

The DAWN

VOLUME No. LXXXII, Number 6
(USPS 149-380), June 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

First-class postage paid at Rutherford, NJ. Published monthly by The Dawn Bible Students Association, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. \$12.00 a year.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|---|
| The Holy Spirit—Its Definition and Purpose | 2 |
|--------------------------------------------|---|

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

- | | |
|----------------------|----|
| Obey the Lord | 14 |
| Trust God's Promises | 16 |
| Live Pure Lives | 18 |
| Hope for a New Day | 20 |
| A Call for Unity | 22 |

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|----|
| The Mind of Christ—Part 18 | |
| Peculiar and Zealous | 24 |
| Envy and Jealousy—Enemies of God's People | 38 |
| The Serpent upon a Pole | 52 |
| Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts | 51 |

TALKING THINGS OVER

- | | |
|-------------|----|
| In Memoriam | 59 |
|-------------|----|

OBITUARIES

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

CONVENTIONS

The Holy Spirit— Its Definition and Purpose

*“Behold, I send the
promise of my
Father upon you:
but tarry ye in the
city of Jerusalem,
until ye be endued
with power from
on high.”*

—Luke 24:49

FIFTY DAYS FOLLOWING

the resurrection of Jesus, an event of great importance to the Christian church took place. It was the Day of Pentecost, at which time the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples of the Master that were gathered together in Jerusalem, according to his instruction found in our opening text: “Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” According to Jewish calendar reckoning, the anniversary of this day falls each year sometime during the period from mid-May to mid-June—and this year it will be June 5. Nowhere in the New Testament are we asked to especially commemorate the Day of Pentecost as we are the “Memorial” supper which our Lord instituted the night before his crucifixion. However, it is appropriate, we believe, to consider

the events of that important day, especially as it has to do with the work and purpose of the Holy Spirit in the life of God's people.

A number of questions may come to the mind of those diligently inquiring concerning this subject. What is the Holy Spirit? Is it the third person of a trinity with God and Jesus? Is it some form of "ghost," as translated in numerous scriptures? What is the purpose of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian? What does it mean to be "born" of the Spirit, "baptized" of the Spirit, and "filled" with the Spirit? What is God's ultimate purpose with regard to the work of the Holy Spirit in his human creation? These are all valid questions, and ones which we believe are answered, not by the traditions and creeds of men, but by the Scriptures themselves. Let us examine this subject, then, in the light of the unerring and harmonious testimony of God's Word.

MISTRANSLATION

Through mistranslation and otherwise, many have been led erroneously to believe that the Holy Spirit is a person, the third person of a trinity. However, the Scriptures, when properly understood, do not warrant this thought. One of the mistranslations contributing to this misunderstanding is where the Greek word *pneuma* is rendered by the English word "ghost." This makes the Holy Spirit to be a Holy "Ghost."

This is a gross mistranslation, and is so recognized by nearly all Bible scholars. In nearly all translations of the Scriptures other than the *King James Version*, the word "Ghost" has been correctly changed to "Spirit." The *King James Version* was translated

at a time when superstition was rife, hence the word "Ghost" would command a great deal more respect and reverence than it does today. At that time, ghosts were very real in the minds of many people, yet very mysterious. They were always associated with the thought of personality, and the translators, believing in a "personal" Holy Spirit, conceived the idea of calling it a Holy "Ghost."

INVISIBLE POWER—NOT A PERSONALITY

In the Old Testament, the word "spirit" is a translation of the Hebrew word *ruach*. The primary significance of this word is wind. We do not mean to imply by this, however, that the Holy Spirit is a holy wind. This is merely the root meaning of the word. Wind is both invisible and powerful, hence the ancients applied this word to various invisible and powerful influences. Since divine power is exercised through channels and by agencies beyond human sight and understanding, this word *ruach* came to be applied more and more to all of God's dealings.

The word *ruach*, in addition to being translated "spirit," is also translated in the Old Testament by the English words "blast," "breath," "tempest," "mind," "smell," "wind," and "windy." It will be seen that in each of these translations the thought behind the word is that of invisible power, or influence. There is power in the mind, for example, but it is a power that is invisible to the eye.

As already noted, in the New Testament the Greek word translated "Spirit" or, incorrectly, "Ghost," in the expressions Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost, is *pneuma*. The primary meaning of this word is also wind, or air. It is the word from which our English

word “pneumatic” is derived. In addition to being translated Spirit and Ghost, it is also translated in the New Testament by the words “life,” “spiritual,” and “wind.”

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

The likening of God’s Holy Spirit to the invisible power of the wind is appropriately brought to our attention as we note what occurred on the Day of Pentecost, the very day that God’s Spirit was given to the disciples gathered in Jerusalem. The account states: “When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost [Spirit].”—Acts 2:1,2,4

The “rushing mighty wind” which filled the house was powerful, yet invisible. The disciples could see its effects and hear the resulting sound as it roared through the trees and blew through the house. Its force perhaps was seen in curtains which were moved violently, or household items that were jostled and fell to the floor. It was in the midst of this literal demonstration of the power of the wind that the Holy Spirit—also a mighty, invisible power—came upon the Lord’s disciples.

In noting God’s use of the natural, invisible power of the wind on the Day of Pentecost to illustrate the similarly invisible power of the Holy Spirit, we see that there is nothing in the scriptural account which states that the disciples saw any form of apparition, or “ghost-like” being, in conjunction with the wind or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them.

Surely, on such a momentous occasion as this, when they were to receive “power from on high,” if the Holy Spirit was indeed a personal being—part of a trinity—or a mysterious “ghostly” personality, there would have been some visible indication given to the disciples of this fact. No such sign was given.

EVIDENCES OF GOD’S POWER AND INFLUENCE

While the account in Acts 2 of the Day of Pentecost gives no indication that the Holy Spirit was a personality or a ghost, there were clear evidences of its invisible power and influence upon the disciples—power which had not before been present with them. Verse 4 states that they “began to speak with other tongues [in other languages], as the Spirit gave them utterance.” The Holy Spirit, God’s power and influence, provided the disciples with the mental ability to speak in other languages. This was very important at the time, because there were in Jerusalem “Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven” (vs. 5), gathered for the purpose of keeping one of the required feasts under the Mosaic Law arrangement. These multitudes spoke the various languages of the nations from which they had travelled. In order for them to understand the message which God intended to have given that day, there was a practical need for the disciples to speak in the languages which the people could understand. Thus we see the first manifestation of the invisible power of God—the Holy Spirit—as it worked in the minds of the disciples, giving them the ability to speak and be understood in the native languages of those gathered there.

The second demonstration of the invisible power of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was a direct outgrowth of the foregoing. Once those who were gathered heard the words being spoken in their own language, the Holy Spirit provided enlightenment to the minds of the disciples concerning the purpose of the events surrounding Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension to the Father—even the events of that very day. The disciples began to share this message of “the gospel” with all there. As the crowds listened, “they were all amazed, . . . saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.”—vss. 12,13

Peter, as the spokesman for the disciples, stood up and said boldly, “Hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, . . . But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass, . . . saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit: . . . and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.” (vss. 14-17) The word “prophesy” as used here has the thought of teaching. Indeed, through the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit, Peter began to teach in a way never seen before in any of the Lord's disciples. This was the same Peter who, just a few weeks earlier, confused and disappointed, denied the Master three times and, even after Jesus' resurrection, had seriously considered going back into the fishing business with others of the Lord's disciples. Now, as recorded in verses 22-36, Peter gave a discourse in which he outlined the entire plan of God and clearly explained the purpose of Jesus' death and resurrection as the centerpiece of that plan. What a demonstration of the invisible power and influence of the God's Holy

Spirit we see as it opened up Peter's mind, and as it gave him the ability to teach the Gospel message to those gathered there.

The foregoing demonstrations of the power and influence of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost were provided in a miraculous fashion. Yet, we note again that in none of these is there any indication that the Holy Spirit was a personality, an apparition, or any sort of "ghost." It was simply the invisible power and influence of God, as manifested in various ways—such as the example of the invisible power of the wind. Later, after the work of the Apostles was finished, and the Early Church was well established in the Gospel, miraculous demonstrations of the Holy Spirit's operation such as occurred on the Day of Pentecost were no longer needed. However, the work of the Holy Spirit as an invisible power in the lives of the followers of the Master was only beginning. This work has continued to our very day. Those who have fully consecrated their lives to do the Lord's will rely daily on the promised assistance of God's Holy Spirit in their lives.

The Holy Spirit then is, simply stated, the invisible power of God, a power that is manifested in a variety of ways. Speaking of God's creative power, we read that his Spirit "moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1:2) It was a mighty, invisible power, used in preparing the earth to be a life-sustaining home for plant and animal life, as well as for God's crowning creation—man. The influence of the Holy Spirit in our lives as Christians at the present time is primarily that which relates to God's mind and character attributes—the power associated with the development of these in us.

HOLY VS. UNHOLY POWER

It helps us in our understanding of the Holy Spirit to contrast what the Scriptures say about it with what they say about the unholy spirit of Satan. Various manifestations of the Holy Spirit are referred to as: “The Spirit of Christ,” the “Spirit of holiness,” the “Spirit of truth,” the “Holy Spirit of promise,” the “Spirit of meekness,” the “Spirit of grace,” the “Spirit of prophecy.” Here again, nothing in these various shades of meaning attached to the Holy Spirit gives any thought of personality. Rather, invisible power and influence are the focus in each case.

The various manifestations of the spirit of Satan are described as the “spirit of fear,” the “spirit of bondage,” the “spirit of the world,” the “spirit of error,” the “spirit of divination,” the “spirit of anti-christ,” and the “spirit of slumber.” Similarly, no one would conclude that because the word spirit is thus used to describe the various manifestations of Satan’s influence in the world, that there is a personal “unholy spirit” who is one in substance with the Devil.

BORN OF THE SPIRIT

There are a number of expressions used in the Scriptures to describe the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and lives of Christians. One of these is “born of the Spirit.” This is a word which suggests the coming into existence of a new life, and this is one of the things accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit. This new life, when it comes fully to birth, will be so different from the human life that, concerning it, Jesus said, “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof,

but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”—John 3:8

The Greek word in the Bible translated “born” is also correctly translated “begotten,” and it is necessary to determine from the context which thought is intended by the writer. By observing this distinction, we learn that it is not proper to speak of conversion to Christ as being “born of the Spirit.” When one comes to God in repentance and, through faith in Christ as his Redeemer, surrenders himself in full consecration to do God’s will, what occurs is properly described as a “begetting” of the Spirit of God. In other words, a new life is then begun.

However, this new life, to continue the symbolism, is merely an embryo. It needs to be nourished by the Word of God, and thus to develop, growing strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. It is not until the resurrection that this new life comes to the birth. Not until then is one truly “born of the Spirit.” Only then are the words of Jesus true that one thus born is able to go and come invisibly as the wind. Thus we see that to note this difference in the use of the words “born” and “begotten” gives us a much more comprehensive understanding of what the power of God exercised through his Word accomplishes on behalf of the consecrated followers of the Master.

BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT

The Scriptures also speak of the “baptism” of the Spirit. The word baptize means to bury, and to be baptized by the Spirit of God simply means to be so fully surrendered to the doing of God’s will that

one comes completely under its control, having no will of his own. However, from God's prospective standpoint, the entire church of Christ was baptized by the Spirit at Pentecost. Hence, there is no necessity for a fresh outward demonstration of the Holy Spirit upon each individual who consecrates to do the Father's will.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "By one Spirit are we all baptized," and he explains that for the individual this baptism occurs when one comes into the "one body" of Christ. (I Cor. 12:13) It is a burial of our wills into the will of God as expressed through Christ, the Head of the "body." When we get this proper viewpoint of what is involved in the baptism of the Spirit, we will not be looking for repetitions of the spectacular manifestation of the power of God which occurred at Pentecost.

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

The Scriptures declare, "Be filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5:18) How void of meaning would this expression be if the Holy Spirit were a person! However, when we recognize that it is simply the power, or influence, of God, exercised in the Christian life through his written Word and our experiences in the narrow way, then we can understand how it is possible to have either more or less of the Spirit influencing our lives. To be filled with the Spirit calls for an emptying of self and self-will, and a diligent application of ourselves to the study of God's Word and a putting into practice all of its righteous precepts.

Christians are also said to be "sealed" by the "holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. 1:13) God's Spirit—

his power and influence—directed the minds of the prophets in writing the Old Testament, in which are recorded many promises assuring God’s blessing upon his faithful people. The New Testament was also written under the direct inspiration of the Spirit, or power of God, and it contains additional promises by which God guarantees victory through Christ for every faithful follower of the Master. Thus he “seals” us by his promises—that is, he assures us that if we are faithful to him he will give us grace to help in every time of need, and in the resurrection will give us a “crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

The word “witness” is likewise used in connection with the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians. His Spirit bears witness with our spirit, the apostle tells us, “that we are the children of God.” (Rom. 8:16) This too is a very understandable matter. Throughout the Spirit-inspired Scriptures are outlined the various steps and experiences of Christians who are faithful in doing God’s will. Those who find that God is blessing them along the lines outlined by the Spirit through his Word, have thus the witness of the Spirit that they have been accepted into the family of God through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and thus are “children of God.”

ALL FLESH TO BE BLESSED

God’s Spirit will be poured out in various ways for the blessing of mankind during the Millennial kingdom of Christ. He will cause the knowledge of his glory to fill the whole earth “as the waters cover the sea.” (Isa. 11:9) His power will also operate to restore the dead to life, for the promise is that

there “shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”—Acts 24:15

In the promise of a New Covenant which God will make, first with the house of Israel, and then encompassing the whole world, the statement is made that the Lord will write his law in the hearts of the people. (Jer. 31:31-34) This too will result from the operation of his Holy Spirit in the lives of those who obey the laws of the kingdom.

During the period of Christ's kingdom Satan will be bound, thus his spirit will not be influencing people to do wrong. Instead, every condition of the new social order will be favorable to the doing of God's righteous will. Love will take the place of selfishness as a motivating power in all human activity. Mankind will learn that the greatest and only enduring joy comes from doing good to others rather than from selfishly seeking always to take care of one's own interests first.

In that kingdom, the whole outlook of the human race gradually will be changed as a result of the outpouring of God's Spirit upon all flesh. How glad we should be that the power of God is thus to be manifested for solving the problems of a distressed and dying race. When the blessings accruing from this outpouring of the Holy Spirit will be recognized as coming from the great and true God of the universe, the Creator of heaven and earth, the people will be glad to give glory to him, for they will then know that he is truly a God of love. Thus, at the end of the kingdom, all the obedient of mankind will have their thoughts, words, and actions fully directed by nothing other than the righteous power and influence of God—his Holy Spirit. ■

Obey the Lord

Key Verse: “*Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?*”
—Haggai 1:3,4

Selected Scripture:
Haggai 1:1-11

WHEN GOD MADE A COVENANT with Israel by delivering the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai, he told them they were to worship him only. If they obeyed the covenant given to them, God promised to bless them above all the nations of the earth. To these instructions “all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do.”—Exod. 19:8

It was not long, however, until Israel’s promised obedience was broken. When Moses was delayed coming down from the mount while speaking with God, the people implored Aaron to make them new gods. Aaron was persuaded to build a golden calf, to which the people said, “These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought us up out of the land of Egypt.” (Exod. 32:1-4) Thus began a recurring pattern of disobedience by Israel in keeping their promise to worship only the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God which performed miracles in delivering them from Egyptian bondage—the God who chose them from all the nations of the earth to be his people.

God gave Israel a series of strong warnings that the worship of other gods would result in their promised land being taken from them and the people being scattered

among the heathen nations. In the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses became the first of many prophets to warn Israel of the punishment that would result from their failure to obey God's commandments. It was the Prophet Jeremiah who later told Israel that after so many instances of disobedience God would take away their kingdom and give them into captivity in Babylon.

Along with this punishment, however, came a promise from God that he would visit them after seventy years and cause them to return to Jerusalem. (Jer. 29:10) As always, God kept his promise. First, he lifted up Cyrus as king of Persia and gave him all of the kingdoms of the earth. This was in accordance with Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream that another would take power from Babylon. Cyrus acknowledged God's hand in giving him the kingdoms of the earth. When he was charged to build God a house in Jerusalem, Cyrus obeyed and made a proclamation that the Israelites should be allowed to return to Jerusalem to do so.—Ezra 1:1-3

The Israelites gladly received this news. Many quickly returned and built the foundation of the Temple with singing and praise for their God. (chap. 3:10,11) However, when adversaries arose to hinder the work, the people quickly turned from building the Temple to building homes for themselves. Once again, they failed to maintain obedience to the instructions of their God. Many years passed with no further rebuilding of the Temple. It was then that the Lord sent the Prophet Haggai to speak the words of our Key Verse to the people.

What a striking lesson we can gain from this message delivered by Haggai. Do we sometimes allow our desire for earthly treasures to interfere with our obedience to God's will? Let us rather heed the words of our Master: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."—Matt. 6:20,21 ■

Trust God's Promises

Key Verse: *“The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.”*
—Haggai 2:9

Selected Scripture:
Haggai 1:12; 2:1-9

Failure to appreciate and trust God's providences was the reason Israel kept breaking their covenant with God, a promise that all the people had made when they were delivered from Egyptian bondage.—Exod. 19:8

Throughout their history we see the merciful nature of God towards his chosen people. When they were finally permitted to be taken into Babylonian captivity, God encouraged them with reminders of his love for them. He told them that he would not leave them nor forsake them, just as he had promised Moses and Joshua. (Josh. 1:5) He further assured them that their captivity would not be permanent, but would end after seventy years.—Jer. 29:10

After being chastised by Haggai's words for not obeying God, the people were moved to obey the instructions of God and once again revere and praise him. (Hag. 1:12)

AS NOTED IN OUR PREVIOUS lesson, Israel followed a pattern throughout their history of obeying and praising God when receiving blessings, then disobeying when left to their own imaginations. God's provision of manna in the wilderness is but one example in which their thankfulness was soon replaced with complaints for something better. Such is the nature of fallen humanity.

God then reassured them once more by declaring, “I am with you.” This stirred the people to action: “They came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God.”—vss. 13,14

The further message of the prophet, recorded in Haggai 2:6-9, was doubtless puzzling to the Israelites who heard it. To the best of their understanding, the shaking of the past might have been referring to the quaking of the earth at the giving of the Law Covenant at Mount Sinai. They could only guess what the future shaking might be, as they had no special aid in looking toward future events. The same could be said about their inability to understand the meaning of the statement, “The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former,” mentioned in our Key Verse.

With the aid of the Holy Spirit, we are able to understand what Israel could not recognize. We realize that the things that happened to natural Israel were types of greater things that apply to the church in this present Gospel Age. (I Cor. 10:11) Through spirit begetting, we are able to see that the “latter house” Haggai referred to is the body of Christ. “Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (II Cor. 6:16) We understand also that this latter house does not negate the importance of the former house. God has promised to never forget Israel nor his role for them to be an earthly blessing in the coming kingdom.

The Apostle Paul reminds his audience of the importance of Israel in God’s plans: “I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.” (Rom. 11:1,2) We are blessed to have an understanding that the desire of all nations will soon come in God’s kingdom, just as he promised through Haggai. Let us learn from Israel’s experiences to trust God’s promises implicitly. ■

Live Pure Lives

Key Verse: *“Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless you.”*
—Haggai 2:19

Selected Scripture:
Haggai 2:10-19

THE MESSAGE DELIVERED

by the Prophet Haggai was intended to wake Israel from indifference to their covenant with God. They had become complacent toward their religion. Their energy had become consumed in providing for the comforts of their homes, gardens, and other earthly things, while the Lord’s Temple lay desolate and neglected. However, by responding positively to Haggai’s message, they demonstrated a willingness to repent that few of the other prophets experienced. Indeed, many prophets were rejected, or even killed, when hearing unpleasant news sent by God. Jesus himself attested of this: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee.”—Matt. 23:37

Israel’s response to Haggai provides a valuable lesson in how we are to live our lives. God had made a covenant with Israel wherein he commanded them to obey him. The covenant was clear and simple. If Israel obeyed the Lord they would be blessed. If they disobeyed the Lord they would be punished. (Deut. 28:1-42) We see an example of their disobedience and punishment during the time of Haggai’s prophecy.—Hag. 1:5-11

Speaking to the church in Rome, the Apostle Paul

describes how God provided his love toward Israel: “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”—Rom. 10:1-3

Limited by their fleshly imperfections, it was impossible for Israel to keep the provisions of the Law Covenant. Paul continues, however, explaining how we might live up to our covenant relationship even though we, too, are imperfect in the flesh. “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, . . . That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”—Rom. 10:4-6,9,10

Israel was expected to live pure lives if they were to receive God’s promised blessings. The same is to be true of us. We, however, have the imputed merit of our Master’s sacrifice. “Even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: . . . that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”—I Pet. 2:21-25

Let us give thanks for the reassurance given to Israel through the prophecy of Haggai, and be confident that God will bless us even more so if we live pure lives. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10 ■

Hope for a New Day

Key Verse: *“Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”*
—**Zechariah 4:6**

Selected Scriptures:
Haggai 2:20-23;
Zechariah 4:5-14

AS THE PROPHET HAGGAI grew older, his successor arrived on the scene to continue giving God’s message concerning the rebuilding of the Lord’s Temple. Zechariah was a young man when he returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity under the current governor, Zerubbabel. In our Key Verse, combined with the words of verse 9, we hear God’s statement that the Temple would be completed by Zerubbabel, but not by his might, nor that of the Persian monarch, nor by any other earthly power. Zechariah’s words were clear that by the spirit of God himself the work would be finished.

Zechariah’s first prophetic words to Israel concerned their fathers’ evil ways, which had led to God’s displeasure and punishment. (Zech. 1:1-6) Those words, however, are followed by words of comfort to Jerusalem and a promise to finish the house they had started: “Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.”—vss. 16,17

Zerubbabel was a prince amongst the people and of the line of David. He did finish rebuilding the Temple as God had said, but it was not literally greater than the former house, as Haggai had prophesied. (Hag. 2:9) Clearly God was speaking of an antitypical house which would be greater, and that house is revealed to us as the Christ, head and body, the spiritual temple of God. In Zechariah 4:1-4, the context of our Key Verse, we have described a candlestick and two olive trees. Reference to these is also found in Revelation 11:4. These Scriptures further point to a greater spiritual temple which will eventually bring the promised new day of Messiah's kingdom.

We also note Haggai's prophetic statement concerning the overturning of "the throne of kingdoms" (Hag. 2:22), followed by these words: "In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, . . . and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts." (vs. 23) The presentation of a signet ring indicated great power and authority for the one who wore it. During the present age, it is only to the footstep followers of Jesus that the "signet" promise of sonship is given, which contains hope for a new day and of being part of the finished spiritual temple to those faithful unto death. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:14-17

The Spirit of God was indeed the instrument used through Zerubbabel. Likewise, his Spirit will operate to bless all in his kingdom, as all the holy prophets foretold: "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." (Joel 2:28) What a privilege for us to see this hope for a new day! ■

A Call for Unity

Key Verse: *“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”*
—I Corinthians 1:10

Selected Scripture:
I Corinthians 1:1-10

ple and a chosen people and its literal Temple. Considering the reliance Israel should have had in God's dealings with them through their covenant and its ultimate purpose, the Apostle Paul said, “Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” (Gal. 3:23,24) Israel should have been unified in their worship of God as his chosen people. They should have rejoiced in knowing

AMONG THE LESSONS

from the prophecy of Haggai which we have considered this month was a call for unity among his chosen people. God had called Israel to work and rebuild the Temple. He had reminded them of their promise to live up to the covenant he had made with them and which they agreed to obey, saying, “Work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.”—Hag. 2:4,5

In all of this, we have seen that God was speaking of a temple greater than the nation of Israel and its literal Temple. Considering the reliance Israel should have had in God's dealings with them through their covenant and its ultimate purpose, the Apostle Paul said, “Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” (Gal. 3:23,24) Israel should have been unified in their worship of God as his chosen people. They should have rejoiced in knowing

he was dealing with them above all the nations of the earth, and thereby had faith in him. “Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” (Acts 3:25,26) However, because of a lack of faith, they forsook their opportunity to be the greater temple: “He [Jesus] came unto his own, and his own received him not.”—John 1:11

Because Israel failed to live up to their covenant, and then rejected the very one sent to deliver them from its bondage, God turned to the Gentiles for construction of the greater temple which Haggai had prophesied would come. “It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.”—Acts 13:46,47

Paul told the early Christian Jews that the promises pertaining to the spiritual seed of Abraham were offered first to natural Israel. However, through a lack of faith they, as a nation, rejected their promised Messiah, Jesus, who was sent to redeem them “from the curse of the law.” (Gal. 3:13-16) This call would now be open to individuals who would comprise the seed irrespective of their nationality and regardless of any lack of former standing before God. Paul emphasizes this arrangement by saying, “Ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:28,29) Let us learn from Israel’s experiences and be unified in our service to God, humbled by esteeming others better than ourselves and putting on the mind of Christ.—Phil. 2:3-5 ■

Peculiar and Zealous

***“Who gave himself
for us, that he
might redeem us
from all iniquity,
and purify unto
himself a peculiar
people, zealous of
good works.”***

—Titus 2:14

THE WORD “PECULIAR”

has attached to it today the thought of being odd, or strange, but in our text it means that which is very special, or beyond the ordinary. This is also the meaning of the Greek word from which it is translated. It is true

enough that the world looks upon God’s people as being odd. However, our text is not describing the Lord’s people as they appear to the world, but as they are viewed by God. They are to him very special—a treasure in preparation to be a “royal diadem” in his hand, through which his glory will be reflected to all mankind in his own due time.—Isa. 62:2,3

Jesus was the first of these “peculiar,” special treasures, prepared by God to be the channel through which all the families of the earth would eventually be blessed. While on earth, he too encountered the general ridicule and disdain of the world, particularly the religious leaders of the day. In

prophetic words, Isaiah described in advance this viewpoint of Jesus. “He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; . . . we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. . . . We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” (Isa. 53:2-4)

To God, however, Jesus was a “peculiar,” special treasure. Continuing his prophecy, Isaiah speaks of the Father’s viewpoint of his beloved Son. “The pleasure of the LORD [God] shall prosper in his hand. . . . Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.” (vss. 10-12) As we strive daily to further develop the “mind of Christ,” we must take note of those things in his character and works which caused him to be considered such a special treasure to the Almighty. By emulating his “mind” and considering the many scriptures bearing on this important subject, we will be enabled, by God’s grace, to be esteemed by him as a “peculiar people,” and found worthy to “divide the spoil” of the heavenly inheritance with Christ Jesus, our Head and Forerunner.

PROMISES OF HELP

Because those called to the heavenly phase of the kingdom to be joint-heirs with Christ are a special treasure unto the Heavenly Father, he has made every necessary provision to supply all their needs. When they are weak, he gives them strength. When they are weary and faint, he refreshes them with the water of truth and the food of his Word. When

they lack wisdom, he supplies their need. When they know not which way to go, his Word is a light unto their pathway, and they hear a voice behind them saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."—Isa. 30:21

Many are the foes of God's peculiar people, but he has promised to protect them, and for this purpose has provided the armor of truth, and the fortress of his Word. Thus they are assured that no evil can befall them, because greater is he who is on their side than all who are against them. They claim the promise, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."—Ps. 91:1

In their present fleshly state, God's people are weak and blemished. They come far short of the perfect standard of righteousness to which they aspire. Even this, however, does not cast them down, for God has redeemed them by the precious blood of Christ. They are thereby purified and set apart to be coworkers with Jesus, who loved them and gave his life that they might live. With Paul, they exclaim, "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" (Rom. 8:33,34) In the comfort of this knowledge they press forward, confident that he who began the good work in them is abundantly able to complete it in his own due time and to his own glory.—Phil. 1:6

CONDITIONS ATTACHED

While it is a great honor to be a part of God's peculiar people, and most satisfying to realize how many exceeding great and precious promises he has made to us, we should ever remember that our standing before him in this position is conditional

upon our faithfulness in doing his will. In this respect, we are in much the same position before God as were his typical people, Israel. To them, he said, “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine.”—Exod. 19:5

There are very few of God’s promises which are unconditional. Israel failed to qualify as his peculiar treasure because they did not hearken to his voice and did not keep their covenant with him. It is because of their failure, and ultimate rejection of Messiah, that this opportunity came to believing Gentiles. That is why we have been privileged to hear God’s call and have been granted the opportunity to be his special treasure. We are surely glad for this, but let us remember that the conditions of our acceptance still apply—conditions of obedience.

This thought is emphasized in our text by the statement that the peculiar people referred to are “zealous of good works.” These two thoughts are inseparable. There is no way to qualify as a member of the peculiar-people class apart from being zealous, but simply being zealous is not sufficient. Unless the zeal is for good works, it will count for nothing.

This thought is called to our attention by Jesus. He said that many would come to him saying, “Have we not . . . in thy name done many wonderful works?” However, the Master’s answer is, “I never knew you.” (Matt. 7:22,23) He doubtless knew they were working, but he knew also that the work of these zealous ones was not in keeping with his Father’s plan, nor was it done from a proper condition of heart. Thus, it did not gain for them his commendation.

APPROVED WORKMEN

It is fundamentally important for all who aspire to be of the peculiar people class to make sure that their zeal is properly directed. Paul tells us how to do this. In his letter to Timothy, he writes, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (II Tim. 2:15) Those to whom Jesus will say, “I never knew you,” will be very much chagrined because they had not sought diligently enough to show themselves approved unto God, even though by men they may have been approved.

The Scriptures speak of a “zeal of God” which is “not according to knowledge.” (Rom. 10:2) Such a zeal might be for wonderful works instead of good works. It could be the zeal to promote one’s own opinions and thus to gain the plaudits of men. It might be a zeal for following a human leader, or to build up an imposing organization. One might even have a zeal for the work that God wants done, and yet his zeal could be kindled by a wrong motive.

Paul calls our attention to this latter possibility, saying that though we bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and give our bodies to be burned, and have not love, it will profit us nothing. (I Cor. 13:3) It is a part of the good works of God to give our bodies figuratively to be burned. Paul invites us to do this very thing, saying, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”—Rom. 12:1

Jesus pointed out the terms of the narrow way to the rich young ruler, saying, “Go and sell that

thou hast, and give to the poor, . . . and come and follow me.” (Matt. 19:21) Indeed, we are all invited to present ourselves and all we possess to God to be used by him as he may direct. However, if any other motive than love prompts us to do this, it means that we do not have the proper kind of zeal—not zealous of what God regards as good works.

SINCERE STUDY

Paul admonished us, as previously quoted, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God.” This is the only proper motive for Bible study, and it is well to examine ourselves to make sure that we are sincerely endeavoring to learn God’s will. The human heart is deceitful, and we need constantly to be on guard lest we find ourselves misusing the Word of God in an attempt to justify some private viewpoint of our own, or perhaps some special activity in which we wish to engage. This special activity may not be wrong from God’s standpoint. It may be a special service for which we might be naturally adapted. However, if done from the motive of vain-glory or personal honor, and not to the glory and honor of God, then it would be in vain.

It is well in all our study of the precious Word of God to ask ourselves whether or not we are wholly motivated by the desire to know and do God’s will. “Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,” wrote the poet, “thus understand but little what they read.” We may fancy that we have no pre-adopted creed to prove, but let us be on guard, for surely we do not want to be workmen who shall be ashamed.

It is well to note that proper Bible study in itself is but a preparation for the good works which have

God's approval. We need also to become God's approved workmen. We endeavor, through study, to rightly divide the Word of truth, in order that in our work for God we may be workmen who will not need to be ashamed—workmen to whom he will not need to say, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."—Matt. 7:23

It is necessary to rightly divide the Word of truth in order to know what God wants us to do. We need to divide it dispensationally. For example, there was a time in the plan of God when it was God's will for his people actually to slay their enemies because their iniquity had come to the full. (Gen. 15:16) However, to do that now would certainly not be manifesting a zeal for good works, since Jesus commanded us, "Love your enemies. (Matt. 5:44) Citing another example, Jesus told his disciples not to go to the Gentiles, but that restricted commission does not apply to us today. Indeed, it was changed by Jesus himself, following his resurrection.

WHAT ARE GOOD WORKS?

Fundamentally, no works can be considered good which are not in harmony with the will of God. The young man who came to Jesus and inquired as to how he could attain eternal life addressed him as "Good Master." Jesus replied, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." (Matt. 19:16,17) Jesus did not mean by this that he himself was imperfect or a sinner. He was simply emphasizing the fact that the Heavenly Father was the source of all goodness.

Jesus disclaimed inherent goodness. All that he possessed had come from his Father. He explained

that the words which he spoke were not his. They were gracious words, radiating sympathy, kindness and love. Any man could justly rejoice in such words, reflecting as they did such wondrous wisdom and authority. However, Jesus took no credit for them. They were his Father's words, he explained.

The same was true of Jesus' miraculous works. How wonderful it must have been to bring joy into the lives of the people by opening their blind eyes, unstopping their deaf ears, cleansing them from the dread disease of leprosy, and raising their dead to life again. One less perfect than the Master, and less conscious of his utter dependency upon God for everything, might have been tempted to take just a little credit to himself for the good he was doing, but not Jesus.

He was quick to remind the people that the works which he did were not his works, but the Father's. Hence, when the young ruler addressed him as "Good Master," the first essential thing to do, as Jesus saw it, was to turn the young man's mind and heart to God, who is the fountain of all goodness. Upon the same basis of reasoning, we realize that in order to be zealous for good works, we must be fervent for the things which originate with God, the things of his plan, and the work in which he has invited us to collaborate with him.

OBSERVING ALL THINGS

Following Jesus' resurrection, he commissioned his disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, teaching those who believed to observe all things which he had commanded them. (Matt. 28:19,20; Acts 1:8) This commission has not been

changed nor recalled, and obedience to it designates the followers of the Master as lights in the world. In God's providence, and in keeping with the orderly progression of his plan, the results of Christian work vary, but there is little change in the work itself.

For much of the present age, the preaching of the Gospel was like a sowing of grain, but at the end of the age, the result is likened to a harvest of the matured, ripened wheat. The basic principles of the Gospel, however, do not change. During the Dark Ages, very few understood or preached concerning the kingdom, restitution, or other facets of truth because it was not God's due time for a wide disclosure of his plan. However, as these coming events drew nearer, the Lord provided for a great outpouring of the Gospel message as the time of harvest began.

The good work of proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom means more than to merely give a witness. Those who accept as believing disciples, are to be taught to observe all the things which the Lord has commanded. This means that we are to encourage those who have a hearing ear to present themselves in full consecration to God. Those who do this and thus enter into the fellowship of the saints are to be built up in the most holy faith. Thus we all have a responsibility toward each other, and if we are truly zealous for the good works of God we will delight in the privilege of laying down our lives in this divinely appointed service.

It is well to note the limitation placed upon our work by the Master. We are to proclaim the Gospel, but we are not to impose burdens upon the believers

beyond what Jesus taught us to observe. If we study the Word with the sincere desire to know what the Lord has commanded in order that we may show ourselves approved unto him, it will not be difficult to discern between those things and the various side issues which may be suggested to our minds from time to time.

FUTURE GOOD WORKS

Jesus exemplified a further consideration of God's good works to be done on behalf of men—namely, healing their diseases and giving them life. The footstep followers of Christ are being prepared to share in this future glorious work. Referring to the works which he performed, Jesus said to his disciples, "Greater works than these" shall ye do. (John 14:12) These greater works of healing and restoring mankind to life everlasting are but the logical sequence to the work of this age. The Gospel message is a call to this work and an outline of the necessary qualifications to become partners in it.

One of these qualifications is a consuming zeal in the work of making ready for those future privileges. As Jesus commissioned us, we are to teach believers to observe all things which he commanded, but it is equally important that we observe the divine commands ourselves. We thrill at the thought of God's will being done all over the earth, and we rejoice in the hope of sharing in the work of reconciliation which will bring about this blessed condition. We pray earnestly, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) However, let us never overlook the necessity of having God's will done at the present

time in our own mortal bodies. This is the great lesson we should be learning now. It is the principal and present result of the good work that should be consuming us, as daily we endeavor to pay our vows of consecration unto the Lord and zealously strive to conform to the “mind of Christ.”

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

Should there ever be any question in our minds as to how zealous we ought to be, we can settle that question by observing the example of Jesus. It was prophetically written of him that he would be eaten up, or consumed, by the zeal of God’s house. (Ps. 69:9; John 2:17) The undeniable fulfillment of this prophecy, shown by the Master’s untiring devotion to the work which the Father had given him to do, is a matter of record in the four Gospel accounts of his sacrificial life and death. It would be impossible for any of us to be more zealous than Jesus.

The Master’s zeal was manifested, not only in his service to God, but also in his determination to serve in the manner outlined for him by the Father. His zeal was always according to knowledge, hence resulting in an acceptable sacrifice. We, too, should be concerned about the manner in which we serve, and the spirit in which we do it. We should also be concerned over the extent to which our own lives are conforming to the high standards of righteousness outlined for us in the Word of truth. We should have zeal for doing the right work, in the right way, and at the right time.

“UNDER A BUSHEL”

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus admonishes us not to hide the Gospel light “under a bushel,”

but rather to put it “on a candlestick” that it may be seen. (Matt. 5:15) There are various bushels under which the light may be hidden. The fear of man is one of them. We may be inclined to keep the Truth to ourselves for fear of what our friends and relatives may think of us. Greater faith in God, more earnest prayers for his help, and a richer indwelling of the Spirit of love for him and for suffering humanity, will help to remove this bushel.

The bushel of limitation is sometimes suggested. Because some have shown a zeal that has not been according to knowledge, the tendency may be to suppose that a safeguard against misguided zeal is to have less zeal. The attitude is adopted that the proper course is to set a limit on what we will do for the Lord. However, this is a wrong way to correct an erroneous practice.

Instead of putting our light under a bushel by a diminished zeal, and a self-imposed limitation on how much time and energy we will devote to the spread of the Gospel, all we need to do is to proclaim the message of truth, and be sure that our activity is motivated by the Spirit of the Lord. If we are doing these two things, then we can safely remove the limitations and give ourselves wholly and zealously to the blessed work of letting our light shine.

The bushel of misinterpretation will also hide the light if we permit it to do so. For example, the parable of the net cast into the sea describes the work of fishing, and later that of sorting the fish. (Matt. 13:47,48) Jesus had also said, “I will make you fishers of men.” (Matt. 4:19) The suggestion is sometimes made that the work of fishing for men was quite proper throughout the age, and even

during the earlier part of the Gospel Age Harvest, but now we are in the sorting time—hence no further fishing should be done.

We should remember, however, that just as it is the Gospel message that catches the fish, it is the same message that sorts them. It is God who decides who are acceptable to him, and his decision is based upon the manner in which each individual responds to the Truth when it is heard, and in order for the Gospel to be heard, even by those who already profess to be Christians, it must be proclaimed. Therefore, it is still the will of God for his people to continue sounding forth his message.

The instructions of God are so definite on the matter of Christian service that we may safely conclude that any interpretation of his Word, the purpose of which is to hold us back from a proclamation of the Truth, is fundamentally in error. Such interpretations can serve no other purpose than that of being bushels to hide the light of the Gospel, hence are contrary to the purpose of God in giving us the Truth.

Letting our light shine involves the sacrificing of the flesh, as represented by the breaking of the earthen vessels by Gideon's little band. (Judg. 7:19,20) Those vessels concealed the light, and not until they were broken could the light be seen. The flesh holds back from being sacrificed. Hence, as New Creatures, we need constantly to be on the alert to detect the false reasoning of our human minds in attempts to find excuses not to be zealous in the service of the Lord, the Truth, and the brethren. We should learn to cast down these imaginations, or reasonings, which exalt themselves above the knowledge of Christ.—II Cor. 10:5

A NARROW WAY

The conditions upon which we may qualify to be God's peculiar people are very exacting. The way that leads to glory is a narrow one. Only the truly zealous and sincere will finally hear the Lord's "well done." The Apostle Paul expressed the proper viewpoint, when he wrote, "This one thing I do." (Phil. 3:13) We cannot hope to win the prize except by giving our undivided attention, first to learning the divine will, and then zealously doing it. Some of self and some of God will not do. None of self and all for God and for the doing of his will is what it means to be his peculiar people, zealous of good works.

We cannot attain to our goal in our own strength, but, as we have already seen, God has promised to help us. He will give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. We are not a peculiar people to him because of what we are able to accomplish, either in ourselves or for others. God does not need our help. That which he treasures is our willing minds and hearts, our appreciation of his glory, our enthusiasm for his plan. If we are truly zealous toward everything for which he stands, he will make up the rest. He will give us strength, wisdom, and forgiveness, in order that we may be effectual and acceptable coworkers with him. How highly we are honored by God, and what a glorious provision he has made through Christ that we may prove worthy of that honor! ■

*"Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and
afterward receive me to glory."
—Psalm 73:24*

Envy and Jealousy— Enemies of God's People

“Love envieth not.” **IN OUR OPENING SCRIPTURE,** Paul wrote that godly love cannot be envious of others, or of the good things

which they enjoy. In another place, he stated that love is one of the principal fruits of the Spirit, whereas “envyings” are “works of the flesh.” Paul further said, “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.” (Gal. 5:19-26) Every follower of the Master should desire to be filled and controlled by the spirit of love, and should have, therefore, no reason to be envious of others. However, the human heart is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” (Jer. 17:9) Thus we need to be constantly on the alert, lest we falsely reason that it is proper under certain conditions to be envious of the Lord’s blessings upon others.

Jealousy is very much akin to envy. Solomon wrote that “jealousy is cruel as the grave.” (Song of Sol. 8:6) If we permit its poisonous fangs to lay hold upon us, jealousy will rob our hearts of the peace and joy in the Lord which might be ours. We should not assume that we are immune from attacks by this evil monster of jealousy. It is not only necessary that we be on guard over our hearts, but through prayer seek the Lord’s help and protection, realizing that in our weakness we cannot always fully understand our own ways and motives. David wrote, “Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.”—Ps. 19:12

CAIN

The Scriptures present us with a number of examples of individuals who permitted themselves to be swayed by envy and jealousy, and of the evils to which they led. Cain is the first of these. While neither the words envy nor jealousy are used in connection with Cain, it was undoubtedly these aspects of sin, or selfishness, which overcame him. The record states that he was “very wroth” over the fact that God accepted Abel’s offering and rejected his. (Gen. 4:5) The Apostle John warns that we should, instead, “love one another,” and not be as Cain, “who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother.”—I John 3:11,12

In the case of Cain, as also with the other examples of the sin of envy and jealousy we find in the Bible, the individuals involved ignored God and his part in their experiences. Actually, Abel had nothing to do with the rejection of Cain’s offering. Proper humble reasoning would have sent Cain to God to

find out why his offering had not been “excellent” as Abel’s. (Heb. 11:4) However, he ignored God and slew the one upon whom God had manifested his blessing. How unwise it would be for us to harbor even the slightest suspicion of envy toward those whom God is blessing. To do so would indicate that we ourselves are unworthy of the good things which he bestows upon those whom we envy.

AARON AND MIRIAM

Aaron and Miriam, the brother and sister of Moses, were guilty on one occasion of allowing the spirit of jealousy to motivate their attitude toward their brother. The account indicates that these two servants of the Lord trumped up a charge against Moses to conceal what they really had in mind. We read, “Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.”—Num. 12:1,2

Are we always conscious of the fact that the Lord also hears what we say, and that he knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts? Paul wrote, “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” (Heb. 4:13) This was true in the case of Aaron and Miriam. God knew their observation that Moses had married an Ethiopian was merely a ploy. What was really festering in their hearts was the spirit of envy over the fact that their brother Moses was being so abundantly used as the Lord’s

mouthpiece when they felt that they were just as qualified as he.

Reading their hearts, the Lord knew that Aaron and Miriam had merely been temporarily overcome by the great Adversary, so he dealt with the situation in a way to recover them from this “snare of the fowler.” (Ps. 91:3) As for Moses, he apparently made no effort to defend himself against the charge, although it must have been a difficult experience to find himself attacked by members of his own family. However, the Lord vindicated Moses, and after severely punishing Miriam, took Aaron and Miriam back into his favor and service.

SAUL

In King Saul of Israel we have another example of the cruelty wrought by envy and jealousy when these are permitted to take root in the heart. Saul was a man who, literally, stood head and shoulders above most of his fellow Israelites. Apparently, however, he had never been impressed with the idea that this made him any more important than others. Indeed, when he was chosen to be Israel’s first king, he said, “Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin?”—I Sam. 9:21

Regrettably, Saul did not maintain this humble estimate of himself. He became so important in his own eyes that he presumed to disobey the instructions of the Lord. (I Sam. 13:11,12; 15:17-23) Samuel reminded Saul that it was when he was “little” in his own sight that he had been made head of the tribes of Israel, and had been anointed to reign

over them. However, once Saul sensed that he had power in his hands, he forgot that he was “little,” and did not hesitate to go contrary to God’s instructions. Accused of this, he blamed the sin on the people, but God held him responsible, and he was rejected by the Lord.

As invariably happens when self-interest takes over the control of the life of one of God’s servants, Saul sought to conduct his rulership entirely upon the basis of what would be best for him. God had rejected him, so he tried to rule Israel as though God had nothing to say in the affairs of the nation. This surely led to his own undoing, and in his retreat from God the ugly spirit of envy and jealousy began to take hold upon him.

Saul was renowned among the Israelites as a brave and efficient warrior. Beginning with the slaying of the giant, Goliath, however, David’s reputation as a warrior increased and soon eclipsed Saul’s. We read, “It came to pass . . . when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistines, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick. And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.”—I Sam. 18:6-9

Saul “eyed” David from then on. In his jealousy he sought to kill him, and David was obliged to

hide from his wrath, while Saul hunted him as he would a prey. By contrast, David manifested no inclination to seek revenge against his persecutor. On one occasion, while hunting the object of his insane envy and jealousy, Saul inadvertently exposed himself to capture and death at the hands of David. One of David's friends said to him, "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once."—I Sam. 26:8

This was a persuasive argument—"God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand." If David had harbored the slightest trace of envy and hatred toward Saul this argument would have been convincing, and he would have permitted him to be slain. Here is a heart-searching point for our consideration. Is there any possibility that we may rest contentedly in the idea that the envious action we might take, or permit against others, is the Lord's will? David had a different view, a better one—the Lord's view. He answered, "Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless? . . . As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed."—I Sam. 26:9-11

How wonderfully did David thus display his faith in the overruling providences of God! While Samuel had anointed him to be the new king of Israel, he was quite willing to wait the Lord's own due time to take over the reins of government, and apparently he held no resentment against

Saul, even though he had been treated so unjustly by him.

In these experiences of Saul and David there are valuable lessons for us. Most of the Lord's people no doubt feel quite "little" at the time of their consecration. How important it is that this attitude of meekness and humility be maintained. The Lord may bless us in his service. He may even permit some of his people to attain positions of prominence among the brethren. This is a real test, for it could be that those who were "little" in their own eyes to begin with may become proud, and in their pride become envious of others whom the Lord may also richly bless in his service.

David's generous and loving spirit was demonstrated in the fact that he did not attempt to take the kingdom from Saul or destroy him, even though he knew Saul had been rejected by God. Under such circumstances many would have perhaps expressed delight to have had the opportunity to destroy a rival and an enemy, rejoicing that the Lord's judgments had thus fallen upon him. However, David was not of that disposition. He was a man after God's own heart, one of the qualities of his character being largeness, mercy, and the spirit of love. (I Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22) Thus we see that there is no room for envy and jealousy in a heart that is filled with the Spirit of the Lord.

JESUS

The crowning example with regard to this subject is our Master, Jesus. Prior to Pentecost, Jesus' disciples were concerned over who should be greatest among them. We read that "there arose a reasoning

among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.”—Luke 9:46-48

The reply Jesus received to this lesson is most unusual. We read that “John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us.” To this Jesus replied, “Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.” (vss. 49,50) The connection here is interesting. The disciples had just been told that the important ideal for which to strive was not being great, but “least”—that is, within their own circle. Here, however, was a man outside of their circle, and surely Jesus would approve their show of authority toward him. Indeed, it seems that the fallen flesh is prone, at times, to exercise self-importance and “lordship” over others.

Once again Jesus told his disciples they were wrong. He had not especially invited this worker to serve him, but certainly Jesus was not envious of what he was doing. It is true that Jesus did not instruct his disciples to go out and cooperate with this independent worker, nor to try and bring him into their fellowship. However, the point to be stressed here is that Jesus was in no way envious of this man who was serving independently of him and of his disciples. “Forbid him not”—that is, “just leave him alone,” the Master instructed. This is also a good lesson for us. The Lord of the present

harvest is great and all-powerful. He is able to manage his affairs without our interfering with those who may not be serving just as we are, or with the brethren who make up our fellowship.

To follow this example and instruction of Jesus does not imply that in any manner we are to compromise the Truth. All it means is that we are to go forward in the service as the Lord has given us the opportunity, and not to be overly concerned with the course adopted by others. The temptation to interfere, as the disciples did, does not necessarily imply an envious spirit. It could be, and often is, simply the result of a misdirected zeal. However, whatever the motive may be, Jesus said, "Forbid him not."

PAUL

In the Apostle Paul we have another wonderful example of the largeness of heart for which we should strive—in direct opposition to the spirit of envy and jealousy. In the church at Corinth there was much rivalry, which Paul designated "carnality." In writing to these brethren, he pointed out the error of their position. Some claimed that they were of Paul—others that they followed Apollos. Paul wrote, "Who . . . is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour."—I Cor. 3:5-8

It should be observed that the issue here discussed by Paul is not related to false doctrine. He does not say that those who preach the Truth and those who preach error are all one. The issue was rivalry over who was to be the recognized servant of the Lord in preaching the Truth. In this, he comes directly to the point by saying that the “Lord gave to every man” this ministry of the Truth—that is, every man in Christ Jesus. Thus all who, motivated by the Holy Spirit, exercise their privileges as ministers of the Gospel, are “one” in that endeavor through Christ Jesus.

Paul’s largeness of heart and attitude are again brought to our attention in his letter to the brethren at Philippi. Writing from prison in Rome, he said to these beloved saints, “I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”—Phil. 1:12-18

What a marvelous testimony! Many in Paul’s difficult circumstances would have lost much of their interest in the service of the Lord, feeling

that the Lord had "put them on the shelf," and that therefore they had no further responsibility in connection with his service. It was not so with Paul. Even though chained to a Roman guard, (Acts 28:16,20) he continued to bear witness to the Truth, and rejoiced to learn that others were becoming more active in the Lord's service.

Paul had learned of some who were preaching the Gospel "even of envy and strife," and not with sincerity. His power and authority as one of the inspired apostles enabled him to know the motives of those who were endeavoring, by their preaching, "to add affliction" to his bonds. However, he did nothing to hinder these in their ungodly efforts. He simply said he rejoiced that, "whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached." How do we measure up to this attainment of love?

The situation was perhaps more difficult for Paul than it would be for us. He knew of the insincerity of those who endeavored to injure him. We cannot read the hearts of others, and should never try. We can only assume that all efforts to serve the Lord by proclaiming the Gospel are sincere. Believing this, we have no alternative but to rejoice in those efforts. Let us again emphasize that the point is not concerned with preaching error. No true child of God should, or can, rejoice over the preaching of error. Certainly Paul did not. However, Paul did rejoice, and so should we, to realize that the glorious Gospel of the kingdom is being preached, even though in some cases those who proclaim it "followeth not with us." "Love envieth not."

MOSES

Paul's attitude in this matter reminds us of an experience in which Moses likewise displayed a similar largeness of outlook. It is related in Numbers 11:25-29. Seventy elders of Israel were gathered around the Tabernacle by Moses, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon them and they began to prophesy. However, two of the elders remained in the camp, "and the spirit rested upon them; . . . and they prophesied in the camp." Joshua, who later became Moses' successor, called Moses' attention to this and asked him to forbid them. Moses replied, "Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!"

The point of this illustration is that Moses was not envious. Had he gone into detail he might have explained to Joshua that it really would have been better for those two elders to gather around the Tabernacle as the others had done in obedience to his instructions. However, since they did not do this, and the Lord saw fit to put his Spirit upon them, Moses did not intend to pout over the fact that they had been more or less disobedient to him. So far as he was concerned, he would be happy if God placed his Spirit upon all the Israelites and made them prophets. How similar this is to Paul's viewpoint while suffering as a Roman prisoner.

HEARTS ENLARGED

In his second letter to the brethren at Corinth, Paul wrote, "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels."

(II Cor. 6:11,12) The Greek word here translated “straitened” is defined by Prof. Strong as “narrowness of room.” The *Weymouth* translation renders this text, “There is no narrowness in our love to you: the narrowness is in your own feelings.”

Paul was far beyond the Corinthian brethren as a whole in his largeness of heart. Since only some of them at one time claimed to be his followers, others must have been to a degree opposed to him. This did not matter to Paul. His heart was enlarged to take them all in, and, to the best of his ability, build them up in the most holy faith. Paul recognized, even as we should today, that among the followers of Christ there are various stages of Christian development. It would perhaps be ideal if all had attained the same degree of spiritual growth which we hope is true of us. However, this will never be the case while we are in the flesh. If some seem to exceed us, and the Lord blesses them more than ourselves, we are not to be envious. If others try our patience because they seem to lag behind in grace and knowledge, our hearts should be enlarged toward them.

We need each other—all the more as we “see the day approaching.” (Heb. 10:25) “The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more

abundant honour to that part which lacked.”—I Cor. 12:21-24

Let us endeavor, through prayer and a zealous application of the principle of love, not to be overcome with the spirit of envy and jealousy. Instead, Paul wrote, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” (Phil. 2:3,4) If we recognize that in some or many respects our brethren in Christ are better than ourselves, and we are able to rejoice in their superior qualities, there will be no room in our hearts for envy or jealousy. May the Lord help us to attain to this high and blessed standard of love in our viewpoint and in our dealings with one another. ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JUNE 5—“In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust.”—Psalm 31:1 (Z. ’95-157 Hymn 263)

JUNE 12—“This one thing I do.”—Philippians 3:13 (Z. ’95-250 Hymn 177)

JUNE 19—“Light [Truth] is sown for the righteous, and gladness [the joys of the Truth] for the upright in heart.”—Psalm 97:11 (Z. ’96-55 Hymn 238)

JUNE 26—“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.”—Hebrews 3:1 (Z. ’96-208 Hymn 201)

The Serpent upon a Pole

“Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.”

—Numbers 21:9

THE VERSES PRECEDING

our opening Scripture provide the background for this lesson. They state: “The people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.”—Num. 21:5-8

This experience occurred during the forty years of the Israelites' wandering in the wilderness. They had been camped at Kadesh—about halfway between the Red Sea and the promised land of Canaan. It was a relatively short journey to Canaan if they followed the northern route through Edom. However, because that land was occupied by their enemies, the descendents of Esau, they made the decision to avoid it. Instead, they went south to the headwaters of the Red Sea, then east around a range of mountains. From this point, they went north into the hot desert wilderness, where there was neither food nor water.

As a result of this weary journey, the people became very disheartened and discouraged. They had forgotten the miraculous parting of the sea, the destruction of the Egyptian forces as the waters covered the army which followed them. They failed to recall the provision of their need for water by not only the sweetening of bitter waters, but also, on another occasion, the gushing of water out of the struck rock. More than these one-time miracles, they had a daily reminder of God's providences on their behalf as they gathered the manna. Undoubtedly it was a wonderful, nourishing food, yet they grew tired of it, and they sorely murmured.

God rightly considered that their murmurings were directed against him. Thus he allowed poisonous snakes to enter the nation, and soon thousands were dying from their bites. If nothing had been done, they all would have perhaps died. Finally, the people understood why they were having this experience, and they appealed as a body to Moses that he should pray to God on their behalf. They realized

that it was only after they had lost their trust in him that this terrible trouble had come to them. As stated by the psalmist, “Before I was afflicted I went astray.”—Ps. 119:67

LESSONS FOR US

The Apostle Paul referred to this lesson given to the Israelites in one of his letters. He wrote, “Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. . . . Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [age] are come.”—I Cor. 10:9,11

What “admonition” should we be taking from this? First, we should daily remind ourselves of God’s providences on our behalf. Let us not think of our present “wilderness journey” as too severe, and secretly wish for some direct, non-stop march to our spiritual land of promise. We may not know it, but our deliverance according to the path provided by our Heavenly Father may indeed be much closer than we realize.

Another lesson we can find is that trials and testings along our wilderness journey are used by God to prove our steadfast courage and faith. It is only through patient endurance of all life’s experiences that our character is developed and our progress demonstrated. As difficult as these sufferings may be, they are really necessary to our victory as followers of Christ.

Yet another lesson may be that these adversities and afflictions are instruments God employs to keep us in a condition of humility, and maintain

our reliance only upon him. We, like sheep, can go astray. When we do, it may take some hard experiences to bring us to our “good shepherd.” How reassuring it is to know that our Heavenly Father, just as the father in our Lord’s parable of the prodigal son, is always there with open arms to welcome us back into his abode.—Luke 15:20

THE POISON AND ITS ANTIDOTE

This experience of the Israelites contains additional important lessons which are brought to our attention in the New Testament. The serpents which bit the people may have been called “fiery” because of their sting, or perhaps because of their shiny copper color. We understand that in the Bible the serpent is used as a symbol of sin. Satan, the great adversary of God, is depicted as a serpent both in Genesis 3:1-4 and in Revelation 12:9, and as the Apostle Paul states, “The sting of death is sin.”—I Cor. 15:56

The Israelites had no hope of saving themselves from these serpents. They were either already dead or would soon surely die. Their salvation came through a miracle performed by God, but only by means of an unusual method outlined by the Lord. They were instructed that a replica of a serpent should be made of copper and nailed high upon a pole. (Num. 21:9) The Hebrew word translated “brass” in this verse means “copper,” and is so rendered in Ezra 8:27. It was promised that any who looked upon this copper serpent would recover. Those who refused to look upon it would die.

It perhaps seems strange that they were told to look at a replica of what had just bitten them in

order to be healed. It must have sounded unbelievable, and would certainly require a great deal of faith, to believe that such an act could do any good. However, they had no other choice than to try it, and in their perilous situation there was nothing for anyone to lose. As those who did look up to the copper serpent became whole, the faith of others would grow stronger. Soon all would, in faith, gaze upon the wooden pole with the serpent hanging upon it, where rescue could be found.

The world is in much the same condition today. It has been "bitten" by the serpent of sin, and all mankind is either dead, or dying. There is no other hope of salvation. Life is possible only by looking to the one who was nailed to a "pole." That was Jesus, who was nailed to the cross.

Jesus referred to this circumstance, showing that he was illustrated by the copper serpent. As recorded in John 3:14-16, Jesus spoke with Nicodemus, saying, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

When Jesus spoke of himself as being "lifted up," he was referring to his crucifixion, his death upon the cross. He used a similar expression when talking with the Pharisees: "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man. . ." (John 8:28) Although it was actually the Roman government who carried out the crucifixion of Jesus, God held the Pharisees and leaders of Israel

responsible for this atrocity. They were the ones who exerted pressure on the Romans to carry out the terrible deed, saying, “His blood be on us, and on our children.”—Matt. 27:25

The symbol of the serpent upon the pole as a picture of Jesus on the cross was clearly explained by no less an authority than Jesus himself. Nevertheless, some have difficulty accepting the idea of Jesus being pictured by a serpent, since this symbol had been used early in the Bible to illustrate Satan, who manifested himself in that form in the Garden of Eden. Although claiming to be a friend of Adam and Eve, he infected them with the deadly poison of sin. Jesus, on the other hand, appeared to mankind as a shining example of human perfection, and carried with him the antidote for Satan’s fatal poison.

Note the apostle’s words: God “hath made him [Jesus Christ] to be sin for us, who [Jesus] knew no sin.” (II Cor. 5:21) The *Emphatic Diaglott* translates the words “made him to be sin” as “made him a sin-offering,” pointing to Hosea 4:8 as proof that the word “sin” is sometimes better translated as “sin-offering.” Paul also wrote, “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin [a sin-offering], condemned sin in the flesh.”—Rom. 8:3

Jesus came as the gift of God to die on the cross so that all mankind could be healed from the painful sting of sin and death. (John 3:16) What must one do to be healed? They must accept that sacrifice, they must “look” on him. As a means of being healed, this sounds as unbelievable a solution to mankind as Moses’ instruction sounded to the

Israelites. How can such a simple action accomplish salvation? Here again, mankind has no other choice. Peter said during his great witness on the Day of Pentecost, nearly two thousand years ago, concerning Jesus: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts 4:12

Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die." (John 12:32,33) How thankful we are that our Lord Jesus, who was lifted up at Calvary, lowered into the tomb, to be afterward resurrected to the highest form of life in the universe, will soon be manifested to all.

"He shewed me a pure river of water of life, . . . and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life: . . . and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: . . . And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. . . . And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. 22:1-4,17 ■

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Sylvia Panucci, Groton, CT—April 20. Age, 82

Brother John Johnson, Allentown, PA—April 26. Age, 73

Brother Joseph S. Panucci, Groton, CT—May 05. Age, 92



In Memoriam
**Brother
Mike
Balko**

September 7, 1925 – April 7, 2014

IT IS WITH loving remembrance that we announce the passing “beyond the veil” of our dear Brother Mike Balko, who was 88 years of age. He was well known in the Bible Student fellowship, both in the United States as well as many other parts of the world.

Brother Mike grew up in the West Newton, Pennsylvania area, and continued to live there until his death. He received the Truth from his parents, Brother Charles and Sister Anna Balko. As a child, Mike was ridiculed and persecuted by others because of his beliefs. Stones were sometimes thrown at him and his siblings by other children as they shouted, “Russellites.” Nevertheless, along with seven of his brothers and sisters, Mike consecrated his life to the Lord in the late 1940s.

Brother Mike and his wife, Sister Marjorie, were married in 1948. They were both immersed in 1950 at a convention in Monessen, Pennsylvania. They were members of the West Newton Bible Students ecclesia their entire married life. Shortly after consecration, Brother Mike was encouraged by “old-timers” in the nearby Pittsburgh ecclesia to give short, ten minute discourses as part of the “School of the Prophets.” Soon afterward he became an elder in the West Newton class, serving in this capacity most of his consecrated life. Brother Mike is survived by his wife, Sister Marjorie Balko, and three children: Sister Karen Speroni, Brother Michael Balko, and Sister Marjorie Keith (and their spouses). He has eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, and is also survived by one brother, Brother Paul Balko, and one sister, Sister Dorothy Lorraine Praskavich.

Brother Mike was a very active member of the Dawn Bible Students Association. He became a Trustee of the Dawn in 1987, and subsequently was a member of its Management Committee for many years. He also served as a Dawn “Pilgrim” for many years, especially after his retirement. He and Sister Marjorie traveled on pilgrim trips throughout the United States and Canada. They also traveled to Europe many times, serving and visiting brethren and ecclesias in numerous countries, both in western and eastern Europe.

Following his retirement, Brother Mike and Sister Marjorie regularly visited the Dawn. Because of his background in construction, carpentry, plumbing, and electrical work, he was able to take on many repair and improvement projects at both

the Dawn Home as well as the Dawn Plant. He would sometimes spend several weeks there at a time in order to complete the work. These efforts were an invaluable service to the Dawn, from which we are still benefiting today.

Brother Mike was a wonderful example of zealous service for the Lord, the Truth, and the brethren. He was a devoted student of the Bible, and had excellent abilities in speaking the Word of God and telling forth the Gospel message. His labors, service, and ministry will be missed by all of us.

One of Brother Mike's favorite hymns was "How Great Thou Art"—

O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed.
Then sings my soul, my loving God to Thee;

HOW GREAT THOU ART!

HOW GREAT THOU ART!

Then sings my soul, my loving God to Thee;

HOW GREAT THOU ART!

HOW GREAT THOU ART!

We rejoice with Brother Mike in the words of Revelation 14:13: "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." ■

*"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the
house of the Lord forever."*

—Psalm 23:6

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The speakers listed below are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

M. Nemesh

Germany:
Dortmund June 6
Korbach 7-9
Bonn 10,11
England:
Chesham 13,14
West Wickham 15
Lutterworth/Castle Donington 16
Kempsey/Lydney 17

J. Freer

Washington, DC June 1
Richmond, VA 2

R. Shahan

Buffalo, NY May 31-June 1

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

T. Alexander

Portland, OR June 20-22

G. Balko

Prince Albert, SK June 28-30

O. B. Elbert

Vancouver, BC June 14,15

J. Freer

Detroit, MI June 8

R. Goodman

Atlanta, GA June 22

K. Humphreys

Delaware Valley, PA June 8
Vancouver, BC 14,15

B. Jakubowski

Prince Albert, SK June 28-30

S. Jeuck

Delaware Valley, PA June 8

E. Kalinski

Milwaukee, WI June 15

B. Keith

Prince Albert, SK June 28-30

T. Krupa

Vancouver, BC June 14,15
Prince Albert, SK 28-30

P. Mora

Delaware Valley, PA June 8
Vancouver, BC 14,15

T. Ruggirello

Grand Rapids, MI June 22

A. Williams

Portland, OR June 20-22

CONVENTIONS

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

DELAWARE VALLEY CONVENTION, June 8—Sheraton Bucks County Hotel, 400 Oxford Valley Road, Langhorne, PA. Contact R. Eldridge. Phone: (215) 949-0652 or E-mail: rugeo@comcast.net

VANCOUVER CONVENTION, June 14,15—Aldergrove Kinsmen Community Center, 26770 29th Avenue, Aldergrove, BC, Canada V4W 3B8. Contact B. Smith. Phone: (604) 576-6070 or E-mail: bas@telus.net

PORTLAND CONVENTION, June 20-22—Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel, 8235 NE Airport Way, Portland, OR 97220. Contact B. Hislop. Phone: (503) 691-2699 or E-mail: bwhislop@aol.com

GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, June 22—GRBS Church Building, 830 North Park Street NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525. Contact J. Houlmont. Phone: (231) 972-4259 or E-mail: ljhoulmont@gmail.com

PRINCE ALBERT CONVENTION, June 28-30—Siwak Farm. Contact A. Siwak, RR 1 Stn Mpp, Prince Albert, SK, Canada S6V 5P8. Phone: (306) 764-7692 or E-mail: ahsiwak@inet2000.com

PHOENIX CONVENTION, June 29—Boys and Girls Club of Scottsdale, 8250 E. Rose Lawn, Scottsdale, AZ. Contact C. Humphreys. Phone: (480) 226-9076 or E-mail: christyscastles@gmail.com

VERNON CONVENTION, July 4-6—Schubert Centre, 3505 30th Avenue, Vernon, BC, Canada. Contact T. Fernets. Phone: (250) 558-3055 or E-mail: afernets@shaw.ca

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 19-24—University of Pittsburgh, 450 Schoolhouse

Road, Johnstown, PA. Contact E. Kuenzli, 330 Jasmine Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 670-4189 or E-mail: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com

BIBLE STUDENTS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 6-10—Orle Gnazdo Conference and Recreation Center, Szczyrk, Poland. Contact L. Griehs. Phone: (215) 953-9935 or E-mail: griehs@comcast.net

JACKSON CONVENTION, August 30,31—Holiday Inn Jackson NW, 2696 Bob McClain Drive, Jackson, MI 49202. Contact V. Lumley. Phone: (517) 782-7252 or E-mail: raylumley2531@comcast.net

NEW YORK CONVENTION, August 30,31—Double-Tree Hotel Mahwah, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NJ. Contact A. Williams. Phone: (718) 261-3053 or E-mail: austin@osnetinc.com

SEATTLE CONVENTION, August 30-September 1—Seabeck Conference Center, 13395 Lagoon Drive NW, Seabeck, WA 98380. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (253) 838-3822 or E-mail: laurie@flinn.us

HUNTSVILLE CONVENTION, September 5-7—Radisson Inn Huntsville Airport, 8721 Madison Blvd., Madison, AL 35758. For reservations: (800) 395-7046. Mention Huntsville Bible Students. Contact J. Cothren. Phone: (256) 852-8505 or E-mail: jimmycothren@att.net

MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, September 27,28—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact S. Kuenzli. Phone: (414) 257-2672

PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, October 4,5—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact G. Balko. Phone: (724) 771-0139

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 25,26—South Seminole Lodge, 122 Triplet Lake Drive, Casselberry FL 32707. Contact J. Kuenzli. Phone: (407) 831-2098 or E-mail: jkuenzli@cfl.rr.com