

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

"WE ARE HIS WITNESSES
OF THESE THINGS; AND
SO ALSO IS THE HOLY
SPIRIT, WHICH GOD
HATH GIVEN TO THEM
THAT OBEY HIM."

-- Acts 5:32

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1962

God's Hand in the Affairs of Men

IN A world engulfed by trouble and uncertainty many inquire as to whether or not God is really interested in the affairs of men and in their ultimate future. To many it seems that the forces of evil have been too successful, and that the future holds only trouble and disaster. The faith of many has been shaken, both in the Bible and in God, the Author of the Bible.

However, a close examination of the Bible discloses that God has a definite plan for the human race, and that much of it is revealed to those who have committed their ways unto the Lord. In Ephesians 1:9-11 we read: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

God's plan, or purpose, is unchangeable, for we read: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." (Isa. 14:24) Again: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing where-to I sent it."—Isa. 55:11

What, then, has God been doing since his great creative acts recorded in the book of Genesis? Some would have us believe that he has been trying to convert the world, and that this is

the chief mission of the church. But let us remember that God never "tries" to do things. Everything is subject to his will, and nothing can interfere with the accomplishment of his plans.

The Bible informs us that for a period of time we speak of as the Patriarchal Age God laid his hand upon certain individuals and dealt with them in his own peculiar manner. Among these were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God dealt with these through the medium of a covenant—that through the "seed," or offspring, of Abraham, all the families of the earth were to be blessed.—Gen. 12:3, 22:16-18

Various nations have employed covenants of law and order to bless their subjects. There was the Magna Charta of England, issued in A. D. 1215, under King John. In the United States, in A. D. 1776, there came the Declaration of Independence, followed by the Bill of Rights—the first ten amendments to the Constitution. These have been a blessing in that they have served to maintain law and order and to preserve the priceless privileges of liberty and freedom.

In 1945 a good part of the world subscribed to the Charter of the United Nations. This was referred to by some as "the world's last hope for peace." Now, after sixteen years of faltering efforts, many wonder if the United Nations can bring peace to the earth, that genuine and lasting peace which the people so eagerly and sincerely desire.

Across from the United Nations Building in New York City, there is inscribed on a stone wall that wonderful prophecy of Micah, "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Micah 4:3) This is what all nations desire, but it cannot be brought about by human effort. It can be brought about only by the One who has been given the title, "The Prince of Peace."—Isa. 9:6

The Prince of Peace will establish peace in fulfilment of that outstanding declaration made to Abraham by God, when he said to him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and

make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”—Gen. 12:1-3

After Abraham proved his faith by his willingness to offer his son Isaac in sacrifice, the Lord spoke to him again, saying, “Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; . . . because thou hast obeyed my voice.”—Gen. 22:16-18

Abraham died without this promise being fulfilled. But it was confirmed to his son Isaac, to whom the Lord said: “Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice.”—Gen. 26:2-5

Isaac also died, and still the promise was unfulfilled. However, God confirmed the promise to Jacob, saying, “Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”—Gen. 28:14

The promise was not fulfilled in Jacob’s day. Following his death, God began to deal with his twelve sons, who became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, Jacob’s name having been changed to Israel. Now the Lord’s hand was shown in his dealings with a nation, the nation of Israel. The Lord said to Israel as a nation, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.”—Amos 3:2

God’s favor with Israel lasted a period of 1,845 years. Through Moses he gave them his Law. He sent his prophets to this people to counsel them, and to reprimand them when they were unfaithful to their covenant with him. When faithful to him, God blessed

the Israelites in basket and in store, and gave them victory over their enemies. Under the terms of the Law Covenant the people of Israel were also blessed with an opportunity to gain life. This called for full obedience to the Law, which, as members of a sin-cursed and dying race, was beyond their ability.

God Sent His Son

AT THE close of the Jewish Age, God's hand was manifest in the greatest event known to man. He sent his beloved Son to redeem mankind from the curse of sin and death. The Prophet Isaiah wrote, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." (ch. 9:2) Jesus was that "true light" which eventually will lighten "every man that cometh into the world."—John 1:9

Jesus confined his message to the nation of Israel. Thus the Israelites were the first to receive the invitation to become his disciples. Jesus said to his apostles, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matt. 10:5, 6

Only a small minority of the Israelites accepted Jesus, and after his resurrection he instructed his disciples to be his witnesses throughout all the earth. (Acts 1:8) The purpose of this world-wide witness has not been to convert all the nations of earth to be followers in Jesus' footsteps, but, as stated by James, to take out from the world a people to be associated with Jesus in his future work of blessing mankind.—Acts 15:14

The "way" in which these are invited to walk is not an easy one. Jesus said that those who would be his disciples would have to deny themselves, and take up their cross and follow him. (Matt. 16:24) This means suffering and dying with Jesus. Not many in the entire age since Jesus' first advent have been willing to pursue this course of self-denial and suffering. Jesus refers to these as a "little flock" to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom.—Luke 12:32

A High Reward

TO THE rich young ruler Jesus said that if he would give up all and follow him he would receive "treasure in heaven." (Matt. 19:21; Luke 18:18, 22) One of these treasures will be the divine nature. (I Pet. 1:4) Those who are faithful will receive "glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) They are also to reign with Christ.—Rev. 20:4

The Apostle Paul informs us that Jesus and his true followers, Christ's "body" members, are the "seed" God promised to Abraham, the seed that was to bless all the families of the earth. (Gal. 3:8, 16, 27-29) The purpose of the thousand-year reign of Christ is to bestow God's promised blessings of life upon the people of all nations who then accept the provision of life made for them through the sacrificial death of Jesus, and who obey the laws of his kingdom.

God's hand in human affairs throughout the present age has been operating in the selection of this true church of Christ. This work has gone on unknown to the world, but gloriously blessed by the Lord. With this work completed, God's hand will be manifested to the whole world through the agencies of Christ's kingdom.

The word church—*ekklesia* in the Greek language—means selected, or called out. After this class has been called out from the world, all others will be given an opportunity to hear and obey. James said that then the "residue of men," and "all the Gentiles" will have an opportunity to "seek after the Lord." He also explains that "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts 15:14-18

A New Day

WE BELIEVE that God's work of selecting from the world this people to be associate rulers in Christ's kingdom is nearly complete, which means that the time for the world's enlightenment and deliverance is near. We are today living in the most important period of the world's history. Little do the people realize as yet that God's hand is being manifested in present world events, even as foretold in the prophecies of the Bible. Darkness still covers the earth, but soon the people will see the

dawn of a new day; a day that will be born, as it were, in clouds of trouble.

This new day dawns as a result of the second advent of Jesus. The clear testimony of the Bible is that Jesus returns to earth as a glorious divine being, invisible to human eyes, but with all power to control in the affairs of men in keeping with the divine plan. Jesus said to his disciples, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye [shall] see me: because I live, ye shall live also."—John 14:19

Jesus' true followers will be able to see him, because, in the resurrection, they are exalted to the same divine nature which he possesses. John wrote, "We know that . . . we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is," not as he was, "in the days of his flesh."—I John 3:1-3; Heb. 5:7

When Jesus was on earth nineteen centuries ago, his disciples asked him what the signs of his second presence would be. He said that there would then be "upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."—Luke 21:25-27

Much of this is symbolic language. The world will "see" Jesus in a "cloud." A similar thought is expressed in Revelation 1:7. A literal cloud conceals. But here, clouds are used to symbolize the trouble and distress described by Jesus. This "tribulation" will eventually help the unbelieving world to "see," or discern, the hand of God in the affairs of men through the crumbling of their own sinful social order, or world.—Matt. 24:21, 22

This is the world over which Satan is "god" and "prince." (II Cor. 4:4; John 16:11) It is an "evil world." (Gal. 1:4) It is the destruction of this world that is foretold in the Bible, not the burning up of the earth. (I John 2:15-17) We can rejoice that such an evil world is coming to an end.

Jesus said that the tribulation which was to come upon Satan's world at the end of the age would be so great that unless the period of distress was shortened all flesh would be destroyed. But he assured us that this great "time of trouble" would be

shortened "by" the elect—as indicated by the Greek text—that is, by Jesus and his true followers exercising their divine power to intervene in human affairs through the full establishment of the messianic kingdom.—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:22

Another manifestation of God's hand in the affairs of men is foretold by the Prophet Daniel. In a reference to the rulers of the earth at the time of Christ's return, Daniel's prophecy states, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."—Dan. 2:44

Zephaniah 3:8, 9, reads, "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth [symbolic] shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

This is powerful language, and plainly indicates God's hand in the affairs of men, bringing to an end man's selfish social order. In our generation we have witnessed the beginning of this foretold gathering of the nations. We rejoice that the complete fulfilment of the prophecy is so near; that soon, through Christ and his true church, God will turn a pure message of truth to the people, causing the knowledge of his glory to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.—Isa. 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14

Centuries before Jesus came to earth at his first advent, the Prophet Isaiah foretold: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."—ch. 9:6, 7

This prophecy began to be fulfilled with the birth of Jesus,

but its preview of the messianic kingdom in the hands of Jesus has not yet been realized. However, we are now living in "the day of his preparation" for this. (Nahum 2:3, 4) And we know that when the new world government is firmly established on the "shoulder" of The Prince of Peace, all the present perplexing problems of mankind will be solved. Then the nations will not even learn war any more.

Even the distressing problem of sickness and death will then be solved, for Jesus will also be the world's "everlasting Father," that is, the one who will give everlasting life. Paul wrote that Christ will reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. (I Cor. 15:25, 26) It is difficult to imagine a world in which there will be no sickness, no pain, no tears, no death. But Jesus' death as the Redeemer of mankind from sin and death, provided for just such blessings, and they will be available to the people through the agencies of his kingdom.

The Apostle Peter explained that during the second presence of Christ there will be "times of restitution of all things," and added that this glorious time of blessing had been foretold by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21) Restitution means restoration, and among the things to be restored to mankind are health and life.

And this will include those who have died. The Bible uses the word "ransom" to describe Jesus' work of redemption, and Isaiah wrote that "the ransomed of the Lord shall return . . . with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads," that "they shall obtain joy and gladness," and that "sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (I Tim. 2:3-6; Isa. 35:10) The only ones who will not be thus blessed will be those who wilfully oppose the righteous laws of the new government. Peter said that these will be "destroyed from among the people."—Acts 3:23

Then all will know and serve the true God. They will have learned that "great and marvelous" are his works. No wonder John asked, "Who shall not fear [reverence] thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."—Rev. 15:3, 4

TOPICAL BIBLE STUDY

THE PEOPLE IN GOD'S PLAN

LESSON V

Moses, the Deliverer

THE name "Moses" means "drawn out." It was given to this outstanding servant of God by Pharaoh's daughter because he had been drawn out of the water.¹ Moses was born at the time when his people, the Hebrews, were in slavery in Egypt, and when the King of Egypt had decreed that all Hebrew male babies should be destroyed at birth, in order to halt the rapidly increasing Hebrew population of Egypt.²

Moses' mother, seeing that he was a "goodly child," decided that she would not obey the order of the king, but instead she prepared a special basket which would float, and put the child in it and left it near the edge of one of the small canals by the side of the river, hoping that it would be discovered by an Egyptian, and that the child's life would be saved, which it was.

God overruled in the matter, so that Moses was taken into the home of the king, and the king's

daughter adopted him as her son, engaging his real mother as a nurse.³ Undoubtedly Moses' mother told him a great deal about the promises of God to their people. In addition to this he became learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.⁴

Aside from this we know little of the experiences of Moses until he was forty years old, at which time, seeing one of his Hebrew kinsmen being abused by an Egyptian, he intervened and slew the oppressor.⁵ The next day he learned that his act had been discovered, so he fled from Egypt to the land of Midian.⁶

In Midian Moses married one of the daughters of Reuel (also called Jethro), and for forty years attended the flocks of his father-in-law.⁷ It was then that the Lord spoke to Moses at the burning bush, and assigned him the task of delivering the Hebrew people from their Egyptian bondage.⁸ In speaking to Moses, through an

angel, Jehovah identified himself as "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Through his mother, Moses would know of the promises of God to Abraham, and therefore this identification would mean much to him.

