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Highlights of Dawn

The Voice of Trembling

THERE is one subject that should be of vital interest to every Jew, wherever domiciled, on which one would expect to find substantial agreement, and that is the matter of establishing a viable national existence in the land of Palestine. During the long centuries of their dispersion it was the ever-present vision of one day returning to his land that sustained the suffering Jew, as he endured the unending indignities and persecutions heaped upon him by the Gentiles.

But along in the 18th and 19th centuries, a change gradually developed in the attitude of many Jews regarding this long-held but elusive hope. For by then a certain amount of world tolerance toward the Jew had slowly come about; some became wealthy merchants and influential citizens in the countries in which they lived; a few even rose to high places in the governments of their adopted countries. As they thus gradually achieved greater social status and affluence, many Jews tended to become more American, or more British, or more French, and less Jew. And to the degree that they enjoyed this growing acceptance, and came into possession of more of the material good things of earth, to that degree, in the minds of some segments of Jewry, the urgency to create a national homeland in Palestine became less imperative.

In the United States, for instance, where the Jews have

come to enjoy significant social acceptance and economic security, there have arisen divergent views on this important subject. First of all, there have been the untiring promoters of the Zionist movement themselves, whose determination to found a national state of Israel in Palestine has never wavered. On the other hand, there is that considerable number of Jews who have gained a comfortable status in the social order for themselves and for their families, for whom the need for a national homeland has therefore become less compelling.

Judaism—Nationality, or Religion?

Further, there has been the religious fraternity of the Jews, who regard Judaism not as a nationality, but as a religion, which religion could and should be practised regardless of one's national attachment or geographical location. To be a Jew in this sense did not require that one must live in Palestine. And there were still other factions among the Jews who believed that there were ways to solve their special problems other than by founding a nation in the land of promise.

But since the Six-Day War of 1967, and especially since the Yom Kippur War of 1973, whose unsatisfactory termination served to raise serious questions in the minds of many Jews as to the future destiny of Israel, many of these diverse segments of Jewry have, surprisingly, set aside their individual viewpoints, and have joined in a mighty effort to support and preserve that beleaguered little nation. What has brought about this unexpected unity of effort? It is largely a fear—a real, tormenting, bottom-of-the-stomach fear.

Probably no other people in the history of mankind has passed through trials so deep, so discouraging, and so enduring as have the Jews. Their polity destroyed by the Roman legions in A.D. 70, driven from their ancient homeland to scratch a hazardous living in ghettos in hostile lands,

and persecuted beyond imagination, the simple fact of their existence today as a nation among nations is eloquent, living testimony to the faithfulness of Jehovah God, and to the trustworthiness of his Word of truth.

"Blindness . . . Is Happened to Israel"

And strangely enough, the real import of this astonishing fact is almost totally lost, not only upon the world in general, but upon the Jews themselves, who have been the principal actors in this great drama. For this little nation came into being, at long last, against all odds of probability. Almost certainly, any other people, after two thousand years of afflictions such as they suffered, would have been swallowed up and assimilated into the cultures of the countries to which they had been scattered. Nothing but the power and providences of God himself could have accomplished the preservation of their identity as a people.

But while the Jews themselves are largely blinded to the fact that even today the great God of the universe is directing their destiny, those whose hearts have been blessed with an understanding of God's great plan of the ages have their faith strengthened as they watch the unfolding of events in the troubled land of Palestine.

God's Promise to Abraham

The history of this remarkable people goes back some four thousand years to the time when God made a promise to their father Abraham, "Unto thy seed will I give this land." (Gen. 12:7) This was on the occasion of Abraham's having left his own country in Ur of the Chaldees, and gone to the unknown land to which the Lord directed him, the land of Canaan, later to be known as the land of Palestine.

While Abraham was dwelling in Canaan, the Lord repeated this promise, saying, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which

thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth." (Gen. 13:14-16) Again, when Abraham was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him, and once more definitely confirmed the promise. He said, "I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee . . . all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." (Gen. 17:8) On a still later occasion, after Abraham had demonstrated his faith by his willingness to offer his son Isaac in sacrifice, God made an additional remarkable promise to Abraham, to the effect that in his (Abraham's) seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed.—Gen. 22:18

Thereafter, God went to great lengths to assure the descendants of Abraham of his love and care for them. Over and over again he assured them that they were his people, and he their God. In the third month after he delivered them from bondage in Egypt, and they were to begin their long journey through the wilderness, he seemed especially anxious to assure them of his love and care for them as his very special people. "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself," he told them. "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of prietst, and an holy nation."—Exod. 19:5, 6

Even after repeated instances of faithlessness during the forty years' journey through the wilderness, and having arrived at Jordan before going into the promised land, God again spoke to them through Moses. "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are on the face of the earth." (Deut. 7:6) And a thousand years later, after numerous additional breaches of their covenant with him, God still loved and cherished them, though now he finds it necessary to correct them, as

a father disciplines unruly children. Through the Prophet Amos he talks to them, saying, "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." —Amos 3:1, 2

"Your House Is Left unto You Desolate"

Their final loss as a nation, because of their faithlessness, of their privileged status as a special treasure unto the Lord and as a kingdom of priests, occurred some seven centuries later when, in spite of the many signs that he was indeed the long-promised Messiah, the Seed of blessing, they rejected Jesus. It was Jesus himself, after the Jews as a whole had made clear their disbelief, who pronounced the words of doom upon their house. He said to them, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner; this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Then, as though signifying the sorrows that should later befall them, he added, "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. . . . And the chief priests and Pharisees . . . perceived that he spake of them." —Matt. 21:42-45

Shortly thereafter, Jesus announced their final national rejection. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." —Matt. 23:37-49

With what sorrow Jesus must have spoken these words concerning that people who had been Jehovah's special treasure! Surely the words of Moses must have passed through his mind: "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead him."

And yet these words of Moses' were not without a hint of the tragedy that, so long hence, was to take place. "Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee. . . . They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities; and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not [now] a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation."—Deut. 31:9-11, 18, 21

The Reward of Faithlessness

The Apostle Peter later enlarged on this theme, and showed that it is the called ones of the Gospel Age, both of Jews and Gentiles, who inherit the promises to be God's special treasure and kingdom of priests. He writes, "Unto you . . . which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed. But ye [footstep followers of Jesus of the Gospel Age] are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; . . . which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God."—I Pet. 2:7-9

Not long after Israel's final rejection as a nation Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, and the Jewish people

scattered among the nations of the world, while over the ensuing centuries the land of Palestine itself became subject in turn to Rome, the Moslems, Egypt, the Mamelukes, the Turks, and finally, in 1920, to Great Britain under a League of Nations mandate.

“What Is Our Iniquity?”

But this tragic outcome should not have been unforeseen by discerning Jews, for the Lord had repeatedly warned them of the terrible consequences of disobedience to their covenant. The Lord had said to the Prophet Jeremiah, “Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride. And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt show this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against the Lord our God? Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the Lord, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, . . . and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law, . . . therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night: where I will not show you favor.”—Jer. 16:9-13

Scattered Among the Nations

Much earlier, when the Israelites were about to cross Jordan into the promised land, Moses recited to them the manifold blessings that should be theirs if they kept their covenant with God. But he also pointed out to them the pains of disobedience, saying, “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.”

Then follows an awesome list of curses, including the statement that they shall “be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth; . . . and thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee. . . . And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the Lord thy God. . . . And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other.”—Deut. 28:1, 15, 25, 37, 62, 64

When Jacob went down into Egypt his entire family totaled just seventy souls. (Deut. 10:22) Some three hundred years later, on leaving Egypt, the number of males twenty years old and upward who were “able to go forth to war” amounted to a multitude of over six hundred thousand, not counting the tribe of Levi. This would suggest that, including all women and all those males under twenty years of age, the number of Israelites that left Egypt would approximate some 2,500,000 people! Truly, God’s promise to Abraham that his seed should be as the stars of heaven and as the sands of the seashore was abundantly fulfilled, even as the Apostle Paul later confirmed. No wonder Egypt’s king was alarmed at their presence in the land of Goshen! —Gen. 22:17; Num. 1:46; Deut. 10:22; Heb. 11:12; Exod. 1:7-12

There is no way, of course, to determine how many Jews there were at the time of their rejection of the Messiah and their subsequent scattering into the far nations of the earth; but we do know that they failed to keep their covenant with God, and it is therefore fair to assume that as a result their numbers were indeed reduced even as Moses had prophesied. We also know that, whereas in their relatively short stay of a few centuries in Egypt their numbers had increased from a mere seventy people to some two-and-a-half millions, yet in the following 4,400 years from that time to just prior to the Second World War they had grown only to about

16,000,000 in all the world, of which number some five to six millions later perished by massacre during the war.

We also know that the curses that were foretold to result from disobedience have fallen heavily upon that sorely oppressed people. It well may be that the sentiments of many Jews are truly reflected in the words of the Jewish milkman in the play, "Fiddler on the Roof," when he wistfully remarks, "Lord, we are the chosen people; but why don't you choose someone else for awhile?"

The Flickering Hope of a Homeland

Yet through all these agonizing centuries there was ever kept alight in the hearts of many Jews, albeit as a flickering flame, the hope of returning one day to the promised land. It sustained them in their afflictions, it kept them alive in their ghetto existence. Finally, beginning about the eighteenth century, (and no doubt because it was the due time in God's great plan), the door of hope began slightly to open, and in the late 1880's Jewish colonists began to trickle from Europe to Palestine, which was largely populated by hostile Moslem Arabs, to eke out a precarious existence.

Coinciding most wonderfully with the chronological end of the Times of the Gentiles, World War I began in 1914, resulting in another remarkable coincidence in that Palestine not many years thereafter came under control of Great Britain, whose Foreign Minister, Lord Balfour, issued the Balfour Declaration, whereby the British government pledged support to the Zionist hope of establishing a national home for the Jews in Palestine.

For those who entertained it, this hope was further strengthened in 1920, when Great Britain acquired Palestine as a mandate of the newly created League of Nations, and Jews in modest numbers found their way to that land. But when Hitler came into power in 1933, the frightful

persecutions that followed drove greater numbers to seek refuge in Palestine. Those who succeeded in doing so were the fortunate ones, for during the Second World War some five to six million Jews were cruelly massacred, constituting one of the blackest stains to foul the history of so-called human civilization since the world began.

In May of 1948, wearied and frustrated by continual procrastination, those Jews who were then living in Palestine took matters into their own hands and proclaimed the establishment of the State of Israel at Tel-Aviv, and immediately the surrounding Arab nations attacked the newborn country. But eventually Israel was successful in repelling the attackers, and even won some Arab territory. Since that time the Jews and Arabs have fought three more wars, in the last of which alone the Jews failed to gain a decisive victory. Now, at this very time, the United States and the Soviet Union are jointly engaged in efforts to disengage the armies of the contestants, with both sides very apprehensive.

What Kind of "Peace" Settlement?

World Jewry is watching the outcome of the present political maneuvering with bated breath, fearful that the United States, edgy and tormented under the dislocations and inconveniences brought on by the oil impasse, may force terms upon Israel which will leave her vulnerable to future attack by her enemies. For in spite of vague hints emanating from certain quarters of an Arab desire to reach a just and peaceful settlement with Israel, that nation is far from convinced that the Arabs have abandoned, or ever will abandon, their oft-stated intentions of one day driving the Jews into the sea.

It is precisely this frightening possibility that haunts the hearts of Jews everywhere in the world, including those in the United States. It is precisely this fear that Israel might indeed be destroyed that resulted in uniting all Jews

of whatever opinion in a spontaneous outpouring of support for the nation of Israel. For they firmly believe that if such a calamity should be permitted to come about, then no Jew would ever again be safe in any part of the world.

Thus it was that, at the time of the Six-Day War of 1967, and especially during and after the Yom Kippur War of 1973, Jews of every shade of thinking came together in hearty support of Israel by demonstrations, by offers to serve Israel in any capacity, even in the army, and by pouring great sums of money into the coffers of that nation in a mighty effort to preserve her national existence. For if Israel were allowed to disappear, they fear, then their own lives and the lives of their families would once more, as in the days of their worst persecutions, be in jeopardy. And as one considers the tragic history of this suffering people one can readily be sympathetic with their present dismay.

“The Time of Jacob’s Trouble”

That there would come such a time of deep anxiety for the Jewish people following their regathering to their own land is indicated by the Prophet Jeremiah. He writes, “For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord; and I will cause them to return to the land that I give to their fathers, and they shall possess it. . . . For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, there is fear, and not peace [margin]. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?” (Jer. 30:3, 5, 6) It would appear that we are now in the period described by the prophet.

But what kind of tomorrow may the Jews look forward to from this point? The prophet continues, “Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: It is even the time of Jacob’s trouble.” The Prophet Zechariah adds other details

concerning the terrible trouble yet to come upon Israel. We read, "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."—Zech. 14:1-2

The prophets both describe a time of great sorrow and suffering to come upon Israel. But just when all seems hopelessly lost, The Lord God comes to her aid. "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." (Zech. 14:3) Just as Jehovah God fought on the side of Israel when she was originally establishing a foothold in the land of Canaan, so will he defeat those enemies who come against her in these latter days.

"Fear thou not . . . O Israel"

Speaking of this time of Jacob's trouble, the Prophet Jeremiah adds, "But he shall be saved out of it." (Jer. 30:7) The same prophet then offers much hope and encouragement to Israel. "Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel," he writes. "For lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee; though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."—Jer. 30:10, 11

Thus Jehovah will clearly reveal both to Israel and to the world that he is the one Lord God Almighty, and that his promises are true, and his faithfulness everlasting.

Bible Study

LESSON FOR JUNE 2

A Church's Witness

MEMORY VERSE: "We give thanks to God . . . remembering . . . your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."—I Thessalonians 1:2, 3

I Thessalonians 1:1-10

THE church at Thessalonica was one of the first on European soil. Paul went to Thessalonica on the occasion of his first visit to Europe and, as was his custom, he went to the synagogue to present the truth first to the Jews. The account of this experience is given to us in Acts 17:3-9. The theme of the apostle's message was to prove to the Jews, by the Scriptures, that Messiah must first suffer and rise again from the dead before he came into his glory. Many believed, and the infant church at Thessalonica was founded.

Soon, however, "the Jews which believed not, moved with envy . . . set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason." (Acts 17:5) Jason was brought before a magistrate, who required a bond of him to insure no further trouble. To avoid further embarrassment to his friends the apostle moved on

to Berea.

It was the circumstances under which the apostle left Thessalonica that prevented him from returning for some time, and probably occasioned the remark that "we would have come unto you, . . . once and again, but Satan hindered us."—I Thess. 2:18

The infant church at Thessalonica, born in much tribulation and apparently having but a short period of time with the Apostle Paul, learned well the primary commission of the church during the Gospel Age. This commission is to witness to the Gospel. The responsibility of witnessing to the Gospel is not only that of the church as a body, but it originates with each individual member of the church.

In the very familiar passage of Scripture, Isaiah 61:1, 2, the prophecy states of Jesus, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good

tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn."

It was Jesus' faithfulness in preaching the Gospel as a witness, under very difficult and trying circumstances, that brought on his trials and eventually death on Golgotha's cross. These experiences were necessary for Jesus that he might be tried and tested beyond any question of a doubt. The Apostle Paul in Hebrews 5:8, 9 states, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Jesus' promise to his footstep followers is that they too will suffer as they endeavor to carry out their commission to witness to the Gospel, and serve the interests of the Heavenly Father. Jesus said to his disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."—Matt. 16:24

The brethren at Thessalonica must have benefited greatly by the example of the Apostle Paul in this respect. He had just come from Philippi, where

he had experienced persecution because of his witnessing there, and then had the experience at Thessalonica; but in spite of this he states, "For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit."—I Thess. 1:5, 6

With this example of faithfulness set before them, the brethren of Thessalonica were inspired with zeal for service in the Lord's vineyard. They knew from experience that their activity would bring difficulties and trials, but they were undaunted in their efforts, and because of this they were blessed by the Lord.

Their desire to serve individually must have also motivated them to co-operate as a group, realizing that the united effort of the group directed toward the one goal of witnessing to the Gospel would make their effort more effective. Therefore, as a church, they co-operated in sending forth capable brethren to bear witness to the Gospel in many lands, moving the great Apostle Paul to say, "Your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything."

The Church's Ministry

MEMORY VERSE: "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you."—I Thessalonians 3:12

I THESSALONIANS 2 AND 3

THE previous lesson showed that it was God's design that the church should witness, and that this witnessing would bring about suffering. Our present lesson shows in some detail how the ministry of the church should be conducted.

In introducing the lesson, the apostle states, "We waxed bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel in much conflict. For our exhortation is not error, nor uncleanness, nor in guile: but even as we have been approved of God to be entrusted with the Gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men,

but God which proveth our hearts."—I Thess. 2:2-4, R.V.

To be approved of God for the ministry is a great blessing, that carries with it both responsibilities and privileges. Approval is subsequent to our anointing of the Holy Spirit and the enlightenment of mind. The Apostle Paul states in I Corinthians 2:4-7, "It was in weakness and fear and with great trembling that I visited you; what I said, what I preached, did not rest on any plausible arguments of 'wisdom', but on the proof supplied by the Spirit and its power, so that your faith might

not rest on any human 'wisdom' but on the power of God." (Moffatt) And again in II Corinthians 5:18-20, "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation . . . and hath committed [placed in] unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ."

This is a staggering thought—that the church in its ministry speaks on behalf of God; that the Gospel, the good news of the kingdom, and the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, constitute a mystery revealed to those to whom the ministry is entrusted.

It is not without reason, therefore, that the apostle emphasizes the manner in which their ministry was conducted. He says that it was not of deceit (or error), which means that the doctrines that they taught were pure and not a mixture containing the ideas or precepts of men.

The ministry was not conducted with uncleanness; that is, impure motives of self-interest. He was not deceiving and flattering with secret motives of covetousness. The Greeks were familiar with such conduct on the part of traveling lecturers and intellectuals, who beguiled audiences for the fees that they could extract. The very opposite was the case with the Apostle Paul.

In verse 9 he states, "For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you." While as a minister of the Lord he could have expected to be given his sustenance. (I Cor. 9:13) But rather than be a burdan, or be accused of covetousness, he worked at his trade as a tent-maker to support himself. His conduct as a minister was blameless.

But yet another and equally important part of the ministry is expressed in the memory verse. It is love for the brethren, and the manifestation of that love by works, that constitute in a large measure the Christian sacrifice. As the apostle says, "So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us."—I Thess. 2:8

The thought is that they were willing to lay down their very lives in service to the brethren. This service was accomplished by giving personal care and attention to every individual convert separately; ministering to their individual needs "as a father doth his children"; exhorting to arouse a sense of duty, and encouraging to cheer them with the respect of a faithful performance.

Christ's Coming, Our Hope

MEMORY VERSE: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—I John 3:2

I THESSALONIANS 4 and 5

SOME of the most valuable lessons that we get from the Apostle Paul's writings are the result of difficulties, errors, or misunderstandings in the churches. This is true of our lesson today.

The theme of the apostle's message was the return of the Lord and the establishing of the kingdom. Apparently the brethren at Thessalonica were imbued with the same zeal for the kingdom and the return of the Lord, but all the more so because they believed that it was near—indeed even at the door. It was their erroneous belief also that only the living members of the church would enjoy the reward of faithfulness. The problem

had become acute when some members of the church had died. And so the apostle, in verses 13-18, endeavors to correct this false concept.

First he says that they are sorrowing for their deceased brethren as the world would sorrow; that is, as those having no hope. This is in error, because we have a hope—a hope that is oblivious of death because we believe in the resurrection of the dead. This hope of a resurrection is centered in Jesus, and the fact that he died and rose again. The brethren who have died are asleep in Jesus; that is, because they have accepted Jesus as their Savior and have walked in his footsteps, sharing his suffering, their hope is

still alive even though they are asleep in death, for they sleep until Jesus returns, and at that time the power of God is exercised and the sleeping saints are resurrected to the divine nature, and will accompany Jesus at his presence. vs. 13, 14

In verse 15 the apostle clarifies the order in which the saints shall be glorified. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep."

The key word in this text is "prevent." The Greek word is "phthano," which means anticipate or precede. The thought of the text, then, is that "we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord do not precede them which are asleep." In fact, says the apostle, when the Lord comes, God himself will take an active hand in the affairs of men.

We, as Bible students, have come to recognize this time as the Day of Jehovah—a time when God, exercising his power through Jesus, would prepare the world for the establishment of his kingdom. Little did the Apostle Paul realize that this day would be nearly 2,000 years thence; for the evidence of the fulfillment of prophecies, and the conditions in the world today

pinpoint this time as being in our day. At this time, the apostle says, "the dead in Christ will rise first."—vs. 16

Then the apostle deals with those of the church who are alive at this time, and he says, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Some use this text to teach the "rapture," but the key to a proper understanding rests in the word "together." In this instance it is an adverb modifying the verb "caught up," and as an adverb, according to Strong's Concordance, it means "also." The emphasis then is not on time, but on the place to where they are caught up. The same word is used in the fifth chapter, verse 10, with the same emphasis on place rather than time.

In other words, those who are alive will be gathered to the same place—in the air, or in the heavenlies, with the Lord. The apostle, in I Corinthians 15:51, 52, states that those who are alive will be changed in a "twinkling of an eye." The thought is that as each living member goes beyond the veil he is changed immediately, and gathered together with the Lord and the risen saints.

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

The Christian Hope and the Daily Task

MEMORY VERSE: "Be not weary in well-doing."

—II Thessalonians 3:13

II THESSALINIANS 2:1, 2;
3:6-16

IN OUR lesson the apostle emphasizes the glaring mistake of the brethren at Thessalonica with the respect to the coming (parousia—presence) of the Lord. This mistake had led to other errors that had an adverse effect on their Christian life, and thus it became a serious matter with Paul.

In an effort to correct this error the apostle reminds the brethren of some things that they already knew from his past ministry—that there must be a series of things come to pass before the parousia. First, there must be a great falling away; and then, the rising to power of the man of sin; and finally, a general condition of unbelief and a time of judgment of the ungodly.

None of these things had come to pass, and therefore

their expectation about the presence of Christ was unfounded. But even though this was a disappointment, the apostle admonishes them not to lose their confidence, but to "stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."—II Thess. 2:15

The point of the apostle's emphases is that nothing should weigh against the facts—that they should not be "shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter . . . as that the day of Christ is at hand," (II Thess. 2:2) but with calmness of mind observe the times and seasons and direct their efforts toward establishing themselves in the faith and "in every good word and work."

The belief in the imminent return of Christ and the establishment of the kingdom had a

very adverse effect upon a particular group of brethren. These neglected their daily work, depending for their support upon the generosity of their brethren. They were idlers, going about making trouble, interfering in the affairs of others.

Although impelled by an enthusiasm for the kingdom, nevertheless their motive was wrong, because this kind of behavior was directly opposed to the teaching of the Gospel, which requires a Christian to manifest a spirit of sacrifice and a desire to serve rather than be served. Their conduct represented a worldly or carnal spirit, which shows itself in selfishness and a desire to be served.

It was to set a good example that the apostle, when he was with them, supported himself. "For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you: neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us."—Thess. 3:7-9

This same spirit of worldiness was manifested among the disciples when James and John were seeking a preferred position in the kingdom (Mark 10:35-40), and Jesus admon-

ished his disciples, "But whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—Mark 10:43-45

The Apostle John, in I John 3:16, welds Jesus' statement into the life pattern of the true Christian: "Hereby perceive we the love . . . because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

This is why we have been called; that we might lay our lives down in serving the brethren and the Lord, and his truth. And if faithful in this, the Heavenly Father accounts such a dedicated life as an acceptable sacrifice and part of the offering for sin. The Apostle Paul expresses his life of sacrifice for the brethren thus: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church."—Col. 1:24

The apostle's concern over the beginning of a worldly attitude among some of the brethren is understandable and his admonition to the faithful, "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing." is more meaningful to us.—2 Thes. 3:13

God's Redeeming Grace

MEMORY VERSE: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence."—Ephesians 1:7, 8

EPHESIANS 1:1-14

FOR a proper understanding of many of the texts in the New Testament it is necessary to consider to whom the passage is addressed. In this instance the epistle is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." The words of the apostle, then, are not addressed to the world, nor even to Christians in name only, but to those who are laying down their lives in sacrifice and have taken up their crosses, endeavoring to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

The warmth of feeling, the free outpouring of thought, and the union in spiritual privileges is a reflection of the close association that Paul had with the brethren at Ephesus. He knew each one individually and per-

sonally, and therefore could call them "saints" and "the faithful in Christ Jesus."

The apostle states that they, with him, have been "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," (verse 3) and as we read the context of the chapter we find that the reason for all of the blessings and privileges that they enjoyed (and that we also can enjoy if we are of the faithful in Christ Jesus) is that God had planned it so from the beginning: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—verse 4

The Heavenly Father, the great Creator of the universe, had planned to have a group of faithful brethren who would be associated with him as sons,

holy and blameless, and made acceptable through the beloved. Herein lies the wonderous grace of God, for it is only by being brought out from under adamic condemnation that any could stand before God "holy and blameless," and receive of these boundless blessings.

In Romans, the 5th chapter, verses 7-11, the apostle says, "for scarcely for a righteous man will one die. . ." The thought is that in the worldly arrangement one would be hard pressed to find someone who would die even for a righteous man; but God proves his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

The human race inherited the condemnation of their father Adam. (Rom. 5:18) He was perfect in the Garden of Eden, with a capacity for perfect obedience. He wilfully chose to disobey God (I Tim. 2:14), and because of this disobedience the death penalty was passed upon him. Adam was also the father of the human race, and therefore all of his offspring inherited Adam's penalty—death.—Rom. 5:12; I Cor. 15:21

In order to lift condemnation from the human race it was necessary that a perfect man take Adam's place in death. Jesus was this perfect man, and when he died on Calvary's cross, he provided the means for lifting adamic condemnation from all of Adam's offspring (Rom. 5:18, 19; I Cor. 15:21, 22), but all in

due time.—I Tim 2:6

Until this "due time"—the time of the thousand years of Christ's kingdom—the merit provided by Jesus' death is made available during the Gospel Age to the footstep followers of Jesus for the purpose of justification. (Rom. 5:9-11, Eph. 1:7) It is because the true Christian has been justified that he can stand before God "holy and without blame." And it is because of this justification that the true Christian can be a son of God, and have the glorious prospect of an inheritance with our Lord in the kingdom.

God's redeeming grace, thus expressed in its fulness, is beyond the human mind to grasp or appreciate, and so he has given us an earnest of our inheritance in that we have been "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13, 14), giving our minds a new dimension, enabling us to discern and to appreciate spiritual things as revealed in the promises of God to his people.

"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

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2—"Divine Healing"

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16—"The Judgment Day"

23—"What Is Death?"

30—"This Gospel of the Kingdom"

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Ancient Worthies

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: . . . God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Hebrews 11:1, 2, 39, 40

IN THE eleventh chapter of Hebrews we have an account of the deeds of some of the "heroes of faith" who lived in past ages. Faith is the foundation requisite that leads to God. We know that without faith it is impossible to please God in any age. We know that no work is acceptable to God unaccompanied by faith. According to Scripture, between creation and today there are two groups of men and women who have exercised supreme faith in God. Both of these groups are well-pleasing to the Heavenly Father. Both will be highly rewarded for their faith and their faithfulness.

One of these groups existed before Pentecost. They are known as the Ancient Worthies. The other has existed since Pentecost. They are known as the church of God. Christendom is almost entirely ignorant of the division of these two groups. The Ancient Worthies is a "truth" subject; others not in the truth know very little about them. An appreciation of the Ancient Worthies and their reward is peculiar to those who understand the important doctrine of the ran-

som, the philosophy of the ransom and the application of the merit of the ransom.

Let us consider the Ancient Worthies. These saints of the Old Testament, these holy and consecrated men and women who lived and died before the days of the spiritual seed; these Ancient Worthies whose experiences of faith help us in our faith, in our providences; these men of God, some of whom are referred to in II Peter 1:21 as "holy men of God who spake and wrote as they were moved by the Spirit of God," are a grand example for us.

The first of the Ancient Worthies was Abel. The last was John the Baptist. Certainly John the Baptist was an Ancient Worthy, for the "Law and the prophets were until John," the Master said; and in Hebrews we are told that the prophets are included among the Ancient Worthies.—(Heb. 11:32)

The church is composed of men and women. So also are the Ancient Worthies—Rahab, Sarah, the Shunammite woman, Moses' mother, are some of the women. Hebrew 11:23 reads, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the King's commandment." Thus we know that Moses' mother and father both were Ancient Worthies. We also know that the prayers of the Ancient Worthies were heard by God. There were many nominal believers then, just as there are many nominal believers now. There were relatively few faithful then, and there are comparatively few faithful today. From Abel to John the Baptist the Ancient worthies were God's faithful of that period, as the faithful of the Gospel church of Christ have been from Pentecost until their glorification.

We do not know how many Ancient Worthies were faithful in those days. Their number has not been recorded. