

The Dawn

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Highlights of Dawn

“When Ye See These Things”

“When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.”—Luke 21:31

SOME six thousand years ago, Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the earth and placed him in the Garden of Eden where he was supplied with everything needful for everlasting life. God also gave Adam a lovely helpmate, and instructed them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and subdue it. They were also appointed to have dominion over every living thing on the earth. Indeed, so perfect and complete were the arrangements he made for man's everlasting well-being and happiness that the LORD, reviewing the situation, “saw everything that he had made, and, behold it was very good.”—Gen. 1:26-31

Man and all his offspring could thus have lived forever on this beautiful planet Earth in perfect happiness. The only requirement the LORD imposed was that of obedience. He said to Adam, “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. 2:17) Misled by the serpent, Eve ate of the tree, and so did Adam, and the curse of death fell upon man and all his offspring. It was there in that beautiful garden, the inspired Apostle Paul explains, that “by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”—Rom. 5:12

That single, tragic act of disobedience in the Garden of Eden, jealously contrived and planted in man's heart by his wily adversary, the Devil, in due course brought forth its inevitable, unholy harvest of sorrow. Some sixteen hundred years after the fall, mankind had become so debauched the

Scriptures record that “God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”—Gen. 6:11-13

The LORD God then sent a great Flood upon the earth “to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die.” (Gen. 6:17) But Jehovah spared righteous Noah and his wife, and Noah’s three sons and their wives. The Apostle Peter briefly describes that cataclysmic event in his second epistle, where he writes: “The heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; **whereby the world that then was**, being overflowed with water, perished.” (II Pet. 3:5,6) But the planet Earth, itself, was not destroyed. The apostle tells us it was that first “world,” or social order on earth, which was destroyed by God, because it had become intolerably corrupt.

Peter then calls our attention to a second heavens and earth, or world, which followed upon the destruction of that first world in the Flood. This second world, or social order, continues to this day. But although the Flood temporarily cleansed the planet Earth of the corruption that had so defiled it, Noah’s progeny were still imperfect; and it was not long before sin, suffering, disease and death resumed their former sway.

During the long, dark ages which drearily followed, Jehovah God did not leave his human creation without hope. Through the words of the prophets and in illuminating types and shadows he repeatedly described a coming glorious time of everlasting joy and blessing for all his human creation. He foretold the forgiveness of sin through the provision of a Redeemer, the healing of disease, the destruction of death, with righteousness and justice to be enjoyed by all. Greed and selfishness would be forever banished from the earth, for

God's righteous law would be written in every heart, and all would love their neighbors as themselves.

Best of all, these promised blessings would not be restricted to the few who are presently regarded as relatively righteous, but would be available to all who had ever lived on this planet Earth. To this end God would arrange for the resurrection of all who had ever gone down to the grave since the world began.—Ps. 103:1-6; Jer. 31:31-34; Gen. 22:18; Hos. 13:14; Isa. 9:6, 7

Finally, to guarantee the fulfillment of all these precious promises, Jehovah God would send a loving, wise, and powerful King to reign on earth. This one would be a Wonderful Counselor, a Mighty God, an Everlasting Father, and a Prince of Peace. And his kingdom and justice and reign would be from henceforth even forever!—Isa. 9:6, 7

Precious promises, indeed! No wonder the inspired psalmist, sensing something of the perfect happiness in store for suffering mankind, was moved to exclaim, "Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; who satisfied thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." What a joyous prospect was thus proclaimed to a sin-sick, dying world!

In accordance with the Word of the LORD, and precisely in the LORD'S due time, the long-promised Savior and Redeemer finally came. The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world; the Anointed One; the one who would give his life for the many; who would redeem us all from the curse of death; who would obediently lay down his perfect life that all the world might have life; the Prince of Peace—he finally came! Almost two thousand years ago our dear Lord Jesus left the glory that he had with the Father and suffered death on the cross, so that sin and death might forever be

banished from the face of the earth, to be replaced by the everlasting peace and joy of an Eden restored. The Savior came almost two thousand years ago!

But today, as we observe the world about us, we see little of the promised peace. We see, rather, a world that is well-nigh overwhelmed with a multitude of virtually unsolvable problems. A single day's issue of the morning paper reports worldwide fears of nuclear devastation, of widespread runaway inflation, of wars and threats of wars and revolutions in a dozen parts of the world simultaneously. Not a week passes without accounts of corruption in high places, or world-spreading pollution of air and water, of the decline in morality and decency, of terrorism, robberies and murders. The obituary section is brimful with its ill tidings. A bombing atrocity claims the lives of hundreds of young soldiers. An invading force of soldiers lands on a tiny island in the Carribean in order to protect lives—at the cost of life.

These and countless other sorry conditions do not continue in the world for want of sincere human efforts to correct them. The plain fact is that human wisdom and human benevolence are simply not capable of coping with these problems. A good example of this difficulty is to be seen in the ongoing stalemate in the all-important arms limitations discussions between the superpowers. Sincere men on one side believe the solution lies in reducing nuclear weapons. Other equally sincere statesmen fear that circumvention of any agreement reached would leave their own nation subject to political blackmail and slavery.

The thorny situation in Lebanon where the United States is carrying out a so-called peacekeeping role is similar. Commenting on this, one magazine writes: "To withdraw . . . would be a humiliation and a blow to America's credibility. To stay, on the other hand, risks deeper entanglement in a seemingly interminable civil war. . . . With the bullets flying and the language growing stronger, the U.S. found itself mired in a difficult situation from which there clearly was **no**

easy way out." (U.S. News & World Report, 9/26/83) On this same Middle East predicament, **The New York Times** reported (9/18/83), "For the Reagan Administration, the Lebanese crisis now seems **virtually insoluble.**" No way out!

Almost wherever one turns in this present world of trouble one finds problems human wisdom cannot solve. Consider China, with its teeming millions. **Time** magazine (9/26/83) comments on what it describes as "China's overwhelming, **perhaps insoluble, problem,** which is simply: What do you do when you have too many people? . . . The government recognizes . . . that China holds too many people; the figures are grim, inexorable, inescapable. **No one knows what can be done about it.**" Again, No way out!

The same predicament arises in connection with the production of the food and the mass of manufactured goods that are required to feed, clothe and supply the swelling world population with the necessities of life. Present-day farming methods use fertilizers and herbicides that contaminate the world's water supplies. Some industrial processes result in contamination of the air, earth and rivers of the world, and additionally may be largely responsible for the acid rain that destroys forests and life in lakes and streams. But the world **needs** food! And the world **needs** manufactured goods! And so again we have the same, seemingly insoluble situation—which way to turn?

This inability of human efforts to solve world problems, no matter how well-conceived and well-intentioned, is well illustrated in the collapse of the so-called League of Nations established by international treaties at the end of World War I. Its excellent purpose was the promotion of world peace and security. But it failed to prevent the occurrence of World War II, a casualty of ages-long, selfish national interests.

That noble, failed effort was later followed by the creation of The United Nations at the close of World War II. But this organization is even now approaching the same sad fate as its predecessor. In an article headed, "The Broken Promise of

the United Nations'' (**Readers' Digest**, 10/83), we read, "When President Harry S. Truman eagerly welcomed the U.N. into existence in June 1945, he called it a 'great instrument for peace and security and human progress'. Since then, 140 wars around the globe have claimed close to ten million lives. . . . Noting that the U.N. had 'strayed far from the Charter in recent years', [Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar] warned that 'we are perilously near to a new international anarchy'."

Thus we find that this latest and doubtless the most ambitious international attempt ever undertaken by man to bring peace, harmony, and cooperation between the nations of the world now lies, like the League of Nations before it, in a virtual state of impotence insofar as its ability to achieve its original, stated purpose is concerned.

But what about all those wonderful promises by God's holy prophets of a better world that was to come—a world of peace, of health and happiness, of justice and righteousness, of love for one's neighbor, of everlasting life? Has man's inability to solve the world's problems rendered those glorious promises null and void?

Not by any means! Never for a moment has God closed his eyes or shut his ears to events taking place on this planet Earth! Never for an instant has he forgotten his often-stated purpose to bless all the families of the earth! Never at any time since the world began was it God's plan or purpose that imperfect man would or could be the means of bringing those precious promises to pass!

It is Jehovah God himself who will bring them to fruition! It is the LORD himself who said through the prophet, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." (Hos. 13:14) It is God himself who said, "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh." (Joel 2:28) "I will write my law in man's heart. I will make all things plain, so that all may call upon me." It is God who so loved the world that he

sent his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish. It is the LORD God who will wipe away all tears. And it was the LORD God himself who promised that all these things would surely come to pass.—Rev. 21:5

But why the seeming delay? The Scriptures reveal that the continuance of the reign of sin and death during this Gospel Age since our Savior died on the cross has been wisely permitted by Jehovah God in order to accomplish other important parts of his grand design. It will conclusively prove to imperfect man that, even if allowed additional, untold millennia, he would never be able to solve the world's problems by his own efforts.

Mankind will also learn the all-important, lasting lesson of the destructive nature of sin. In speaking of the divine purpose of the Law, the Apostle Paul explains that "sin [was thereby] shown clearly to be sin, that the extreme malignity and immeasurable sinfulness of sin might plainly appear." (Rom. 7:13, **NEB**) Furthermore, it is during the specially trying times of this evil world since Jesus died that the LORD God of heaven is choosing out of the world and perfecting those who shall live and reign with their Lord Jesus in the kingdom for the blessing of the people.

Ah, but **when? When** will this all come to pass? True, the LORD seems not to have given us any precise time. But, as we have discussed in previous issues of this publication, he has graciously given us unquestionable signs of the near approach of the kingdom. And one of these hope-inspiring, clearly indicated signs of the nearness of the kingdom is revealed to the LORD'S watching people **in the very perplexity and futility of man to solve the problems presently afflicting the world in which he lives!**

As recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus' disciples—eager, even as the LORD'S people are today, to know when he would return to establish his kingdom on earth—asked him, "What shall be the sign of thy coming [presence], and of the end of the world [age]?"

Among other signs that would manifest his return Jesus said, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

Mark and Luke also wrote of this same time, but in Luke's account we are given additional, significant information concerning it. He said that **at that time** there would be "upon the earth **distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts falling them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.**"—Luke 21:25,26

The English word, perplexity, used in this passage is a translation of the Greek word **aporia**, meaning 'a state of quandary'. But it is even more revealing to note that this word is itself derived from the Greek **aporeo**, which according to Professor Strong literally means 'to have no way out'.

It is reasonable to suppose that the inspired writer would choose the word that would most fittingly describe mankind's confusion and helplessness in that future time of which he was writing, "**A state of quandary! No way out! No solution!**" This is the very language we hear repeated almost every day in connection with so many of the great problems facing mankind!

Could there possibly be a more precise description than here given by Luke of the confusion, futility, and fear that are filling the hearts of the people today, as they consider the possible awful consequences of human error or human selfishness? It is almost as if the LORD had permitted the Gospel writer to look down the long corridors of time to the present, and to catch a glimpse of the universal helplessness gripping the hearts of the world's great leaders, and to record his vision of what he saw for the instruction and comfort of the LORD'S people who are alive and watching in these last days of the Gospel Age! And what Luke reveals to us clearly shows that the world is, indeed, in the foretold

Time of Trouble which Jesus said would mark his presence and the end of the Gospel Age.

But that is not all! In the same prophecy of the Time of Trouble, Luke gives us additional important information that is not contained in the other Gospel accounts. After reciting a number of events that would identify the Time of Trouble, and which clearly would require the passage of some time for their accomplishment, he says, “And when these things **begin to come to pass**, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption **draweth nigh**. . . . So likewise, when ye see these things **coming to pass**, know ye that the kingdom of God is **nigh at hand**.”—Luke 21:28-31

Thus Luke is used of the LORD to give to the footstep followers of Jesus living down here in the end of age some wonderful, hope-inspiring information not found in the other Gospel accounts of this period of time. For one thing, the language here used by Luke clearly shows that the Time of Trouble is not a single, sudden cataclysmic event occurring in the very closing moments of the Gospel Age. It is a **time** of trouble having some **duration**, as suggested by the writer in his use of the words, “When ye see these things **begin to come to pass** . . . your redemption **draweth nigh**.” Other translations are even more explicit. One puts it, “**When you see these things taking place**,” and another states it, “**When you see all this happening**,” you know the kingdom of God is near.—RSV and NEB

These encouraging words, of course, are written for the benefit of the remaining members of the church, the Lord's followers who will live and reign with him in the kingdom. For them to **see** all these things happening they must still be present on the earth in these closing days of the age. The Scriptures abundantly assure the little flock that before the final climax of the Time of Trouble comes they will have been gathered safely home.—Rev. 19:7-15

Thus, among the other clear signs that the world has truly entered the foretold Time of Trouble we may also include the

obvious universal confusion and helplessness—the perplexity—that is present in the world today as additional confirmation.

But most of all, we who are so fortunate as to be living in these closing days of the Gospel Age and privileged to observe the dramatic, unfolding events of this Time of Trouble, are most grateful to our Heavenly Father for the abundant assurance he has given to us through his faithful servant, Luke, that just beyond these troubled days will come the kingdom for which we have all prayed so long!

So, dear brethren, we close with those precious, comforting words of Luke, “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. . . . When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.”—Luke 21:28,31 □

CHRISTMAS BELLS

O CHRISTMAS BELLS, ye ring and ring! I hear your music pealing.
To me there's mockery in the tones that on the air are stealing.
For peace is but an empty name; goodwill—ah, who can find it?
For selfish greed stalks through the earth and misery walks behind it.

O Christmas Bells! what other sounds now fill the earth with sighing!
The earth brings forth enough for all, yet men for bread are crying.
Though they are given Christmas cheer, and told to banish sorrow,
Their mournful eyes behold with fear the specter of tomorrow.

O bells, the curse is over all, and Adam's children languish;
For back at Eden's gate began six thousand years of anguish.
God's wrath has rested on the race; its marks are all about us.
Go search throughout the whole wide earth, and see what sin has brought us!

Peal out, peal out the heavenly joys that breathe a glad tomorrow;
Ring out the message God has given—how he will banish sorrow.
Tell earth the song the angels sang full soon will have fulfilling:
That God shall give eternal joy to every soul that's willing.

Tell out, O bells, their long-lost dead shall rise from Death's dark prison!
Tell them the earth will be renewed because the Lord is risen!
He holds the keys of death and hell; His powers shall wake the sleeping
And raise them up to perfect life, and end earth's night of weeping.

International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 4

A New Day for God's People

KEY VERSE: "They shall call them, The holy people, the redeemed of the LORD."—Isaiah 62:12

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 2:2-4; 62:1-3

IN THE LORD'S plan of salvation, all who are in their graves will hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth. (John 5:28,29) Their resurrection will be one of the first events that will occur in the kingdom under the terms of the New Covenant. The purpose of their resurrection is beautifully described in our Selected Scripture, Isaiah 2:2-4. Verse two of the text reads, "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." "The last days" has reference to the very last days of the Gospel Age, for it is then that the last remaining members of the church will have been tried and tested and glorified. The Scriptures tell us that this work of the Gospel Age must be completed before the kingdom can be established.

(Rom. 11:25-27) In the Scriptures, a mountain pictures a kingdom, and so the LORD through the prophet is saying that at the proper time he will establish his kingdom, and it will dominate and control all the other kingdoms of the earth. But most importantly, the text tells us that all nations will flow into it, showing that it is to be a universal kingdom which will have as subjects all the families of the earth.

The third verse of our text reads, "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain [kingdom] of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem." The thought is that at the start, the LORD will begin the work of the kingdom with the nation of Israel, and when the nations of

the earth see the blessings which are being bestowed upon that people they will want to become a part of God's arrangement so that they too can partake of the kingdom blessings. One of the beautiful prophecies concerning this time is found in Zechariah 8:13, 20-22. "You, house of Judah and house of Israel, have been the very symbol of a curse to all the nations, and now I will save you, and you shall become the symbol of a blessing. . . . Nations and dwellers in great cities shall yet come to those of another and say, Let us go and entreat the favor of the LORD, and resort to the LORD of Hosts: and I will come too. And so great nations and mighty peoples shall resort to the LORD of Hosts in Jerusalem and entreat his favor." (NEB) The prophecy in Isaiah 2:3 goes on to say that the LORD will teach the people of his ways and as a result of this knowledge the people will walk in his paths, or conduct their lives in a manner that will be in harmony with God's will. Those who have God's law written in their hearts and are obedient to his precepts will inherit everlasting life here on the earth and they will be God's people and he will be their God.

One of the beautiful prophecies concerning the nation of Israel being the nucleus of the

kingdom is found in Ezekiel 36: 24-32: "I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the LORD God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel." □

Good News for the Afflicted

KEY VERSE: "The LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek."—Isaiah 61:1

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 61:1-7

JESUS, at his first advent, quoted a portion of our Selected Scripture text, and indicated that the proclamation of the good news of the kingdom was to be the theme of his ministry. The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the LORD. . . . And he began to say to them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:18-21) When Jesus read this prophecy, he read only that portion which was his responsibility to declare to the nation of Israel during the three-and-one-half years of his ministry. This was the day of visitation for Israel. (Luke 19:42-44) The special opportunity was given to the Jewish nation not because they were faithful to God's arrangements, but because God loved them and

would keep the oath that he had sworn unto their fathers. (Deut. 7:7, 8) The time element of this special witness was fixed by the prophecy of the seventy weeks. —Dan. 9:25-27; Acts 13:46

When we examine the part of the prophecy that Jesus read in the synagogue, we can understand why it was especially addressed to the Jews for the time of their visitation. Because of the prophecies, they were in expectation of the Messiah (Luke 3:15), who, according to the Scriptures, would deliver them from bondage and establish his kingdom which would bring blessings to them and eventually to all the families of the earth. (Luke 1:68-75) This, according to their understanding, was to be the literal earthly kingdom. The Apostle Paul tells us that because they were blinded, Israel as a nation was not permitted to understand that this was the end of a dispensation, and that their deliverance and the kingdom were to come about

in an entirely different manner than they had expected. (Rom. 11:25-32) The first work to be accomplished in the new dispensation is the selection and development of those who will be associated with Jesus as co-mediators of the New Covenant under which the kingdom will function in the subsequent age. It was this phase of the development of the LORD'S plan that Jesus invited individual Jews to embrace.

The Lord's message was addressed to the meek of the nation, that is to those who realized their own undone condition, and who had become aware that they could not attain to righteousness under the Law. They needed help and they were willing to accept by faith the LORD'S arrangement through the Messiah. (Rom. 3:19-24; Gal. 3:19-29) The Scriptures tell us that a remnant from the nation of Israel responded to the LORD'S invitation. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11:5-7) Jesus' message was an encour-

agement to the brokenhearted and discouraged of Israel, as his message revived their hopes. The message of the Gospel, when accepted, gave them the opportunity to be released from the bondage of the Law (Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 3:10-13), "because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. 8:21) The hope of the Gospel also included the prospect of release from Adamic condemnation, and everlasting life with the Lord in the heavenly phase of the kingdom. And finally, this was the day of salvation, the exclusive day of visitation for the Jews.

After the time of special favor to the Jews, the complete prophecy of Isaiah 61:1-3 became the Gospel message the footstep followers of Jesus are to proclaim unto all the world as a witness down through the Gospel Age. The Apostle Paul relates this good news of God's arrangements for the establishment of a kingdom to the LORD'S promise to Abraham, saying, "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."—Gal. 3:8 □

Preparing for the Messiah

KEY VERSE: "Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."—Isaiah 40:3

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 40:3-11

TO PROPERLY understand the prophecy of Isaiah the fortieth chapter, it is necessary to be aware of the time setting. In the preceding chapters the prophet predicts the Babylonish captivity and we believe that he was here, starting with the fortieth chapter, enjoined to give comfort to the Jews in expectation of the great affliction coming upon them. In this prophecy the distress and sorrows of captivity are considered to be past, and the full measure of their punishment extracted. But God through the prophet remembered mercy, and before he sent his people into captivity he furnished them with the support and comfort of the promise of a future deliverance. We can well imagine the comfort and encouragement these rich promises gave to the people of the nation of Israel during the terrible oppression of their captivity.

The promise of the deliverance is also associated with the advent of the Messiah and the subsequent establishment of the

kingdom, but God wanted it known that all these preparations were to be accomplished because they are of his design and through his power. John the Baptist, through inspiration of the Holy Spirit, identified himself as the voice crying in the wilderness, thus pinpointing the beginning of the time of fulfillment of the prophecy, saying, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the LORD, as said the Prophet Isaiah." (John 1:23) John is here picturing himself as the instrument the LORD used to proclaim Christ, as the Son of God, the King of Israel, and the Savior of the world. By doing this he prepared the way of the LORD in the midst of the desert, which from the standpoint of God's Word, was a dry and thirsty land.

The LORD was coming to do these things for Israel in the sense that they would be accomplished through the Messiah, as we read in verse ten of our

prophecy, "Behold the LORD will come with a strong hand, and his Arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." The prophet, in Isaiah 52:9-15, still speaking to Israel and holding forth the promised deliverance and the kingdom, states in part, "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD hath made bare his holy Arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. . . . Behold my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. . . . So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had been told to them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider."

We know that in fulfillment of this prophecy in the fifth verse of Isaiah forty, the Messiah will be revealed first to the nation of Israel. Subsequently the knowledge of him and the promise of the kingdom will be made known to the Gentile nations. (Acts 13:46) The LORD in his foreknowledge knew that these prophecies would not be fulfilled in the way that the Israelites ex-

pected them to be (Hos. 2:23), because of their continued unfaithfulness. They knew not the day of their visitation! (Luke 19: 42-44) But the LORD'S love and tender mercy for his people, even though it was to be long delayed, was expressed in Isaiah 40:10,11, "He [the Messiah] shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

The voice of the LORD with comfort for his people continues in the remainder of the verses of this fortieth chapter of Isaiah, for in them he establishes himself as the great and powerful Creator of the universe on whom his people can rely to fulfill his promises. In Romans 11:34 the Apostle Paul, after he had reviewed God's dealings with the nation of Israel, quoted from Isaiah 40:13,14 as an expression of his own wonderment and appreciation of the mind and purposes of God. "Who hath known the mind of the LORD, or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

□

A Reign of Righteousness

KEY VERSE: "His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isalah 9:6

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Isalah 9:2-7; Isalah 11:1-3

THE prophecies of our texts are two of the most often used scriptures at Christmastime to emphasize the magnitude of the gift of God in giving his only begotten Son for the blessing of all the families of the earth. The prophecy in Isalah 9:2-7 is especially helpful, in that while describing the character of Messiah, the King, it gives us an insight as to the mercy, justice, equity, and joy of the kingdom to be established here on the earth.

In the Bible, names and titles of people are especially meaningful, and so are the names that the prophet, by inspiration, ascribes to Jesus, the Messiah. The first title that is given to Jesus is Wonderful Counselor. The word counselor means 'one who deliberates or resolves differences', and when associated with the word 'wonderful', which according to **Strong's Concordance** means 'miracle, marvelous thing, or wonder', we get some idea as to the standard

of justice and judgments to be rendered in the kingdom. The Apostle Paul tells us that "in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:17, 18) Associated with his training by experience is the wonderful provision of his ability to look upon the heart and not on outward appearances. It is no wonder that the Scriptures say, "Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice . . . for he comes to judge the earth."—I Chron. 16: 31-34, **RSV**

Another title by which Jesus will be called is the Mighty God. The word 'god' in this instance is from the Hebrew word *el*, which has the meaning of 'strength' or 'powerful one'. We know that in the kingdom Jesus

will have the full authority of the Heavenly Father and be his representative and mouthpiece in all things. He is recognized now, by his true followers, as the mighty Lord, the mighty God, not as the Father but as the Father's representative, the well-beloved Son, whom God hath clothed with glory, honor, and immortality, and given all power in heaven and earth. It is to Jesus that God has given the responsibility of bringing to a satisfactory conclusion the work of the Gospel and Millennial Ages.

Jesus will also be the Everlasting Father of the human race. Adam, their father, failed to give them everlasting life, but Jesus, when he provided the ransom-price for Adam, made it possible for the living and all who are in their graves to be resurrected and cleansed from Adamic condemnation, and given an opportunity to earn everlasting life under the terms of the New Covenant. The Apostle Paul likens Jesus to the second Adam, saying, "It is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit [or life-giver]."—I Cor. 15:45; John 5:28, 29

Jesus, the world's Savior, will also be the Prince of Peace. The

wonderful song the angels sang in heralding the birth of Jesus stated, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and goodwill toward men." (Luke 2:14) This promise will become a reality in the kingdom. In a prophecy concerning the kingdom, the Prophet Micah said, "It shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. . . He will teach us of his ways and we shall walk in his paths. . . He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."—Mic. 4:1-3

Jesus did not establish his kingdom at his first advent, but rather indicated that his kingdom was not of this world or age (John 18:36), the reason being that the great work of the Gospel Age of selecting and proving the church must be completed before the kingdom can be established. Because of the signs in the earth today, however, we have good reason to believe that the time is near at hand. Praise the LORD! ☐

Christian Life and Doctrine

THE BOOK OF BOOKS—PART 14

Christian Hopes and Prospects

ALL the inspired writers of the Bible were enthused with the divine plan of salvation, which each, in his own way and in harmony with divine providence, helped to present. The consistent harmony of the Bible's teachings which we found displayed throughout all the Old Testament books, and in the New Testament to the end of the Book of Hebrews, continues in evidence throughout the seven books which we will now review. These books, like the writings of the Apostle Paul, are in the form of letters, or epistles, and were written by the Apostles James, John, and Jude. These seven books are commonly known as:

| | |
|----------|----------|
| James | II John |
| I Peter | III John |
| II Peter | Jude |
| I John | |

In these seven books there are admonitions to Christian faithfulness, and assurances of God's care for his people, those who are called to be saints. There are also reminders of the Christian's glorious hope of living and reigning with Christ, in that kingdom of promise by means of which God's promise to Abraham to bless all the families of the earth will be fulfilled.

And the Christian's hope of glory, as it is expressed by the Apostle Paul, is the more wonderful because of being brightened by the prospect of the promised blessings which are yet to be enjoyed by the world of mankind. Because of this prospect of blessings for others, the Christian hope is an unselfish one. This is emphasized throughout all the books of the Bible.

The promises of God are that all the families of the earth are to be blessed, and that, of the increase of Christ's kingdom and the peace it will bring to mankind, there shall be no end. It was in keeping with this loving purpose of God, reassuringly stated over and over again by his holy prophets, that when Jesus, the Messiah, was born, an angel announced, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." (Luke 2:10) And so, intermingled with the various expressions of Christian hope in the epistles now before us, we will also find reaffirmations of the divine purpose to use the called-out ones of this age to be, with Jesus the Messiah, the channel of blessing to all mankind when the kingdom of promise is established.

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

Need of patience . . . The firstfruits . . . Faith dead without works . . . Controlling the tongue . . . Heavenly wisdom . . . Riches for the last days . . . Hope of Christ's return

The full title of the Book of James is, "The General Epistle of James." It is addressed to the "twelve tribes which are scattered abroad," and to these he sends "greetings." (James 1:1) While the nation of Israel contained twelve family divisions, originating with the twelve sons of Jacob, we are not to suppose that James intended his letter to be read generally by the entire Jewish nation, for he knew that only a small remnant of that nation had accepted Christ as their Messiah and consequently the rest would not be interested in a Christian letter. The thought is, evidently, that he intended his epistle to be for the benefit of Jewish believers from among all the various tribes of Israel.

The letter is largely inspirational in character, consisting of exhortations to wholesome Christian thinking and activity. He knew that every follower of the Master found himself in surroundings hostile to his aims as a Christian, and needed constantly to be on guard against the encroachments of the world, the flesh, and the Devil, so he wrote, "My brethren,

count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”—James 1:2-4

James exhorts, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.” (James 1:5,6) Again, “A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” (vs. 8) “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the LORD hath promised to them that love him,” is a timely word of assurance and comfort. (vs. 12) “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” (vs. 17) This is a reminder of the source of all our blessings.

Verse eighteen reads, “Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.” In our study of Paul’s first letter to the brethren in Corinth, we noted that in his explanation of the resurrection, he said that those first to be raised from the dead would be “Christ the firstfruits.” (I Cor. 15:23) Now James is identifying this firstfruits class for us, explaining that it is made up of those who are begotten by the Word of truth.

These are the “new creatures” referred to by Paul in II Corinthians 5:17. They are the ones who have the hope of a new, a heavenly life. Through “patient continuance in well-doing” they are seeking for “glory and honor and immortality.” (Rom. 2:7) In other words, they are the called-out class of the Gospel Age. That they should be described as the firstfruits of God’s creatures, implies that there will be afterfruits, and this the Bible clearly shows to be the case. The afterfruits class will be the whole world of mankind, restored to life during the “times of restitution of all things.”—Acts 3:19-21

Continuing his exhortations, James writes, “Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only.” (James 1:22) Chapter two

enlarges upon this thought, showing that faith without works is dead. If we merely hear the Word, and profess to believe it, yet do not conform our lives to its righteous precepts, our professions of belief are valueless. James concludes this exhortation by saying, "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."—James 2:26

The Greek word translated 'spirit' in this text means 'breath'. James' use of this illustration indicates that he thoroughly understood the truth on this subject; that is, that it requires the union of the breath of life with the body in order to have life. Probably he had many times read the statement in Genesis, where we are told that God "formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7) There is no such thing as an immortal soul!

Chapter three is almost wholly an exhortation to Christians to control their tongues. Too often, as James observes, "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." (James 3:10) He explains that the cause of this is most likely an impure condition of heart. "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" he asks.—vs. 11

In a further penetrating remark, James says, "If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth." He explains, "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." Then, by contrast, James writes, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."—James 3:14, 15, 17, 18

In James 4:10, he writes, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the LORD, and he shall lift you up." This is true of every faithful Christian on a far grander scale than is possible for the human mind to grasp. It was true of Jesus. In Philippians

2:5-11, the Apostle Paul tells us about it in an exhortation for us to be like Jesus. He writes:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, . . . made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

God's promise to the followers of Jesus is that if they, like he, humble themselves in doing his will, to the full extent of actually being willing to suffer and to die with him, they will be exalted to live and reign with him. A glorious prospect, indeed!

In chapter five of his letter, James becomes somewhat prophetic, forecasting some of the conditions of the last days. He speaks particularly of the heaping together of treasures for the last days. (vss. 1-3) This, he indicates, would come about, at least partly, because of worldwide inequities which would allow some nations to become rich more or less at the expense of others who are poor. Christians whose minds and hearts are attuned to the principles of divine justice and righteousness are properly pained by every evidence of injustice they see about them. At the same time, however, the Scriptures do not bid them take such matters into their own hands.

To these, and especially in view of the distressing conditions of this present evil world, James writes, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”—Gal. 1:4; James 5:7, 8

To every faithful believer in the Early Church, the return of Christ and the establishment of his kingdom would be the solution to every problem of the sin-sick and dying world. They knew, also, it would mean the fruition of their hope—that blessed hope of living and reigning with Christ. They knew that his coming and his kingdom would be the complete fulfillment of all that the Old Testament prophets had foretold concerning the blessing of all the families of the earth, the restitution of all things.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

Election and predestination . . . Suffering and glory . .

Where will the ungodly appear?

The Apostle Peter wrote his first epistle to the “strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.” (I Pet. 1:1) His use of the word strangers evidently denotes that he had not personally met these brethren. That they were brethren, and not unbelievers of the world, is evident from the next verse in which he speaks of them as being “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”—vs. 2

There is an election feature of God’s plan, not a pre-selection of individuals to be saved regardless of their qualifications, but an election, or predetermination of different classes to be used in the general plan of salvation. This was indicated by James in his speech at the Jerusalem conference when, after outlining God’s plan for this age and for the next age—that now God is calling out a people for his name, and that Gentiles are included under the arrangements—he said, “For known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”—Acts 15:13-18

Paul spoke of this election in so far as the church is concerned, explaining that God has predestinated that each one in this called-out class must be “conformed to the image of his Son.” (Rom. 8:29) This work of transformation into the

likeness of Christ is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit, which in turn works in our lives through the medium of God's Word. Peter speaks of this as a work of sanctification, and explains that it is being accomplished by the Holy Spirit.

In the opening verses of his letter, Peter mentions several important elements of Christian hope. He says that through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead we have been "begotten again unto a lively hope [or hope of life] . . . to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." Then he explains that we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."—I Pet. 1:3-5

The great salvation, the inheritance which is incorruptible, is reserved in heaven, Peter explains. It was not to be revealed, not to be entered into, until the last time; in other words, not until the end of the age and the return of Christ. Paul mentioned this when he said that there was laid up for him a crown which the Lord would give to him at that day, and not only to him, but to all them also that love his appearing.—II Tim. 4:6-8

In verse nine, Peter speaks of the salvation of souls. The word soul in the Bible does not refer to a living entity within the body which continues to live after the body dies. The reference here is to beings—in this instance, those called to be saints. Nor is the salvation the apostle speaks of merely an escape from the LORD'S condemnation—and certainly in no sense the erroneous idea of escaping the fires of hell, for such an idea is not taught in the Bible.