Moses' forty years as a shepherd, tending the flocks of his father-in-law, had removed much of the self-confidence which earlier had caused him to slay the Egyptian who was "smiting" one of his countrymen. He probably felt that now he was capable only of performing the simple duties of a shepherd. To appear before the mighty Pharaoh and demand the release of the Hebrew people from bondage, Moses felt was quite beyond him.⁹

But the Lord reassured Moses, saying, "Certainly I will be with thee." Then, as though he had agreed to accept the assignment, Moses began to ask the details of procedure. First he wanted to know who he should tell Pharaoh had sent him to demand the release of the Hebrew slaves. In reply to this Moses was instructed to say that "I AM" had sent him.¹⁰

The Hebrew expression translated "I AM" means, "to exist."^A By extension the full thought of the word when thus used by the Creator as a name would be, "The Self-existing One." Moses evidently got this thought, for in his psalm he spoke of the Creator as

being "from everlasting to everlasting."¹¹ It was especially appropriate that the Creator should thus identify himself to Moses, for although the Hebrew people were slaves in Egypt, and Moses himself had been, as it were, a shepherd-slave for forty years, their God, and the God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, still existed as the true and ever-living God who would fulfil all his promises.

God promised Moses that he would use him to deliver the Hebrew people from Egypt, even though the king would refuse to let them go.¹² The lesson which God impressed upon Moses was that miracle-working power would be essential to bring about the deliverance of the Hebrew people, and that such power would be used; and it was. Nine plagues were visited upon the Egyptians, each of which was lifted when Pharaoh agreed to release the Israelites. But each time the plague was lifted the king changed his mind, and the Israelites were not released.

Then came the tenth plague, which was the death of Egypt's firstborn.¹³ The firstborn sons of the Hebrew children could escape this plague if their families followed the Lord's instructions concerning the sacrifice of a lamb and the sprinkling of its blood upon the lintels and doorposts of their houses.¹⁴

As foretold, the Lord smote all the firstborn of Egypt on the night of the fourteenth day of their first month, Nisan.¹⁵ Not only did Pharaoh then consent to the Israelites' leaving Egypt, but their departure was urged upon them; so much so that the Egyptian people gave them many of their valuables, apparently to help encourage a speedy exodus.

The Antitype

THE importance to us of this episode in Moses' experience as a servant of the Lord is the scripturally established fact that God designed it to serve as an illustration of a much more important deliverance—a release from the bondage of sin and death, under the great taskmaster Satan, the Devil, whom the Bible speaks of as having the power over death.¹⁶

When the Lord's time came to prepare for the deliverance of the Hebrews, those among them who were exposed to immediate danger were the firstborn. They would have lost their lives that night had it not been for the protection afforded them by the blood of the passover lamb. This was designed by God as an illustration or type of a very important feature of his plan of salvation and deliverance of all mankind from death. In the New Testament the indication is given to us that antitypically the footstep followers of Jesus during the Gospel Age, the true church of

Christ, are the real "firstborn" foreshadowed by the type.¹⁷

The Apostle Paul identifies Jesus as the antitypical Passover Lamb.¹⁸ We know that it is only through Christ's blood, that we, his followers, receive life. Apart from his shed blood we could not be assured of life during this nighttime of sin and death.¹⁹

In the passover type the firstborn and their families ate the lamb during the night, and it was in the morning that the deliverance of all Israel took place. So, during the Gospel Age, when the darkness of sin still covers the earth, the true church class feeds upon the antitypical Lamb. Thus they are being prepared to participate in the deliverance of the whole world of mankind in the morning of earth's new day, the Millennial Age.²⁰

Bitter herbs were to be eaten with the flesh of the typical passover lamb. This suggests the severe trials which come upon the true followers of Jesus as they feed symbolically upon him and lay down their lives in sacrifice.²¹ These symbolic "bitter herbs" give us a greater desire to look to the Lord for strength and courage as we endeavor to be pleasing to him and to be made ready to share in the glory of Christ's kingdom which is to bring deliverance for all mankind from their bondage to Satan and to sin, sickness, and death.

Moses was given the assurance that it was the God of Abraham who was sending him to deliver the Hebrew people from Egypt. It was this true and living God who had promised Abraham that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. The Apostle Paul explains that it is Jesus and the antitypical church

of the firstborn who together constitute the "Seed" promised to Abraham.²² The church is a faith seed, and when saved from death through the blood of Jesus, the antitypical Passover Lamb, and brought forth in the first resurrection to live and reign with him, will share in the promised blessing of all nations.

QUESTIONS

What does the name Moses mean? Who gave this name, and under what circumstances?

How much do we know about Moses' life in the home of Pharaoh in Egypt?

What circumstances led Moses to flee to the land of Midian, and with whom did he become acquainted there, and how?

How long did Moses dwell in Midian before God spoke to him? How did God make himself known to Moses?

What effect did Moses' experience as a shepherd have upon him, and how was he assured that he would be able to deliver God's people from Egyptian bondage?

What is the meaning of the name, "I AM"?

How many plagues did God send upon Egypt in order to force the release of the Hebrew people?

Explain the nature of the tenth plague, and the arrangement the Lord made to spare the Hebrew people from it?

What is represented by the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egyptian bondage?

Who among the Hebrews were in danger of being smitten by the tenth plague, and how were they protected?

Who is the antitypical Passover Lamb?

What is represented by the Hebrews eating the typical passover lamb?

What is symbolized by the bitter herbs eaten with the passover lamb?

Who will be associated with the antitypical Passover Lamb in the deliverance of the world of mankind from sin and death?

SCRIPTURAL PROOF

¹Exod. 2:10

¹²Exod. 3:17-22

²Exod. 1:7-22

¹³Exod. 11:4-6

³Exod. 2:1-10

¹⁴Exod. 12:1-27

⁴Acts 7:22

¹⁵Exod. 12:28-36

⁵Exod. 2:11, 12;

¹⁶Heb. 2:14

Acts 7:23-30

¹⁷Heb. 12:23

⁶Exod. 2:13-15

¹⁸I Cor. 5:7

⁷Exod. 2:18; 3:1

¹⁹I Pet. 1:18, 19

⁸Exod. 3:2-10

²⁰John 6:51, 63

⁹Exod. 3:11

²¹I Pet. 4:12, 13

¹⁰Exod. 3:12-14

²²Gen. 12:3; 22:18;

¹¹Ps. 90:1, 2

Gal. 3:8, 16, 27-29

REFERENCE MATERIAL

^AStrong's Hebrew Dictionary, page 32, reference No. 1961.

"The New Creation," pages 457-461.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT THOUGHTS

Moses was used by God to deliver the Hebrews from their bondage in Egypt, thus foreshadowing the greater work of deliverance of all mankind by Christ—the deliverance from sin and death. In this greater work of deliverance, the followers of Jesus, the antitypical firstborn class, will share.

Lesson VI

Moses, Lawgiver and Mediator

THREE months after Moses had served God in delivering the Hebrew people from their bondage in Egypt he was assigned the major task of giving them the divine Law.¹ This Law was epitomized in the Ten Commandments.²

The Law offered the Israelites the opportunity of gaining life upon the basis of full obedience to its requirements.³ Since the Israelites, even as the people of all other nations, were members of a sinful and dying race, born under condemnation to death, none of them was able to measure up to the full demands of God's perfect Law, so none gained life by this arrangement.⁴

Nevertheless, the Law served a

useful purpose in that it demonstrated that it is impossible for any member of the fallen adamic race to gain life by reforming and keeping God's Law. Up to the time of the giving of the Law there had been no demonstration of this, for all were dying because of Adam's transgression. But when the Israelites agreed to keep God's Law, they were brought under individual condemnation by their failure to do so.⁵ Thus the Israelites were brought under an additional curse, the curse of the Law.⁶

Paul wrote that the Law served as a "schoolmaster" to bring the people to Christ.⁷ It did prepare some of the Israelites to receive

Christ at the first advent. But although they did not accept him as a people, the experience of that people under the Law will always stand as a lesson of the great fact that none can gain life except through Christ. This has been true in the Gospel Age, and the lesson will carry through to the end of the Millennial Age. Thus the Law served a vital purpose in the outworking of the divine plan.

While the Israelites for the most part did not make a serious effort to keep the Law, it served as a certain restraint upon them, and contributed to holding them together as a people until their Messiah came and presented himself to them.⁸ Since the Israelites were the natural descendants of father Abraham, they were the first in line, when Jesus came, to be the inheritors of the promise made to him concerning a "seed" that was to bless all the families of the earth. But in this also, love for God and a sincere effort to do their best to obey his Law as a demonstration of faith in him and in his promises, were the conditions of becoming the blessed "seed," which the Lord described as a "kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."⁹

Disobedience to God, climaxed by their rejection of their Messiah, the Head of the "Seed" class, caused the Israelites to lose this choice inheritance. Jesus ex-

plained that the "kingdom" would be taken from them, and given to another nation, a "nation" that would bring forth the proper fruits of righteousness.¹⁰ The Apostle Peter identified this new "holy nation" for us.¹¹

Moses received the Law from God while hidden in a cloud on Mt. Sinai, where he remained in communion with the Lord for forty days. Meanwhile the Israelites became weary of waiting for his return, and set up a golden calf to worship instead of their God.¹² The Lord was much displeased with this display of unfaithfulness, and said to Moses that he would blot them out, and through him make a "great nation."¹³

Moses, serving as mediator between God and the people, interceded for them, and they were not destroyed.¹⁴ But when Moses came down out of the mount and saw the golden calf, and noted the sinful revelry of the people in their worship of the false god, he became wroth and destroyed the Tables of the Law which had just been given to him by the Lord.¹⁵

Later the Lord instructed Moses to hew other tables of stone like those he had broken and to take them up into Mount Sinai, which Moses did.¹⁶ The Lord then stood with Moses in a cloud and proclaimed the vir-

tues of his character, virtues which now we see exemplified in the divine plan of the ages.¹⁷ It was while the Lord thus outlined the attributes of his character that the Law was written on the tables of stone. Then Moses, serving as a faithful mediator, petitioned the Lord to pardon the iniquity of the Israelites and take them for his inheritance, which the Lord agreed to do.¹⁸

Moses was again on Mount Sinai with the Lord for forty days and nights, and when he came down his face was aglow with the glory of the Lord. This "glory" remained on Moses' face as he started to speak to the people with respect to God and his Law, and he had to put a veil over his face, which was removed when he spoke to the Lord.¹⁹ In the New Testament the Apostle Paul refers to this "glory" as being representative of the glory to be associated with the mediation of the New Covenant by Christ and his church.²⁰

There was an important use of blood in connection with the mediation of the Law Covenant. Moses took the blood of oxen, half of which he put in basins, and half he sprinkled on an altar. Then he presented the terms of the Law to the people, referred to as "the Book of the Covenant," and in response the people agreed to abide by these terms of their covenant with the Lord. Then

Moses, using the blood which he had put in the basins, sprinkled the people and the book.²¹

The "blood of the covenant," as it is described in the New Testament, was typical of the blood of Christ, the blood which, symbolically speaking, will be used to sprinkle the people of all nations in connection with the terms of the foretold "New Covenant" which is to be made with them by Christ, of whom Moses was a type.²² Further details of this will be considered in a later lesson, dealing with Jesus as the Mediator of the New Covenant.

Although Moses' service as a lawgiver and mediator ceased, he continued to be the leader of the Israelites throughout their entire wilderness journey. During this time God sustained his people with manna from heaven. Jesus referred to this, and indicated that the manna was typical of his own humanity, his "flesh," which he said he would give for the life of the whole world.²³

Moses drew water from a rock in order to supply the needs of the people, and the Apostle Paul explains that this rock was symbolic of Christ.²⁴

On one occasion when the Israelites had sinned, a plague came upon them, and Moses lifted up a copper serpent—and those who looked upon this serpent were saved. Jesus referred to this,

and indicated that antitypically he was that serpent which would be lifted up to provide an opportunity of salvation for all mankind.²⁵

The Lord explained to Moses that a "Prophet" would be raised up to the people, similar to him.²⁶ The Apostle referred to this promise, and indicated that it

would have its fulfilment through Christ during the "times of restitution of all things."²⁷

Thus we see that as a Lawgiver, a mediator, a leader, and a teacher, Moses foreshadowed Christ. Thus did the Lord use him to open up to us in this typical manner many of the important features of his plan.

QUESTIONS

Recite a brief summary of the Law God gave to Israel.

What great blessing did the Law offer to any one capable of full obedience to it?

How did the Law place the Israelites in a different category with respect to death condemnation than the remainder of mankind?

In what way did the Law serve as a "schoolmaster," and how otherwise did it benefit Israel as a nation?

What relationship did the Law have to God's original promise to Israel with respect to a blessing "seed"? What "nation" finally qualifies to be this "blessing nation"?

How long was Moses in Mount Sinai receiving the Law, and what did the Israelites do during this time? What was Moses' reaction to this?

How did God make known his glory to Moses while he was in Mount Sinai the second time?

What was represented by the use of blood in connection with the inauguration of the Law Covenant?

What was represented by the manna with which God fed the Israelites during their wilderness journey?

What was represented by the rock smitten by Moses to secure water?

What reference did Jesus make to the brazen, or copper, serpent raised up by Moses?

Who is the "Prophet" greater than Moses whom the Lord promised to raise up?

SCRIPTURAL PROOF

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ¹ Exod. 19:1-3 | ¹⁶ Exod. 34:1-4 |
| ² Exod. 20:1-17 | ¹⁷ Exod. 34:5-7 |
| ³ Lev. 18:5; | ¹⁸ Exod. 34:9, 10 |
| Rom. 10:5 | ¹⁹ Exod. 34:29-35; |
| ⁴ Rom. 3:20; 7:10 | II Cor. 3:13 |
| ⁵ Rom. 5:14 | ²⁰ II Cor. 3:3-12 |
| ⁶ Gal. 3:10 | ²¹ Exod. 24:6-8; |
| ⁷ Gal. 3:24 | Heb. 9:19, 20 |
| ⁸ Gal. 3:19 | ²² Heb. 9:21-23 |
| ⁹ Exod. 19:5, 6 | ²³ John 6:31-33, 51 |
| ¹⁰ Matt. 21:43 | ²⁴ I Cor. 10:4 |
| ¹¹ I Pet. 2:9, 10 | ²⁵ Num. 21:9; |
| ¹² Exod. 32:1-6 | John 3:14, 15 |
| ¹³ Exod. 32:7-10 | ²⁶ Deut. 18:15-19 |
| ¹⁴ Exod. 32:11-14 | ²⁷ Acts 3:19-23 |
| ¹⁵ Exod. 32:19, 20 | |

REFERENCE MATERIAL

"The New Creation," pages 349 to 354.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT THOUGHTS

God used Moses to give his Law to the Israelites. Moses served as mediator between the Creator and the people. Fallen man is incapable of keeping God's perfect Law, so the Israelites did not gain life under this arrangement. However, it did demonstrate the need of a Redeemer from sin, thus serving as a "schoolmaster." The Israelites as a whole will not understand the full import of this demonstration until they are awakened from the sleep of death and enlightened during the Millennial Age.

Lesson VII

Moses, First of the Holy Prophets

MOSES was one of the outstanding Old Testament prophets, and was used by God to foretell various important features in the divine plan for the rescue of mankind from sin and death. He was the compiler of The Book of Genesis, and in this capacity recorded that original prophecy concerning the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head.¹

Moses also recorded the prophecy of Jacob concerning the "lion of the tribe of Judah."² This was a prophecy of the coming of Jesus, first to redeem mankind from sin and death, and then to rule over the people throughout the thousand years of his kingdom.

Moses was the first of God's holy prophets to foretell the dispersion of the Israelites from their Promised Land, and their regathering and restoration to

God's favor in "the latter days."³

When the resurrected Jesus talked with his two disciples on the road to Emmaus, he began, the record states, with Moses, and from all the prophets pointed out to them that according to the divine plan it was necessary that the Messiah should first suffer, and afterward enter into his glory.⁴ From this we know that Moses foretold the suffering and death of Jesus. One of the ways in which he did this was through the institution of the passover, in which the death of the passover lamb foreshadowed the death of Jesus as "the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."⁵

In a prophetic prayer Moses calls attention to the sentence of death which came upon all mankind because of sin, and assures us that the time will come when

the people will be summoned by divine power to return from destruction.⁶ This is one of the Old Testament prophecies of the resurrection of the dead.

Jesus explained to the Sadducees (who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead) that the hope of the resurrection was set forth in connection with God's dealings with Moses. This is when he spoke to Moses at the burning bush, and referred to himself as "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Jesus explained that the Creator is not a God of the dead but of

the living, that all live unto him because he proposes to restore them all to life by means of an awakening from the sleep of death.⁷

Moses as a faithful servant of God, and one of the outstanding prophets, is the only one to be mentioned in association with Jesus in connection with the glorious message of the Gospel.⁸ One of the songs composed by Moses pertained to the deliverance of the Hebrew people from their bondage in Egypt.⁹ This prefigures the deliverance of all mankind from the bondage of sin and death.

QUESTIONS

As compiler of The Book of Genesis, what prophecy did Moses bring to our attention?

What prophecy by Jacob did Moses record?

Under what circumstances did Moses foretell the dispersion of the Israelites from their land?

How do we know that Moses foretold the suffering and death of Jesus? How did he do this?

Where in the Old Testament do we find Moses' prophecy concerning the resurrection of the dead?

How did the Lord teach the resurrection when he appeared to Moses at the burning bush?

What is "the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb"?

SCRIPTURAL PROOF

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| ¹ Exod. 2:10 | ⁶ Ps. 90:3 |
| ² Gen. 49:9, 10; | ⁷ Exod. 3:6; |
| Rev. 5:5 | Luke 20:37, 38 |
| ³ Deut. 4:26-31 | ⁸ Rev. 15:3 |
| ⁴ Luke 24:25-27 | ⁹ Exod. 15:1, 2 |
| ⁵ John 1:29 | |

REFERENCE MATERIAL

"The Atonement Between God and Men," page 352, paragraphs 1 and 2:

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT THOUGHTS

Moses was used to record prophecies concerning Jesus, the great deliverer of mankind from the domination of sin, Satan, and death. He also foretold the restoration of the Israelites to the favor of God in "the latter days." Moses foretold the sufferings of Christ, the glory of his kingdom, and the resurrection of the dead.

The Memorial Supper

THIS do in remembrance of me." (I Cor. 11:24, 25) This simple statement became an important command to Jesus' true followers, and no doubt from the eventful night when it was uttered, until now, it has been faithfully observed by them each year. As indicated in the Matthew account, the Lord's Supper took place at the conclusion of the passover supper, hence we do it in remembrance of him at the appropriate time of year. (Matt. 26:17-30) However, the Lord's Supper is not a higher type of the passover. Instead it is a memorial of that which fulfilled the passover; that is, the death of the antitypical passover Lamb, our Lord Jesus.

When the Memorial was instituted by Jesus it must have raised many questions in the minds of his disciples, questions which grew even more perplexing when he died. These questions were not fully answered until the Holy Spirit of enlightenment came upon them at Pentecost. Only Jesus knew of the dark hours which lay ahead for them all. And in spite of the special trial he knew he was to endure, his thoughts were filled with concern for the disciples, and the difficulties their faith would experience.

Since their deliverance from Egypt the Israelites had annually observed the passover supper. The keeping of this feast had been enjoined upon them by the Lord as a memorial, to remind them of his hand in releasing them from bondage. They were to repeat each year the service instituted in Egypt.—Exod. 12

Each family was to select an unblemished lamb, "a male of the first year," on the tenth day of the first month, Abib or Nisan. On the fourteenth day of the month at evening (margin reads, "between the evenings"), the animal was to be slain. Its blood was to be sprinkled on the two side posts and on the upper post of the house wherein they were to eat it.

The flesh was to be roasted with fire that night, and, if pos-

sible, was to be entirely eaten by each household, together with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. In the event all of the lamb could not be eaten before morning, the remainder was to be consumed by fire.

When the Memorial was instituted, only Jesus knew that the unblemished lamb pictured himself. As the literal lamb was secured five days before its slaughter, so Jesus presented himself to the people of Israel that many days before his death. This was on the occasion when he triumphantly entered Jerusalem.—John 12:1, 12-16

The typical lamb was slain “between the evenings.” (Exod. 12:6, margin) The people of Israel had two evenings, the first from noon till three o'clock in the afternoon, and the second from that time until six o'clock in the evening. The antitypical Lamb died at a similar time “between the evenings,” or at three o'clock in the afternoon.

The blood which had been sprinkled on the door posts assured the Israelites in Egypt that the angel of death would pass over their houses and spare their firstborn children. We now realize this pictures that the Gospel Age church of the firstborn, under the blood of Jesus, will be spared from death so long as they remain in the hallowed condition thus foreshadowed. The fact that the typical event took place at night illustrates that it is during the “nighttime” of sin and death that the Lord is dealing with the “church of the firstborn.”—Ps. 30:5; Heb. 12:22, 23

The morning following that fateful night in Egypt the Israelites began their exodus, or deliverance from bondage and oppression. So, too, in antitype, when this nighttime passes during which God has been selecting the church of the firstborn, there will begin the deliverance of the suffering world from the bondage of sin and death into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.—Rom. 8:19-22

A Custom

IT WAS the practice thereafter in Israel, when the passover was kept, for the head of the household to recount the facts of that faraway night in Egypt which they were then commemorating. Without doubt Jesus was recognized as the head of the com-

pany in the upper room. We are certain that his reading of the experience, or his precise reciting of it, was most impressive. Yet he alone knew just what it portended.

As the story unfolded, Jesus must have been specially moved by the fact that on the following day the antitype of this ceremony would be fulfilled, which had, for so long a time, been observed. He, the Passover Lamb, was to die. How well, also, he knew of the severe testing this would mean to those with whom he ate that evening! The atmosphere which pervaded the room was heavy with foreboding, but only Jesus knew just why.

From the account given, it appears that after the passover supper was eaten, the Lord instituted what we call the Lord's Supper, or Memorial. We read in Matthew 26:26 that "as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body."

This was a strange new thing to them, and in all probability their faces mirrored their confusion of mind. They were accustomed to his unique and forceful methods of teaching, and perhaps they concluded this was another such instance. No doubt the room was strangely still as one by one the apostles reached for and ate of the unleavened bread he had broken.

What could Jesus mean, they probably wondered, by calling the bread his body, then breaking and asking them to eat of it? However, if this thought were perplexing, the one which followed was even more so. After all had eaten of the unleavened bread, they would naturally look to him for an explanation. However, instead of explaining, Jesus did another strange thing.

In Matthew 26:27-29, we read, "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

As the cup was slowly passed to each of the disciples, all were vainly trying to comprehend the meaning of Jesus' words. None of them at this time seemed to fully realize he was to die. Indeed, just a short time after they left the upper room, Peter attempted to defend Jesus with the sword, hoping that the hour of our

Lord's triumph, not his death, was at hand. With what mixed feelings they received the instructions to drink the wine which represented his blood! From the Law of Moses they had been taught not to drink the blood of any animal, because it represented the life thereof.—Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:10, 11, 14; Deut. 12:23; Acts 15:20

Not Explained

AT THE conclusion of drinking the "cup," as Jesus had instructed, he abruptly concluded the service. The waiting, perplexed disciples were given no explanation of that which Jesus had instituted. Whatever questions they had were soon to be temporarily forgotten in the deeply tragic events which were quickly to follow. No doubt after the first numbness left his disciples following his death, some of them recalled snatches of those statements during the Last Supper. "This is my blood . . . , which is shed for many," or, "take, eat; this is my body." However, the strange utterances which somehow had given promise of death answered none of their questions.

We can clearly understand the confusion of the disciples and sympathize with them in their sorrow. They had come to recognize Jesus as the long-promised Messiah. According to their understanding of the Scriptures, the Messiah was not to suffer and die. Instead, it was their thought that the prophets consistently spoke of the Messiah's glory, and his power which was to overwhelm all opposition.

To the disciples it seemed that Jesus had amply confirmed their viewpoint. How vividly they could recall his specific words when Peter asked, as recorded in Matthew 19:27, 28, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" His answer was full of hope concerning the glory of the Messiah and his kingdom. He said, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

To them it had seemed certain that the long-promised Messiah was shortly to establish among men his kingdom without end. No doubt all were keenly aware of the prophecies which so

clearly depicted his power and reign. Perhaps, as they had seen the many evidences of Caesar's legions, it had served to remind them of Micah's glad promise, "He shall . . . rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nations shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Micah 4:3) But Rome, the strong nation, instead of being rebuked by the One claiming to be the Messiah, had put him to death.

Heartbroken and discouraged, the disciples sought in vain for an answer. They had felt the warmth of Jesus' gentle disposition. They had listened to his wisdom as he expounded to the multitudes, and to them. They had observed the power of God working through him as blind eyes opened to his touch. Yea, they had seen eyes which were closed in the sleep of death, open at his command, and, with life, gaze once more on those whom they loved.

We, who have known since our childhood of his resurrection, cannot fully comprehend the depth of despair that gripped the souls of Jesus' disciples. It was a harsh and cruel experience for them to see him so brutally treated. But the sorrow lay even heavier because it seemed to end the brightest hope they had ever had for themselves and for the world.

The Emmaus Journey

WE ARE not surprised that the Gospel account of those days tells of the disciples' talking "together of all these things which had happened." One of the most moving stories in the New Testament concerns the disciples at that very time. It is found in the 24th chapter of Luke, beginning with verse 13. It recounts how two disciples, perhaps for the first time, learned of Scripture texts which foretold the Messiah was to die and how, in addition, they had the matchless experience of seeing the risen Lord. In verse 13 we read that "two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, . . . and they talked together of all these things which had happened. . . . While they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them."

This was our risen Lord, but we are told of the disciples that

“their eyes were holden that they should not know him.” We now realize that the various appearances of the risen Lord to his disciples were in bodies specially assumed for each occasion. The fleshly bodies were not at all like his present glorious spiritual one. This we know because, among other proofs, the Apostle John indicates such in his first epistle, chapter 3 verse 2.

In this verse John writes of our sonship, and adds, referring to our heavenly bodies, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” Of course, if we were to have bodies like our present ones this statement would not have been made. Furthermore, John wrote, “But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” From this it is certain that John did not expect Jesus, in the spirit realm, to have a body similar to those assumed during the forty-day period following his resurrection.

As recorded in the narrative, when Jesus approached the two disciples he appeared as a man, and they regarded him as such. The account indicates he walked alongside as they continued in conversation. They were talking about him and his miracles and of his crucifixion. He inquired about the subject matter of their conversation, and commented on their appearance of sadness.

This caused them to enlarge upon the matter and no doubt they recited many evidences of Jesus’ miracle-working power which they had observed. But then their story trailed off with these sorrowful words, “The chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be . . . crucified.” Note, too, how their words reflected their perplexed minds and dashed hopes as they said, “But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel.”—vss. 20, 21

Doubt, too, was in the disciples’ voices when they told Jesus of some of the women of their group reporting that they found the empty sepulchre, and saw angels which claimed the Lord was alive. One can almost feel their despair when reading the conclusion of their investigation of the women’s claims: “Certain of them [the disciples] which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even as the women had said: but him they saw not.”—vss. 22-24

Suffering First

THE sadness of the disciples was soon to be replaced with exultant joy. The supposed stranger began to expound to them the scriptural teaching concerning the Messiah. He indicated they were slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had written. That which prepared their minds to receive this truth was his key question, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and [then] to enter into his glory?" (vs. 26) The answer implied by his question was an entirely new concept to them. If, as this stranger indicated, the prophets foretold such need of suffering and death, it would mean they had not believed in vain.

The briefly worded 27th verse in Luke 24 is filled with drama for the imaginative. It reads, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Just what did this supposed stranger say to them? The skill of his presentation is revealed as they later described their reaction to it by the words, "And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"—vs. 32

The fact that Jesus began with Moses in his presentation to show that the Messiah must first suffer, suggests that he might have explained what the passover lamb pictured. Also, there may have been some discussion of the typical atonement-day sacrifice of the bullock, picturing the death of Jesus. And then, too, our Lord could have called their attention to the prophecy in Isaiah, chapter 53, which explicitly details so many facts surrounding his death.

Their eager minds were so gratefully accepting the logic of the "stranger" that it appears they did not give much thought as to why he possessed such accurate knowledge, yet had not been a disciple. Their warm appreciation of him was soon manifested. When they reached the village of their destination, Jesus indicated he would continue on. He must have been pleased as the two now joyful disciples constrained him saying, "Abide with us."—vs. 29

The time came for them to partake of the evening meal. The account reads, "As he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and

blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight." (vss. 30, 31) This suggests to us that the Lord probably repeated the very words, tone, and gestures used at the Last Supper. The language is the same as in the records of that event. We know that when he appeared as a gardener to Mary, it was the familiar sound of his voice speaking her name that revealed him to her. As he disappeared before their eyes they quickly began to place the events in proper order—Jesus was indeed risen. There had been a further unfolding of the plan of God.—John 20:11-18

The Report

HOW commendable that the two returned immediately to share their joy with the other disciples! The eleven together with others were in a room in Jerusalem. They were still in a state of shock and in much fear of the mobs. No doubt their place of haven was known only to the disciples, and at this time was kept locked for protection. When the two arrived, probably identification was made in hushed tones before they were admitted. But when they burst into the dimly lit room it was apparent to all that they were joyfully excited as they spoke out, "The Lord is risen indeed."—vs. 34

The disciples gathered round them as they recalled the details of that memorable walk while Jesus had talked to them. And while they were gathered in that tense atmosphere with only the voice of the narrator being heard, suddenly Jesus himself stood in their midst. A strange hush fell over the room, and all eyes were fixed on him who had suddenly and miraculously appeared. Then calmly and in the old familiar voice he said, "Peace be unto you."—vss. 35, 36

He read the terror in their eyes, and sought to assure them that all was well. Some of them imagined they were seeing a vision. Jesus sought to impress upon them that the body he had assumed was flesh and bone and to indicate this he ate of fish. They were thus assured, and, fear being displaced with joy, they were prepared for his explanation of the Scriptures.—vs. 37-43

Beginning with verse 44 we read Jesus' statement, "These

are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. And he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."

No doubt Jesus explained why the Messiah had to first suffer and die before beginning his glorious reign. In all probability he enlarged upon a fact they all knew; that is, that death came upon the human family because of one man's disobedience. They learned that before that sentence of death could be lifted, God required a corresponding price for the forfeited life of Adam.

It could have been in this very explanation that the disciples learned more of Jesus' pre-human existence. For them fully to understand the ransom it would have been necessary for Jesus to explain how he could have corresponded to Adam. Of the human family only Adam had been a perfect man. None of his condemned children could be a ransom price for him. Adam's substitute must be a perfect, uncondemned man.

Because of this requirement of perfection our Lord was willing to exchange his pre-human spiritual life for that of flesh, so that he could ransom Adam and his family from the power of death. With such knowledge, Jesus' words at the last supper for the first time began to have meaning to them.

They recalled that Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and broke it. This must have represented his body being broken in death. When he told them to eat, it had meant for them to appropriate unto themselves the benefits which came from his death. The same is true of the wine which represented his blood, or life, poured out.

Jesus had told this very thing to his disciples prior to his death, but at that time they could not receive it. In John 6:51 we read his words, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Meaning of Memorial

WHEN our Lord's disciples observe the Memorial Supper each year, the primary meaning of eating and drinking the symbols of bread and wine is that we have life given to us because of his sacrifice. In other words, Jesus' disciples of the Gospel Age have imputed to them the benefits of the ransom, and are passed from death unto life. Perhaps this explanation of the bread and wine symbols was personally told to the disciples by the resurrected Lord. However, at that time they were not aware of the deeper truth that the Christ, or Messiah, was to be composed of many members, and that until all the members of The Christ have suffered, the glory phase of the kingdom could not be established.

In his various appearances during the forty days after his resurrection, Jesus never indicated other than that the kingdom would soon be set up. The disciples' concern for its establishment finally manifested itself. In Acts, chapter one, is recorded Jesus' final contact with the disciples prior to his ascension. Verse 6 records their last question, which was, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" The reason for their question is apparent. If the Scriptures taught that the Messiah must first die as a ransom price before establishing the kingdom, then why a further delay? Had not Jesus fulfilled this provision?

Jesus answered that it was not for them to know the times or the seasons which the Father had put in his own power. However, immediately after this statement, Jesus continued with a promise by saying, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you." And, indeed, there was a further revealing of the Father's plan after the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost.

After the special enlightenment through the Holy Spirit, the disciples knew that the kingdom would not be established until the full number of body members of the Messiah, or Christ, was complete. Prior to this time they had supposed the Messiah was our Lord only. Note how clearly the Apostle Paul presents the deeper truth concerning the Messiah in I Corinthians 12:12: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members

of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ [or, the Messiah].”

The disciples, or body members of the Messiah, must also suffer before the kingdom is established. This, of course, agrees with Jesus' statement made to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. He said, "Ought not Christ, to have suffered these things, and [then] to enter into his glory?" The Apostle Peter also expressed this thought. In his statement Peter encouraged the disciples to rejoice in sufferings, because of the lofty purpose it fulfilled. His words in I Peter 4:12, 13 are, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

The appreciation of the truth of the oneness of the Messiah prepares us to understand the secondary or deeper meaning of the Memorial Supper. The Apostle Paul alludes to this deeper feature in I Corinthians 10:16, 17, where we read, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

The word "communion" here used could be more understandingly stated "common union." Or to make the meaning even more distinct we could use the more direct translation of the Greek word, which would be "partnership." In other words, Paul was saying that the cup represented the "partnership" of the blood of the Messiah, and the broken bread the "partnership" of the body of the Messiah. Thus understood, it would mean that the symbol also illustrated the death in sacrifice of the entire Messiah class.

The thought of sharing in Christ's death is stated elsewhere in a very direct manner. For instance, in Romans 6:3, 5 we read, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? . . . For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

The disciples who partook of that first Lord's Supper had occasion, in later years to recall it fondly. And how grateful they must have been for the enlightenment which came through the Holy Spirit! Those words and acts of Jesus which had been so perplexing at the Last Supper had become luminous and clear. So, too, are they meaningful to us.

When we observe this solemn feast, certain thoughts should be uppermost in our minds. When the broken bread and "cup" is given to us, we should first of all remind ourselves that because of Jesus' broken body we may live. Because of his willingness to die, the sentence of death can be lifted from the world of mankind, who were all condemned in Adam. However, as we partake of the symbols, it should remind us that the church, or his body members, now partake of the merit of his ransom sacrifice. The benefits of his death will not be available to the world until the earthly kingdom is fully established.

The church now receives of the benefit of Jesus' sacrifice for only one purpose, which is that it may be released from condemnation, and, as justified humans, be sacrificed as part and parcel of the Messiah. This deeper meaning and its appreciation should indeed be soul-searching. Recall again the words of Paul, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [partnership] of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion [partnership] of the body of Christ? For we being many are one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

We, as members of Christ's body, are being sacrificed with him. By the trials and testings, the suffering and sacrificing experienced now, we are being prepared to reign with him in glory. To the faithful body members who suffer and die with him shall be accorded the matchless privilege of sharing in the blessing of all the families of the earth. By his grace we may become hands of mercy and love which lift the sin-sick world from the depths of degradation to the heights of sons of God on the perfect human plane. "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."—I Cor. 5:8

THE PARABLE SERIES

Article IX—Luke 15:11-32

The Prodigal Son

THE Parable of the Prodigal Son, even as The Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, which immediately precede it, was addressed particularly to the scribes and the Pharisees. It is designed to emphasize the vaunted self-righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees and their resentfulness of the fact that Jesus showed interest in the publicans and sinners, and taught that upon the basis of true repentance they could attain the favor of his Heavenly Father.

The parable is an interesting story which might well have been true in the experience of many throughout the centuries. A certain man, apparently of means, had two sons, who, in the ordinary course of events, would inherit their father's estate. The younger of these two sons said to his father, "Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." The father granted the son's request, and a short time later "the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living."—vss. 12, 13

Then difficulties arose. "There arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine." (vs. 15) But this was far from satisfactory. "He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him."—vs. 16

In this degrading situation of dire need this younger son "came to himself"; that is, he realized that he had acted very foolishly, and became repentant. He reflected upon the contrasting situation at home, and had been so humbled that he decided he would be glad to become one of the hired servants of his father, for thus he would at least get something to eat.

So this repentant son said within himself, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." He carried out this purpose, and upon arriving home

(Continued on page 34.)

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DAWN PUBLICATIONS

East Rutherford

NEW JERSEY

(Continued from page 31.)

offered himself to his father as a servant.—vss. 18-21

Then comes the important lesson of the parable. The father forgave his son, and received him back into his family. Indeed, a feast was arranged to celebrate the occasion of the prodigal's return. The feast and its accompanying merrymaking were in progress when the elder son came in from the field. But when he learned what had happened he was not at all pleased.

The elder son refused to take part in the celebration, complaining to his father that although he had served him faithfully throughout the years that his brother had been wasting his life, no celebration had ever been arranged for him. For him no "fattened calf" had ever been killed and no opportunity given to make merry with his friends.

This parable clearly illustrates the sin of jealousy in connection with a matter of no less importance than life itself. However, unlike the elder son, the father looked upon the return of his younger son as though he had received him back from the dead. The boy's sin had not destroyed the father's love for him.

But it is important to note that the prodigal son had repented of his wrongdoing, and had returned humbly to his father, not even asking to be reinstated as a son, but merely that he might become

one of the servants. Here we have illustrated an important principle in God's dealings with all his intelligent creatures, whether angels or men, Jews or Gentiles, Pharisees or publicans. Repentance is essential in order to have one's sins forgiven.

God's love for the sin-cursed and Satan-blinded human race motivated him to send his beloved Son to be a Redeemer and Savior. Thus he made provision for the reconciliation of mankind; but as individuals no one receives any benefit from this except upon the basis of repentance and dedication to do the Father's will. There are two aspects of a sinner's return to God. There is God's part in providing the atoning blood, and there is the sinner's part of repentance and consecration.

As for the scribes and Pharisees to whom the parable was addressed, they were very much like the elder son who thought that he was entitled to special consideration because of his superior conduct. Nothing is said in the parable to indicate that the elder son had been hypocritically righteous, although Jesus had charged the scribes and Pharisees on other occasions with hypocrisy. Evidently the Master wanted us to know that even those who sincerely serve, and to the best of their ability endeavor to be righteous, have no right to be jealous when sinners

repent and are accepted with rejoicing into the favor of God.

On the other hand, the lesson might also be that no matter how outwardly righteous one might be, to take the attitude of the elder brother in the parable would itself indicate an impure heart condition. It would surely reveal a lack of true godlikeness. Our Heavenly Father stands ready to embrace all who return to him in humility and true repentance. This is illustrated in the brief parable of the Pharisee and publican who went up to the temple to pray. The Pharisee thanked God that he was not like other debased men, especially the publican. But the publican smote upon his breast, and asked God to be merciful to him, a sinner. He went away justified, but the Pharisee did not.—Luke 18:10-14

Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, "Ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." And again, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."—Matt. 23:13, 23

From these denunciations it is evident that the scribes and Pharisees had little or no com-

passion for those whom they considered at variance with their own standards of holiness. Justice and mercy, based on true faith in the divine arrangements of love, had little place in their viewpoints and attitudes.

The father of the prodigal son spoke of having received him back from the dead. To him it was as though the young man had really been dead, and we can understand the heart rejoicing and sympathetic understanding of this loving father.

But the father's sentiments are not shared by many, even today, who are not willing to concede that sinners who have actually gone into death, and will be restored to life, can possibly receive any consideration from the Heavenly Father. How thankful we are to have learned that the love of God is broader than the measure of many human minds which have been distorted by erroneous views concerning him!

The important lesson of the parable to us is that we are to maintain a sympathetic and loving attitude toward the erring, and to rejoice at any evidence of repentance, and endeavor to walk in the ways of the Lord more perfectly. Our attitude toward those who repent of their wrongdoing should be based upon what they are today, rather than on their erroneous conduct of yesterday. Thus we will be like our Father who is in heaven.

THE UNKNOWN GOD

Article III

Man's Search for God

WHEN the Apostle Paul visited Athens near the beginning of the Christian era, he found the people given over almost entirely to the worship of idols. It has been asserted that there were more idols in Athens than in all the rest of Greece. The Athenians imported the deities and superstitions of every nation, along with their arts and learning. A satirist observed that it was easier to find a god in Athens than a man.

There were two groups of philosophers in Athens, cited by Paul: the Epicureans and the Stoics. (Acts 17:18) The Epicureans were, as one writer has stated, "gay and superficial infidels, who amused themselves and others with various and curious speculations." These, even as millions still do, ascribed the origin of all things to chance.

The Epicureans graciously, and probably for reasons of personal popularity, did not deny outright the existence of the many heathen gods of the times, but insisted that these really had nothing to do with the creation of the world and what is in it. The Stoics, on the other hand, more firmly be-

lieved in being submissive to natural laws, but were very vague in their philosophy, and they had little or no faith in a future life.

It was these two groups of philosophers who called Paul in question. To them he was advocating a strange god, "because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?"—Acts 17:16-19

This furnished Paul with a rare opportunity to set forth some basic truths pertaining to the great and loving God of the Bible, the Creator and Ruler of the universe. As Paul was led to Areopagus, or Mars' Hill, the route took him close to a large display of idols, each ascribed to a particular god. When he stood on the hill and faced his audience these idols would be visible in the valley below to the left. Towering above him to the right was the Acropolis on which there stood in all its architectural glory that massive heathen temple, the Parthenon.

Paul made full use of this setting as he explained to the Greek

philosophers important facts concerning the God he worshiped, and the "new" religion he was advocating. He began his sermon by reminding them that one of their idols was ascribed "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." Yes, even in Paul's day, and among the wisest philosophers of the time, was the acknowledgment of the existence of a God about whom they knew little or nothing.

Paul explained that this "unknown God," whom they ignorantly worshiped, was the One he "declared" unto them. He then proceeded to call their attention to some of the characteristics of this "unknown God." This was the great and powerful God who had "made the world and all things therein." This was contrary to the "unbelief" of the Epicureans.—Acts 17:24

Furthermore, this true and living God, Paul explained, "is Lord of heaven and earth," and since this was true, he could not be expected to "dwell in temples made with hands." Here we can see Paul taking a glance at the magnificent heathen temple which towered above him as he spoke, a temple that housed many gods, and indicating that the unknown God he was identifying for them was entirely too great and too glorious to be confined in any structure which could be erected by man, regardless of how beautiful and glorious it might be.

This is a great truth concerning the God of all glory which is important for all to remember. Our little minds are often impressed by displays of splendor which are to be seen throughout the world in the various temples of public worship. To the extent that these lift our minds and hearts to the true and living God of wisdom, justice, love, and power, and inspire us to devote our lives to his service, they serve a useful purpose. But may we ever realize that the true God of our worship, and to whom we are devoted, could not now be expected to dwell in temples made with hands, any more than in the days of Paul.

King Solomon of Israel recognized this many long centuries before Paul's day. Solomon's temple was probably the most magnificent ever constructed up until that time. But when it was complete, he realized that the great God of Israel could not be confined within its walls, and in his prayer of dedication said, "Will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!"—II Chron. 6:18

Jesus also confirmed this larger viewpoint of the true and living God. A Samaritan woman raised the question with Jesus as to where God should be worshiped,

whether at Mt. Gerizim, or Mt. Zion, in Jerusalem. Jesus' reply did away with the necessity of limiting the worship of God to specific locations. He explained that "God is a Spirit," hence invisible to human eyes, and that the true worship of him is "in spirit and in truth."—John 4:20-24

The word "spirit" is used here in contrast with that which is material and visible. Crude images of God, as in idols, are hindrances to true worship, for the mind concentrates on the image and sees little beyond. God is a person, but not human, and so far above us that it is impossible for us fully to conceive him; so our minds and hearts go out to him as the One in whom is centered all that is good and holy. From him, "the Father of lights," comes "every good and every perfect gift," the Scriptures declare.—James 1:17

Prayers to this glorious God of love reach him without the aid of temples made with hands; and without the imagery of pagan ceremonies. We can lift up our hearts to such a God at any time of day or night, regardless of place or circumstance. Costly temples may give a temporary sense of awe and reverence, but so much more should the "temple" of nature which God himself has provided, and in which we dwell, help us to realize his exalted character and majesty.

Jesus said that our great God of glory and of love should be worshiped, not only in spirit, but also in truth. There are certain basic truths concerning God which must be known if we are to worship him acceptably. It will not do to conjure up a concept of him based upon our own superstitions and twisted philosophies. The Athenians did this with the result that they worshiped idols, and the true God remained "unknown" to them.

The human mind can never know more than a mere fraction of the whole truth concerning God, but that fraction must be true if we are to worship him "in spirit and in truth." All concepts of God which depict him as other than a God of wisdom, justice, love, and power, merely hinder true worship. Idols, images, and sacred cows are barriers between the human soul and the glorious and loving God of all creation.

Certainly, as Paul declared to the Athenians, this true and living God who is still unknown to countless millions of the human race, does not dwell in temples "made with hands, neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." How perfectly plain it should be that the Creator of all life, including our own, does not need anything from

us, and that nothing wrought by human hands can be used to induce him to bless us.

God said to ancient Israel, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." (Ps. 50:10-12) We have nothing that we can give to God that we did not first receive from him. "In him we live and move and have our being," Paul said. We are alive only because God gave us life. We are able to move about in the pursuit of life's responsibilities and joys only because God designed our organisms to make this possible. Our very existence depends upon the continuance of his loving provisions.

These common blessings of life are showered upon all without respect to the degree of appreciation which may be manifested. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus expressed it beautifully, saying: "Your Father which is in heaven . . . maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt. 5:45) The sun and the rain, and all the other elements by which life is sustained, are the handiworks of God. They are beyond our ability either to create or to regulate.

It is not difficult to realize why there have been those from time to time who worshiped the sun and the rain. Their failure was that they did not look beyond these to the great God of the universe who created them, and pour out their heartfelt devotion to him. David did this, and wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, without these their voice is heard. Their rule is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race."—Ps. 19:1-5, **margin**

The Greeks were reputed to be a wise people, especially in their philosophies. Perhaps the Epicureans and "Stoics" considered themselves to be somewhat superior to *hoi polloi*, the "common herd," especially of other nationalities. If they had illusions of this sort, they would not like Paul's bold assertion that the God who was unknown to them had "made 'out of one' [Greek] all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts 17:26

Here is a great truth, simply stated. It is that the human family is one family, the offspring of one father, who was created by the Athenians' "unknown God." Yes, the great Creator of heaven and earth has made of, or from, one, all the various races and nationalities of men. The "one" referred to by Paul is Adam. Paul believed in the Genesis record of creation and in his letter to the church at Corinth referred to Adam as being the "first man."—I Cor. 15:45

One of the proofs that all races of men are of a common stock is the fact that they can—while not generally practiced—intermarry and produce normal offspring. The different characteristics of the various races are accounted for by differences of climate, food, and other factors to which they have been subjected throughout the centuries, and not because they sprang from different sources.

Paul told the Athenians that God's design was that all nations of men should "dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitations." (vs. 26, R. V.) To this he adds, "That they should seek the Lord, if 'haply' they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain

also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."—vss. 27-29

Here two great truths concerning the true and living God are beautifully expressed. He is the fountain of all life; in him we live, and move, and have our being, and he wants us to seek him and to know him. Furthermore, as Paul reminds us, in seeking God we are not to think that we will find him in images of gold, or silver, or stone which are fashioned by human hands, for this would imply that the great Creator is something less than his creatures.

God is not far from any one of us, Paul asserts. He is not referring to distance, but to the Creator's interest and love, and his ability to do for his human creatures all that his wisdom and love sees is best for their eternal welfare. We are not to think of God as being austere and unapproachable. We are not to seek him in fear, but with the assurance that he is understanding, merciful, and kind.

To find and to know God is a glorious experience in one's life. The Prophet Jeremiah wrote, "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,

neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."—Jer. 9: 23, 24

But we must not expect to find God in our own small concepts of what we would like him to be. Many make the mistake of trying to find God amidst the confusion of a selfish and dying world. They think of the crime, war, accidents, injustices, the sorrow and suffering from all causes, and they wonder where God can be found in it all. He can't! If we are to find God we must look for him apart from, and above all that has been distorted and defiled by human hands and minds.

The great God of all creation said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my Word be that goeth forth out of

my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isa. 55:8-11

Truly God's ways are higher than ours. And how beautifully he has illustrated this in his reference to the purpose served by the rain and snow. Shortsighted humans often complain when it rains or snows, forgetting that their very life depends upon the objects of their complaints. But God in his love does not withhold the rain and the snow because his human creatures, in their foolishness and selfishness, complain about it. No, the rain and snow continue to fall and water the earth, "that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater." To the lesson of the rain and snow the Lord significantly adds, "So shall my Word be."

God's Word is the expression of his plans and purposes for his human creatures. Paul explained concerning the nations of earth that God had determined their seasons, and the bounds of their habitations. Moses wrote that God had "divided to the nations their inheritance." (Deut. 32:8. See also Genesis 11:8.) There has been a divine overruling with respect to the location on this planet of all the different races, and a determination of the season, or time, in which they are to remain in these "habitations."

But this is only a fragment of the Creator's design for his earthly creatures, and even this is not known by the vast majority involved in it. They are born, they experience briefly a measure of joy, they suffer, they die. If they think of God at all it is usually in terms of their own restricted experiences and limited understanding and viewpoints. The vast majority throughout the ages have not even discerned, as some of the Athenians did, that there is an "unknown God" whom Paul said is not far from any one of us.

But just as their lack of knowledge has not hindered the periodic falling of the rain and snow to water the earth, so it has not interfered with the "Word" of God, his detailed plan, as it has gone forth through the ages for the accomplishment of a wise and loving provision by which he will eventually be revealed to all mankind, who will then be enabled to know and serve him with rejoicing. The Prophet Isaiah wrote, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."—Isa. 11:9

The universal blessings of the rain and snow are today not without their drawbacks, for thorns and thistles are also thereby helped to grow. Here again we see the result of disobedience to divine law. (Gen. 3:17, 18) But the Lord has promised that when his "Word," his plan, has been accom-

plished, this also will be changed. He said, "Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn, shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."—Isa. 55:12, 13

The soil of this planet has, of course, been continuously plagued with pests and convulsions of nature, which is not always to be the case. But we might also think of the "thorns and thistles" of human experience—the disappointments and sufferings of the people throughout all the ages. These also are to be removed, and they will no longer serve to obscure the people's vision of the true and loving God. On this point Isaiah wrote: "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces. . . . And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Nothing shall be permitted to "hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, or kingdom."—Isa. 11:9; 25:8, 9

Yes, through all the ages of

human experience there has been a searching after God, a "feeling after him," but few have been rewarded with anything better than to be told that God is to be found in the imagery of pagan, oriental, mythological, and pseudo-Christian rituals. And the gods they have thus found have been vindictive and cruel—particularly the pseudo-Christian god of torture.

But eventually, and in the Creator's own due time, he will reveal himself to his human creatures. They will see him as one who loves and cares; who is sympathetic and understanding; and also an all-powerful God who is able to rid the world of everything which contributes to human unhappiness. He will "swallow up death in victory," which means

that there will be no more sickness, no more pain. Tears will be wiped away.

The Apostle John wrote concerning that time, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Rev. 21:3, 4) No wonder the people will say, "This is our God"! Truly they will be glad, and will rejoice in the salvation from death which he has provided through Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior. "Hallelujah! what a Savior!"



Let the words of my mouth *
be acceptable in Thy sight.
Psalm 19:14**

With words we may our thoughts convey,
And words have power to bud and flower,
To bring forth fruit for good or ill—
To good incite or good to kill.
Then let us always words well weigh,
For by our words by night or day,
We shall be judged by what we say.

The Power of God --How It Operates

"The Gospel: . . . the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." —Romans 1:16

NOWHERE in Holy Writ have we a more full, concise, and forceful outline of the Gospel of Christ than the Apostle Paul gives in his Epistle to the Romans. There he shows man's need of the very Gospel plan of salvation that God has provided. He describes how mankind in the person of father Adam was created perfect, capable under proper conditions of living everlastingly.

The Apostle Paul also explains, very properly, how man, having been given a perfect life, was placed on trial to see if he would prove worthy of its everlasting continuance. He shows how, as a result of the trial in Eden, man failed to fulfil the condition of perfect obedience to the divine law, and so "by one man sin entered into the world, and death [as a result of Adam's] sin; and so death passed upon all men."—Rom. 5:12

All mankind, instead of being tried individually, were allowed to suffer the penalty for sin, resulting from one man's disobedience. And, as Paul goes on to show, all having been condemned to death in one man, it was possible for all to be redeemed from death by another perfect man, who would be willing to give up his perfect life in death, and thus ransom Adam and all condemned in him. So Paul argues in Romans 5:17-19 (R. V.), "For if by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ. So then, as through one trespass the judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so, through one act of righteousness, the free gift came [is to come] upon all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous." "For since by [a] man came death, by [a] man came [is to come] also the resurrection of the dead."—I Cor. 15:21

In the Epistle to the Romans Paul is greatly used to show the

wonderful wisdom displayed in the divine plan for human salvation, so that, as he testified, it is an arrangement of which he is not ashamed. (vs. 21) Indeed, not only was Paul not ashamed of the message, but he felt it was something worthy of devoting his whole life and all his powers to, in order to make it known.

Satan, the great opponent of the divine purposes, desires to hinder their accomplishment, and in his keen endeavors to thwart God's plan, has deceived mankind by foisting upon the people various caricatures of the Gospel, giving exaggerated, ridiculous representations so unreasonable and unjust that large numbers of logically minded people have been repelled, rather than attracted to it. How true are the words: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ... should shine unto them."—II Cor. 4:4

However, prophecy shows that as soon as the faith-salvation of the true church during the Gospel Age has been brought to a completion, "the god of this world" is to be "bound,"... "that he should deceive the nations no more" with these misconceptions and counterfeits. Instead, the knowledge of the Lord will be made to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.—Rev. 20: 1-3; Hab. 2:14; Isa. 11:9

God's Righteous Character Revealed

THE Apostle Paul, when stating that the Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," adds, "for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." (Rom. 1:16, 17) The Gospel does indeed reveal the righteousness of God—his righteous character. It especially shows how justice is the foundation of all the divine dealings. Man having been sentenced to death, justice says this sentence must remain; it cannot be set aside, unless justice can in some way be satisfied. This satisfaction was made by the Lord Jesus, who died "the Just for the unjust." (I Pet. 3:18) In this plan of redemption, therefore, is revealed the righteousness of God "from faith to faith."

Faith in this elementary feature of the plan of redemption relating to the satisfaction of justice by a willing Redeemer, leads to faith in other features of this wonderful arrangement, including faith in the divine promises pertaining to all the various features of God's plan. It leads also to faith in his promises which have to do with his personal dealings with his people, and the many tests of faith which come to them to see if they will trust the Lord where they cannot trace him. In this way the Gospel becomes the power of God unto sal-

vation to every one that believeth; and to the extent we are able to believe, to exercise faith.

Although the knowledge of the Gospel has much to do with bringing to us its benefits, it is, as already noted, far from being "the power of God unto salvation," without the all-important part that must be performed by those who hear and receive the message.

An Operative Faith

THE power of the Gospel, or in other words, the power of God, can only reach us in proportion to our faith; that is, to the extent that we receive and exercise obedient faith in the Gospel plan of salvation, and the many divine promises associated therewith. "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," to every one that adheres to, trusts, relies upon the Gospel of Christ.

We may observe daily that all men have not the faith. (Luke 18: 8; II Thess. 3:2 A. V. and **Diaglott**) Not all are able to exercise that degree of faith in God and his Word that will bring them into a condition of full relationship with himself through a willingness to follow in the footsteps of the Redeemer. Nevertheless, during the Gospel Age there are those who are being drawn by the Father. "No man can come to me," said Jesus, "except the Father

which hath sent me draw him." (John 6:44) These are drawn to be members of the true church, the many sons who, during this age, are being brought to glory. (Heb. 2:10) And as other Scriptures show, this glory to which they are called is the glory of the divine nature.—II Pet. 1:4

Our Lord Jesus, for the joy set before him of redeeming the world, and of being perfected through suffering in order to be prepared to be a sympathetic High Priest and King beyond the veil, partaker of the divine nature, endured the cross, despising the shame. (Heb. 2:17; 12:2) And the invitation has now come to us—after our believing in Jesus as our Redeemer—to take up our cross daily and follow him, being baptized into his death, and in this way being prepared to be in his likeness in the resurrection.—Luke 9:23; Rom. 6:3-8

In view of this, we might well say: What a large measure of the power of God would be needed to work in us to fit us for such a great change! Of ourselves we are very insufficient, but the power of God will, says Paul, work in us in sufficient measure if on our part we can exercise a sufficiency of obedient faith. Ours must be an "operative faith." (I Thess. 1:3, **Diaglott**) If it is, then "the power of God unto salvation" can truly work in us.

God's Abundant Mercy

MANY, on seeing something of the "high calling" of the church even to be partakers of the divine nature, may be inclined to feel they could never attain such a wonderful prize, the prize of immortality, the kind of life possessed originally only by Jehovah. (Rom. 2:7; Phil. 3:14; I Tim. 1:17; 6:16) On this point our Lord explains: "As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."—John 5:26

But it is here that we, as consecrated children of God, must never leave out of our calculations the power of God which can operate through the Gospel. He has, according to his abundant mercy, begotten us to a living hope, to an inheritance incorruptible, . . . reserved in heaven."—I Pet. 1:3, 4

The true Gospel is so wonderful and inspiring that to the extent we lay hold of it in obedient faith, it will bring us a sufficient amount of the power of God to enable us to press onward to attain the great salvation to which we are called. This salvation is indeed a prize we could never attain of ourselves; but a living "operative faith" enables us to receive the power of God sufficient for us to overcome in the trials and tests of the narrow way, and to endure unto the end of the journey, so that we can experi-

ence an abundant entrance into the kingdom.—II Pet. 1:10, 11

Not only do we by faith experience the power of God working in us, but also in proportion to our faith in the Word of God and the plan of salvation therein revealed, we are able to have an understanding of the righteousness of our Heavenly Father. "The righteousness of God is revealed," not only in his justice, but in all the elements of his righteous character as manifested in the divine plan of the ages, and specially seen in the perfect character of our Lord Jesus Christ who came to redeem man, and who, while in the flesh, could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (Rom. 1:17; John 14:9) And this revelation of the Father goes on "from faith to faith." It is a progressive revelation according to our faith. Hence the Apostle Paul says, "The just shall live by faith."—Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38

Those justified to life during the Gospel Age experience a growth in obedient faith, and in this way there is communicated to them an increasing measure of the power of God. And it is faith that says: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."—Gal. 2:20

A Wondrous Holy Power

AMONG other scriptures which emphasize how the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to

every one that believeth, are the following:

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 15:13) Here we are shown that a believing faith, bringing with it an abounding hope, is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

"For the word of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness; but unto us which are being saved it is the power of God." (I Cor. 1:18, R. V.) To the world, still perishing on the broad road to destruction, the necessity of the ransom sacrifice is not appreciated. It indeed often appears to them unreasonable that the great Creator should require the sacrifice of an innocent victim before he could bless his creatures and take steps for bringing about their at-one-ment with himself. But unto those who are being saved, and in whose hearts the Holy Spirit has begun to work, "it is the power of God."

Indeed this is the only way the power of God can reach us, and work in us. And to these called ones it is both "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (I Cor. 1:24) Hence the faith of the Christian rests not upon human wisdom, human theories, but upon the wisdom and power of God—"that your faith should not stand

in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—I Cor. 2:5

In order that the blessing of justification by faith, the treasure of the Holy Spirit, and the knowledge of the truth may not puff us up, causing us to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, the Apostle Paul says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves." (II Cor. 4:7, R. V.) Therefore, instead of being able to keep ourselves, or to stand alone, we are "kept by the power of God through faith" until we attain the great "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."—I Pet. 1:5

The Apostle Paul would remind us in Ephesians 3:4, 7, 8, R. V., that any special service we may be able to render for the Lord is not accomplished by human ability, but by God being pleased that his power shall work in us. He says: "The mystery of Christ... whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of his power. Unto me... was this grace given to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

In II Peter 1:3 this very comprehensive statement is recorded: "His divine power hath given

unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." Here the Apostle Peter emphasizes that in every way we are dependent upon the power of God. Every desire of goodness; every effort to attain more of the character likeness of the Master; every work of faith; every service prompted by our faith, can be successfully carried forward only by God's power continuing to work in us "both to will and to do of his

good pleasure."—Phil. 2:12, 13

And to quote the Apostle Paul's words : "We pray always for you, that our God may count [margin, vouchsafe] you worthy of your calling, and fulfil every desire of goodness, and work of faith with power." (II Thess. 1:11, R. V.) And that this might be possible Paul reminds us that "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."—II Tim. 1:7

Vineyard Echoes from Britain

ALTHOUGH Radio Luxembourg has ceased to beam forth the "Frank and Ernest" programmes, which, by divine grace, have introduced the true Gospel of the kingdom to many very grateful listeners in the British Isles, there is much evidence that the "first love" and appreciation of the truth on the part of former listeners is not only being maintained, but is also being increased. A letter from one of these in Northern Ireland reads:

"Dear Brethren of The Dawn: Loving greetings in our beloved Redeemer's name! It is with deep, heartfelt gratitude that I write to thank you for the very many ways in which you have brought, and are bringing to me, help, comfort, and blessing through the truth of God's Holy Word. Isolated here in the west of Northern Ireland from any

of like precious faith, and now a semi-invalid, what a joy it was—some years ago—to hear "Frank and Ernest" speaking from Radio Luxembourg! Then followed The Dawn Magazine; 'Studies in the Scriptures,' 'Our Most Holy Faith,' and all your other wonderful truth literature.

"Next came personal visits from the brethren in England, Northern Ireland, and Dublin, at great inconvenience and expense to themselves. And then, during the past year, I have been receiving regularly magnificent tape recordings from The Dawn Recorded Lecture Service, and also from a dear sister in Northern Ireland who has loaned to me her own tape recordings taken of all the discourses given at the annual Portrush Convention. So I no longer feel on my own, but one of the family—God's true family of sons.

"I deeply appreciate also that all

this work of you dear brethren is voluntary, and I seem to be able to do so little to help. But I do earnestly pray that God will continue to bless and prosper all in his service, and in the doing of his will as you continue to show forth his praises. Yours very humbly and sincerely, in His service."

In Eire Also

WE WISH also to mention a friend of "Frank and Ernest" who lives in Eire, and until recent years was a prolific reader. But now this joy is no longer hers, due to blindness. Her reading is confined to Braille. One evening this dear one heard "Frank and Ernest" over Radio Luxembourg. She was interested, and continued to listen as long as the station carried the programme.

Her very interesting typewritten letters to the British Branch have been very encouraging. In response to one of her early en-

quiries a sister residing in the same county now visits her regularly for the purpose of reading and discussing Dawn literature and the Bible's teachings with respect to the divine plan of the ages. Various other brethren from near and far have also called to enjoy sweet fellowship with this sister around the Holy Scriptures, and the sister appreciates this very much. She now has the Bible available to her in Braille, which is a great help. Her hope is expressed in the lines of a poem she has sent to us, the closing verse of which reads:

"The blessed kingdom, when it comes,
Will not be like the earthly ones,
Which passed away into decay.
But stronger, brighter, grows each day,
For Christ THE King is here to stay."

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

These speakers are associated with the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their services are furnished free, upon request. Address—Dawn Bible Students Association, Pilgrim Department, 15, Southwood Gardens, ILFORD, Essex.

A. BOYCE

Liverpool April 15

J. H. MURRAY

Lincoln March 11

Letchford April 1

E. TERRY NADAL

Llanelly March 10, 11

W. READER

Letchworth April 1

C. SMITH

Letchworth March 4

CONVENTION at Portrush, Northern Ireland, Whitsun, June 9, 10, 11. Write to Mr. T. R. Lang, 41, Clooney Terrace, Waterside, Londonderry, Northern Ireland, for accommodation and other details.

THE BIBLE ANSWERS TV SCHEDULE

HALF-HOUR PROGRAMS

Albany, N. Y.—WAST-TV, Channel 13, Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

Alexandria, Minn.—KCMT-TV, Channel 7, every third Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

Anchorage, Alaska—KTVA, Channel 11 (Time and day to be announced.)

Bakersfield, Calif.—KLYD-TV, Channel 17, Sundays, 12:00 noon

Bismark, N. D.—KXMB-TV, Channel 12, Sundays, 12 noon.

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

Cleveland, Ohio—WEWS, Channel 5, Saturdays, 9:30 a.m.

El Paso, Tex.—KELP-TV, Channel 13, Sundays, 12:00 noon.

Fairbanks, Alaska—KTVE, Channel 11 (Time and day to be announced.)

Florence, Ala.—WOWL-TV, Channel 15, Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

Harrisonburg, Va.—WSVA-TV, Channel 3, Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

Huntington, W. Va.—WSAZ-TV, Channel 3, Sundays, 4:30 p.m.

Jackson, Mich.—WILX-TV, Channel 10, Saturdays, 8:15 a.m.

Lafayette, Ind.—WFAM-TV, Channel 18, Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

Little Rock, Ark.—KATV, Channel 7, Sundays, 11:30 a.m.

Meridian, Miss.—WTOK-TV, Channel 11, Sundays, 10:30 a.m.

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

Peterborough, Ont.—CHEX-TV, Sundays, 12:00 noon.

Petersburg, Va.—WXEX-TV, Channel 8, Sundays, 7:30 a.m.

Pittsburgh, Pa.—WTAE-TV, Channel 4, Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

Portsmouth, Va.—WAVY-TV, Channel 10, Sundays, 9:00 a.m.

Salinas, Calif.—KSBW-TV, Channel 8, Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

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

San Luis Obispo, Calif.—KSBY-TV, Channel 6, Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

Springfield, Mass.—WHYN-TV, Channel 40, Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

Valley City, N. Dak.—KXJB-TV, Channel 4, Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

Victoria, B. C.—CHEK-TV, Channel 6, Saturdays, 4:30 p.m.

Wichita, Kan.—KARD-TV, Channel 3, Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

FIFTEEN-MINUTE PROGRAMS

Elkhart, Ind.—WSJV-TV, Channel 28, Alt. Sundays, 9:15 a.m.

Tampa, Fla.—WFLA-TV, Channel 8, Alt. Sundays, 8:45 a.m.

MARCH RADIO TOPICS

4—"The Bible Harmonious"

11—"Times of Restitution"

18—"LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE"

25—"Peace When There Is No Peace"

Liberty in Christ

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

—John 8:31, 32

THE dictionary defines liberty as "exemption from slavery, bondage, imprisonment, or control of another." It is also described as "freedom of conscience." The Greek words used by the New Testament writers with respect to the freedom or liberty of the followers of Jesus have essentially this same meaning. In the world the principle of liberty has a wide variety of application. There is "civil liberty," "political liberty," "individual liberty, and "personal liberty."

However, to know the dictionary meaning of the words liberty and freedom, and to know their application in human relationships, does not in itself explain what it means to be made free by the truth and to enjoy liberty in Christ. For example, liberty, the dictionary tells us, is to enjoy exemption from imprisonment, but our liberty in Christ does not guarantee that we will never be imprisoned. Indeed, throughout the age many of the Lord's faithful disciples have been permitted to languish in prison, not a few of them even unto death. Jesus, who promised that the truth would make his disciples free, foretold that many of them would be cast into prison.

Liberty is also freedom from slavery and bondage, but the true followers of Jesus are not free from all slavery and bondage, for they are bondslaves of Jesus Christ, and in the days of the Early Church, many of them were slaves of earthly masters. (Gal. 6:17, **Diaglott**) Jesus said to those who would become his disciples, "Take my yoke upon you." (Matt. 11:29) Of one who is in bondage to others for any reason the expression is often

used, "His soul is not his own." From the standpoint of human standards such a one certainly does not enjoy liberty, yet to the Christian the Bible says, "Know ye not that . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." (I Cor. 6:19, 20) Slaves are bought and sold.

Liberty is also, the dictionary says, exemption from control by another; but as Christians we do not enjoy this exemption, for we have voluntarily put ourselves under the control of the Lord by accepting the headship of Christ. Liberty is also freedom of conscience, and the Christian's conscience will not permit him to say or do anything that is contrary to the will of his Head, Christ Jesus. For the conscientious Christian this is not a mere theory or platitude, but a serious reality which often checks the desires and plans of the flesh.

Those who, through consecration, have voluntarily taken Christ's yoke are held in restraint by it. Others may plan their lives to suit their own fancies. They can decide where and how they will live, and whom they will choose for their special friends, with the thought only of getting as much satisfaction and enjoyment out of life as possible. But dedicated Christians are restrained by the "yoke" of Christ from doing this. They have been "bought," and belong to another, even Christ, and they can do only as he wishes. These cannot say, "I'll go where I want to go." If their surrender is complete they can say only, "I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord."

Christian Liberty

IT SEEMS evident that liberty in Christ is something quite apart from the ordinary human concept of liberty. When Jesus said to those who believed on him that they would know the truth and that the truth would make them free, they replied, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" Jesus' answer to this question was, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house forever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—John 8:32-36

The thought here is clear. Our liberty in Christ is freedom

from control by the great taskmaster, Sin. This taskmaster is referred to in Romans 6:6, 7 as the "body of sin" which is to be destroyed as a result of Christ's crucifixion and our crucifixion with Christ. Paul explains that being crucified with Christ means that we are "dead," and those who are thus dead, he says, are "freed [margin, justified] from sin." In verse 12 Paul admonishes, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

To be free from the taskmaster Sin does not mean that sin has been destroyed in our mortal body. It simply means that we have been made free from the penalty of sin, which is death. It means that by divine grace we are not condemned because of our unwilling imperfections so long as we bend every effort to keep the body under and bring it into subjection. We are not to continue willingly in sin "that grace may abound." (Rom. 6:1) Indeed, should we take this attitude of wilfulness, grace through Christ would cease to abound. We have not been freed from the struggle against sin.

A Yoke of Bondage

PAUL wrote, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, . . . if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." (Gal. 5:1, 2) Here it is clear that Paul is referring to the Law Covenant as a "yoke of bondage" to those who were deluded into thinking that they were under obligation to adhere to its ordinances. Paul wrote, "I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law. Christ has become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace."—Gal. 5:3, 4

In verse 13 of this chapter Paul writes, "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Here, also, the liberty referred to is freedom from the condemnation of the Law. And again Paul warns that this does not imply the right to give loose reign to the flesh. The Christian's struggle against the weaknesses of his fallen nature is to be just as energetic as though he expected to gain perfection and God's approval by his own

efforts. Selfishness is basic to all human weaknesses, but instead of serving and catering to self we are to serve the brethren, even to the point of laying down our lives for them.

Peter also wrote on the subject of Christian liberty. We quote, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."—I Pet. 2:13-17

The Law of Liberty

THE Apostle James speaks of "the perfect law of liberty." (James 1:25) "The New English Bible" translates this, "The perfect law, the law that makes us free." In this lesson James speaks of one who looks into a mirror, then goes away and forgets how he looks. Such a one he compares to those who are hearers of the Word, and not doers. So his admonition is to look into the perfect law of liberty, or the law that makes us free, and continue therein, not being forgetful hearers, but doers of the work called for by the perfect law.

This is the thought of our text. Jesus said that if we continue in his Word, we will be his disciples, will know the truth, and the truth shall make us free. The words of Jesus, his commandments which outline the will of God for his people, make up this perfect law, and it is obedience to this law which makes us free from the law of sin and death, hence it is the law of liberty.

Jesus said to his disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:34, 35) Jesus' love for his disciples and for the world motivated him to lay down his life that they might have life. His law for us, therefore, calls for the laying down of our lives for one another. Thus, accepting the provisions of his love, we are made free from

sin's condemnation, and as yokefellows with Jesus become the servants of one another. In doing this we enjoy personal liberty only within the confines of the divine will.

Love's Restrictions

A CHRISTIAN'S conscience is regulated by his understanding of the truth concerning God's will. Since there are varying degrees of understanding, there will be different views among the Lord's people as to what is right and what is wrong. This has always been true among the brethren, and will continue to be until the last member passes beyond the veil. There are certain details of conduct which constituted tests of love in the Early Church and which are no longer issues among the brethren; but the viewpoint of the apostles in these matters can, and should, serve as guides for us, even now.

One of the points of controversy in the Early Church was whether or not it was a sin to eat meat which had been offered to idols. Paul's approach to this problem was Christlike, and wholly in keeping with the perfect law of liberty, the law of love. In explaining his viewpoint and practice he emphasized that each individual's conscience is governed by the depth of his knowledge concerning God and his will. We quote:

"As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with the conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better [margin, have we the more]; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse [margin, have we the less]. But take heed lest by any means this liberty [margin, power] of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak. For if

any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."—I Cor. 8:4-13

Here is an excellent example of self-sacrifice in the restraint of liberty. In this case the liberty referred to is freedom from the power of superstition, a freedom that is gained through knowledge, a knowledge that while there are many heathen gods to which idols are ascribed and worshiped, actually there is but the one true and living God. This being so, the offering of meat to a lifeless idol, which represents a nonexistent god, in no way affects the meat, so no harm, morally or otherwise, can come from eating such meat.

But Paul pointed out that the liberty of action resulting from knowledge should not be used if its use would cause a weaker brother to stumble. The lesson is that there are conditions under which it is best voluntarily to refrain from doing what would be the most pleasing to ourselves, even though it would be right, in order to be of greater service to others. This simply means that the liberty of action which we attain through a knowledge of the truth should not be considered more important than the spiritual welfare of our brethren. We cannot insist on exercising our own liberty—regardless of the effect it may have upon others—and, in so doing, also be pleasing to the Lord.

Liberty in Christ is a freedom from the condemnation of sin based upon believing in Christ, and obeying his commandments, of which love is the prime factor. Its emphasis is not on liberty of action. Indeed, the Christian's personal liberties are often curtailed by the law of love, for love is a daily laying down and giving up, a continual foregoing of our own preferences so that others might be blessed. Those who have taken the Master's yoke have no liberty to go in any direction other than the way he goes.

Paul wrote, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

(II Cor. 3:17) Here, again, the reference is to freedom from the blinding and condemning effects of the Law Covenant. (vss. 15, 16) The Spirit of the Lord is the Spirit of truth, and where the truth is received, believed, and acted upon, it brings liberty from the bondage of sin, even as Jesus taught.

The liberty of Christ is a freedom from fear. "There is no fear in love," John wrote, "but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." (I John 4:18, 19) Our faith enters into this liberty, for we are made free from fear in proportion to our trust in the promises of God as they pertain both to the present and to the future. We might well be tormented by fear with respect to the experiences of tomorrow unless we can believe that the Lord is caring for us, and will supply all our needs.

How thankful we should be for the truth which has made us free from the bondage of sin and death—free from the hampering and depressing influences of error and superstition, and free to lay down our lives for the brethren! As we continue through 1962 with its opportunities, joys, and trials, let us endeavor to restrain self that we might the better serve the Lord, the truth, and the brethren.

PLEASE--

WHEN YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS it is highly important to you and to us that you notify us of your new address at least four weeks in advance. Thus you will be assured of the regular visits of The Dawn and will save us the expense of being notified by the post office of your new address, or that The Dawn is not deliverable at the old address. Some assume that if they leave a forwarding address with the postman The Dawn will automatically be forwarded to their new address, but this is not so. Only first class mail is thus forwarded. All magazines sent to an old address are discarded by the post office, and the publishers notified and charged ten cents for the notification. So please, when you contemplate moving send us your new address as far in advance as you can. You will be helping yourself and us.

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

From "Down Under"

"Dear Brethren: Sincere greetings in our dear Redeemer's name! I am writing to express to you my sincere appreciation of The Dawn. This little book has been received regularly, and the articles have been real "meat" to me, and have proved a stimulus to faith and confidence in our Heavenly Father's Word. I now possess a clearer conception of my obligations and privileges as a consecrated child of God. The Dawn is a little book with a big message—a wonderful service. I thank the Lord for it all, and request daily his blessing on the work he has assigned you in the service of the truth. Please accept my sincere Christian love and prayers for the Lord's blessing on you all. Yours by his grace."—Australia

Has Not Forgotten

"Dear 'Frank and Ernest': I know you are thinking that I have forgotten all about The Dawn, and everything connected with it; but not so. The Dawn is still my teacher, and will be until I leave this sin-sick world. When I came across this literature I was through searching. May God's

richest blessing rest upon you and upon all who are associated in sending 'this Gospel of the kingdom' around the world."—Alabama

Class Interested

"Gentlemen: My Sunday School class is very interested in your booklet, 'Science and Creation.' I would appreciate it very much if you would be good enough to send me an additional seven copies. The enclosed remittance is to help defray the cost."—Canada

Thankful

"Dear 'Frank and Ernest': I will appreciate it very much if you will send me the 96-page book, 'God and Reason.' I am so thankful that The Dawn came my way. I never joined a church for I knew that the churches were not telling the truth. Over thirty years ago I found what I believed was the truth, and Christian love and understanding reigned for several years, but not any more. I am now all alone. My husband passed away in 1960. As the 'day' approaches we need the encouragement and aid in understanding the truth more than ever. I notice

that you announce many conventions. If I skimp I think I may be able to attend the convention in Bloomington, in August. I will be so glad when God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. The Dawn has a nice warmth, and I enjoy reading and re-reading it. Thanks again."—Georgia

Wants to Study

"Dear Sirs: I received the booklet from you, and appreciate it very much. I am a teacher of an adult ladies senior class at our Southern Baptist Church. I think it is the desire of all Christians to search the Scriptures, and to study to show themselves approved unto God. We all have room for improvement, and I feel that the more a teacher of the Word studies, the better teacher he can be. I will appreciate your mailing me a copy of 'The Divine Plan of the Ages.' Thank you for the booklet, and I will enjoy searching the Scriptures for the answers to the questions it presents, with the help of the booklet. Sincerely.—Kansas

Interested Through TV

"Gentlemen: As I previously wrote you, I became interested in your way of explaining the Bible when I lost my husband over three years ago. I lost him on the way back from the West, and shortly after arriving home,

one Sunday when I was unable to go to church because of a cold, I turned on the television and you were just finishing, announcing that anyone who would like it could have a copy of 'Hope Beyond the Grave.' I felt that this was for my benefit, so I sent for it. Since then I have bought the entire set of 'Studies in the Scriptures,' and have subscribed to The Dawn Magazine. Sincerely.—Michigan

A Future Opportunity

"Dear Sirs: Would you please send me your TV offer for last Sunday, the booklet showing chart of the ages, etc. I enjoy the deep study of God's Word, mainly God's future plan for mankind. The evangelical world holds no hope for man after death, but the Apostle Paul wrote, 'If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable.' God has something more for his creatures than condemnation."—North Dakota

A Blessing

"Dear 'Frank and Ernest': Again it is a privilege to send something to help in the Lord's work. My husband is dead, also my mother and brother. My father is seventy-eight years old, and almost blind, so you must know what a blessing your radio programs are, and also 'Studies in

the Scriptures' and The Dawn Magazine. Thank God that if we can stand by him we will soon be rewarded and live in his kingdom. May God bless all of you good people who are working so hard for him."—Ohio

The Needed Light

"Dear Friends: I thank you very much indeed for your fine answers on television. Your explanations are greatly appreciated. The volumes, 'Studies in the Scriptures' are indeed the work of a real servant of God, and they give us the light we need in these serious times. I thank you also for the tracts, which greatly help in spreading the good news of the kingdom. May you be blessed for

the time and patience you have given in helping us to understand the Scriptures. Yours in the service of the Lord, and in the peace that comes from knowing him."—Pennsylvania

Needs Help

"Dear 'Frank and Ernest': In our circle I have been elected to give the lessons for the year. I feel so inadequate to do this without help. I thought maybe 'The Book of Books' would give me some of the needed explanations. Do you have anything that would be specially good on the Book of Romans? I love The Dawn Magazine, and have gotten so much good and comfort from it. Very sincerely."—Oregon

"LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE"

To be discussed by

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

WAVE—970 kc.—8:15 A. M.

Sunday, March 18

How much can we know about the great beyond? Will we meet and know our loved ones who have died? Where are the dead? Here "Frank and Ernest" discuss these questions, and send for a free copy of the booklet, "Life After Death." Address:

"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. This outline is designed for two inches in one column.

APRIL TOPIC: On Sunday, April 15, the "Frank and Ernest" topic will be, "The Preview of History." The effectiveness of these broadcasts is in proportion to the number of listeners, which is increased by advertising. Circulars are available for advertising this special broadcast of the 15th, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. There is no charge. Please get your order in as early as possible.

WALTER Blicharz Chatham, Ont., Can. 18	S. W. JEUCK St. Petersburg, Fla. Mar. 11	R. A. RAWSON Adrian, Mich. Mar. 18 Saginaw, Mich. 25
J. BURTON BROWN Whittier, Calif. Mar. 11	EDMUND JEZUIT Milwaukee, Wis. Mar. 11	GILBERT L. RICE Phoenix, Ariz. Mar. 11
DAVID A. BRUCE Tehachapi, Calif. Mar. 18	RUSSELL L. JURD Riverside, Calif. Mar. 18 Ontario, Calif. 18	NORMAN F. RICE San Bernardino, Calif. 4
BERTRAM C. COOPER Ventura, Calif. Mar. 11 Whittier, Calif. 18	DANIEL KAZIAK Flint, Mich. Mar. 4	GEORGE P. RIPPER Fullerton, Calif. Mar. 25
FRED J. DARROW Whittier, Calif. Mar. 4	ADAM MISKAWITZ Gary, Ind. Mar. 18	B. E. ROSE Akron, Ohio Mar. 18
JOSEPH FENCHAK Pittsburgh, Pa. Mar. 4	N. MOLENAAR Whittier, Calif. Mar. 25	R. S. SEKLEMIAN Stockton, Calif. Mar. 31
THEODORE HACK Aurora, Ill. Mar. 11	D. J. MOREHOUSE LaSalle, Ill. Mar. 4	IRWIN WYSOCKI Connellsville, Pa. Mar. 11
G. HOMER HAMLIN Antloch, Calif. Mar. 18	H. W. OSTRANDER San Luis Obispo, Calif. 18	LOUIS ZBIK London, Ont., Can, Mar. 11



WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

MARCH 1—"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."—Philippians 4:7 (Z. '03-8 Hymn 233)

MARCH 8—"God hath set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."—I Corinthians 12:18 (Z. '03-59 Hymn 21)

MARCH 15—"The just shall live by faith."—Hebrews 10:38 (Z. '95-92, 93 Hymn 197)

MARCH 22—"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."—I Corinthians 11:31, 32 (Z. '03-3, 4 Hymn 130)

MARCH 29—"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."—Ephesians 2:8 (Z. '03-90 Hymn 255)

CONVENTIONS

Full information concerning programs and room reservations can be obtained by writing to the name listed. An asterisk (*) indicates an immersion service is being planned.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, March 11—Southern Hotel, South High and East Main Streets. Mrs. Josephine Ewing, 273 South Algonquin Avenue, Columbus 4.

PHOENIXVILLE, PA., March 11—United Steelworkers Hall, 167 East Bridge Street. Mrs. William Geisinger, 835 North Hanover Street, Pottstown, Pa.

SAGINAW, MICH., March 11—The Woman's Club, 311 North Jefferson Street. Mrs. C. A. Sundbom, 207 Alice Street.

FORT WORTH, TEX., March 22-25—Camp Yo-Wo-Chi-A (YWCA Camp), near Lake Worth on Ten Mile Bridge Road, 3 miles northwest of Farm Road 1220. Mrs. G. B. Wilmott, 2406 Prairie, Fort Worth 6.

CHICAGO, ILL., March 25—Central Masonic Temple Building, 912 North LaSalle Street. Mr. George Tabac, 3936 North LeClaire Street, Chicago 41.

PITTSBURGH, PA., March 25—"Old Bible House," 610 Arch Street. Mr. John Baracos, 736 Dunster St., Pittsburgh 26.

PATERSON, N. J., March 31, April 1—YWCA Building, 185 Carroll Street. Mr. Michael Koterba, 29 Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Wallington, N. J.

*LAKELAND, FLA., March 31, April 1, 2—Florida Bible Students Annual Convention, Civic Center Theater, Lake Mirror Drive. For room reservations write to Mr. Stanley W. Jeuck, 1910 Hillcrest, Or-

lando. For any other information write to Mr. Jens Copeland, 546 84th Avenue North, St. Petersburg.

DETROIT, MICH., April 14, 15—North Rosedale Park Civic Association Bldg., Avon Road and Bretton. Mr. R. A. Rawson, 19050 Addison Ave., Southfield, Mich.

WILMINGTON, DEL., April 14, 15.

STEUBENVILLE, OHIO, April 22.

AKRON, OHIO, April 29—Sponsored by the Akron and Cleveland Ecclesias. Details later.

NEW ALBANY, IND., April 29.

NEW YORK, N. Y., April 29.

GARY, IND., May 5, 6.

KANSAS CITY, MO., May 5, 6.

VANCOUVER, B. C., May 19-21.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., May 20.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., May 20.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., May 27.

SAYVILLE, N. Y., May 30.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., May 30-June 3, Asilomar Convention Grounds, Pacific Grove, Calif.

YORK, PA., June 16, 17.

MONESSEN-WEST NEWTON, PA., June 17.

CHARLOTTE, N. C., June 23, 24.

MEMORIAL DATE: The Memorial Supper Date for 1962 is Tuesday evening, April 17.

GENERAL CONVENTION DATE: The General Convention for 1962 will be held in Bloomington, Indiana, beginning on Saturday, August 11, and continuing through Thursday, August 16.

An Excellent Gift
Especially for Children

GOD'S PROMISES COME TRUE

This is a book of Bible stories for children—forty-eight illustrated stories, many in two colors. The stories, beginning with creation and including the more important episodes recorded in both the Old and New Testaments, are told in a style which makes them easily understood by children, and also interesting to grown-ups. Above all, they are free from the traditional errors of the Dark Ages. This Gospel-pure book is appropriate for every gift occasion.

255 PAGES 7x10 INCHES, CLOTH BOUND \$2.00

The first of these "keys" to the Bible was written more than seventy-five years ago, the last in 1904. They continue to be the outstanding text books on the Bible for our day.

**Studies
in the
Scriptures**

- The Divine Plan of the Ages, cloth, 50 cents, ten or more 40 cents each; paper, 30 cents, ten or more 23 cents each.
 - The Time Is at Hand, cloth, 50 cents each.
 - Thy Kingdom Come, cloth, 50 cents each.
 - The Battle of Armageddon, cloth, 85 cents each.
 - The Atonement Between God and Man, cloth, 85 cents each.
 - The New Creation, cloth, 85 cents each.
- Question Books for Volumes 1-3, 10 cents each; Volumes 4-6, 15 cents each.

SIX VOLUMES, OVER 3,000 PAGES, CLOTH BOUND, \$3.75

to us the
SCRIPTURES
clearly teach

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

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

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

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

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

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