321 Vivian Ct., Portage, Ind.

KANSAS CITY, MO., May 2, 3—Kansas City Athenaeum, 900 E. Linwood Blvd. at Campbell. Mrs. H. E. Brink, 4236 Antioch Rd.

WEST NEWTON, PA., May 10

NEW ALBANY, IND., May 16, 17

VANCOUVER, B. C., May 16-18

PHILADELPHIA, PA., May 17

ROCHESTER, N. Y., May 17

SAN FRANCISCO (ASILOMAR) May 28-31

CHICAGO, ILL., May 29-31

SAYVILLE, N. Y. May 30

JACKSON, MICH., June 7

WATERBURY, CONN., June 14

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., June 20, 21

CHARLOTTE, N. C., June 27, 28

WINNIPEG, MAN., June 27, 28

DETROIT, MICH., July 3-5

LOS ANGELES, CALIF., July 3-5

CANORA, SASK., July 4, 5

PORCUPINE PLAIN, SASK., July 10-12

PRINCE ALBERT, SASK., July 10-12

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| to us the |
| SCRIPTURES |
| clearly teach |

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

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

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

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

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

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