In the next verse, Peter indicates that the salvation he refers to is the one of which the "prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit . . . which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (I Pet. 1:10, 11) Many texts of Scripture give assur-

ance that the called-out class of this age will share this foretold glory with Christ. Surely this is a "great salvation."—Heb. 2:3

Jesus' disciples did not at first grasp the meaning of the prophecies pertaining to the sufferings of Christ. They saw only the forecasts of his messianic glory. However, with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, their minds were illuminated, and now, in order to strengthen Christian faith, Peter calls attention to these prophetic utterances which showed that Christ must suffer and die as the world's Redeemer and Savior. And he also emphasizes the glory that should follow. Throughout his epistle Peter reveals that every Christian will ultimately share in that glory that should follow. The condition, of course, is that they first share in the foretold sufferings of Christ.

The fact that in the divine plan Christian believers are privileged to share in the foretold sufferings of Christ and thus prove their worthiness to share in the glory and power of his kingdom is one of the principal themes of this epistle. In I Peter 2:5 he writes that these called-out ones are "an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." The Book of Hebrews reveals that the brethren of Christ are a priesthood, authorized to offer sacrifice, even the sacrifice of themselves, and now Peter confirms this vital truth for us.

In verse nine, he speaks of our being a "royal [or kingly] priesthood." This confirms Paul's claim that Christ and the church together were represented by Melchisedec, who was both a priest and a king. Thus, in the midst of timely exhortations to Christian faithfulness and endurance, we find these nuggets of thought which serve to bind the promises and prophecies of God's Word together so that it presents a gloriously harmonious testimony concerning the great plan of salvation for both the church and the world.

In the offering of sacrifice, suffering is involved, and it is this which Peter describes as the sufferings of Christ. Peter

writes, "Even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps." (I Pet. 2:21-24) In the next chapter we read, "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit."—I Pet. 3:17, 18

In the fourth chapter he writes, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." Again he touches this viewpoint, saying, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."—I Pet. 4:12, 13, 16

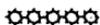
This suffering which faithful believers share with Christ is, as Peter indicates, a fiery trial. It tests their fidelity to God and to Christ. The entire Gospel Age is set apart in the plan of God for this trial, this testing of the church. In verse seventeen, Peter refers to it as the judgment—from a Greek word meaning 'decision'—which begins with the "house of God." God's people, the called-out class throughout the age, have suffered many fiery trials. Upon the basis of their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the LORD when thus tested, they are accounted either worthy or unworthy of living and reigning with Christ, sharing in his glory.

It has been a severe test, but the reward is correspondingly great. In the expression, "If the righteous scarcely be saved," Peter continues to show that their trial is a severe one. And it is indeed through much tribulation that any of the consecrated qualify to enter into the kingdom as kings and priests to reign with Christ. Those whose hearts are right, however, can depend upon the LORD to give them strength to endure and, depending upon him, they can be sure that nothing will separate them from his love.

Peter then makes a statement which has been greatly misused, because misunderstood—"If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (I Pet. 4:18) Because of traditional misconceptions of the plan of God, many have surmised that Peter is implying that the ungodly and the sinner will appear in a hell of torment. But Peter does not say this, nor is it what he meant.

The Greek word here translated 'appear' means literally to 'shine', or to 'show'. In view of the severe trial of the righteous in this age, a testing so severe that they scarcely prove faithful, Peter is apparently asking what kind of showing the ungodly and the sinner will make. If they were now on trial for life, the implication is that they would fail.

Peter is not discussing the future trial period of the world, so does not answer his own question. Had he done so, his answer would have been in harmony with Jesus' teachings, when he said, "If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not. . . . The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:47-49) The last day is the time of the general resurrection. (John 11:24) It is in that day that the ungodly and the sinner—those who have done evil—will be awakened from death and given their opportunity to hear, understand, and obey the words of Jesus, believe on him, and live. That will be their judgment day; but they will not be invited to suffer for righteousness' sake, so their trial will not be so exacting. Neither will they get the same high reward that is gained by the believers of this age, but will be restored to life as perfect humans upon the earth. □



"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."



—John 3:16, 17

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Holy Spirit

THE THEME SUBJECT OF THE 1983 GENERAL CONVENTION

AMONG the many blessings of the 1983 General Convention, held at Albion, Michigan, was a doctrinal study on the subject of the Holy Spirit. The many ramifications of this topic were discussed in a four-part presentation as assigned subject discourses by very able brethren. We have condensed these four talks and publish them here for your enjoyment.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN PAST AGES

In the Old Testament, the word spirit is often the English translation of the Hebrew word **ruach**. The primary significance of this word is 'wind', and constitutes the root meaning of the word spirit. Wind is both invisible and powerful, hence the ancients applied this word to the various invisible and powerful influences of God. Divine power is many times exercised through channels and agencies beyond human sight and understanding. This Hebrew word, **ruach**, in addition to being translated 'spirit', is also translated 'tempest, mind, smell, wind' and 'windy'. In each of these translations, the thought behind the word is that of invisible power or influence. There is a power in the mind, for example, but it is a power that is invisible in its operation and little understood. The Holy Spirit, then, is simply the invisible power of God.

In past ages, the Holy Spirit was manifested in a great variety of ways. Speaking of God's creative power, we read in Genesis 1:2 that his Spirit "moved upon the face of the waters." God's power initiated the life-cycling processes which over eons of time prepared the planet Earth as a suitable home for mankind. When this was accomplished, God's Holy Spirit as a creative power brought forth Adam and Eve,

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” — Gen. 2:7

The word breath (Hebrew, **neshana**) simply refers to ‘vitality, life, power’, or a ‘living soul’. It required two things for man to become a living soul; first, a body which God formed out of the dust of the ground; and second, the breath of life. These two in combination formed a living soul, a sentient being, in the person of Adam. The Prophet Job wrote, “In whose hand [in whose power] is the soul [life] of every living thing, and the breath [**ruach**] of all mankind.” (Job 12:10) This same thought is beautifully expressed by the Apostle Paul in Acts 17:28, when he said, “In him [God] we live, and move, and have our being,” referring to the fact that all life stems from our Heavenly Father.

Yes, the Spirit or power of God is manifest throughout all creation. It was the Spirit of God that transformed this planet from an empty, shapeless mass into this beautiful, vital earth. It was God’s Spirit (power) which set bounds to the mighty oceans. “Hitherto shalt thou come but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.” (Job 38:11) It was God’s Spirit (power) in the past ages that decreed, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life. Let the earth bring forth the living creatures, after his kind.” (Gen. 1:20,24) We marvel at the magnitude of these great accomplishments, and search for understanding of them. Solomon wrote, “Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child. Even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.” (Eccles. 11:5) Solomon, the wisest of men in his day, acknowledged that he did not understand how the Spirit of God accomplishes the commonplace miracles of life.

Another aspect of the invisible power of God is made manifest in gravitation. The Prophet Job wrote, “He . . . hangeth the earth upon nothing.” (Job 26:7) This great,

(Continued on Page 38)

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| Israel Fulfilling Prophecy..... | Israel in History and Prophecy |
| Key to the Bible: The Divine Plan of the Ages..... | The Divine Plan of the Ages |

DAWN PUBLICATIONS, EAST RUTHERFORD, NEW JERSEY 07073

LITERATURE

“FRANK and ERNEST”

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

ALABAMA

Mobile WUNI 6:45 a.m.
Sheffield WSHF 1290 1:30 p.m.

ALASKA

Ketchikan KTKN 7:30 a.m.

ARIZONA

Phoenix (Sat.) KXEG 11:30 a.m.
Nogales KFBR 1340 9:15 a.m.

ARKANSAS

Little Rock KAAZ 1090 9:45 a.m.

CALIFORNIA

Bakersfield KUZZ 970 8:00 a.m.
El Centro KICO 1490 10:30 a.m.
Glendale KIEV 870 1:45 p.m.
Redding KSXO 600 7:45 a.m.
Sacramento KJAY 1430 10:00 a.m.
Tehachapi KTPI 10:15 a.m.

COLORADO

Englewood KQXI 1550 3:15 p.m.

CONNECTICUT

Groton WSUB 8:15 a.m.

FLORIDA

Jacksonville WBIK 1010 1:15 p.m.
Orlando WGTO 540 7:30 a.m.
Tampa WFLA 970 10:15 a.m.

GEORGIA

Albany WALG 1590 7:30 p.m.
Augusta WHGI 10:45 a.m.
Vidalia WVOP 1:00 p.m.

HAWAII

Honolulu KNNDI 5:15 p.m.

IDAHO

Nampa KFXD 580 7:30 a.m.

ILLINOIS

Elmhurst WKDC 1530 8:15 a.m.
La Salle WLPO 1220 9:45 a.m.
Rockford WXTA 1330 6:15 a.m.
W. Frankford WFRX 1300 9:15 a.m.

INDIANA

Hammond WJOB 1230 8:30 a.m.
La Porte WCOE

KENTUCKY

Bowling Green WLBK 1410 8:00 a.m.
Newport WNOP 8:00 a.m.
Winchester WWKY 1380 10:30 a.m.

MAINE

Portland WDCI-AM 9:45 a.m.
Portland WDCS-FM 9:45 a.m.

MARYLAND

Baltimore WCBM 7:15 a.m.

MICHIGAN

Detroit CKLW 800 8:15 a.m.
Grand Rapids WMAX 1480 8:45 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis KTCR 690 9:45 a.m.

MISSOURI

St. Louis KSTL 690 7:30 a.m.

MONTANA

Kalispell KGEZ 600 9:45 p.m.

NEW JERSEY

Salem WJIC 9:45 a.m.

NEW YORK

Buffalo-Niagara Falls
WHLI 1270 12:00 noon

OHIO

Zanesville WHIZ 1240 6:40 a.m.

OREGON

Oaks Park/
Portland KLIQ 1290 9:45 a.m.

PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown WHOL 1600 10:45 a.m.
Pottstown WPAZ 1370 12:45 p.m.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston WOKE 1340 7:06 p.m.

TENNESSEE

Memphis WMQM 1480 1:45 p.m.

TEXAS

Fort Worth KJIM 870 6:45 a.m.
Pearsall KVWG 1280 8:00 a.m.

VIRGINIA

Richmond WGGM 7:45 a.m.

Radio Broadcast Schedule

WASHINGTON

| | | |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| Clarkston | KCLK | 10:00 a.m. |
| Seattle | KGAA 1460 | 8:15 a.m. |
| Spokane | KICN-FM 99 | 3:00 a.m. |
| Spokane | KUDY 1280 | 9:45 a.m. |
| Tacoma | KAMT 1360 | 9:45 a.m. |
| Yakima | KUTI 980 | 6:45 a.m. |

WISCONSIN

| | | |
|-----------|------|-----------|
| Milwaukee | WZUU | 7:00 a.m. |
|-----------|------|-----------|

WYOMING

| | | |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Cheyenne | KSHY 1370 | 9:00 a.m. |
| Sheridan | KWYO 1410 | 12:00 noon |

PUERTO RICO

| | | |
|------------------|------|-----------|
| Aguadilla (Fri.) | WABA | 8:00 p.m. |
|------------------|------|-----------|

CANADA

| | | |
|---------------------|----------|------------|
| Edmonton, Alta. | CJOI | 12:45 p.m. |
| Lethbridge, Alta. | CJOC | 7:15 a.m. |
| Vancouver, B.C. | CJJC 800 | 9:45 a.m. |
| Winnipeg, Man. | CKJS | 9:00 a.m. |
| Fredericton, N.B. | CFNB | 10:15 p.m. |
| Corner Brook, Nfld. | | |

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------|------------|
| | CFCB 570 | 12:15 p.m. |
| Deer Lake, Nfld. | CFDL-FM | 12:15 p.m. |
| Port au Choix, Nfld. | CFNW | 12:15 p.m. |
| Port aux Basques, Nfld. | | |

| | | |
|--------------------|----------|------------|
| | CFGN 910 | 12:15 p.m. |
| St. Andrews, Nfld. | | |
| | CFCV-FM | 12:15 p.m. |
| St. Anthony, Nfld. | | |

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| | CFNN-FM | 12:15 p.m. |
| Stephenville, Nfld. | CFSX | 12:15 p.m. |
| Hamilton, Ont. | CKOC | 7:00 a.m. |
| Oshawa, Ont. | CKAR 1350 | 7:15 a.m. |
| St. Thomas, Ont. | CHLO | 10:45 a.m. |
| Montreal, P. Q. | CFMB | 5:15 p.m. |

| | | |
|----------------------|----------|------------|
| Prince Albert, Sask. | | |
| | CKBI 900 | 7:30 a.m. |
| Regina, Sask. | CKRM | 7:45 a.m. |
| Yorkton, Sask. | CJGX 940 | 10:00 a.m. |

BRITISH WEST INDIES

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Grand Cayman | Radio Cayman | 11:15 a.m. |
|--------------|--------------|------------|

CEYLON

| | | |
|------------------------|--|-----------|
| Radio Sri Lanka (Sat.) | | 9:45 p.m. |
|------------------------|--|-----------|

ITALY

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Europa Radio Milano | | |
| | FM 83.300 | 11:30 a.m. |
| Euro Tele Radio Calabria | | |
| | 102 MHZ (Fri.) | 5:30 p.m. |
| Radio Corleone Centrale | | |
| | FM 88-500 FM 92 | 11:00 a.m. |

NEW ZEALAND

| | | |
|-----------|-----|------------|
| Dunedin | 4XD | 11:45 a.m. |
| Whakatane | IXX | 6:45 a.m. |

NIGERIA

| | | |
|-------------------|------|------|
| Ondo State (Wed.) | OSBC | 2245 |
|-------------------|------|------|

PANAMA

| | | |
|-------------|----------|------------|
| Panama City | HOQ 1250 | 10:30 a.m. |
|-------------|----------|------------|

PHILIPPINES

| | | |
|---------------|------|-----------|
| Manila (Sat.) | DWXX | 9:15 p.m. |
|---------------|------|-----------|

SOUTH AFRICA

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| Joubert Park | SWAZI Music Radio | |
| (Wed.) | | 11:30 a.m. |

SPAIN

| | | |
|---------------------|--|-----------|
| Radio Gerona (Mon.) | | 9:45 p.m. |
|---------------------|--|-----------|

TONGA

| | | |
|--------------------|--|-----------|
| Nuku' Alofa (Mon.) | | 5:30 p.m. |
|--------------------|--|-----------|

VIRGIN ISLANDS

| | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------|
| St. Croix | WSTX 970 | 9:00 a.m. |
|-----------|----------|-----------|

SPANISH RADIO BROADCASTS

ARIZONA

| | | |
|---------|-----------|-----------|
| Nogales | KFBR 1340 | 9:00 a.m. |
|---------|-----------|-----------|

CALIFORNIA

| | | |
|-------|-----------|-----------|
| Wasco | KWSO 1180 | 7:45 p.m. |
|-------|-----------|-----------|

FLORIDA

| | | |
|--------------|------|-----------|
| Coral Gables | WRHC | 8:45 a.m. |
|--------------|------|-----------|

MEXICO

| | | |
|----------|------|-----------|
| Mazatlan | XECQ | 8:30 a.m. |
|----------|------|-----------|

TEXAS

| | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| San Antonio | KUKA 1250 | 8:45 a.m. |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|

URUGUAY

| | | |
|------------|---------------------|-----------|
| Montevideo | Radio El Espectador | |
| 810 k.c. | (Sat.) | 1:30 p.m. |

The BIBLE ANSWERS

REGULAR TELEVISION BROADCASTS

We regret that we are unable to furnish the date and time of the broadcasts for the stations listed below:

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| CALIFORNIA | | IOWA | | NORTH CAROLINA | |
| Chico | KMPN-10 | Cedar Rapids | KTS, 18 | Charlotte | WHKY |
| | Sunday, 8:30 p.m. | Mt. Vernon/ Lisbon | WMVL Cable | OHIO | |
| FLORIDA | | Every weekday 7:00 a.m. | | Dayton | WHIO |
| Miami | WKID | MISSISSIPPI | | Zanesville | WHIZ-Sunday |
| Jacksonville | 17 | Jackson | WAPT | TEXAS | |
| GEORGIA | | MISSOURI | | Lubbock | KCBD |
| Albany | WTSG, 31 | Springfield | KOLR | WEST VIRGINIA | |
| | Sunday, 9:30 a.m. | | | Logan | 12-Monday |
| Atlanta | WATL | NEW MEXICO | | GUAM | |
| ILLINOIS | Champaign- | Roswell | KSWs | KUAM, 9:00 a.m., Sun. | |
| Decatur- | | | | | |
| Springfield | WBHW | | | | |

SATELLITE TRANSMISSION CABLE NETWORK SCHEDULE

This is a new schedule of stations and times of our satellite transmission broadcasts. The broadcasts are on Sundays, and the schedule is on Standard Time.

| CITY | CHANNEL | CITY | CHANNEL | CITY | CHANNEL |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------|
| ALABAMA-8:00 a.m. | | Englewood | 35 | GEORGIA-9:00 a.m. | |
| Dothan | 3 | Fort Collins | 28 | Atlanta | 27 |
| Montgomery | 6, 22 | Greeley | 22 | Augusta | C |
| ARIZONA-7:00 a.m. | | Longmont | 29 | Decatur | 27 |
| Phoenix | 17, 30, 31, 38, 42 | Parker | 28 | IDAHO-7:00 a.m. | |
| Tucson | 37 | CONNECTICUT 9:00 | | Boise | 18 |
| ARKANSAS-8:00 a.m. | | Bridgeport | 35 | Caldwell | 18 |
| Joplin-Pittsburg | 10 | Groton | G20 | Idaho Falls | 10 |
| Little Rock | 7, 23 | Plainville | 33 | ILLINOIS-8:00 a.m. | |
| CALIFORNIA-8:00 a.m. | | West Haven | 32-S | Belleville | 24 |
| Alhambra | 48 | DELAWARE-9:00 a.m. | | Elmhurst | 19 |
| Arroyo Grande | 31 | Dover | 14A | Joliet | 21 |
| Bakersfield | 29, 31 | Wilmington | 2 | Mount Prospect | 1 |
| Beverly Hills | 29 | FLORIDA-9:00 a.m. | | Sunnyside | 36 |
| Laytonville | 61 | Coral Gables | 6 | Waukegan | 33 |
| Los Angeles | 14, 23, 30, 44, 48, 50, 56 | Florida City | 18 | INDIANA-9:00 a.m. | |
| Mountain View | 34B | Fort Lauderdale | 25 | Hammond | 22 |
| Palm Desert | 33 | Fort Myers | 9 | Indianapolis | 5 |
| Sacramento | 25 | Kendall | 33 | Lafayette | 5 |
| San Francisco | 21 | Key West | 5 | Munster | 31 |
| Tulare | 23 | Madison | 4 | New Haven | 10 |
| Ukiah | 47 | North Miami Beach | 12 | IOWA-8:00 a.m. | |
| COLORADO-7:00 a.m. | | Oriando | 28 | Dubuque | 22 |
| Cortez | 2 | Pompano Beach | 32 | Sioux City | 23 |
| Denver | 20 | Sarasota | 4 | Waterloo | R(31) |

| CITY | CHANNEL | CITY | CHANNEL | CITY | CHANNEL |
|------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|----------|----------------------------|-----------|
| KANSAS-8:00 a.m. | | NEW JERSEY-9:00 a.m. | | Providence | 30 |
| Roland Park | 5A, 10A | Fort Lee-Edgewater | S | Warwick | 30 |
| Wichita | 13 | Suffern (NY) | 10 | SOUTH CAROLINA-9:00 | |
| KENTUCKY-9:00 a.m. | | Newark | 24 | Charleston | P |
| Bowling Green | 20 | Trenton | 34 | Columbia | 4, 19F |
| Covington | B-16 | NEW MEXICO-7:00 a.m. | | TENNESSEE-8:00 a.m. | |
| Dayton | B-16 | Alamogordo | 26 | Bristol (VA) | 18 |
| Lexington | 31 | Albuquerque | 12 | Chattanooga | 18 |
| Louisville | 25 | Santa Fe | 22 | Knoxville | H, 15, 21 |
| Westwood | 21 | NEVADA-6:00 a.m. | | TEXAS-8:00 a.m. | |
| LOUISIANA-8:00 a.m. | | Las Vegas | 21 | Arlington | 41 |
| Lafayette | 7 | NEW YORK-9:00 a.m. | | Austin | 16 |
| St. Bernard Parish K(24) | | Albany | 29 | Brownwood | 17 |
| MASSACHUSETTS-9:00 | | Brookhaven | 6 | Bryan | 19 |
| Arlington | 32 | Buffalo | 11 | Dallas | 71 |
| Beverly | 43 | Manhattan | 10 | El Paso | 13 |
| Boston | B5 | Niagara Falls | 3 | Fort Worth | 16 |
| Lynn | 27 | Rochester | 12, 32 | Galveston | 31 |
| Quincy | 43 | Schenectady | 8 | Harris | 25 |
| MARYLAND-9:00 a.m. | | Syracuse | 17 | Hitchcock | 31 |
| North Brentwood | A-22 | NORTH CAROLINA-9:00 | | Houston | 22, 31 |
| MICHIGAN-9:00 a.m. | | Apex | 17 | Irving | B30 |
| Birmingham | 51 | Greenville | 27 | Odessa | 25 |
| Clinton | 10 | Rocky Mount | 26 | San Antonio | 34 |
| Coldwater | 27 | OHIO-9:00 a.m. | | Victoria | 55 |
| Dearborn | 38 | Blue Ash | 38 | Waco | 17 |
| Flint | 23 | Cincinnati | 33 | VIRGINIA-9:00 a.m. | |
| Lincoln Park | 31 | Cleveland | 17 | Alexandria | 30 |
| Plymouth | 39 | Columbus | 5, 8, 19 | Chesterfield | 28 |
| Southfield | 43 | Mentor-on-Lake | 12 | Danville | A |
| Warren | 10 | Poland Village | 10 | Newport News | 13 |
| MINNESOTA-8:00 a.m. | | Youngstown | 0 | Richmond | 11 |
| Alexandria | UHF34 | OKLAHOMA-8:00 a.m. | | Staunton | 8 |
| Richfield | 34 | Tulsa | 10 | WASHINGTON-6:00 | |
| N.W. Minneapolis | 56 | OREGON-6:00 a.m. | | Tacoma | 10 |
| St. James | 48 | Portland | 30, 44 | Vancouver | 28 |
| MISSISSIPPI-8:00 a.m. | | Salem | 26 | Yakima | 16 |
| Lafayette | 12 | PENNSYLVANIA-9:00 | | WISCONSIN-8:00 a.m. | |
| Meridian | 7 | Aston | 3 | Ashwaubenon | 31 |
| MISSOURI-8:00 a.m. | | Erie | B29 | Green Bay | 12 |
| Chesterfield | 32 | Lansdale | 18 | Hustisford | 26 |
| Columbia | 11 | Norristown | 29 | Madison | 29 |
| Kansas City | 8 | Pittsburgh | 57 | Manitowoc | 30 |
| Overland | 23 | Stroudsburg | 23 | Milwaukee | 31A/B |
| St. Louis 13A, A13, 28, 33 | | Uniontown | 22 | New Berlin | 31 |
| NEBRASKA-8:00 a.m. | | RHODE ISLAND-9:00 | | Portage | 33 |
| Columbus | 29 | Lincoln | 46 | Sheboygan | 13 |
| Lincoln | 36 | WYOMING-8:00 a.m. | | PUERTO RICO | |
| Omaha | 29 | Douglas | 7 | San Juan | 24 |

immeasurable weight is hung upon nothing, and yet so precisely balanced, and minutely timed, that its celestial movements can be accurately plotted for millions of years in advance. And the earth is only one speck in God's great universe. Think of the countless billions of stars which are likewise hung upon nothing! Yet they spin as ordered in orbits designed for them, kept in place by forces staggering to our imagination.

The Bible reveals another important facet of the power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who served him in past ages. Take, for example, Joseph and his ability to interpret for Pharaoh two strange dreams concerning the seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine. (Gen. 41) God caused Pharaoh, by giving him these dreams and later arranging an interpretation, to realize that Joseph accomplished this under the direction of the Spirit of God. Pharaoh, acknowledging this, said, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?"—Gen. 41:38

A different manifestation of God's Spirit was given to Bezaleel at the time the Tabernacle was built. The Tabernacle, constructed in the wilderness, required very special and skilled workmanship for its accomplishment. God said about Bezaleel, to whom this task was given, "I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and in understanding and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold and in silver and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. . . . And in the hearts of all that are wise hearted, I have put wisdom that they may make all that I have commanded thee." (Exod. 31:3-6) Not only were the skilled workers important for the Tabernacle, but so also was the cooperation of all the Israelites. "Moses spoke unto all the congregation of the children of Israel saying, . . . Take ye from you an offering unto the LORD. And they came everyone whose heart stirred him up."—Exod. 35:4, 5, 21

One of the activities of the Holy Spirit in past ages was its work among the prophets, whose written testimonies are still very important to us today. God said, "I have also spoken by the prophet and I have multiplied visions and used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets." (Hos. 12:10) And again in II Kings 17:13, "Jehovah testified against Israel and against Judah through all his prophets, everyone who had a vision which I sent unto you through my servants the prophets."—

Rotherham

The Apostle Peter eloquently states: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto you do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. . . . Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (II Pet. 1:19-21) Our faith is confirmed in the knowledge that the teachings of our Lord and the apostles are built upon the foundation of the prophets.

What about the miracles of past ages which were recorded for us? What about the ten plagues upon Egypt? Who performed them? It was the Spirit, the mighty power of God! Again, an even more amazing miracle recorded in the Scriptures took place when Israel, being led out of Egypt on their way to Canaan, came to the Red Sea. What now? Did you bring us here to die or to drown? was the question asked by the Israelites. Only the great power of God could save them, and it did. In acknowledgement they sang, "Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power; thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy." (Exod. 15:6) There are many other miracles recorded in the Bible: the curing of the bitter waters of Marah; the providing of manna from heaven; crossing the Jordan; the fall of the wall of Jericho; the staying of the sun and moon by Elijah; the raising of the widow's son by Elijah; the raising of the Shunamite's son. Yes, we could go on and name many more, all accomplished by the Spirit of God.

The marvelous way in which the Holy Spirit of God was exercised aforetime was not only to reveal Jehovah's great power, but also to establish a foundation of information and source of inspiration for the later ministry of our Lord and the apostles. The work of the entire Gospel Age—the call of the church— is accomplished “not by power [of men], not by might [of men] but by my Spirit, saith the LORD.” (Zech. 4:6) God's Holy Spirit as it worked in ages past was chiefly for our benefit today. My Word “that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it.”—Isa. 55:11

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE GOSPEL AGE

Beginning with the Gospel Age, God began to deal with his servants in an entirely different way than in past ages. He still instructed his people how to accomplish his will, but, with the instruction, added the new dimension of **why**! This opened up a whole new vista of understanding, allowing those receiving the Holy Spirit to share God's thoughts more intimately. The veil which for ages had shrouded God's Word in mystery, even for those who were instrumental in writing its sacred pages, began to be lifted through the ministry of our Lord and the apostles.

That the Holy Spirit is the power that accomplishes the removal of this veil was well illustrated in the life of Jesus, when the time came for him to be baptized. Prior to this experience, our Lord must have known the Scriptures well. No doubt he was very familiar with the writings of Moses and the prophets and knew of the types, illustrations, and prophecies which they contained, and he realized that locked in their mysteries was the purpose and detail of his life here on earth.

When he was baptized with the Holy Spirit at Jordan, the scripture says that “the heavens were opened unto him.” (Matt. 3:16) The effulgence of light and spiritual understanding that came upon his perfect mind began to illuminate the

thoughts of God written aforetime for him. To grasp its full import, Jesus felt the need of being alone, to ponder and consider how to plan his ministry so that it might conform to those things which he found written in the "volume of the book." (Ps. 40:7) "And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness and he was there in the wilderness forty days." —Mark 1:12,13

The Holy Spirit is also the power of God which has called every one who is to be associated with Jesus. He said, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John 6:44) While not so spectacular as with Jesus at Jordan, or the coming of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at Pentecost, the process is, nevertheless, essentially the same. With us, it is generally a step by step process of coming to a knowledge and appreciation of the truth, which inspires in us a desire to serve God, and leads on to consecration.

The Scriptures give some wonderful examples of the drawing power of God. The eunuch whom Philip met was a man seeking to serve God, and was searching the Scriptures for truth. (Acts 8:26-39) The Holy Spirit directed Philip to him, and starting with the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, his eyes became opened to Jesus. While the record of this meeting is greatly abbreviated, we can be sure that Philip pointed out the ransom features of Jesus' death, and the necessity of the merit of his sacrifice being applied on our behalf. He must have indicated the necessity of sharing in sacrifice in order to do God's will. With this knowledge, the eunuch asked, "What doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. . . . And he baptized him."

Another experience that well illustrates the drawing power of God involved some disciples whom Paul met when he came to Ephesus. They had some truth and believed, but were unfamiliar with baptism into Christ, and the receiving of the Holy Spirit, and the purpose for which it was given. Again, the record in Acts 19:1-6 is very brief, but we can be sure that the

apostle gave a full explanation of baptism to these brethren—how it symbolizes the surrendering of our wills to the will of God, the desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus even unto death, the taking up of our cross to follow him, the burial with Jesus into death, and to be raised with him in newness of life. After hearing Paul they believed and were baptized, and evidences of the Holy Spirit came upon them.

These examples suggest a sequence similar to that mentioned in Ephesians 1:12-14. First the truth must be presented and heard—“In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard.” Next, it must be accepted and acted upon through consecration—“After that ye heard . . . ye believed [believed into].” Then follows the sealing work of the Holy Spirit, stamping the impression of God’s character (his identity) into our hearts and minds—“Whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.” The many manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives gives evidence that God will someday complete this good work in a heavenly inheritance. And all this comes about, as the apostle declares, by having “the eyes of your understanding being enlightened.”—vs. 18

The Apostle James tells us that it is the truth that begets: “Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.” (James 1:18) A belief and acceptance of the high calling based upon the redemptive work of Jesus starts us off on a new life with a living hope destined in heaven. Expanding upon this thought, Paul wrote, “Even when we were dead in sins hath he quickened us together with Christ . . . and hath raised us up together and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”—Eph 2:5, 6

Being made alive to spiritual hopes and promises, we now enjoy a special fellowship with Jesus as sons of God. And prospectively we look forward to being resurrected to the divine nature as he was. “For if we have been planted

together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection.”—Rom. 6:5

The Bible also speaks of those who are spirit-begotten as being anointed. In II Corinthians, the first chapter, verses twenty-one and twenty-two, we read, “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us is God. Who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” The same anointing that our Lord experienced at Jordan, we experience. What it meant to him, it also means to us. Anointing had its roots in early Bible times when kings and priests who served the LORD were anointed with the holy anointing oil. This act demonstrated to all that the person so honored was authorized by God.

Isaiah prophesied of Jesus: “The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me, because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” (Isa. 61:1) This was a commission that our Lord received and accomplished during the three-and-one-half years of his ministry. Jesus, reading this scripture to the Jews, said, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your ears.” (Luke 4:21) During his ministry, this was his chief occupation. The prophecy of the fortieth psalm was used to beautifully speak for Jesus on this matter. “I have preached righteousness in the great congregation. Lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.” (vss. 9, 10) This is how he proved his faithfulness. It was his diligence in preaching that brought on his trials and finally led to his death on the cross.

We have the same anointing; we have the same commission to preach the Gospel. And the joy which was set before Jesus which enabled him to endure the cross and despise the shame, is also set before us. The vision of truth that is revealed to us by God’s Holy Spirit is the motivating factor in our lives, enabling us to endure suffering and pain, and trials and

tribulations, with the expectation of one day being exalted with our Lord to share in his work of blessing.

EVIDENCES OF SPIRIT-BEGETTAL

Perhaps most of us, from time to time, wonder: Was my consecration really accepted? Is the power of God truly working in my life? In order to help us answer these questions, we have prepared a list of ten evidences of Spirit-begettal by which we can carefully scrutinize our lives and know that the power of God's Holy Spirit is working within us.

Witness number one is hunger. In John 6:32 we read, "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven." When a baby is born, it needs food. When it is hungry, the mother feeds her baby, and it is satisfied. When it gets hungry again, it cries; again it is fed. When we grow older, we know how important proper nutrition is to us.

The new creature needs food; spiritual food to the new creature is a great joy and pleasure. An important evidence that the new spiritual life has begun within us is our hunger for spiritual food. Where will we get this food? It must come from the Word of God, and we realize that this food will not come to us without effort on our part. We satisfy this appetite for truth by our personal studies, by going to meetings and conventions, because it is by these methods food is supplied for the new creature. We should have such a great drive within us for this spiritual food that we will be willing to sacrifice in order to obtain it! We will be willing to lay aside the interests of the world in order to have time to study God's Word, and to satisfy the new creature. If we do, then it is a real evidence that the Holy Spirit of God is working in our lives.

Witness number two is knowledge. II Timothy 3:16, 17 says, "All scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." After our Lord was immersed at Jordan, he went into the mountain in order to be with his Heavenly Father. While there, forty days and forty nights, an

understanding of his Father's Word was opened to him in a magnificent way. Can you imagine how he felt when he thought about Abraham and Isaac? He said to himself, "I'm Isaac! My Father wants to offer me for the world!" Can you realize how he felt when the windows of heaven were opened to him and he realized that, as Aaron had offered sacrifices, he would offer a better sacrifice? How he must have rejoiced when he realized that there would be a greater priesthood than the Aaronic—that he would be the head of the Melchisadek priesthood. Oh, what joy that must have been to him!

He had no thought concerning anything of an earthly nature for all those days. And, my dear brethren, when we are really serious about the truth, when it means everything in our lives, then, as we hunger and as we feed upon God's Word, the windows of heaven also open for us. We come to understand the great doctrine of the ransom, the two salvations, restitution. We might think these are such simple things, but in reality they are the deep things of God. An understanding of these basic truths has given us the theme in our lives and we gladly lay everything down upon the altar in order that we might in some way bring glory to God's great name.

God's Word is written in such a marvelous way that nearly every time we open the Bible we see something new, something wonderful, and we say, I've never seen this before! although we may have read it for fifty years! "'Tis a mine, aye, deeper too, than can mortal ever go. Search we may for many years, still some new, rich gem appears.'" So, if our knowledge is growing, then we do have another wonderful evidence of the Holy Spirit working in our lives.

Witness number three is separation. God's servants in every age have been a separated people. In Numbers 8:14 we read (God speaking to Moses): "Separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine." What was their portion as far as temporal things were concerned? They obtained no inheritance in the land. They received the opportunity, however, of serving God full-time,

and our portion is like that of the Levites. We receive no earthly inheritance, but we are given the privilege of offering our lives in complete consecration to the LORD and his service.

The Apostle Paul, in II Corinthians the sixth chapter, gives us a list of ways in which we must be separate from the world:

Be not unequally yoked—separation from worldly marriage partners. (vs. 14) What part has a believer with an unbeliever, or an infidel?—separation from worldly activities. (vs. 15) What connection has God's Temple with idols?—separation from worldly worship. (vs. 16) "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." (vs. 17) This will not be an easy path. The world will continue to call to us. We will hear voices in our ears calling us to take part in their worldly pursuits, to join them in worldly pleasures, and love of ease.

The enemies of God tried to convince Nehemiah to stop his work of rebuilding the wall at Jerusalem, and meet them in the plain of Ono. He answered, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" (Neh. 6:3) But God's enemies did not give up. Four times they tried to interrupt the work, and four times he said, Oh no, not I! We must be able to say, No, to similar temptations and suggestions to hinder the work God has given us to do. Paul wrote, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38, 39) If we are likewise persuaded, we have a great evidence of God's Holy Spirit transforming our lives.

Evidence number four is discipline. Paul wrote, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons." (Heb. 12:7) The thought of the word chastening is tutorage, education, or training; by implication, disciplinary instruc-

tion. The Heavenly Father is watching over our actions, whether they be influences of present advantage, worldly policies, personal friendships, earthly loves, honor among men, love of ease, love of peace at any price. We must be controlled, rather, by the principles of truth and righteousness. In our walk, we must look for correction, for instruction, for these are important lessons that will help us become more Christlike. If we do, we have another evidence of God's Holy Spirit working in our lives.

Evidence number five is suffering. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, **if so be that we suffer with him**, that we may be glorified together." (Rom. 8:16,17) The strength of this witness is often lost through a circumscribed conception of what the sufferings of Christ are. We often contemplate the cruelty heaped upon the Lord which culminated in his crucifixion. We think of the cruelty suffered by Early Christians at the Colosseum in Rome, and the Christian persecution during the pagan and papal times in Early Church history. And we compare them to the more or less tranquil kind of lives we lead today. Although Jesus endured actual physical abuse only the last day of his life on earth, he also suffered uncomplainingly during the many preceding days of his ministry—the ridicule and scorn of the Pharisees, weariness and fatigue, and rejection from his people.

If we have plunged wholeheartedly into the LORD'S service, and we bear willingly at least some twinges of painful fatigue, some loss of vitality, some ridicule or rejection for our witness of the truth, then we have cause for rejoicing because our Heavenly Father considers this as part of the sufferings of Christ, which constitutes another strong evidence of Spirit-begettal.

Next comes loyalty, another word for faithfulness. The beginning of each day should find us going immediately to our Heavenly Father to say, "What shall I render unto the LORD

for all his benefits toward me?" This should be the song in our heart. And then, all day long, because we realize our loyalty belongs to God, we will continue to go to the throne of grace for his direction, help, comfort, praise and thanksgiving. The Spirit-begotten child of God is so loyal to God's righteous principles that he does not sin willfully. God's righteous principles are **his** standard also. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (I Thess. 4:3) "Be ye holy, for I [the LORD] am holy." (I Pet. 1:16) Our loyalty to God and his righteousness must go on day by day, year by year, decade by decade. If it does, we have another great witness.

Number seven is witnessing, which is another wonderful evidence in our life. Jeremiah said, "His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forebearing, and I could not stay." (Jer. 20:9) Jeremiah had to speak the Word of God; he had to give God the glory. And so it should be with us. Like Jesus, we too must bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and preach the acceptable year of the LORD.—Isa. 61:1-3

We can witness by being an example—having an epistle "written in our hearts, known and read of all men." (II Cor. 3:2) Witnessing God's great plan of salvation to the poor, sin-sick world is a thrilling experience for us. And it is another evidence that God's power is working within us.

Number eight is sacrificing. In Leviticus the eighth chapter we have a beautiful picture of consecration. The blood of the ram of consecration was put on each individual priest's right ear, right thumb, and right big toe. The consecration of everything we possess was represented in this type. What are we doing with our hands? What are we listening to? Where are our feet taking us? The April 20th Manna says, "Let us carefully scan our earthly duties and obligations to see in what manner we could justly and properly cut off moments, hours, or days from the service of earthly things and earthly interests that now might be given to sacrifice to spiritual interests of ourselves and others." Our recognition of the reasonableness

of presenting our bodies as living sacrifices, acceptable to God, is a powerful evidence that the Holy Spirit is doing its work in our lives.—Rom. 12:1,2

Number nine is providences. “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Rom. 8:28) This, and other scriptures assure us that the providences of God are great indeed. All of our steps are ordered by God. His eyes are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers. No good thing is withheld from them.—Ps. 37:23; I Pet. 3:12; Ps. 84:11

Sometimes the experiences that come to us do not always seem like providences from God—losing a job; becoming ill; not being able to sell a home; not being elected an elder or deacon; or a sudden death in the family. These things, from the human standpoint, can seem like tragedies. But when we faithfully respond and submit to them with confidence that he knows what is best of us, we will see the hand of God and his work in our experiences, and looking back will praise the way he has led us. When we look for, find, and accept our Heavenly Father’s providences in our lives, we have another evidence that we have been begotten by his Holy Spirit.

Last, but not least, **number ten is fruitage.** John 15:8 says, “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit. So shall ye be my disciples.” II Peter 1:5-8 gives the thought that there must be growth—Add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience piety, to piety brotherly kindness, and finally love itself. If these fruits are manifest in our lives, then truly we can rest assured that God’s Spirit is within us. “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”—Gal. 5:25

It should be encouraging to us to note evidences that give witness that the power and influence of God is working in our lives. He loves us, and is working in us, both to will and to do his good pleasure.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE KINGDOM

All who come under the influence of God's Word of truth are properly said to be under the influence of the Holy Spirit, or disposition of the truth. Mainly, in our studies, we apply this definition to the work of the Gospel Age, but we must remember that the Spirit of the truth will be given also to the world of mankind in the Millennial Age. The Holy Spirit will then be used by Christ and his church to further carry out God's purposes to their glorious conclusion in the restitution of the world of mankind.

Jesus said on one occasion, after his resurrection, "All authority has been imparted to me in heaven and on earth." (Matt. 28:18), **Diaglott**) Authority implies power, power that was given to our Master at the time of his resurrection to be used in the subsequent outworking of God's plan. In the kingdom, Christ and his church, as the Mediator of the New Covenant, will act as the principal agency of Jehovah in bringing blessings to all the families of the earth.

This great work will be carried out by the authority and power which was granted to Jesus. In that day the Holy Spirit of God will be exercised through the Christ, who will teach all mankind how to comply with the righteous laws of the kingdom. The application of the blood of the New Covenant will mark the inauguration of the blessings to come through the reign of Christ. This will commence after the end of the great time of trouble, which culminates in Armageddon—bringing to a close this present evil world. While this is the point in time which marks the beginning of the kingdom, it will however, require the entire thousand years for the full establishment of the New Covenant, when the work of perfecting the earth and its people is completed. Then will be fulfilled that part of God's Covenant to Abraham which promised blessings to all the families of the earth.

The Scriptures seem to indicate that the initial use of the Holy Spirit's power will be exercised in the work of resurrect-

ing the dead. That the Holy Spirit's power is to be used for this purpose is made clear in the experience of our Lord in raising Lazarus from death. (John 11:40, 41) He did not accomplish this by his own power, but by God's power, the Holy Spirit, given to him.

The first to receive this blessing will be the ancient worthies, a class mentioned by Paul in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. These devout men and women, because of their faith and service to God, were promised a better resurrection. "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." (Heb. 11:39, 40) The ancient worthies also have other blessings in store for them, for they will be the earthly representatives of the kingdom. Psalm forty-five, verse sixteen, reads, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." They will be raised out of death and made princes by the power of the Holy Spirit.

These worthy men of old, raised perfect, will also have the influence of the Holy Spirit upon them. Like Bezaleel, they will be filled with the Spirit of God imparted to them by Christ and the church, in wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and all manner of workmanship in order that they might function as the earthly representatives of the kingdom here upon earth. They will, by the power and authority vested in them, bring order out of chaos, instruct the people as to God's purpose, and what is expected of them. This will be the fulfilling of the Apostle Paul's prophecy, that all men will be brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth.—I Tim. 2:4, **Diaglott**

With the resurrection of the ancient worthies and the subsequent resurrection of the rest of mankind, God will pour out his Holy Spirit upon all flesh. And what will be the result of this outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all the world? Let us briefly consider some of the specific statements of the Bible. "This shall be the covenant that I will make . . . saith the

LORD. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be my people.”—Jer. 31:33

Isaiah prophesied of the kingdom: When “the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest, . . . the work of righteousness shall be peace and the effect of righteousness quietness, and assurance forever.”—Isa. 32:15, 17

Ezekiel wrote, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.” (Ezek. 36:26, 27) As the world of mankind comes under the influence of the Spirit of truth through a knowledge of it, they will experience a gradual transformation of their characters. Their desires, habits and inclinations, will turn toward righteousness and true service to God. And as the spirit of selfishness, which so characterizes the present evil world, gives way to the law of love, mankind will learn to work together under the kingdom’s tutelage, to make our planet, Earth, the bountiful, beautiful, perfect home which God envisioned, when long ago his Spirit first moved over the waters, and lifted the darkness from the face of the deep.

“Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision, the glories of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society. Not a bitter thought. Not an unkind look or word. Love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more, not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay, not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness.

The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be, and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away when thus they realize the resurrection work complete."—"The Divine Plan of the Ages"

"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."—Rev. 22:17 □



T is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: to show forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. . . . To show that the LORD is upright: he is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.—Psalm 92:1, 2, 15



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

DECEMBER 1—Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.—Matthew 22:39 (Z. '99-72 Hymn 166)

DECEMBER 8—If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you.—John 15:18 (Z. '01-300 Hymn 168)

DECEMBER 15—The LORD is my Shepherd.—Psalm 23:1 (Z. '02-365 Hymn 257)

DECEMBER 22—If a man therefore purge himself, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.—II Timothy 2:21 (Z. '02-319 Hymn 240)

DECEMBER 29—In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.—Ecclesiastes 11:6 (Z. '02-71 Hymn 260)

Our Great Savior

“Thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, . . . and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”—Luke 1:31-33

OUR confidence in Jesus as the one sent by God to be the Redeemer, the Messiah, the Deliverer of his people, rests not merely upon the testimony of the apostles in the New Testament records. Wonderful and convincing as these testimonies are, they gain nine-tenths of their weight and importance from the fact that they evidence the fulfillment of promises, types, and prophecies given by the LORD throughout the preceding 4,000 years. He who does not discern at least something of the divine plan of the ages in connection with our Savior, his birth, his three and one-half years' ministry, his sacrificial death, his resurrection, his ascension, fails to get the real strength of the divine revelation, designed by the LORD to be the firm foundation for his people's confidence in him and in all the glorious things which he has promised he would yet accomplish through this great Savior. □

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Talking Things Over

Peace on Earth

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.”—Luke 2:14

WHEN Jesus was born in Bethlehem, almost two thousand years ago, shepherds tending their flocks in the hills of Judea had a marvelous and unexpected experience. An angel appeared to them, announcing the birth of our Lord. At the conclusion of his message, “suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.” (Luke 2:13, 14) Note the phrase, ‘on earth peace’. At that time the civilized world was ruled by Rome, and its mighty empire depended upon soldiers, armies, and wars to maintain power and superiority over their subjects. In the intervening centuries since that memorable night, conditions have not changed. Armed strength has been employed to subdue people, and war has been accepted as inevitable. But the people do not want war. This paradox was well expressed in a book entitled, “Anatomy of Peace,” published in 1945 as the Second World War was drawing to a close: “Although the majority of all people hate violence and long to live in peace, we cannot prevent recurrent and devastating war.”

At Christmastime, many Christian people are reminded of peace because of the angel’s message to the shepherds. During a time of war, a prominent businessman sought to encourage his friends with a Christmas message containing the statement, “Christmas, the promise of permanent peace;” it is a promise still unfulfilled, but one that will be sure.

Thus, when the Christmas season comes this year, and it is evident that peace is still eluding us, those Christians who

ponder the significance of the angel's message will take hope. Skeptics, on the other hand, may seize the opportunity to stress how impractical the principles of Christianity are. But the angel's words are unmistakably clear: God had sent his Son to earth, and this was a special expression of his goodwill to men. Furthermore, the angel's opening words to the shepherds, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luke 2:10), mean that no one is excluded from these tidings of great joy!

The New Testament opens with the most joyous message ever heard by man—the announcement of our Lord Jesus' birth! And, its closing pages records a beautiful hallelujah chorus. It is a fitting finale to the inspiring words sung by the heavenly host on that unforgettable occasion of our Lord's birth. "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the LORD God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." (Rev. 19:6-9) In this rendition, men, great and small, are the singers who see the culmination of all their desires and hopes when peace and happiness come through the blessings of God's righteous kingdom. Our Lord will be on the throne as earth's rightful King, the Prince of Peace.

The happy tone of the message in the New Testament has been captured in the Christmas carols which are sung so joyfully at this season of the year. A few examples are:

"Hark the Herald Angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King.
Peace on earth with mercy mild,
God and sinner reconciled."

“God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay.
Remember Christ our Savior
Was born on Christmas day,
To save us all from Satan’s power
When we had gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy.”

“Joy to the world! The Lord is come!
Angels and men rejoice!
The jubilee will soon begin;
Praise God with heart and voice!”

“Joy to the world! The Lord is come!
O earth receive thy King!
Let every heart prepare him room,
And grateful tribute bring.”

“It came upon a midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From heaven’s all-gracious King:
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.”

It will be so uplifting when the whole world will be able to sing with understanding these joyous carols.

Mankind yearns for happiness yet true joy cannot be attained without peace, and true peace for the world can be attained only through Christ’s kingdom, when all shall know and obey the LORD. But, because the footstep followers of Jesus are in harmony with God’s purposes and obedient to his will, they have learned to know him and therefore find joy and peace even now. The Christian’s path leads first to a knowledge of Jesus. Then, as he continues to progress, knowledge leads to consecration; and consecration brings the blessings of the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit is the Spirit

of truth, it brings joy and peace. As these fruits of the Spirit are developed, they become a part of the Christian's character.

Our Lord's birth was the first step taken by the Heavenly Father toward the removal of sin from the world. In announcing this momentous event, an angel of the LORD appeared to Joseph, the espoused husband of Mary, in a dream, and said, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:20, 21) The salvation of the whole world could now be possible, and permanent joy and peace, in the LORD'S due time, will be a reality.

The true footstep followers of Jesus during this Gospel Age are, by the LORD'S grace, privileged to appreciate this deeper meaning of God's gift of his only begotten Son. And because of this understanding the commercial activity and some of the traditions associated with the worldly celebration of this event seem frivolous. The proper view, we believe, is expressed by the following quotation from a faithful servant of the LORD:

"Although we cannot agree that this is the proper day for celebrating the birth of our dear Redeemer, but must insist that it was about October first—nevertheless, since he did not intimate his desire that we should celebrate his birthday, it is quite immaterial upon what day that event, of so great importance to all, is celebrated. Upon this day, so generally celebrated, we may properly enough join with all whose hearts are in the attitude of love and appreciation toward God and toward the Savior. The habit of giving little remembrances one to another at this time of year seems to us specially appropriate. God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. He is continually giving and we are continually receiving from him; but amongst all his gifts the one of greatest importance to us is the gift of his Son to be our Redeemer."

Even though we believe that Christmas is not the correct day for the observance of our Lord's birth, it is remarkable that the Christmas season is almost the exact anniversary of the time when the angel visited Mary and announced the future birth of Jesus. It does not appear to be a coincidence that the tradition of gift-giving should be such a prominent part of Christmas. It is truly the anniversary of the greatest gift of all time!

Indeed, the wonderful promises related to Christmas are for the world of mankind. The tidings of great joy are intended to be for all people. This is so because Jesus Christ "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. 2:3-6) "God . . . gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) But when will these promises be fulfilled? The answer is, not until the old order of this present evil world passes away.

There is no nation or group of nations, including the United Nations, or any other worldly power, that can bring about the peace which the world longs for. Lasting peace will come through the Prince of Peace, as he is the only one who can bring about this desirable condition. He will bring true peace to all. The title, Prince of Peace, was given to Jesus centuries ago in a prophecy that foretold his birth: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa. 9:6) Jesus will assume all these titles when he begins his reign, even as this prophecy states: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9:7

If we are faithful, we shall be with the Prince of Peace to assist him in bringing peace to all the earth because Jesus

himself promised his disciples that their inmost desire for peace will be satisfied. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." (Matt. 5:9) They will not only become members of God's family, as children of God, but will share in the reign of Christ in bringing joy, blessings, life and peace to all mankind. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. 20:6 □



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| Allentown, PA | December 11 | | |
| G. PASSIOS | | J. TATE | |
| Berwick, PA | December 18 | Middletown, NY | December 18 |

Obituaries

The following sister has recently finished her Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to the family and friends in their loss of this dear one.

Sister Dunajski, Chicago, IL—November 6, 1983. Age, 95

We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.

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Conventions

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MINNEAPOLIS, MN, December 4— Northeast YMCA. Mr. C. R. Newham, 1722 N.E. 5th Street 55413
Phone: 789-3944

MIAMI, FL, December 10, 11—Mrs. Josephine Wesol, Acting Secy., 3580 S.W. 91st Ave. 33165
Phone: 226-8455

CHICAGO, IL, December 25—Elmhurst Masonic Temple, York Rd. & Arthur St., Elmhurst. Ted Marten, 2033 Busse Hwy., Des Plaines, IL 60016
Phone: (312) 824-8916

DETROIT, MI, December 25—Redford YMCA, 25940 Grand River, Detroit. Frank Nemesh, 2183 Babcock, Troy 48084
Phone: (313) 649-6588

PHOENIX, AZ, December 30, 31, & January 1—Quality Inn, 2420 West Thomas Rd. Mildred Enteman, 542 West Southern Ave. 85041

CHICAGO, IL, December 31, January 1, 2—Harold Richards High School, 10601 South Central, Oak Lawn. Ted Marten, 2033 Busse Hwy., Des Plaines, IL 60016
Phone: (312) 824-8916

ST. PETERSBURG, FL, January 8—Heilman's Mobile Home Park, 8300 Seminole Blvd. (Alt. 19), Seminole. Mrs. Lloyd Hagensick, 8003 Seminole Blvd., Lot 8, Seminole 33542
Phone: (813) 391-1772

PALO ALTO, CA, January 21, 22—San Jose Masonic Lodge, 2500 Masonic Dr., San Jose. Mrs. Irene Altuvilla, 1201 Sycamore Ter., Sp. 67, Sunnyvale 94086

LOS ANGELES, CA, January 29—Golden State Masonic Temple, 933 South Hoover St., Los Angeles. Steve Mengos, 8355 Santa Ynez St., San Gabriel 91775
Phone: (213) 286-0766

DELAWARE VALLEY BIBLE STUDENTS, February 12—Hugh Carcella Community Center, 920 Trenton Rd., Fairless Hills, PA. Barbara Green, 291 Oaktree Dr., Levittown, PA 19055
Phone: (215) 949-2283

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 11-17—Hotel Tyrol, Obsteig, Austria. Write: International Convention of Bible Students, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272
Phone: (213) 454-5248

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