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The Memorial Date

According to the Jewish calendar the fourteenth day of Nisan this year falls on Monday, March 26, which according to biblical reckoning begins at sundown the night before. This means that after sundown Sunday, March 25, would be the proper time to commemorate our Lord's death. The February issue of The Dawn will carry an article dealing with the significance of the Memorial Supper.

WOR Time Change

On Radio Station WOR, New York, beginning with Sunday, January 8, the "Frank and Ernest" program will be broadcast at 9:00 P. M., instead of 10:30 A. M., as at present. Friends in the large area served by WOR please note this change.

Foreign Language Tracts

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DAWN PUBLICATIONS

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NEW JERSEY

Deliverance Drawing Near

“When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth near.”
—Luke 21:28

THE entering of a new year is always a reminder that time marches on, and time is an important consideration in our outlook as Christians and students of prophecy. The servants of God in every age have been out of harmony with the world around them. They have been pained by the sinful and unjust practices of the ungodly, and because of their own imperfections have groaned within themselves, longing for the time to come when the downward course of sin would be arrested, and deliverance from its corrupting influences would come to them and to all mankind.

The questions, “How long?” and “When?” and their equivalents appear many times in the writings of the prophets and apostles, and God’s reply is always that the reign of sin and death will not continue forever. The expressions, “last days,” “the time of the end,” the “latter days,” and others, gave assurance that in the divine plan a new dispensation was coming, in which righteousness would be en-

throned and sin and death destroyed.

God’s assurances of this final triumph of right over wrong are recorded throughout the Bible, beginning with Genesis 3:15, where the statement is made that the “seed” of the woman would bruise the “serpent’s” head. This hope is amplified by God’s promises to Abraham that through his “seed” all the families of the earth would be blessed.—Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18

Through Moses, God promised to send a great “Prophet,” and Isaiah prophesied, “Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder.” (Deut. 18:18; Isa. 9:6) Daniel prophesied, “In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.”—Dan. 2:44

When Jesus came, he was accepted by his disciples as the One of promise. To them it seemed that the long awaited time for the divinely promised deliverance had come. John the Baptist announced the presence of Jesus with the statement, “The kingdom of heaven

is at hand." (Matt. 3:2) A better translation of the original Greek in his statement would be, "The Royal Majesty of the heavens has approached."—**Emphatic Diaglott**

To the disciples it seemed certain that there was to be no further delay. They believed that the "kingdom of God should immediately appear." (Luke 19:11) Jesus understood this situation, and to prevent them from being too greatly disappointed, he related The Parable of the Pounds, in which a "certain nobleman" went into a "far country" to receive a kingdom, and later to return.—**Luke 19:12**

Evidently the disciples recognized that Jesus, their Messiah, was the "certain nobleman" of this parable, and that he was telling them in this parable that he was going away, and that the kingdom which they believed "should immediately appear" would not be established until he returned. They did not understand, of course, that his going away involved his death, so they were quite unprepared for this sudden termination of his ministry.

Nevertheless, on the supposition that Jesus was leaving them and returning later to establish his kingdom, they went to him on the mount of Olives, and inquired, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming [Greek, presence], and of the end of the world [age]?" (Matt. 24:3) Here we have the question again, "When?" and how will we know—what evidences shall we

look for that the age of waiting has ended, and that you have returned to set up the long-promised kingdom?

Chapters 24 and 25 of Matthew contain Jesus' reply to these questions, and Luke's report of the Lord's great prophecy of his return and the end of the age is found in the 21st chapter of his Gospel, of which our text is a part. "When" you see the signs I have outlined "begin to come to pass," Luke reports Jesus as saying, "then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption [Greek, deliverance] draweth nigh."

Here we have one of the most definite assertions found in the Bible concerning the time for the establishment of Christ's kingdom. It is "when these things begin to come to pass." It is very important, therefore, that we ascertain what "these things" are which so definitely identify this "time" for which the saints of God in every age have so hopefully waited and longingly prayed.

Let us examine briefly some of "these things"—the signs referred to in verses 24 through 27 of Luke's Gospel, chapter 21. Verse 24 reads, "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The first part of this text is a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Israelites among the various Gentile nations.

While the literal city of Jerusa-

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lem was then destroyed, its destruction signified the overthrow of the whole Jewish polity and the complete subjection of the people to Gentile domination. Actually, the nation had lost its independence more than six centuries before this—in 606 B. C.—when their last king, Zedekiah, was overthrown, and the people taken captive to Babylon.

When Jesus said, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," he was merely saying that the nation which had lost its independence in the days of Babylon would remain captive, and continue to be persecuted, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This is one of "these things" which we should see "begin to come to pass" if we are to be assured that our deliverance is near.

Has this prophecy begun to be fulfilled? We believe so. But let us not read more into the prophecy than it says. We know from other promises of God that wonderful blessings of health and peace and life and joy are in store for Israel. We know that the time will come when he will "make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." (Jer. 31:31-34) We know, too, that while Israel will be the first to have these kingdom blessings made available to them, the Gentiles will share in the blessings in God's due time.

But Jesus said nothing about these kingdom blessings in this prophecy. All he said was that "Jerusalem," emblematic of the na-

tion as a whole, would no longer be trodden down of the Gentiles. Since the treading down of the nation began with the loss of its sovereign independence, its restoration to independence would fulfil Jesus' prophecy. And Israel is now a free nation—a nation among nations, and has been given this status by the United Nations of the world.

The free Israel of today is not a large nation. Jesus did not say it would be. She does not possess all the Promised Land—this is not implied by Jesus. The liberated Israel is not free from problems—serious problems—but Jesus did not say she would be. Just like every other nation on earth today, Israel is perplexed and fearful. Like every other nation, she has acute economic problems. And like every other nation, she is burdened with debt, and further draining her resources in an armament race.

But Jesus did not say that Israel would escape these problems that plague the other nations when she first became free. He indicated only that Israel would no longer be trodden down, that her status of bondage as a nation which began in 606 B. C. would be changed; that she would again be free to conduct her own affairs and make her own laws; that's all, and certainly we have seen this "begin to come to pass"; yes, actually come to pass, at least on a small scale.

Powers of the Heavens Shaken

Verses 25 and 26 describe two signs which are closely related.

Jesus said there would be "signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars." And on the earth, he said there would be "distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring." Because of these things Jesus said that men's hearts would fail them for fear; "for," he added, "the powers of the heavens will be shaken."—**Emphatic Diaglott**

It seems evident from these two verses that the signs in the sun and moon and stars are what Jesus refers to as "the powers of the heavens" being shaken. This, it appears, is one of the contributing causes of men's hearts failing them for fear. It is not the literal heavens that are "shaken," any more than it is the roaring of the literal sea and waves to which Jesus refers in this prophecy.

It is the symbolic "heavens" and "earth" that are involved here, the same "heavens" and "earth" mentioned by the Apostle Peter when he wrote, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."—II Pet. 3:10

The figurative "heavens" and "earth" which pass away with a great "noise" in the day of the Lord are the spiritual and material aspects of the social order which must give place to the kingdom of Christ, the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (II Pet. 3:13) Just as

the literal heavens exercise a powerful influence over all life on the earth, so the symbolic heavens through the centuries of this present evil world have exercised a large measure of control over the people.

This has been done through religion, which has been recognized as a spiritual influence; spiritual, that is, in the sense of claiming a higher authority than the dictates of human laws. The church-state governments of Europe are a good example of this arrangement; but even where these have not functioned, the non-heathen peoples of the earth have been subject to the restraints of religious viewpoints and influences. This, indeed, has been true also in heathen nations, although their concepts of right and wrong have varied somewhat from those of Christendom.

But one of "these things" which Jesus foretold would take place at the end of the age and the time of his presence was, "The powers of the heavens will be shaken," that is, religious institutions and concepts would lose their control over the people. Have we seen this "begin to come to pass"? In many countries throughout the world, religion still exercises much influence in the affairs of the people. Nevertheless, we would be blinding ourselves to reality if we did not recognize that the "powers of the heavens" are beginning to be "shaken," and that this disturbing development is contributing to the fear that fills the hearts of man today.

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The situation behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains is a good example of this. While religion in these countries is still practiced by many, the rulers and policy makers of the communist countries have no respect whatever for its restraints. If they hesitate to start an aggressive war which would lead to the destruction of what remains of civilization, it is not because of any religious qualms of conscience, but only that in their opinion the time is not opportune. If lies suit their purpose better than the truth, they recognize no higher power as having authority to restrain them from lying.

What this means is that in large areas of the world once under a measure of religious restraint, this power of control is almost completely broken. And the leaders of this godless setup are determined to spread their control over the rest of the world. Negotiations looking to a compromise are of no lasting value, for the promises and agreements of the communist world mean little or nothing. Their leaders have no moral sense of right and wrong, according to the standards of the noncommunist world.

To a lesser degree the "powers of the heavens" are being "shaken" in many other parts of the world. A half century ago there was hardly anyone in Italy, for example, who would venture to vote contrary to the wishes of the Vatican. Now, millions of Italians do, almost enough to control the republican government which has taken the

place of the former church dominated ruling house of Savoy.

The recent frustration, by religious rules, of the romance of a princess in the British royal family, seemed like a small thing to precipitate a national crisis, but it almost did. Prominent members of the British Government are asking that the church and state be separated so that the church can no longer exercise control over the family affairs of Britain's hereditary ruling house. This is a small matter in itself, but it reflects a growing attitude of the people toward religious restraints, even in so staid a religious country as Great Britain.

Witness the recent effort in Argentina, which, while unsuccessful for the moment, reveals again the tendency to remove the "powers of the heavens" which have so long held the people under control.

And apart from specific developments along this line in various parts of the world, there is in every country a general breakdown of religious and moral standards. Evidences of this are the increase of crime, growing juvenile delinquency, as well as corruption and dishonesty in business and government.

Yes, we see this sign "begin" to come to pass. Only those who are watching the "sure word" of prophecy can see this beginning with an understanding of what it means. And how heartening is that understanding! It means that

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our deliverance “draweth nigh.” That deliverance from the bondage of sin and death for which God’s people throughout the age have waited and prayed is at hand. And this means, also, that the deliverance of the whole world from the rulership of Satan is near. For this, too, we thank God.

Meanwhile the world also sees. But, unlike the watchers who “look up” and “lift up” their heads, their hearts are filled with fear as they contemplate what they feel will be the inevitable result of the complete breaking down of all religious and moral restraints. Now we see the beginning of this sign, and we rejoice in the evidence it gives that our deliverance is near. But, as it progresses, the world will ultimately recognize the significance of what is taking place. Jesus said, “Then shall **THEY** see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”—vs. 27

With the symbolic sun, moon,

and stars in the ecclesiastical heavens completely obscured so far as their power to control is concerned, the world will see only a “cloud.” It will be in that symbolic cloud—and by means which divine providence will direct—that the presence of earth’s new King will be recognized. At this juncture in the divine plan, the “new heavens” will take control, and through the administrative agencies of the new symbolic earth—to begin with the resurrected ancient worthies—God’s promised blessings of peace and joy and life will begin to flow to the people as a mighty “river of water of life.”—Rev. 22:1-3

So, as we enter the new year it is with hope, and confidence, and joy, for we know that deliverance is near. Just how near, the Lord has not revealed. For some of us it may be within the year. It doesn’t really matter too much, for we know that in any event we do not have much longer to wait.

‘Tis but a little and we come
To our reward, our crown, our home!
Another year, or more, or less,
And we have crossed the wilderness;
Finished the toil, the rest begun.
The battle fought, the triumph won!



LESSON FOR JANUARY 1

Jesus Rebukes Insincerity

GOLDEN TEXT: "He that is not with Me is against Me: and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth."
—Luke 11:23

LUKE 11:29-44

IN APPRAISING the attitude of the people toward Jesus, perhaps we are inclined to blame too much of the opposition against him to the scribes and the Pharisees. No doubt they did wield a very unsavory influence over the people of Israel, but they were not wholly to blame for the persecution which was heaped upon the Master.

On this point the opening verse of our lesson is quite enlightening. It reads, "When the people were gathered thick together, he [Jesus] began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet." The "people," not merely the scribes and Pharisees, were gathered "thick together," and it was to these that Jesus said, "This is an evil generation." No wonder the religious rulers of the nation found it so easy to raise a mob which shouted, "Crucify him, crucify him!"

The people of Israel to whom Jesus ministered had much opportunity to hear his gracious words,

and to witness his miracles. But they passed these over and asked for a "sign" that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. However, as Jesus explained, no further sign was to be given them except "the sign of Jonas the prophet." Luke's record does not explain just what the sign of Jonas was, but Matthew's account does. Matthew 12:40 reads, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Jonas (Jonah in the Old Testament) being swallowed by the "great fish" was equal to being dead. Explaining his experience later, Jonas said, "Out of the belly of hell cried I." (Jonah 2:2) Here the word hell translates the Hebrew word *sheol*, which is the word used in the Old Testament to denote the death condition. To all intents and purposes Jonas was in the death condition. It was only by divine power that he was rescued and able to appear before the people of Nineveh. This was a convincing sight to the Ninevites,

and they quickly repented under his preaching.

The evil generation of Jesus' day, under the leadership of their religious rulers, put Jesus to death. Like Jonas, he also was in the death condition—**hades**, in the New Testament. Like Jonas also, it was only by divine power that he was rescued from **hades**, from death. This was an eloquent sign to the people of Israel, and many of them were convinced—three thousand in one day—the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:41) But the majority were still unconvinced, charging that Jesus' body had been stolen and hidden by his friends.

When King Solomon ruled Israel, his fame spread abroad, and the Queen of Sheba, or "of the south," traveled from "the uttermost parts of the earth" so she could see for herself if what she heard was true. Jesus, the mightier than Solomon, mingled with the people of Israel. They knew something of his glory. They had witnessed his miracle-working power, but because of their evil hearts they were not interested in making a thorough investigation of his identity. Thus the attitude of "the queen of the south" was as a judgment against them. Likewise, because the men of Nineveh repented under Jonas' preaching, their attitude also condemned the people of Israel.

The "light of the body is the eye," Jesus explained. That is, it is through the eye that the body "sees" its way around, and is able to function. Without the eye, the body is in darkness, and Jesus

QUESTIONS

- Can all the sins of Israel properly be charged to their religious leaders?
 Explain the "sign of Jonas."
 What constituted a similar sign in Jesus' day?
 How did the "queen of the south" rise up in judgment against Israel?
 What did Jesus mean by the eye being single?
 Explain Jesus' remarks to the Pharisee who invited him to dinner.
-

stresses the importance of the eye being "single," that is, not trying to observe two things at once. The people of Israel, and particularly the scribes and Pharisees, were professedly dedicated to God. Had their "eye" been single to this purpose in life, they would have recognized and accepted Jesus as their Messiah. But they were also looking at self, and seeking self-interests. Thus they were spiritually blind, and in darkness.

The Pharisee who invited Jesus to dinner expressed surprise that the Master did not ceremonially cleanse himself before eating. Jesus took this occasion to remind this man, whom he called a hypocrite, that an outward and ritualistic cleansing is not nearly so important as inward purity—purity of heart, that is.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" said Jesus, "for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them." (vs. 44) What a scathing denunciation! By their outward forms of piety these hypocrites were able to camouflage their real characters, and thus the better exploit the people.

Jesus Teaches Confidence in God

GOLDEN TEXT: "Seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."—Luke 12:29-31

LUKE 12:22-34

THE words of Jesus constituting today's lesson are designed, as our topic indicates, to teach confidence. They are heart-searching words. It is, shall we say, a very individualized admonition from the Master, one which each Christian can only apply to himself, and not to another. And these words of the Master are designed only for his footstep followers, not for the world. To these are addressed the reassuring words, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Here, in effect, Jesus is saying that the Father will give the kingdom to those who wholeheartedly, and self-sacrificingly seek for it. Seeking for and receiving the kingdom as here discussed by Jesus, refers to joint-heirship with him as rulers in the kingdom. When this kingdom is fully established, its subjects, who will be all mankind, will receive its blessings of happiness and life on conditions much less exacting than those here laid down by the Master for those

who aspire to be his associate kings.

The subjects of the kingdom will be required to adhere to its righteous laws, but they will not be called upon to sacrifice. They, too, will need to put their trust in the Lord, but the good things of earth will be theirs to enjoy. Building houses and planting vineyards will be among the pursuits of happiness for the subjects of the messianic kingdom; and they will learn to trust the Lord for his blessing upon their efforts.

But now we are living in the age of faith and sacrifice; not when the kingdom is ruling, but when the future rulers in the kingdom are being "called and chosen," and when they are having an opportunity to make their "calling and election" sure by proving faithful—faithful even unto death. (II Pet. 1:10; Rev. 17:14; 2:10) This is why the conditions of faithfulness are so exacting.

While thus "seeking" the kingdom we are still in the flesh, and in need of food, clothing, and shelter. Jesus said, "Your Father knoweth

that ye have need of these things." (vs. 30) The Father not only knows our temporal needs, but we have the Master's assurance that if we "seek" the kingdom "these things shall be added unto you."

Even so, the King James Version translation is somewhat extreme when it says, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on." In the Greek text it is "take no anxious thought," or "be not overly concerned." Jesus did not mean that a Christian should neglect all his temporal affairs and expect God to provide for him in a miraculous way.

Just preceding the lesson passage we are given an account of the man whose ground brought forth abundantly, and he decided to build larger barns in which he could horde his additional wealth of produce. This was giving covetous thought to his temporal well-being. The parable indicates that the man died before he had an opportunity to enjoy the abundance which he had selfishly hoarded for himself. "So is he," Jesus said, "that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."—vs. 21

Then follows the admonition, "Therefore, I say unto you, Take no thought for your life," etc. Do not, in other words, take the anxious and selfish thought that the man of the parable did. Other scriptures show that the followers

QUESTIONS

To whom is today's lesson passage addressed?

Explain the difference between being rulers in the kingdom, and being subjects of the kingdom.

Which class did Jesus admonish to seek the kingdom?

What parable did Jesus relate to illustrate an improper seeking for temporal things?

of the Master are expected to make suitable provision for their temporal needs, and the needs of those properly dependent upon them.

Herein is an exacting test of faithfulness; that is, to attain and maintain a proper balance between seeking the kingdom, and taking proper care of our temporal affairs. We are not to be extremists in either direction. But in this also each consecrated follower of the Master is to place his confidence fully in the Lord, knowing that he will be given wisdom and strength to take the proper course.

The sincere of heart will not neglect their temporal responsibilities, yet their chief concern will be to "seek the kingdom." They will maintain control over their temporal affairs, not allowing their temporal needs to control them. Their chief concern always will be to do the will of God. In this spirit of dedication they will trust God to supply all their needs, and to give them the kingdom.

Jesus Calls for Repentance

GOLDEN TEXT: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
—Luke 13:5

LUKE 13:1-9, 31-35

THE principal thought conveyed in the first five verses of our lesson is that those upon whom calamity falls are not necessarily greater sinners than others who go through life without special difficulty. Little or nothing is known concerning the background of the two illustrations which Jesus uses in this connection. What is meant by Pilate mingling the blood of certain Galileans with their sacrifices, we do not know. Nor do we have any further information concerning the falling of the "tower of Siloam" than is contained in this one reference to it.

These details are not important. What is important is the fact that all mankind by inheritance are sinners, and under condemnation to death, and that the first step back to harmony with God is repentance. Paul, in his sermon on Mars' Hill, informs us that now "God commandeth all men every where to repent."—Acts 17:30

For one to recognize that he is a sinner, repent, and ask God for forgiveness is a wonderful evidence of sincerity and desire to please God and do his will. That God greatly appreciates this is brought out by Jesus in his Parable of the

Pharisee and the Publican, who went up to the temple to pray. The publican "smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." Jesus said, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified."—Luke 18:13, 14

The Jewish nation was in a more responsible position before God than the Gentile world. The whole world is under condemnation to death, not because all are wilful sinners, but, being born imperfect, they share the death condemnation which came upon Adam. The Israelites however, were in a different category. Paul wrote, "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." (Rom. 5:14) Through Moses, God gave the Israelites his Law, which they all agreed to obey. Their failure to obey, therefore, brought them under special condemnation.

It is true that regardless of how hard they may have tried, the Israelites could not have kept God's Law perfectly. But their heart attitude was tested by the opportunity which was given to them to try. In this respect they were in the same position as Adam, the difference being that Adam could have rendered perfect obedience had he

willed to do so. Therefore his sin was wilful.

Jesus' parable of a fig tree planted in a vineyard, which for three years failed to bear figs, seems to represent God's long-suffering mercy. The dresser of the vineyard asked that another chance be given to the fig tree before a final decision was reached. The fig tree is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of the Jewish nation. Apparently the final chance was given to the nation to show a fruitage of righteousness and obedience by the coming of the Messiah. They had failed, and already the axe had been laid to the roots of this "tree."
—Matt. 3:10

Verses 31-35 of the lesson reveal the tragedy which came upon the nation because of the people's failure to repent and accept the Messiah. After scorning the warning of the Pharisees to flee from the clutches of Herod, telling them in effect that his life was in the hands of his Father, and that nothing could hinder the full accomplishment of the divine purpose in him, Jesus addressing the nation as Jerusalem, said:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

QUESTIONS

- Do calamities upon individuals indicate that they are greater sinners than others?
 What caused the Jewish nation to be in a different position before the Lord than Gentiles?
 Did Israel's casting off by Jesus at his first advent mean that they had lost all opportunity for salvation?
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The expression, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" is quoted from Psalm 118:26. Verse 22 of the psalm refers to the "stone which the builders refused." This is a prophecy of the rejection of Jesus by the nation of Israel. But Jesus understood that later, at the time of his second presence, those who rejected him would recognize and accept him.

It will be then, as Paul shows, that "There shall come out of Sion [the spiritual phase of the kingdom] the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Rom. 11:26) This is the Lord's covenant with them when he takes away their sin, Paul explains. His reference is to the covenant promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34.

Then "all Israel" shall be saved, Paul assures us. Not all the individuals in Israel were equally guilty in their rejection of their Messiah. But, explains Paul, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." So we are glad that the casting off of Israel meant only their loss of certain kingdom opportunities, not the loss of salvation. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God."—Rom. 11:32, 33

Parables on Discipleship

GOLDEN TEXT: "Whosoever exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."
—Luke 14:11

LUKE 14:7-11, 16-24

THE sentiments of our Golden Text are well illustrated by Jesus in his parable of the man who, invited to a feast, upon entering the banquet hall promptly selected for himself the most prominent seat. Jesus explained that the better way to do would be voluntarily to take a lowly seat, so that the host, if he so chose, could honor him with an invitation to a more exalted position. Obviously, as Jesus explained, this would be much more appropriate than for the host to ask a guest to give up the honorable seat he had himself selfishly taken.

This is good advice in the conduct of human relationships, but we may assume that Jesus' purpose in relating the parable was to help us understand our proper attitude before the Lord, and among the brethren in Christ. James wrote, "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." (James 4:6) Peter admonished, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—I Pet. 5:6

The greatest contrasting examples of the operation of this principle that is brought to our attention

in the Scriptures are the cases of Lucifer and the Logos. Lucifer said, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: . . . I will be like the most High." (Isa. 14:13, 14) Ultimately, however, it will be said of Lucifer, "Thou shalt be brought down to hell [*sheol*], to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee."—Isa. 14:15, 16

How different was the attitude of Jesus, and how glorious the outcome of his humility! Paul wrote, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery [a more correct translation would be, 'thought not by robbery,' or, *Diaglott*, 'did not meditate a usurpation'] to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus

Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:5-11

Verses 16-24 of our lesson tell of another feast, but to illustrate a different truth in connection with the divine plan. In this parable a "certain man made a great supper" to which many had been invited. When the proper time came, he sent his servant to announce to the invited guests, "Come; for all things are now ready."

Forthwith the invited guests began to make excuses as to why they could not attend the feast. One had bought a piece of land which he had to inspect. Another had acquired "five yoke of oxen" which he said he had to prove. Still another had married a wife, and for that reason could not attend the feast.

The "master of the house" was quite provoked over this, and said unto his servant to go out into the "streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." This the servant did, but still there were empty seats at the feast. The places of the invited guests had not yet all been filled.

The servants were then instructed to "go out into the high-ways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Verse 24 emphasizes that none of the originally invited guests were to taste of the supper which had been prepared for them.

One of the important lessons of this parable would seem to be that the indifference of God's professed people can in no way interfere

QUESTIONS

What is a good scriptural illustration of the text, "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble"? Who was the "certain man" who made a great supper, to which his invited guests refused to come?

Who are the two groups who took the places of the invited guests?

with the outworking of his plan. This is reassuring. However, the parable also reveals that those who do not appreciate the Lord's arrangements for them lose the blessings which otherwise might be theirs.

Should we make a specific application of the parable, it would be that Jesus was the "master of the house" and that the originally invited guests were the religious rulers of Israel, those who sat in Moses' seat. Almost without exception, these spurned the spiritual feast of truth which Jesus provided. Many of the common people who heard him gladly did come to the feast—at Pentecost three thousand in one day.

But still the foreordained number had not been found, so another call went forth to those in the high-ways and hedges. This might well have been fulfilled by the Gospel going to the Gentiles. The filling of all the seats at this great banquet has required the work of the entire age. It is not yet fully completed. Happy are we if the call has reached our ears. But let us not be too busy with our "land," "oxen," and "wives," and spurn the opportunity that has come to us!

God's Concern for Sinners

GOLDEN TEXT: "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost."
—Luke 19:10

LUKE 15:1-10

THE setting of the two parables which constitute today's lesson suggests God's interest in sinners. The scribes and Pharisees criticized Jesus for fraternizing with publicans and sinners. Verse 7 contrasts the ninety and nine "just persons" with sinners. The scribes and Pharisees were not actually justified persons. In God's sight they were far from righteous, but they claimed to be, and looked down upon the publicans and sinners who, in God's sight, were perhaps more sincere of heart than their critics.

Those who are actually sinners are "lost," that is, they are outside the fold of God's favor, and condemned to death. Christ came to provide salvation for these, and it was consistent that he should mingle with those whom he had come to save. In principle, this is a good lesson for all the Lord's people. Too often, perhaps, we hold ourselves aloof from those to whom we might be a blessing.

We think it reasonable to suppose, however, that the Parable of the Lost Sheep has a more specific

application, that it illustrates God's interest in the entire human race as the lost sheep, and that the various other orders of his creation are the "ninety and nine" who did not go astray. This application of the parable surely enhances our appreciation of God's love for the entire human race, a love that manifested itself in giving his Son to be man's Redeemer.

Thus Jesus came to "seek and to save that which was lost," as our Golden Text states. Through sin, Adam lost life, and he lost the dominion over the earth which had been given to him by his Creator. He lost these, not only for himself, but for his entire progeny. So the whole human creation became the "lost sheep" of the parable.

Prompted by love, and at great risk, Jesus came to earth to "find" and to rescue the lost sheep. In order to effect this rescue, he gave his life. Ultimately this will lead to a return to the fold of divine favor and life for all who, when they hear about it, give heed to the voice of the Good Shepherd.

There has doubtless been joy in heaven every time a sinner has

turned to Christ in repentance, and asked for help. But the joyful heavenly scene described in the parable will probably reach its climax at the close of the "times of restitution of all things." That will be when the heavenly class, exalted from among mankind, and the restitution class, are all gathered under Christ, as stated by Paul—Eph. 1:10

The Parable of the Lost Coin also reveals God's interest in the "lost." It was the custom of Jewish women to wear on the forehead a fringe of coin bangles. These might be of gold or silver, and sometimes represented her dowry. The loss of one of these would represent more than its intrinsic value, for its absence would mar the beauty of the bangle.

The intense search for the coin would indicate the great value attached to it. The woman's neighbors, learning of the loss, would be sympathetically concerned, and would greatly rejoice with the owner when the coin was found. "Likewise," Jesus interpreted, "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."—vs.10

This lesson illustrates that a man is much more precious than many coins, and of more value than many sheep. Besides, we rejoice to see in these two parables the kindly interest of the Creator and of the holy angels in the recovery of fallen man—as individuals, and also as a race.

QUESTIONS

What is the "in principle" application of the lost sheep parable?

What is its specific application?

Explain the background of the lost coin parable?

What is its main lesson?

What benefit may we derive from these two parables?

The most practical application of the lesson is to our own hearts. Do we, in our hearts, feel the same interest toward fallen man as God possesses? Each of us might well ask, How do I manifest the spirit of God toward my fellow-men? What am I doing day by day to substantiate my professed interest in humanity in general as well as in my neighbors, friends, and relatives in particular?

This, of course, is not God's time for the conversion of the world. His work today, in which we have the privilege of co-operating, is to "take out" from the world "a people for his name." Nevertheless, he does not inform us just who the individuals are that he is calling. Thus it is written, "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters," knowing that God will direct the message to those whom he chooses, and will "give the increase." (Isa. 32:20; I Cor. 3:6) It is this general work which affords us an opportunity to manifest godlikeness in our attitude toward the lost world.

God, the Creator

LESSON TEXT: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." —GENESIS 1:1

THROUGHOUT all the centuries the wise and the learned have endeavored to pry into the secrets of creation and explain how the great universe came into existence—how out of nothing there came countless billions of worlds; myriads of forms of life—plant and animal—and why so much law and order is displayed in it all. Try as they may, however, human philosophers have not been able to produce an explanation so simple, yet so profound and full of meaning, as that contained in the ten words of our text—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

The truthfulness of these words is more universally acknowledged today than ever before. Even the great Prof. Einstein, once an agnostic, confessed in the later years of his life that his increasing scientific knowledge had led him to the conviction that there is an intelligence displayed throughout the universe which he was glad to acknowledge and honor. Einstein, together with other great scientists, was unable to accept the crude conceptions of God handed down to a credulous world from the Dark Ages; but despite this handicap to belief, they came to see unmistakable evidence of supreme intelligence in what they formerly spoke of merely as the works of nature.

Yes, "There is a God—all nature speaks; through earth, and air, and seas, and skies." Yes, "all nature" does testify that there is a God, a supreme and intelligent Creator. The best commentary on this approach to an understanding of the great characteristics of God is the one found in the Book of Job, chapters 38 through 41. Job was a servant of God, the God who in "the beginning created the heaven and the earth." Calamity came upon him. He lost almost everything in life which contributes to happiness, including his health. His friends insisted that he was being punished for gross sins which he had secretly committed. Job denied this, yet was unable to understand why his God was allowing him to suffer.

This controversy between Job and his friends continues through many chapters of the book. Then, as the record states, "The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me." (vss. 1-3) The long series of questions which God asks Job bring out the many points which, because human wisdom does not know the answer, should help even the most skeptical to realize the truthfulness of David's words, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." —Ps. 14: 1

"Where wast thou," God asked Job, "when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the cornerstone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (vss. 4-7) Job was a wise man, with much experience. He knew that the construction of homes and other buildings required planning. Foundations had to be laid, and securely anchored. Evidently, also, he was accustomed to merry celebrations when the cornerstone of a new building was laid.

Yes, Job knew that everything made by man required planning and skill. Houses and cities—and in our day intricate machinery, television, jet planes, and other modern marvels—do not "just happen." The earth, the home of all mankind, had been created without Job or other men having anything to do with it. He was not present when the foundations were laid. He had no part in the architectural design and measurements. Nevertheless, he knew it existed. This marvelous display of wisdom and design should help us to realize, as doubtless it did Job, that there must have been a Divine Architect and Builder with intelligence and power, far superior to his own.

Then the Lord reminded Job of some of the details connected with the creation of the earth. He asked, "Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, . . . and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?"—vss 8-11

The marvels of the sea! How seldom we think of the miracle-

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working power of God in connection with the ebb and flow of the oceans' tides? Oh yes, we know how to "explain" it. The tides, we say, are controlled largely by the gravitational "pull" of the moon. But what does that mean? What is gravitation? Sir Isaac Newton discovered the laws of gravitation, but who framed the laws and implemented them? There are times when heavy winds locally increase the height of the tides a few feet, and those living near the shore flee for their lives; but seldom do they realize that ordinarily they can dwell safely by the sea only because God has decreed, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed!"

Next Job was asked: 'Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place?' (vs. 12) Job, seemingly, was rather a prominent man in his community, one who exercised considerable authority, but he had no control over the rising of the sun. "Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days?" No, of course not! Job knew that from the earliest days of his recollection the sun had risen and set without his having anything to do with it. He realized also that this was true of the generations before him. He knew that man at no time ever had any control over the movements of the sun, the moon, the stars, or the earth. This was far beyond the ability of man. This was the work of God!

"Have the gates of death been opened unto thee?" Job, "or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" (vs. 17) Men and women of all ages have endeavored to peer beyond death, to know what lies beyond the grave. Apart from the revelation given to us in the Word of God, which assures us of a resurrection of the dead, no one has found the answer. Just as the mystery of creation is explainable only in the light of the fact that there is a supreme, intelligent Creator, so the desire for life after death becomes a genuine hope only because the One who created life has promised to restore the dead to life. The several biblical accounts of the awakening of various ones from death are therefore proofs of the existence of God, the God who "created the heaven and the earth."

Here is another intriguing question: "Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof, that thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof? Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy days is great?"

(vss. 19-21) What is light, what is darkness? The light of day replaces the darkness of night, but where does the one go, when the other takes it place? God asked Job if he knew the dwelling place of light, just where it stayed while its place was occupied by darkness. A foolish question? By no means! With all our modern scientific knowledge, no one has yet been able to give an adequate definition of light, or of darkness. Like electricity, which we know exists, but cannot clearly define, so are light and darkness. But God knows, for he created them. It was God who said, "Let there be light: and there was light."—Gen. 1:3

The Lord continued to question Job, asking him about a number of things described by unbelievers as the "works of nature," things which, to those who believe in God, are frequently overlooked as proof of his existence. We quote, "Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; to cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man; to satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth? Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew? Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?"—vss. 25-29

The obvious answer to all these questions is that there must be a Supreme, Intelligent Creator who designed and created water, and who also planned the means by which it would reach the ground and give life to vegetation. Most of us have witnessed with pleasure the revival of plants, or of grass, when water is provided; but do we realize that these are miracles, made possible because all the elements involved were designed and made by God, who "in the beginning created the heaven and the earth"?

And how marvelous is the arrangement by which the water created by God reaches the "dry places." As we know, it is by the evaporation of the water of oceans and lakes, the moisture ascending to form clouds which are distributed over the land, and which, by changes of temperature in the air currents, are caused to release their refreshing waters in the form of rain and snow. Reaching the earth, the water finds its way back into the oceans and lakes to continue the cycle. Scientific instruments of today tell us how all this happens, but the real power, or forces, which contribute to make it possible are still unexplainable.

Shifting the focus of his questions from purely mundane things

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to heavenly bodies, God asked Job, "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?"—vss. 31-33

The implied lesson in these questions is more striking today than it was to Job. Job was a wise man for his time, but astronomical knowledge had not advanced to the degree now enjoyed. Calculations now made possible by powerful telescopes have revealed the minute accuracy of time and distances involved in the movement of the heavenly bodies, giving evidence that they are held in their course, and at constant speeds, by the power and design of a supreme intelligence unexplainable by man.

Without going into detail as to the particular references to Pleiades, Orion, Mazzaroth, and Arcturus, the main point of the lesson is that neither Job nor we can possibly change the course of a single planet, sun, or star. Nor do we understand the governing forces which control "the ordinances of heaven," nor the manner in which their influences are felt in the earth. But God knows, for he created both "the heaven and the earth," and designed their relationship to each other.

In God's Image

One of the most difficult questions asked Job was, "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?" (vs. 36) The lower animal creations are governed largely by what we call instinct. From the time of their birth they seem naturally to follow a certain pattern, and while many of them can be trained to obey somewhat the directives of their masters, there is no evidence that they really understand why. Certainly, as implied in the question asked Job, the lower animals do not possess a "heart" knowledge, or appreciation of their existence, or of their course of action.

But with man it is different. He is able to reason, at least to a limited degree, from the known to the unknown. He knows that some things are right and other things are wrong. He has a conscience which is "pricked" when he does wrong, and affords contentment and peace of mind when he does right. Man in his folly—that is, the "fool" who says in his heart, "there is no God"—has advanced many fancy theories concerning the alleged ascent of man

from protoplasm to his present state. They have "explained" what has brought about this and that change in the anatomy of animals, finally leading to the human species; but no one has even attempted to answer the question put to Job, "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts" of man, "or who hath given understanding to the heart?"

There is only one answer to this question. It is God's answer, recorded in his own inspired Word for our instruction and encouragement. It is found in the very first chapter of the Bible, verses 27 and 28. Here we are informed that man is as he is, superior to even the highest form of lower animals, capable of reasoning, of planning, of inventing, of knowing right from wrong, because he was created in the image of God. When the evolutionists find a reasonable, valid, provable explanation of how this difference between man and his alleged nearest of kin among the brute creation accidentally came about, they will be a little more worthy of being given a serious hearing than at present.

Animal Instincts Display Creative Wisdom

Throughout chapter 39 of the Book of Job, a number of questions are recorded, the answers to which must also be negative where human wisdom is concerned. These questions pertain to the marvelous instincts displayed by various animals and birds. The chapter begins with these questions: "Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve? Canst thou number the months that they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth? They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows. Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them."—vss. 1-4

Then the Lord called attention to the different characteristics of other animals—"Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass? Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing."—vss. 5-8

Again: "Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib? Canst thou bind the unicorn [wild-ox] with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust

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him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labor to him? Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed and gather it into thy barn?" (vss. 9-12) There are what we speak of as "domestic animals," which with little effort can be trained to serve man. But here God called Job's attention to other varieties, animals which are wild and refuse to submit to human training. The question is Who is responsible for these differences?

Neither Job nor we are wise enough to understand the creative processes which brought about this almost endless variety. There is a song which states that "only God can make a tree," and this fact is even more striking when we consider the thousands of varieties of trees, plants, and flowers, as well as the great variety found in the animal kingdom. Only a Supreme, Intelligent Creator could produce this endless array of created things, with each one in its own wonderful way displaying the wisdom and power of its Creator. This is the God who, "in the beginning created the heaven and the earth"!

As if Job would not yet realize how little he understood of the wisdom and power of the Creator, further questions were asked him. "Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?" the Lord inquired. (vs. 13) All birds have feathers and wings, but how vastly different they are. The peacock is noted for the beauty of its plumage, hence it is used here as a contrasting example. The ostrich, on the other hand, is rather plain in appearance. What made the difference between the two? The fortuitousness of evolution? Nay, the wisdom and power of the Creator!

In most cases the birds and lower animals instinctively exercise great care over their young; the birds even watch over the eggs from which their offspring are hatched. If this maternal instinct of the lower creations was the product of evolution, reason tells us that there would be no exceptions, for the same influences would have governed the evolutionary processes of all. But there are exceptions, and in questioning Job, God called attention to one. Referring to the ostrich, the Lord said, "Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust [instead of sitting on them], and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. She is hardened against her young ones, as though

they were not hers: her labor is in vain without fear; because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding. What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.”—vss. 14-18

Evolutionists would be at a loss to explain why the mother ostrich takes no interest in her young. God’s explanation alone reveals the reason for this paradox of nature, that explanation being that he “hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding.” But he did give the ostrich swiftness and strength so that “she scorneth the horse and his rider.” If we remove God from creation, we would here have another unanswered question.

Instinct or Endowment?

In the closing verses of chapter 39, another convincing thought is brought to our attention. Job is asked, “Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south? Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are, there is she.”—vss. 26-30

In calling our attention to the habits of the hawk and the eagle, the Lord reminds us of the numberless peculiarities which exist in the life habits of the animal kingdom. There are the migratory birds which move from north to south and from south to north with the changing seasons. There are the swimming birds, and the singing birds; the screech owls and talking parrots; the gorgeously handsome birds, and the drab, colorless birds.

But why stop with the birds? The same variety exists among the land animals, the trees, the flowers, and the insects. There is only one thing common to them all, which is that they have life—either animate or inanimate. Unbelieving human wisdom, in its folly, contends that all these myriad forms of plant and animal life just happened to develop as they did; but no one has yet been able to explain how they live. The origin of life is unknown, apart from the explanation given to us in the Scriptures that “in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

Accepting this fact, as the many otherwise unanswerable ques-

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tions asked Job impel us to do, then we know the answer to them all, that answer being that the infinite wisdom and almighty power of a personal God and Creator is responsible for awe-inspiring works of creation which are so marvelously displayed in the heavens, on the earth, and in the sea.

In chapters 40 and 41 God reminded Job of certain great monsters of the land and of the sea such as "behemoth," [probably the elephant] "leviathan" the whale, perhaps, or some other sea monster. Job was made to realize that here again are marvels of creation which he could not explain, and at last he answered the Lord, saying, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."—ch. 42:2

Thus Job reached the point where he realized that the only answer to all the mysteries of creation is that they are the work of an intelligent Creator. This was the answer also to the problem of suffering. How could he question the wisdom of the great Creator in permitting him to suffer for a while? Surely the infinite wisdom displayed in all the creative works of God knew what was best for him. Should we not all reach this conclusion, and especially so if we would understand the meaning of our existence, and be inspired with the hope in contemplating the eternal destiny which the Creator has designed for his human family?

"I know that thou canst do everything," said Job to his God. If we know this, then we have a foundation of faith upon which we can build a true knowledge of God and of his all-wise and loving design in man's creation. If we believe that he can "do everything," no explanation of his plans and purposes which he has given in his Word will be disbelieved; no instructions will go unheeded or disobeyed; and no promise he has made, regardless of how far-reaching, or from the human standpoint, impossible of accomplishment, will be doubted.

The wisdom and power of God are wonderfully displayed in his creative works with which we are surrounded. However, had we no further revelation of God than these, we would have many reasons to wonder about his justice and love. These attributes of the Creator we will find revealed in his written Word as we become acquainted with his great plan of the ages for the recovery of his human creation from sin and death.

THE PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE—
PART XII—I SAMUEL 9-21



Kings Saul and David

KINGS Saul and David are both prominent personalities in the Old Testament. Sufficient is recorded of each to be the basis for a lengthy article, but because many of their experiences were so closely associated, we think it best, to begin with, to consider them together. Saul was the son of Kish. The description of him states that he was "a choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people."—I Sam. 9:2

The information we are given concerning David is that he was the youngest son of Jesse, a keeper of his father's sheep, and that he "was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to." (I Sam. 16:11, 12) Both these men were seemingly well-favored specimens of humanity, but as we trace their activities we can see why the Lord considers it so important to look on the heart of an individual rather than on the

outward appearance.—I Sam. 16:7

Saul was the first of Israel's kings, being anointed to this position by the Prophet Samuel, the last to serve Israel as judge during the period of the judges. The Israelites demanded that they be given a king to rule over them that they might be like the surrounding nations. The Lord yielded to this demand, and Samuel was instructed by the Lord to anoint Saul.

To begin with, Saul seemingly was humble. When he sensed that he had been chosen for some special service he said to Samuel, "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) Later Samuel said to Saul, "The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou . . . shalt be turned into another man; . . . for God is with thee."—ch. 10:6, 7

Saul was presented to the people as king at Gilgal. When it was demonstrated that this son of a

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Benjamite family was the Lord's choice for king, he was nowhere to be found. "Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff." (ch. 10:22) The fact that Saul was keeping out of sight on such an important occasion seems to suggest that he felt insufficient for the task assigned to him. However, since the Spirit of God had come upon him, and he had received various evidences of God's direction in his choice (see chapters 9 and 10), it may be that his hiding "among the stuff" revealed a lack of faith in God and in the Lord's ability to help him.

But the people showed no hesitancy. Presenting Saul to them as their king, Samuel said, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And "the people shouted, and said, God save the king." (ch. 10:24) Then "Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched."—vss. 25, 26

Saul's Opportunity

Saul did not at once exercise his authority as king of Israel. But, when Nahash, the Ammonite, "came up, and encamped against Jabesh-gilead" and threatened to "thrust out" the "right eyes" of the Israelites, the "Spirit of God came upon Saul, . . . and his anger was

kindled greatly," and, taking command of an army which he quickly raised, he defeated the Ammonites.—ch. 11:1, 2, 6

Perhaps one reason Saul had not asserted himself prior to this is that "the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents." (ch. 10:27) But now that he had delivered the Israelites from the oppressive hands of the Ammonites "the people said unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death."—ch. 11:12

But Saul did not agree to this. He said, "There shall not a man be put to death this day: for today the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel." (vs. 13) "Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal; and they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly."—vss. 14, 15

The rejoicing of the people under the rulership of Saul was not destined to continue long. After he had reigned two years he chose three thousand men, two thousand of which he kept under his own direct command, and one thousand were delegated to the command of Jonathan, his favorite son. Jonathan, young and ambitious, "smote the garrison of the Philistines that was

in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it.”—ch. 13:1-3

Saul realized that this would stir up the animosity of all the Philistines against the Israelites, so he began to muster an army of defense. The men were summoned to Gilgal, and seemingly Saul had arranged with the aged Samuel to meet them there to offer sacrifice on behalf of Israel, thus to assure that the Lord would be with them in the coming battle against the Philistines.

But Samuel did not arrive within the time agreed upon, so Saul offered the sacrifice himself. This was exceeding his jurisdiction, and was contrary to the arrangements of the Lord, and Samuel said to him, “Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now [had you been faithful] would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.”—ch. 13:13, 14

Samuel here spoke prophetically of David, whom later he anointed to be Saul’s successor as king of Israel. It is noteworthy that from Saul’s first transgression against the commandment of the Lord, he was rejected. In this respect no mercy, no second opportunity, was given to him. Later, when Saul

again disobeyed the Lord, his rejection was reaffirmed.

This was when he was commanded to go “and smite Amalek.” He was instructed to “destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.” (ch. 15:2, 3) The Lord in his wisdom knew that it would be best for the Amalekites if they were all put to sleep in death until the time came for them to be awakened and given an opportunity to be enlightened and to enjoy the blessings of the messianic kingdom.

Saul was victorious in his battle against the Amalekites, and had it within his power fully to carry out the Lord’s instruction. But he did not do so. He spared the king, Agag, and “the best of the sheep and the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.”—vss. 8, 9

The Lord then made it known to Samuel that Saul had again disobeyed, and he went to the king at Gilgal, where, when Saul met him he said, “Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord.” (vs. 13) Here he sinned again by attempting to misrepresent the facts to Samuel.

But Samuel said, “What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” (vs. 14) Saul

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explained that the people had saved the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice to the Lord, but all the rest had been destroyed. Saul contended that it was the people who had spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, as though he was not personally responsible for this failure to obey the Lord's instructions.

Then Samuel reminded Saul of the time he was anointed king over Israel—"when thou wast little in thine own sight." (vs. 17) Saul's exaltation had, as the expression is often used today, "gone to his head." He now imagined that he was wiser than the aged Prophet Samuel who had given him the instructions of the Lord concerning the Amalekites.

Throughout the ages, many who have started out humbly in the service of the Lord have similarly been affected by a measure of prominence with which they may have been favored by the Lord. Such proudness of heart manifests itself in various ways, and not infrequently by a tendency to be overcritical of others, and the assuming of superior judgment in matters pertaining to the service of the Lord and his people. Saul thought that his way of serving the Lord was superior to Samuel's. It seemed obvious to him that the Lord would be pleased to have sacrifices offered to him. But he was mistaken. Samuel said to him, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacri-

fice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king."—vss. 22, 23

No Mercy Shown

Saul acknowledged his sin, and asked for pardon. "Pardon my sin," he asked of Samuel, "and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord. And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel." (vss. 25, 26) Samuel had, as we have seen, previously told Saul that the Lord had rejected him, and now Saul himself had sealed this rejection by his further flagrant violation of the Lord's command. No mercy was shown to him so far as his kingship was concerned, although we are glad that this will not deprive him of an opportunity to gain everlasting life under the laws of Christ's kingdom, when as one of the "unjust" he will be awakened from the sleep of death.—Acts 24:14, 15

Following this final and complete rejection of Saul as the rightful king of Israel, God instructed Samuel to anoint another to take his place. This was David, the son of Jesse, of Bethlehem. He was the one Samuel had prophetically referred to as a man after God's own heart—I Sam. 16:1-13; 13:14; Acts 13:22

Although David was now

anointed to be king of Israel, he did not assume the rulership of the nation until the death of Saul. Meanwhile, the lives of these two men were frequently and dramatically brought into close contact. Saul's first acquaintance with the newly anointed king was when he was taken into the royal palace as a harp player, Saul, of course, being unaware of David's anointing.

The record states that when the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, an "evil spirit from the Lord troubled [margin, 'terrified'] him." (ch. 16:14) His servants recommended that they find a good harp player who by his sweet and soft music could soothe the king's nerves. He consented, and David was the one selected. "Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep." (vs 19) In harmony with this request Jesse sent David to Saul, who was greatly pleased with the young man. The account says that Saul "loved him greatly." (vss. 20, 21) In addition to playing the harp for the king during his spells of nervousness, David became his armor-bearer.

But Saul's love for David was not to continue very long. It was not a time of peace in Israel, for now the Philistines "gathered together their armies to battle," and it was necessary for the Israelites to do the best they could to defend themselves. To make the situation worse, the Philistines sent out a giant to challenge the Israelites, a

man "whose height was six cubits and a span."—ch. 17:4

This heavily armed giant "stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together."—vss. 8-10

When the Israelites heard these words, they were greatly dismayed, including Saul. Three of David's brothers were in Saul's army, but David had returned home to care for his father's sheep. For forty days the Philistine giant appeared and hurled his defiance to Israel's army, and David learned about the situation when, in response to his father's request, he had taken a supply of cheese to the officers of Israel's army, and inquired concerning the welfare of his brothers.

David, brave and confident, volunteered to meet the giant in battle, much to the dismay of Saul and others. It was his defeat of the Philistine giant that brought him into prominence before the people and kindled the murderous jealousy of Saul against him. However, it is in David's encounter with the giant that we begin to see why he was considered a man after God's own heart.

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When David revealed his determination to accept the challenge of the giant, Saul insisted that he wear his armor, but the young shepherd boy declined because he had not proved it. He chose instead "five smooth stones out of the brook," deciding that he would rely on his slingshot to slay Israel's enemy. "And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; . . . he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? and the Philistine cursed David by his gods."—ch. 17:40-43

Then David answered, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee." (vss. 45, 46) Here David's true character is revealed. He had faith that God would give him victory over the giant, and in advance of that coming victory, he hastened to give the glory to the Lord.

David was victorious. The giant was slain. This destroyed the morale of the Philistine army and they were easily put to rout, and thus was Israel delivered from the oppressive hand of their enemy. But in the minds of the Israelites David was given the credit for this defeat. Soon, and in appreciation, the women were shouting that

while Saul had slain his thousands, David had slain his ten thousands. (ch. 18:7) This was more than Saul could bear.

David was brought back into the household of Saul. He was given Saul's daughter Michal, who loved the young hero. Saul's son, Jonathan, also greatly loved David. The record is that the "soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."—ch. 18:1

But it was different with Saul. The record is that he was "afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul." (vss. 12, 15) So this wicked king determined in his heart that David must die. He attempted to murder him with his javelin, but failed. Then he endeavored to prevail upon both Jonathan and Michal to work with him to bring about David's death. Instead, they used their knowledge of their father's intention to save David and enable him to escape.

For a time, seemingly, Jonathan persuaded Saul not to press his anger against David, but to let him live. Saul agreed. But soon "there was war again: and David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter: and they fled from him. And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul." (ch. 19:8, 9) So again he endeavored to murder the shepherd boy, but failed.

Saul's heart attitude toward David had not changed. In his jealousy he could not bear to see

David praised for his victories over Israel's enemies. The statement that an "evil spirit from the Lord" came upon Saul should not be understood to mean that God directly filled his heart with evil. Rather, the Lord knew Saul's heart condition, and he simply permitted circumstances to arise which would cause the wicked and rejected king to manifest his true disposition so the people might know why the Lord had rejected him from being king, and why David had been anointed to succeed him. The people did not immediately know this, but the Lord knew that later they would understand.

Jonathan and David

A very deep friendship developed between Jonathan and David, a friendship which more than once cost Jonathan the ill will of his father, Saul. When, through the advice and assistance of Michal, Saul's daughter, who had become David's wife, he escaped from the murderous designs of his father-in-law, he sought out the aged Samuel, and related his trials to him.—ch. 19:11-18

But Samuel made no attempt to enter into the controversy, and realizing that Saul was still plotting against him, David sought out Jonathan at Ramah. Jonathan endeavored to reassure David on the ground that his father would do nothing unless he revealed his plans to him. David was not too sure of this. However, he followed Jonathan's advice, who aided him

in again escaping the wrath of Saul.—ch. 20

Jonathan said to David, as they separated, "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed forever." (ch. 20:42) After this David was for some time hunted by Saul, who did all he could to find and kill him. On two occasions Saul, while sleeping, was at the mercy of David, but his life was spared. David looked upon Saul as the Lord's anointed, so would not take the responsibility himself of destroying him, even though it would mean safety for himself.

In this as in other matters, David took the Lord into consideration. Saul, to the contrary, even when knowing the will of God, did not hesitate to go contrary thereto. It was for this reason that he kingdom of Israel was wrested from him, and after his death, given to David. But David's waiting for the Lord's due time was a severe test upon him, especially since all the while his life was in danger from the angry Saul.

The Witch of Endor

Saul continued his course of disobedience to the Lord right to the end of his career, his last sin being to consult a witch concerning an impending battle with the Philistines. (See I Samuel 28:3-20) The Philistines had again assembled their armies to fight against Israel, and Saul "gathered all Israel to-

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gether, and they pitched in Gilboa. And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.”—vss. 4-6

“Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her and inquire of her.” (vs. 7) As if to emphasize Saul’s wilful sin in this matter, the narrative is introduced by the information that “Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.” (vs. 3) He knew that this ancient form of spiritualism was condemned by the Lord, and in this respect had endeavored to carry out the Lord’s will.

But when Saul realized that the Lord would no longer communicate with him, either directly or indirectly, he turned away from the Lord to seek information through a channel which he knew was under divine condemnation. In doing this, however, it was not with any thought of ascertaining the Lord’s will, but simply of learning, if he could, how he would fare in the impending battle with the Philistines.

Saul, in compliance with his request, was taken to a witch—the witch of Endor. He disguised himself for he knew that the witch would be afraid and would not cooperate if she realized that the king of Israel, who had placed a ban upon her activities, was in her presence.

Then she asked him whom she should “bring up” to him, and he said, “Bring me up Samuel.” (vs. 11) Samuel had died, but for some time before his death he had not communicated with Saul concerning the will of the Lord. He knew that God had withdrawn his favor from the wicked king, so withheld his own services from him.

But Saul, in his fear and wickedness, was easily deceived. The witch discovered that it was Saul who was in her presence, and assumed that she had been tricked. But Saul assured her that she would not be harmed, and then she described an old man whom she said had ascended “out of the earth.” “And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.”—vs. 14

Then Saul heard a voice speaking to him, which he supposed to be Samuel’s. The “voice” reiterated Saul’s rejection by the Lord, and predicted defeat of the Israelites by the Philistines, adding, “Tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me.” (vs. 19) Saul understood this to be a prophecy of his death, and he was “sore afraid.”—vs. 20

Those who believe that humans have “immortal souls” which continue to live after the body dies are prone to use this narrative in an attempt to prove their error. They claim it proves that Samuel was not really dead, else he could not have been called up by the witch. But a close examination of

the account leaves much to be desired in the way of proof that righteous souls, such as Samuel's truly must have been, go to heaven when the body dies.

For example, the record states that the supposed Samuel came up out of the earth. So far as we know there is no one who believes that righteous souls go into the earth when the body dies. Again, the "voice" predicted that Saul and his sons would be with Samuel the next day, meaning that they would be killed. This would mean that the righteous and the wicked live together after death, which is also contrary to the popular belief on this subject.

The true explanation of this episode in the life of the wicked King Saul is that evil spirits ("fallen angels") impersonated the dead Samuel, deceiving both the witch and Saul. Actually, the "voice" which spoke to Saul gave him no information which he did not already possess. He knew that he had been rejected by the Lord, and he realized also that with the mighty armies of the Philistines closing in around him, he was sure to lose his life. That is why he had gone to the witch. He had hoped against hope that he would be told something he could do that would result in a restoration of the Lord's

favor, and with Lord's help, the Philistines might yet be defeated.

But he was disappointed. Neither the witch, nor the evil spirits with whom she worked, could change matters. All they could do was to reaffirm his fears. But even so, the "voice" was inaccurate in predicting the time of the king's death. He was not killed the next day, but several days later.*

A detailed account of Saul's death is presented in I Chronicles, chapter 10, verses 1-7. Jonathan and his other sons were slain first. Then Saul was wounded. Fearing what the Philistine soldiers might do to him should they find him in a weakened and helpless condition, he asked his armorbearer to kill him, but he refused. Then Saul fell upon his own sword, killing himself. Thus came to an inglorious end this first king of Israel, who, to begin with, was little in his own eyes, but became proud, disobeyed the Lord, and died an outcast from divine favor.

After Saul's death, David became one of Israel's most beloved kings. Next month we will discuss some of the important aspects of his reign, and the manner in which they reflect the character of this man of God—also the typical features of the "throne of David."

*NOTE:—See the booklet, "Spiritualism," for a full explanation of the "fallen angels" part in this experience.

"O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary."—Psalm 63:1, 2

Exceeding and Abounding

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

—II Peter 1:4, 11

THESE are superlative expressions: “Exceeding great and precious promises,” and an entrance “abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord.” Then there are others assuring us that God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,” and “is able to make all grace abound” toward us. (Eph. 3:20; II Cor. 9:8) Many similar statements are also frequently recorded in the Scriptures. They are generally in relation to what our Lord and our Heavenly Father will bestow upon those who put their trust in him.

The Apostle Peter’s salutation at the commencement of his letter is, “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you,” who “have obtained like precious faith . . . through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” (II Pet. 1:1, 2) The Apostle Paul also uses similar expressions replete with adjectives to strengthen the statements referring to the attainment of glory.

In contrasting our afflictions with the glory to be received Paul says, “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” (II Cor. 4:17) Weymouth’s translation is even stronger, speaking of preponderating, yea a vastly preponderating and eternal weight of glory, which is surpassing, an outweighing compensation, a reward for the most crucial affliction we could possibly encounter.

Then we have that wonderful promise of God through the prophet Malachi: “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”—Mal. 3:10

It is all just like our Heavenly Father. He gives unstintingly. The measure is pressed down, shaken

together, running over. His love has no limit; his grace has no measure; his power no boundary known to men. Out of his infinite riches in Jesus, he giveth and giveth and giveth again. Jesus said to the people, God is full of mercy and compassion, "kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." (Luke 6:35) He admonished his followers to be the same: "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."—Luke 6:36

Peter states that God "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." (II Pet. 1:3) Nothing has been forgotten, or omitted, to complete the call. "Whereby," or for which purpose, "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world."—II Pet. 1:4

Many of these promises are conditional. Peter says: If you cultivate the graces of the spirit, you will be "neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." If these things be in you and abound, "ye shall never fall." (II Pet. 1:8, 10) And since Jesus said, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit," it behooves all his followers to have fruitbearing as their great objective so that they might have an entrance "abundantly into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (John 15:8) And so we wish to reflect on what is

really the fruitage our Heavenly Father is looking for in us, and to encourage ourselves in reaching out for that which will glorify and honor him as well as prepare us for an abundant entrance into that heavenly kingdom.

The promises given to us from God and our Lord cover every feature and phase of our spiritual and temporal experiences. It was so with the patriarchs and prophets. We are exhorted to be followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises given for them.—James 5:10, 11

For the comfort and encouragement of the followers of Christ Jesus during the Gospel age we read: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: . . . that . . . we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us [in the promises], which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered."—Heb. 6:17-20

Let us recall a few of the hundreds of these great and precious promises by means of which we become partakers of the divine nature, changed from human to spiritual, realizing that God himself is the Author of this great change, and is operating within us. "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth, that we [begotten ones] should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."—James 1:18

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The ancient worthies and old-time saints saw many of these afar off; these great promises we are privileged to see in our day, many of them now in course of fulfilment. Like the patriarchs, we should be "persuaded of them," and embrace them, confessing that we are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth.—Heb. 11:13

To Abraham God promised, "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 22:17, 18) The apostle, in Galatians, referring to this great promise, reminds us that God said not of "SEEDS" as of many, but as of "ONE," which is Christ; "and if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:16, 29

Psalm 84:11: "The Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."—Isa. 40:31

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."—Ps. 55:22

"My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."—Phil. 4:19

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."—Isa. 26:3

Jesus promised: "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he

that believeth on me shall never thirst."—John 6:35

"I am the living bread of life: . . . if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever."—John 6:51

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

"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."—Ps. 138:7, 8

"He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."—Ps. 91:11

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—John 14:2, 3

"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper."—Heb. 13:5, 6

"What he had promised, he was able also to perform."—Rom. 4:21

"Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness, . . . perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."—II Cor. 7:1

Why are we so slow to believe these wonderful words of life, joy, comfort, and peace—these exceeding great and precious promises of present spiritual inheritance? Be assured, dear brethren, these promises are not given to excite a vague hope of some future mirage or prospective phantom, or ever-failing vehicle of anticipation. They are predetermined promises of God

himself to you and to me as his children that we might be satisfied in that life-long urge of soul to become new creatures in Christ Jesus, members of a new creation, not barren nor unfruitful, but complete and ready for an entrance abundantly into the kingdom, the heavenly kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In the First Psalm, the psalmist beautifully illustrates how we can become complete in Christ. The Psalm is a commendation of a godly life and what can make a man God-fearing, or spiritually minded. It opens with an expression of admiration for the man who lives a godlike life, which it proceeds to describe in a simple and engaging manner by telling what such a man avoids, what he delights in, and what he resembles. The first verse is: How happy or blessed is the man who walks not, stands not in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.

By this man the laws of nature are revered, and the slightest revelation from the Word of his God he will welcome and obey. In this day of enlightenment he will be so happy to know Christ that he will find in him the spirit and source of all love.

Christ Jesus and his Word will be the law of his being, and toward the word of Christ Jesus his mind and heart will gravitate; and in the Lord he will discover his songs of hope and joy and peace continually. "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Such a

one comes directly under the care of the great Husbandman. "He is like a tree planted by the rivers of water; . . . his leaf [or profession] will not wither."—Ps. 1:1-3

Jesus, using the figure of a well of water, reveals similar expressions and observations of the life of such a one. Out of his belly, Jesus said, shall flow rivers of living water. (John 7:38) To the woman of Samaria Jesus declared: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."—John 4:14

A deep well drains its water not from the surface only. It depends not on rain. Its resources are mighty oceans. And so this man of Psalm 1 draws his supplies of refreshment and life from his Creator, and with David can say: "All my springs are in thee."—Ps. 87:7

To the Lord's dear people today comes the word of Paul. I "cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers," he wrote, "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." (Eph. 1:16, 17) As the mind and heart is filled and fed with the things of God and of Christ Jesus our Lord, being aware also of the blessings of life that will presently flow to all mankind, life in the truest sense finds a swelling, springing up within, which finds expression through the tongue.

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All the promises—these great and precious promises and assurances from the Word of God—are productive of faith, strong and enduring faith; and Peter continues concerning the promises by which one can be partaker of the divine nature by saying: "Beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith" other virtues: fortitude, knowledge, temperance (self-control), patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. For, he adds, "if these things be in you and abound they make you that you shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." And, "herein is my Father glorified," said Jesus, "that ye bear much fruit."—John 15:8

Faith alone is not sufficient to insure an entrance abundantly into the kingdom. Other virtues need to be secured and maintained to the end. For this reason, how necessary it is to accept the apostle's word and give all diligence to regulate our conduct of life in furnishing faith with these virtues, by making all our contributions of effort and faith answer to the promises that God has so graciously given to assist us in this objective.

The Bible is full of examples of faith for our benefit. Abraham stands out admirably in this respect. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." (Heb. 11:8) Under hopeless circumstances he hopefully believed. It was as though Abraham said to

"sight," "Stand back"; to the laws of nature, "Hold your peace"; and to a misgiving heart, "Silence, thou tempter, I still believe God." "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: . . . accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."—Heb. 11:17, 19

Having Abraham as our example of faith, let us add to or intensify our faith with fortitude. This implies strength of will, the power of resistance, an element of character generally admired. We need it quite early in our walk of faith, and all along our pilgrim way. It encourages singleness of purpose, firm decisions of acceptance and resistance, whereas "a double minded man is unstable in all his ways."—James 1:8

Daniel is a great example of fortitude. He proposed in his heart not to defile himself with the king's meat or wine. (Dan. 1:8) He knew the writing was signed by the king that "whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days," save of the king, he was to be cast into the den of lions. (Dan. 6:7) Knowing this, Daniel went into his house, and his windows being open, he kneeled three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before God, as he did aforetime.—Dan. 6:10

Let us have the same spirit of confidence and restfulness, unmoved, unperturbed, strong and faithful, as did Daniel. Let us emulate these stalwarts of faith and fortitude. "Dare to be a Daniel;

dare to stand alone; dare to have a purpose firm; and dare to make it known." Take heed, be quiet, fear not, neither let thine heart be faint.—Isa. 7:4

Knowledge

And then Peter exhorts us to add or intensify our knowledge. Knowledge is always open for growth, and is a gathering of facts. Christian knowledge is knowing God, his Word, his purposes, as they relate to us who have faith in him, and as those recorded purposes relate to the world. To all those who accept the Word of God and the exceeding great and precious promises it means spiritual knowledge, spiritual discernment of what is wise, just, right, true, philosophical, in all the activities of God, especially so in our devotion to God and his Word.—John 7:17; 17:3

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children; but in understanding be men." (I Cor. 14:20) He prayed for all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, "that your love may abound yet more and more in all knowledge and in all judgment," or spiritual understanding, or discernment. (Phil. 1:9) Knowledge is most certainly a treasured virtue and should be increased and broadened and diffused for the benefit of others, but knowledge misused or misapplied quickly makes shipwreck of its possessor, and finally leads to disaster.

Solomon was a great example of knowledge; that is, in his early

days, at his coronation. Listen to his replies: "O Lord my God, . . . I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. . . . Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord." (I Kings 3:7-10) Let us maintain this humility and meekness of Solomon.

Self-Control

And to knowledge intensify "self-control," or temperance, that virtue which keeps one moderate, gentle, properly balanced. Paul says: "Let your moderation [gentleness, **Diaglott**] be known unto all." (Phil. 4:5) Be gentle, show meekness to all. (Titus 3:2) "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." (I Cor. 9:25) Paul says too: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." —I Cor. 9:27

Peter, in his later years, was a wonderful example and pattern for us, in growth of grace and in the virtue of self-control. Naturally, as a man, he was a strange character in many ways. We bring him to your notice for encouragement and comfort. At first he was impetuous, bold, courageous; he was also fearful, slow to perceive, quick to speak, self-thinking, but he was deeply sincere. All these traits are so noticeable in his earlier life. —Matt. 16:22; 18:21; 16:16; 19:27

But from Pentecost onward, when the Holy Spirit of God took possession of his mind and heart,

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Peter made rapid strides in temperance, self-control, courage, firmness, manifesting a soberness of faith worthy to copy. He was then an established saint, becoming a pastor of the church, exhorting to traits of character and qualities of mind, many of which he least exemplified prior to Pentecost.

Note his exhortations: "Be ye holy [saith God]; for I am holy." (I Pet. 1:16) "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober." (I Pet. 1:13) "Decorate the hidden man of the heart with what is incorruptible—a meek and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God." (I Pet. 3:4, **Diaglott**) Let us take heart, brethren; Peter was a mirror of ourselves, and he was enabled by the Spirit and grace of God to triumph. His secret of success was sincere devotion and love for his Lord. If we have similar traits of character, we shall triumph also.

Patience

And to self-control intensify the virtue of patience. Patience is that grace which enables one to bear affliction and calamity with calmness and cheerful constancy of mind. Patience is the power of endurance. "Tribulation worketh patience." (Rom. 5:3) "In your patience possess ye your souls."—Luke 21:19

Joseph was a beautiful example of patience. James says: "Take my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye

have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."—James 5:10, 11

Joseph waited many years from the time he was sold to the Ishmaelites until he received his father at the palace of Pharaoh. The many and distressing experiences which he encountered without complaint and with pity and mercy toward his brethren will stand out as a beacon light to all the earth throughout the world's judgment day. The incidents in Joseph's life indicate he was a lovable boy, a father's boy, with his mother's traits of affection for those whom he loved. It would have been easy and natural for him to pine, languish, and to long for parents, home, and homeland, but he remained patient.

It was undoubtedly in his power to have gained leave from Pharaoh's court to visit home, but there is no record of such a request. He was cruelly and unjustly charged by Potiphar's wife, submitted to wrongful imprisonment, and waited even when his brethren arrived, and he knew them. He remained silent for two years before disclosing that he was their brother. (Gen. 45:6) Finally, in assuring his brethren with respect to their treachery, his reply was, "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance."—Gen. 45:7

Godliness

And to patience Peter exhorts to

add godliness. This enables one possessing such a valued virtue to view every experience from the divine standpoint; to take an exalted position for discernment of every experience; to be seated with Christ in the heavenlies. (Eph. 2:6) How often we find our judgment of men and things changed when so seated. How often have our second, cooler thoughts disapproved what our first apprehension of things (upon a sudden provocation) have suggested.

When storms arise in our breast, let us wait for the second, surer report which our judgment shall bring in from the still small voice of reason and conscience. Those possessing godliness are inclined to peace, and opposed to strife. They are dignified, just, majestic. If you are with them long, you are impressed with their influence, and the beauty of their minds. "The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself."—Ps. 4:3

It was so with David, a man after God's own heart. We read that David behaved himself wisely. (I Sam. 18:5) David's heart smote him for cutting off part of Saul's robe, and he said, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed." (I Sam. 24:6) David's consideration and love and keenness of responsibility for his parents is very manifest when he went to the King of Moab and said, "Let my father and mother . . . be with you till I know what God will do for me." (I Sam. 22:3) "And they dwelt with him [the king] all the while

that David was in the hold." (vs. 4) God was with David in battle, prayer, persecution, and kingship. He was a type of the church, who also are copies at heart of God's dear Son.

Brotherly Kindness

And to godliness intensify brotherly kindness. This is a virtue or characteristic that possesses an affinity for others of like mind, in habitation and in parentage. In spiritual things it is manifest in affinity of fellowship, assembly, equal sonship, care, concern, as shielder and helper. Paul was one of our examples for such a virtue. Paul's letters are full of brotherliness. His care for all the churches (II Cor. 11:28); his exhortation to others to be kindly affectioned (Rom. 12:10); his desire that brotherly love should continue (Heb. 13:1); his willingness to be cut off for his kinsmen (Rom. 9:3); all of which prove Paul's faith and fidelity.

Godly Love

And we cover all the virtues with love; that virtue which emanated originally from God. God is love; a love which possesses no other motive than good; a love that wounds to heal—sacrificial, forbearing, merciful, constraining to assist the good; abhorring that which is evil.

Christ Jesus our Lord is our example, our copy and pattern; and God, our Heavenly Father, our Creator, our Potter. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

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that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (II Cor. 8:9) "The love of Christ . . . passeth knowledge." (Eph. 3:19) "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (I John 4:16) Of Christ Jesus it is said, "Having loved his own, . . . he loved them unto the end."—John 13:1

These, brethren, are the furnishings of faith. These virtues make one's faith complete in Christ. Without these virtues or characteristics, hope of joint-heirship with Christ is vague. Paul urges that we reach the stature of a full grown man in Christ. (Eph. 4:13) Faith in the exceeding great and precious promises requires growth to maturity in Christlikeness in order to be assured of an entrance abundantly into the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faith, to be complete, must show its fruit or works. Faith without works is like an empty house. It

is well built on a good foundation, beautifully situated, but for habitation it needs furnishings; and so it is with our faith. Peter assures us if these things, these virtues, be in us and abound, they make us that we shall be neither barren nor unfruitful. These are the virtues of faith that produce fruit; that is, fruitage of character, fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. For if ye do these things, add these qualities, or furnishings to faith—which is the fruit gained by embracing the exceeding great and precious promises—"ye shall never fall." "For so," or because of which, "an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:4-11

—Contributed



WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JANUARY 5—"The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on Me."—Romans 15:3 (Z. '96-83. Hymn 168)

JANUARY 12—"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."—Galatians

6:1 (Z. '01-150 Hymn 149)

JANUARY 19—"O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day."—Psalm 119:97 (Z. '99-156. Hymn 114)

JANUARY 26—"When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance."—Matt. 6:16 (Z. '98-45. Hymn 182)

An Evidence of Faith and Love

(Activities Report—October 1, 1954—September 30, 1955)

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers: remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and the patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father."—I THESSALONIANS 1: 2, 3

FAITH works, and love labors. This is a scriptural truism which is demonstrated in the life of every faithful follower of the Master. All claims of living close to the Lord and of being obedient to his Word are vain if one's faith is not manifested by works, and if love for God and his people is not demonstrated by sacrificial labor in the divine cause. Both "work" and "labor" in the Lord's vineyard are a joy to those who are strong in faith and whose hearts are filled with that "giving" love which prompted our Heavenly Father to give his dearly beloved Son that through him both the church and the world might have life.

Paul says that he gave thanks to God for the faithful, zealous brethren at Thessalonica. There are many causes for Christian thanksgiving, and surely one of them is that he still has faithful people in the earth whose vision of truth impels them to find ways of expressing their faith and love through activities by which others may be, like themselves, blessed with a knowledge of the truth—that glorious truth of the divine plan, the "Gospel of the kingdom."

As we look out over the "field" which, as Jesus explained in his Parable of the Wheat and the Tares, is the "world," more than ever we give thanks to God for "you all" on account of your "work of faith, and labor of love." As we assemble the items for this report, we are deeply impressed with the fact that it is "your" efforts which give us something to report. Nor are we thankful merely for the fact that a great deal has been accomplished. This, of course, is

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always a cause for rejoicing; but, as Paul states, "We give thanks to God for you."

We know that God is love, for he has revealed himself to us through his Word. We have never seen God, but we do see his people in whom is displayed his spirit of love; and to have the privilege of fellowshiping with these in the joys of the truth and its service is the nearest approximation we can have this side of the veil of being in the actual presence of our Heavenly Father. Surely, then, we should be thankful for one another, and for the great honor the Lord has bestowed upon us of laboring together in his service, which begins now and will be continued and greatly expanded when we prove worthy of hearing that "well done, good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Matt. 25:21

Paul also remembered "without ceasing" the "work of faith and labor of love" being so zealously rendered by the Thessalonian brethren. We are confident that all the Lord's people have likewise been praying for one another as they continue to lay down their lives in his service. This incense of prayer which daily ascends to our Heavenly Father from his people in every part of the world is a potent support in all their efforts to glorify his name.

As we review the work of the past year, we find much in the way of encouragement. Indeed, every phase of the work has been productive of good results. Thousands have heard the truth for the first time—over the radio, by reading tracts, booklets and books, and by being witnessed to personally by their friends, neighbors, or relatives. Many have received the witness at public meetings. Of these, thousands have been brought into contact with the truth through the united efforts of the brethren; many have been made glad, a considerable number responding in full consecration to do the Lord's will. This greatly rejoices the hearts of the laborers.

The manner in which the Lord has blessed the sacrificial efforts of his people bears out the truthfulness of Paul's words in the 58th verse of the 15th chapter of I Corinthians. Here he encourages us always to abound in the work of the Lord, knowing, as he adds, that our labor "is not in vain in the Lord." Some of us as individuals may not have witnessed any tangible results from our labors. Perhaps no one in our community accepted the truth during the year. Perhaps no new interest manifested itself in the ecclesia which we attend. Even so, we can be sure, even as Paul affirms, that our labor has not "been in vain."

Our united efforts are not in vain, because we know that new ones are "coming into the truth" throughout many parts of the earth, and we have all had a share in this, even if it was only in "remembering without ceasing" the work of faith and labor of love on the part of those who have been able to find time, strength, and means with which to serve. Even more important in the way of lasting results from our efforts has been the increase of divine love in our own hearts, an increase resulting from the fulfilment of the promise that those who "water" shall themselves also be watered.—Prov. 11:25

Who among the Lord's people has not experienced the refreshment of spirit experienced from efforts to make known the glad tidings to others? If we keep the truth to ourselves and make no effort, directly or indirectly, to enlighten others with it, we will soon find that it has lost its invigorating power in our own lives. It is when we witness the Gospel of the kingdom to others that it becomes alive in our own hearts. Indeed every effort we make to proclaim the kingdom message leads to a re-experiencing of our "first love" enthusiasm, and that joy which so filled our hearts when first we found the Lord.

We should not serve the Lord for a reward, nevertheless he has promised that all who serve him faithfully will be rewarded, and his integrity guarantees the fulfilment of these promises. In Hebrews 6:10 we read, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." It is because God does not "forget" that we can rest assured that our labor will "not be in vain."

And it is important also to remember that all our labors are primarily a ministry on behalf of the "saints." We have Jesus' command to lay down our lives for the brethren, and this manifestation of brotherly love is not limited to those who, at any particular time, are within the circle of our immediate fellowship. There are brethren among us now who knew nothing of the truth a year ago. They were unknown to us, and we were strangers to them. Through our united efforts the truth reached them, and they have become our brethren; so actually we were laying down our lives for them when we were proclaiming the truth which the Lord used to draw them to us.

We are not preaching the truth today to convert the world. The

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principal objective of all our efforts is to seek out from the world "a people for his name." In doing this, therefore, we are laying down our lives for the brethren—those already enjoying fellowship with us, and those yet to be reached with the glad tidings of the kingdom. Incidental to this principal object of preaching the truth, a witness is given to the world. This also, of course, is important. Jesus said that "this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness, . . . and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24:14) We do not understand this to refer to some single, spontaneous effort of the Lord's people, of short duration, but to the general and cumulative witnessing activities in the time of the end, which will reach "all the world" before the full end of the age has come.

After assuring the Hebrew brethren and us that the Lord is not unrighteous to forget the labor of love of his people, the apostle adds, "And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." (Heb. 6:11) In our text Paul speaks of remembering in prayer not only the "work of faith, and labor of love" of the Thessalonian brethren, but also their "patience of hope." This expression implies "full assurance of hope unto the end."

The Lord's people today still need patience based upon hope. We have a blessed hope of "glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) We have a hope of joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom. We have a hope for the world, being assured that all the families of the earth will soon be blessed through the promised "seed" of Abraham—Christ and his glorified church. Yes, we are richly blessed, because we have heard the joyful sound of present truth. Our hearts are not filled with fear as is the case with so many in the world. Instead, as we see the things come to pass which caused the world to be filled with fear, we recognize them as evidences of the Master's presence and the near establishment of his kingdom, so we "look up, and lift up our heads, knowing that our redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28

Yes, we know that our deliverance into the kingdom, and the world's deliverance through the agencies of the kingdom, are "nigh"; but just how near the Lord has not been pleased to reveal. This is one reason we need patience with our hope, as we continue to work and labor. Being faithful unto death means more than making a supreme effort for a few months, or a year, or two, or three. The

time during which we are to be faithful is from consecration until death. There is no period between these two points during which we can afford to relax our efforts. Those whose "rejoicing in hope" enables them to endure faithfully to the end are the ones who will receive the crown of life.

And the Lord will strengthen his people thus to prove faithful. He who is mightier than all our enemies will continue to be our strong tower of defense. He quickens our mortal bodies, thus helping us to overcome the inertia of the flesh which tends to hinder us from "abounding in the work of the Lord," as we would like to do. As the Lord told Paul, his strength is made perfect in our weakness, and the little things we can do in his service become great in his eyes because he accepts them as evidence of our heart-love for him. And when we hear him say, "Well done," we will know so much more fully than we can understand now, that our "work of faith, and labor of love" was not in vain, that in his faithfulness he has fulfilled all his gracious promises thus causing his grace to abound toward us—his "grace to help in time of need."—Heb. 4:16

The General Work

The general service of the truth consists of two categories—the spoken word and the printed word. The spoken word is heard through various media—the radio, public lectures, tape recordings, and in personal witness work. The written word carries the truth to the mind through the eye by means of books, booklets, tracts, circulars, and cards. Usually the printed word is used to augment the spoken message. Personal witness work, for example, is greatly assisted by judicious use of the printed message. Much of the effectiveness of the radio witness would be lost without the aid of the printed page. It is not a matter of determining which aspect of the work is most important, for it is all a part of the one effort in which we are co-operatively engaged.

The statistical report of the various phases of the work appears on page 54, including radio broadcasting. The "Frank and Ernest" broadcasts continue to receive the Lord's blessing. At the end of each year, there are new brethren here and there who, within the year, heard the truth for the first time, and over the radio. There is really no way of properly evaluating this kind of result. It is truly a rich "harvest" in which we all rejoice.

The number of radio requests for literature was slightly less than

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the preceding year. As we have explained before, this is due in part to the competition of television. And too, we used a few less stations than the year before. There is also the fact that so many of the public now know the background of the "Frank and Ernest" programs, that it is unpopular Millennial-Dawnism. The truth has never been popular, and is not popular now. It is still true that the darkness hates the light. However, we rejoice that the message is still being heard so widely over the air. There is no other medium today by which so many people can be reached at so small a cost.

Some of the brethren are giving serious consideration to the use of television, and probably within the present year a few experimental programs will be televised. This, of course, is a field of service as yet unexplored. It is one of the marvels of the "time of the end," and we think it should not be ignored, but used as effectively as possible, if the Lord provides the opportunity.

Tract Distribution

The number of tract pages of free literature distributed was approximately the same as the previous year, which was the largest number we ever had the joy of reporting. This free literature is of different types. The radio circulars were very widely used. A new edition of these is published each month, and is designed to advertise the broadcast for the third Sunday of the month. Many ecclesias and individuals have standing orders for these circulars. It would be a joy to see this list increase. It is a definite audience builder for the broadcasts.

Then we have quite a variety of regular tracts. A number of these have already been redesigned, and made, we believe, more attractive. All the tracts display an announcement of the radio programs, and when ordered in quantities of one thousand or more, the local radio station carrying the "Frank and Ernest" programs and time of broadcasts will be imprinted, if requested.

We still furnish "kingdom cards." These are the size of a post card. On one side is a short message of truth, and an offer of a free booklet. On the other side The Dawn address is printed. These have been found very effective in witness work. When ordered in lots of a thousand or more you may ask that a code number be printed on them. Then those which are returned to The Dawn requesting the booklet will be forwarded to you, in case there is a desire to follow up the interest. Consolation folders are another

type of free literature. Through the use of these the brethren are receiving many blessings. The folders, or sympathy cards, are mailed to addresses found in the obituary lists of local papers. The card expresses condolence for the bereaved, and offers to send the "Hope" booklet which calls attention to the promises of God concerning life after death. This work has been blessed by the Lord in a number of cases as the first contact with the message which has led to a full acceptance of the truth. If you are not using these folders, we suggest that you investigate the possibility.

Cards are also available for announcing public meetings. Many thousands of these were furnished during the year, announcing meetings in nearly every part of the country. One shipment was made to as far away as Londonderry, Ireland. They will be available when you arrange a public meeting, perhaps the next time a pilgrim visits your class.

Books and Booklets

We believe that the friends generally know what is available in books and booklets carrying the truth literature. "Studies in the Scriptures" heads this list. Auxiliary to these, we have a wide selection, and on many truth subjects, which are listed on the inside of the back cover. Besides the booklets, we have God's Promises Come True," a children's book; "Our Most Holy Faith," a compilation of Reprint articles and sermons by Brother Russell; "The Book of Books," a review of the sixty-six books of the Bible, showing how the message of present truth is presented in them; "Behold Your King"; Daily Heavenly Manna"; and "Hymns of Dawn." These do not bear witness to the truth unless they are read, so there is an opportunity of putting them into the hands of those who will read them.

Pilgrim Service

The lecture service was considerably increased during the year: Brothers J. Y. Mac Aulay; Christian W. Zahnow; Samuel T. Baker; August W. Swanson; and Gustin P. Ostrander serving regularly, or nearly so, in this field. In addition to these "regular pilgrims," a number of brethren served for periods of three weeks or more. Brother Orlando Deifer served for a total of about three months. Brother George A. Ford, of England, served the brethren in the United States and Canada for a period of two months; while Brother

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Russell Pollock visited classes overseas in Great Britain, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, and Italy for upwards of three months.

Then there was the large number of brethren who served on weekends—a glance at pages 62 and 63 of any issue of *The Dawn* will give an idea of how many, and who these brethren are. This weekend ministry is a very important phase of the pilgrim work, and is greatly appreciated by the ecclesias visited. Elders of a number of the larger ecclesias participate in this ministry.

Recorded Lecture Service

This is a comparatively new phase of the work, having been functioning less than two years, but we are confident that the Lord's blessing is upon it. Tape recorders are finding their way into increasing thousands of homes, and are being more and more widely used by the general public for educational purposes. Just as the truth message can be sent out in printed form, so now it can also be put on tape to be heard in many places, and under many circumstances, where "in person" speakers cannot reach.

Thus far the recorded lectures are being used largely by small ecclesias and isolated brethren, and these report rich blessings received through this ministry. During the year many hundreds of tapes were sent out, and nearly all of them were used several times before they were returned—by the small home ecclesia, perhaps taken to the ill and isolated, to a brother or sister confined in a hospital, and so forth. We learned that one recorded lecture had been heard by nearly three hundred people before it was returned.

We have lectures designed specially for the public and beginners, and others which are particularly suitable for the brethren. This service, of course, is free. All we ask is that when you have finished using a tape it be returned, that it may be sent to someone else. You may have your name placed on our regular list to which tapes are sent. In this case, each time a tape is returned a new one is sent. Or, you can at any time request a recorded lecture for a special occasion, specifying the particular topic you would like to receive.

As we have said, heretofore this service has been used mostly by the brethren, but as it can be developed we are making it available to the public. We think that some of the interested radio listeners in isolated places may wish to hear these recorded lectures. In any

event, this outlet for the truth will be developed and expanded as the Lord's providence directs and makes possible.

Overseas Activities

The ministry of the truth in overseas countries, particularly in Europe and India, has been very encouraging. The Lord willing, in the February issue of *The Dawn*, reports from a number of our overseas branch offices will be published, so we will not now go into detail. For your encouragement, however, we will say that German and Spanish-language broadcasts were begun during the year, and that many hearts have already been made glad in the countries where these languages are spoken.

Surely the Lord has been good to us all in permitting us unitedly to serve him. May our prayers ascend to him continually for his guidance and help in all the efforts his providences indicate to be his will. We do not know how much longer it will be our privilege to serve him this side of the veil, but we do know that as stewards of the mysteries of the kingdom, the Lord wants us to be faithful. We know also that he is able to make all grace abound toward us in order that we might be faithful; yes, faithful even unto death, thus receiving the "crown of life."

HEAR . . .

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

DISCUSS

"GOD'S ASSURANCE OF SURVIVAL"

WOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 15
710 kc., 9:00 P. M.

Hear this assurance from the Bible that the human race will not be destroyed. Send for a free copy of the booklet,

"God's Assurance of Survival"

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

Box 60, Dept. N, General Post Office
New York, N. Y.

For Your Newspaper

To the left is a suggestion for a small advertisement in your local newspaper. The outline is designed for two inches in one column.

FEBRUARY TOPIC: The "Frank and Ernest" topic to be especially advertised in February is, "Today and Tomorrow in Prophecy." This topic will be used on Sunday, February 19. Circulars advertising the program will be available, and free—but place your order as early as possible. You may send for your supply individually, or through your class secretary, as you prefer. The distribution of these circulars helps to increase the number who listen to the truth over the radio. Those who participate in their distribution are being richly blessed.

Statistical "Good Hopes" Report

October 1, 1954—September 30, 1955

	Received	Transferred	Expended
General Fund	\$ 39,751.19	-\$39,751.19	
Radio Fund	124,803.74	9,871.87	\$134,675.61
Traveling Speakers Fund	6,523.42	2,611.33	9,134.75
Free Literature Fund	901.84	10,232.35	11,134.19
Free Subscription Fund	165.25	289.75	455.00
Overseas Fund	3,384.60	4,727.14	8,111.74
Publications, Subscriptions, etc.	35,160.05	8,559.35	43,719.40
Bequests	1,200.00	-1,200.00	
Total Receipts and Expenditures	<u>\$211,890.09</u>		<u>\$207,230.69</u>

GENERAL FUND: \$39,751.19 was contributed to this fund during the year, which was allocated to other funds as required.

RADIO FUND: \$134,675.61 was spent for the radio work, approximately one-quarter of which was for foreign broadcasting in the English, German, French, and Spanish languages. This amount also includes the cost of the Mutual Network and incidental stations in the United States and Canada, as well as the cost of preparing electrical transcriptions, tape recordings, and other items in connection with the radio work.

TRAVELING SPEAKERS FUND: Pilgrim service was supplied to 2,327 class meetings, with a total attendance of 93,200; and to 206 public meetings, with a total attendance of 14,175. This service was at a total cost of \$9,134.75.

FREE LITERATURE FUND: Total charge against this fund is \$11,134.19. This charge includes the cost of publishing and shipping 9,013,160 tract pages of free literature, such as tracts, radio circulars, kingdom cards, etc., and also 59,000 free booklets.

OVERSEAS FUND: \$3,384.60 was donated to this fund during the year, while total expenditures for overseas work amounted to \$8,111.74. This figure includes financial assistance to the work in Italy, Germany, and Sweden, and the cost of publishing and shipping German, Danish, Swedish, Italian, and Greek literature.

Expressions of "Good Hopes" may be sent as desired to any of the Funds—General; Radio; Traveling Speakers; Free Literature; Overseas; and Free Subscriptions. Donations are deductible on Federal income tax returns.

The Marriage of the King's Daughter

AS FULLY consecrated children of God, we are living in a sweetly solemn hour. It is the time of final testing, prior to our induction into the marriage feast as members of the bride of the Son of our Heavenly Father, the King of the universe—if indeed, we shall be counted worthy.

“Behold the Bridegroom!” He is now present, and by faith we look forward and see, as it were, the marriage splendor within the open door, even as the Revelator writes: “The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”—Rev. 19:7

A Poetic Picture

“The King’s daughter is all-glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of fine needlework.” (Ps. 45:13, 14) Here our attention is drawn to one of those beautiful figures by which the close and precious relationship between Christ and his elect church is scripturally portrayed. Whether it be the figure of the Captain and his soldiers; the Shepherd and his sheep; the Master and his servants; the Bridegroom and the bride—each illus-

tration of our Lord’s relationship to the true church teaches its own valuable lesson.

The picture now under consideration is very important, as it brings to our mental vision our Lord, the King’s Son, highly exalted to Jehovah’s right hand in the throne, and the church in glory, his queen, to be associated with him in his glorious millennial kingdom reign, and for ages to come. The study of these various pictures of heavenly things is intended to lift the minds of the new creation from earthly hopes, aims, and ambitions, to heavenly things—which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, but which God hath in reservation for those who love him supremely; that is, with all their heart, mind, and being.

Heavenly Joys

Those are for the King’s Son, the Lamb of God, also for those who will become the “bride,” the Lamb’s wife. Those who would enter into this joy unspeakable, this glorious inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, must faithfully comply with the conditions laid down in the inspired Word of God, revealed to those who accept the offer, or invitation, to become the bride of Christ. These, as the psalmist directs, must incline their ear—Ps. 45:10

THE DAWN

The Gospel age is set apart, a parenthesis as it were, in the divine plan, for the calling out and developing, testing and proving, of the "bride," consisting of many members. The kingdom is a great prize which the Father bestows upon his beloved Son, and this is to be shared by the glorified church, the bride of Christ.

It is revealed in the Scriptures that God is selecting a bride for his Son, even as illustrated in the case of Abraham choosing a bride for his son Isaac, through his servant Eliezer; Abraham typifying God, the Heavenly Father; Isaac his son, picturing God's dear Son; Eliezer his servant, the Holy Spirit.

Jesus has indicated that no man cometh unto the Son except the Father draw (or invite) him. (John 6:44) And this he does through the Holy Spirit operating in connection with the holy Scriptures. Through this holy influence we have been espoused to one husband, that we may be presented a chaste virgin to Christ. Therefore we must have respect unto this espousal (or engagement) and maintain our virginity, purity, if we would finally be presented to the glorious Bridegroom, and be associated with him in his great kingdom reign.

The Jewish Wedding Custom

The act of espousal or betrothal under the established Jewish custom was celebrated by a feast, at which the bridegroom placed a ring on the finger of the bride-elect; a ring being a symbol of

faithfulness; being endless, and being placed on the finger indicated that the contract was a binding one, and could not be violated without grave consequences to the offending person. Faithfulness must be maintained.

When the Heavenly Father "calls" or invites us to fully consecrate ourselves and become the espoused of his Son, and when we wholeheartedly respond, a contract—indeed a marriage contract—is entered into, God sealing it by the Holy Spirit. This signifies his acceptance of us as the prospective bride of his dear Son, binding us to be faithful to our covenant even unto death.

Under the Jewish custom an interval elapsed, usually about a year, between the betrothal and the marriage. During this period the bride would embroider her robe, make herself ready, typifying how the espoused bride of the Lamb must build the necessary character, develop the required fruitage of the Holy Spirit, work out, figuratively speaking, the various fruits on her wedding garment.

During this period, the Jewish bride-elect continued to live at the house of her father, as does the espoused bride of Christ, all communications being carried on through a friend of the bridegroom, picturing the Holy Spirit. The bride-elect was even then regarded as the wife of her future husband, so that faithfulness was demanded.

The essence of the whole arrangement, however, consisted in the final removal of the bride-elect

from her father's house to the home of the bridegroom's father. Here is an illustration of how the espoused bride of Christ will be taken from her father's house (the adamic house, or earthly, temporary abiding place) to the home of her Bridegroom's Father (the heavenly, spiritual abode).

In effect, our heavenly Bridegroom has said: "I go to prepare a place for you, my beloved espoused bride, and after I have done this, I will return to your father's house for you and take you with me to the mansion which I have been engaged in preparing for you while you have been making yourself ready, embroidering your wedding garment with the rich fruitage of the Spirit."

The distinctive feature of the bride's attire was the robe furnished, which covered her entire person. This robe, being white linen, representative of purity, righteousness, was embroidered with gold thread (symbolic of the divine nature). It was covered, also, with exquisite perfume—"All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia." (Ps. 45:8) The bride was further adorned with jewels "as a bride adorneth herself with jewels"—the "new Jerusalem, . . . prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."—Isa. 61:10; Rev. 21:2

The King's Gracious Arrangement

The Scriptures reveal to us the requirements whereby we might enter into this exceeding great honour of becoming the bride-

elect of the only begotten Son of the King of the universe. At the onset it is made quite clear that our own righteousness is but "as filthy rags,"—surely not a very desirable or pleasing covering—and these in no sense would commend us to the King and make us presentable before the presence of his glory, and acceptable as the prospective bride of his dear Son.

Therefore he devised a way whereby he could "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26) For these he has prepared or arranged for a covering of their imperfections; for God is of pure eyes and cannot behold or look upon iniquity or imperfection with any degree of allowance; therefore he has graciously "clothed" these with the "garment of salvation," covering them with a robe of righteousness. The merit of Jesus' precious sacrifice is imputed to them. And by reason of our wholehearted acceptance and belief in this, and in Jesus as our Lord and Redeemer, also our reliance upon, and sympathy with, this divine arrangement, we have righteousness imputed to us, thus making us acceptable. Even as stated by the Apostle Paul: "Not having mine own righteousness . . . but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."—Phil. 3:9

The Glory of Christ's Kingdom

The whole picture is beautifully elaborated in the 45th Psalm. The inspired writer first describes the grandeur and majesty of the heav-

THE DAWN

only Bridegroom. In his earthly life he was fairer than the children of men, and divine grace poured from his lips. Because he loved righteousness and had regard for truth and meekness, the Heavenly Father highly exalted him above all others, giving him a name above every name.

Some of the features of this picture are, of course, future; for at present the church is not the queen, not actually the bride of the King's Son in glorious garments. During her earthly pilgrimage she is the "espoused" virgin in an earthen tabernacle. But soon, if faithful, she shall have a glorious body—in the first resurrection—and then, the bride will be all-glorious within and without, clothed with the divine nature, immortality, as shown by her standing in the "gold of Ophir."

"Hearken, O daughter, and consider," because I, [Jehovah], have chosen you to be the bride of my dear Son. Was ever a proposal of marriage stated in more delicate and beautiful phrase? "Hearken"—yes, "and consider" that I have very specially set my favour and affection and my love upon you. It is my "good pleasure to give you the kingdom," to make you joint-heir with my Son, therefore I have chosen you to be his bride.

If you appreciate this invitation, this high calling, "and incline thine ear," and "forget thy father's house" (Adam's house—all human relationships, hopes, aims, ambitions, joys, pleasures; not, of course, neglecting your duties and obliga-

tions to earthly relatives and friends, but loving these less, and holding all such interests subordinate to the higher, the spiritual), placing the Bridegroom first in your thoughts as you cleave to him, "so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty" of character.

In the present time many voices are calling to the espoused ones: home, pleasure, wealth, art, music, popularity, false doctrines; all these lend their influence toward worldliness. Our great Adversary—and we are not ignorant of his devices—works with subtlety to draw us away from the prize, co-operating with the earthly influences. But as the espoused one listens, she hears the voice of her Bridegroom: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—John 14:15; Rev. 2:10; 3:21

While the world invites us to be absorbed with its attractions and hopes, the Lord says, paraphrasing: "Hearken, and consider, that the things of the present life at the very most are transitory, and you have an opportunity to sacrifice these now, and gain the chiefest of all blessings, the crown of life, the divine nature, to become the bride of Christ."

Mankind in general do not "hearken," and being more or less absorbed with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches, they do not fully please the Lord. But those who eventually will constitute the bride in glory, do "hearken

and consider," and are guided by the counsel from on high. And they press with vigour along the narrow way of sacrifice which, by divine grace, leads to glory, honour, and immortality.

Brought unto the King

As a new creation the bride will, in due time, be clothed with the divine nature. "She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework."—in the simple white robe of the Lord's own furnishing, the "robe of righteousness" upon which she will have wrought, with much carefulness, the beautiful adornments of the Christian graces. And great will be the rejoicing in heaven and in earth at her abundant entrance into the King's palace; truly a heavenly inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Of necessity the bride of Christ, the Lamb's wife, must be completed and glorified before the words of Revelation 22:17 can have fulfilment; namely, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

In another place the Revelator gives a description of the Lamb's wife in beautiful symbolic language: "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."—Rev. 21:9-11

The whole of this 21st chapter gives a wonderful, extensive, symbolic picture of the bride, the Lamb's wife, the holy Jerusalem, and "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." Through this glorious spiritual, invisible "temple" city—in other words, through this "new heaven"—God's long-prayed-for kingdom in the earth will be fully established; earth's dead millions will be raised, and with the living ones will be given a full and fair opportunity to conform to the kingdom requirements, thereby attaining life everlasting on the human plane. Then, and for all eternity, "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

"Let every act of worship be
Like our espousal's, Lord, to thee."
"Let every moment, as it flies,
Increase thy praise, enhance our joys,
Till we are made to share thy name,
As bride of God's anointed Lamb!"

THE DAWN

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

W. CLARKE		
Anerley	January	29
C. A. CORNELL		
Southend-on Sea	January	15
Eastleigh	February	19
G. A. FORD		
Letchworth	January	15
Anerley	February	26
J. LESLIE McKEOWN		
Clonelly	January	1
Belfast	February	5
Clonelly	February	12
Dublin	February	12
Belfast	February	19
J. H. MURRAY		
Guildford	January	8
Ipswich	January	15
Leigh (Afternoon)	January	29
Latchford (Warrington) (Evening) ..	January	29

Letchworth February 12

E. TERRY NADAL

Oxford	January	29
Luton	February	19
Leigh (Afternoon)	February	26
Latchford (Warrington) (Evening) ..	February	26

W. E. PAMPLING

Liverpool	January	29
Guildford	February	12
Southend-on-Sea	February	19

CONVENTION AT PORTRUSH, N. IRELAND, WHITSUN, MAY 19/21, 1956. This preliminary announcement is given to enable brethren to make preparations to be present.

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The Book of Books—(Cloth)—5/-

THE DAWN

98 Seel Street

Liverpool 1

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

Sent to the Bible

Dear "Francisco and Ernesto": It is with great pleasure that I have been listening, every week, to those magnificent dialogs that are heard every Monday through Radio Tangier. My words, therefore, are of gratefulness because ever since I have been listening to you I have come to know the fact of just how important the Bible is as a spiritual foundation for one to know the great work of redemption. Now I can say that not a single day goes by without my going to the public library to read this great book, which is the only truth in the world. I believe that there are many people listening to your broadcasts, which bring to us the good news of the Gospel of Christ. And now, my wish is, to get the booklet, "Hope Beyond the Grave." With affectionate greetings, I am yours very truly.—Spain

Forming Study Group

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I listen every week to your programs, and I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you for these broadcasts. You have invited listeners to send for your booklet, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," and I now gladly apply for a copy. Seeing that this is the tenth in a series that you have published, I would like to know if

it is possible for me to obtain copies of the preceding booklets. A friend and myself are forming a Bible study group, and if you have any other literature which you feel will be helpful to us, we would be greatly pleased to have details. Yours in the Lord.—South Wales

Enjoy The Dawn

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Greetings in the name of the great God of the universe. We greatly enjoy reading The Dawn Magazines, and look forward to receiving them. The entire family study the weekly lessons every Sunday morning after breakfast, without fail. Thank you very much. Yours in Jesus' name.—England

"So Thankful"

Gentlemen: I would like you to know that your broadcast of yesterday on the creation of man brought me "back to earth." I am sorry to say that I am one of those who is easily swayed, and the article in last week's Life Magazine very nearly persuaded me to believe the scientific version of man's origin. I am so thankful that I was fortunate enough to have heard your discussion. It helped me to see that the archeologists have uncovered so much which proves the Bible right and gives science so little to work on to dispute the Word of God.—Illinois

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The services of the lecturers here scheduled are furnished upon request, and free of charge. If you would like to have one serve in your community, simply address a request to the Dawn Bible Students Association, Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, N. J. A visit will be arranged when possible.

HENRY E. ANDERSON			
Philadelphia, Pa.	January	1, 2	
Wallingford, Conn. (Morning)		22	
Hartford, Conn. (Afternoon)		22	
NICK BARACOS			
Monessen, Pa.	January	22	
WALTER Blicharz			
Toledo, Ohio	January	15	
FRED A. BRIGHT			
Reading, Pa.	January	22	
BURTON BROWN			
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
Sacramento, Calif.		8	
DAVID BRUCE			
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
CHARLES CHUPA			
Chicago, Ill.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
Adrian, Mich.		15	
Bertram Cooper			
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
Riverside, Calif. (Morning)		15	
Ontario, Calif. (Afternoon)		15	
L. PAUL DAVIS			
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
RUSSELL DEAN			
Philadelphia, Pa.	January	1, 2	
York, Pa. (Morning)		15	
Lancaster, Pa. (Afternoon)		15	
ORLANDO D. DEIFER			
Easton, Pa.	January	15	
EDWARD E. FAY			
Chicago, Ill.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
THOMAS FAY			
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
EARL L. FOWLER			
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
JOHN HULL			
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
GEORGE M. JEUCK			
New Brunswick, N. J.	January	8	
GEORGE O. JEUCK			
Miami, Fla.	Dec. 31., Jan.	1	
St. Petersburg, Fla.		29	
STANLEY W. JEUCK			
Miami, Fla.	Dec. 31, Jan.	2	
DANIEL KAZIAK			
Flint, Mich.	January	1	
PETER KOLLIMAN			
Philadelphia, Pa.	January	1, 2	
ARTHUR H. KRUMPOLT			
Pottstown, Pa.	January	8	
Allentown, Pa.		22	
RAYMOND J. KRUPA			
Philadelphia, Pa.	January	1, 2	
Pittsburgh, Pa.		29	
C. STUART LIVERMORE			
Philadelphia, Pa.	January	1, 2	
LUDLOW P. LOOMIS			
Philadelphia, Pa.	January	1, 2	
Albany, N. Y.		8	
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.		15	
EDWARD G. LORENZ			
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan.	2	
Santa Ana, Calif.		22	

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

JOHN Y. MAC AULAY	
Baltimore, Md.	December 27, 28
Richmond, Va.	29, 30
Greensboro, N. C.	January 1, 2
Augusta, Ga.	4, 5
Savannah, Ga.	6-8
Jacksonville, Fla.	9-11
New Smyrna Beach, Fla.	12
Orlando, Fla.	13-15
Miami, Fla.	19-22
St. Petersburg, Fla.	26-29

MARTIN C. MITCHELL	
Asbury Park, N. J.	January 8

EVERETT MURRAY	
Columbus, Ohio	January 5
New York, N. Y.	8
Stuebenville, Ohio	10

ARTHUR B. NEWELL	
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2

LEON H. NORBY	
Baltimore, Md.	January 8
Paterson, N. J.	22

ADOLPH OBENLAND	
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2
Los Angeles, Calif. area	3-11
San Diego, Calif.	12
Yuma, Ariz.	13
Tucson, Ariz.	15
Lamesa, Tex.	17, 18
Weatherford, Tex.	19
Ft. Worth, Tex.	20
Shreveport, La.	22
Meridian, Miss.	23
Waynesboro, Miss.	24, 25
Montgomery, Ala.	26
Texasville, Ala.	27, 29
Albany, Ga.	30
Jacksonville, Fla.	31

GUSTIN P. OSTRANDER	
Chicago, Ill.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2
Muncie, Ind.	3
Indianapolis, Ind.	4
Columbus, Ind.	5
Salem, Ind.	6
New Albany, Ind.	8
Nashville, Tenn.	9
Knoxville, Tenn.	10, 11
Hendersonville, N. C.	12, 13
Greensboro, N. C.	15
Rocky Mount, N. C.	16
Enfield, N. C.	17

Roanoke, Va.	18
Blue Ridge, Va.	19
Lynchburg, Va.	20
Wilmington, Del. (Morning)	22
Philadelphia, Pa. (Afternoon)	22
Rutherford, N. J.	27
New York, N. Y.	29
Scarsdale, N. Y.	30

HOWARD W. OSTRANDER	
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2

WILBUR N. POE	
Chicago, Ill.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2

G. RUSSELL POLLOCK	
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2

KENNETH W. RAWSON	
Graton-New London, Conn. .	January 14, 15

NORMAN F. RICE	
San Diego, Calif.	January 8

GEORGE P. RIPPER	
Whittier, Calif.	January 15

BERT ROSE	
London, Ont., Can.	January 8

WILLIAM SOPER	
Phoenix, Ariz.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2

MICHAEL A. STAMULAS	
New Haven, Conn. (Morning)	January 8
Waterbury, Conn. (Afternoon)	8

J. I. VAN HORNE	
Duquesne, Pa.	January 1
East Liverpool, Ohio	8

FELIX S. WASSMANN	
Washington, D. C.	January 22

CLAUDE R. WEIDA	
Chicago, Ill.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2
Catawissa, Pa.	8

GEORGE M. WILSON	
Miami, Fla.	Dec. 31, Jan. 2

W. NORMAN WOODWORTH	
Chicago, Ill.	Dec. 31-Jan. 2
Philadelphia, Pa.	2
Providence, R. I.	15
Babylon, L. I., N. Y.	21

CONVENTIONS

CHICAGO, ILL., December 31-January 2—Convention opens 10:00 A.M. Saturday, in the Masonic Temple, 912 N. LaSalle Street. Room reservations and other details can be obtained by writing the secretary, Mr. D. J. Morehouse, 2617 N. Springfield Avenue, Chicago 47, Illinois.

MIAMI, FLORIDA, December 31, January 1—Convention opens with a watchnight service at 1785 N. W. 4th Street. Sunday services will be held in Simpson Memorial Hall, 55 S. W. 17th Road. For further details, write the secretary, Mrs. Adolph Obenland, 4784 S. W. 6th Street, Miami 34, Florida.

PHOENIX, ARIZONA, December 31-January 2—Convention will be held in the Osborn School Auditorium, 3415 North Central. There will be a watchnight service. Early notice for room reservations will be appreciated, and please specify type of accommodations desired, number of persons, and whether motel or hotel is desired and for how long. Address the secretary, Miss Esther Haldenwang, 1422 N. 2nd Street, Phoenix, Arizona.

ALBANY, ORE., January 1—3596 Bernard St.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., January 1, 2—Convention will be held in the Y. W. C. A. Building, 2027 Chestnut Street. For room reservations which should be made very early, write the secretary, Mrs. Otis R. Barrall, 42 Fairfield Road, Havertown, Pennsylvania.

ALBANY, N. Y., January 8—Y. W. C. A. Building, 5 Lodge Street.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, January 8—Convention

will open at 10:00 A. M. in the Women's Benefit Association, 53 E. Gay Street.

SAGINAW, MICH., January 8—Convention will open at 10: A. M. in the Women's Club, 311 N. Jefferson Street.

CLEVELAND, OHIO, January 15—Convention will open at 9:30 A. M. in the Y. M. C. A. Building, Prospect Avenue and East 22nd St.

SALEM, ORE., January 15—Convention opens 11:00 A. M. at 2339 State Street.

CHICAGO, ILL., January 22—Convention opens 10:00 A. M. in Central Masonic Temple, 910 N. LaSalle Street.

DETROIT, MICH., January 29—Maccabees Building, Woodward Avenue at Putnam.

NEW YORK, N. Y., January 29—Regular Fifth Sunday Convention to be held in the Y. M. C. A., on West 23rd Street, near Seventh Avenue.

PITTSBURGH, PA., January 29—Convention opens at 9:30 o'clock in the "Old Bible House," 610 Arch Street. Lunch and supper will be served by the Ecclesia.

ORLANDO, FLA., February 25, 26—For room reservations and other details, write the secretary, Mrs. Stanley W. Jeuck, 1910 Hillcrest, Orlando, Florida.

MIAMI, FLA., March 2-4—Reservations should be addressed to Mrs. N. S. McElvany, 1785 N. W. 4th Street, Miami 44, Fla. Other details may be obtained through the secretary, Mrs. Adolph Obenland, 4784 S. W. 6th Street, Miami 35, Fla.

WATERBURY, CONN., March 11.

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The Blood of Atonement—32 pages, 5 cents.
The Day of Judgment—32 pages, 5 cents.
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Spiritualism—32 pages, 5 cents.
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Father, Son, Holy Spirit—32 pages, 5 cents.
Does God Answer Prayer?—32 pages, 5 cents.
The Truth About Hell—64 pages, 10 cents.
The Grace of Jehovah—64 pages, 10 cents.
Creation—112 pages, 10 cents.
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to us the

SCRIPTURES

clearly teach

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

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

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

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

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

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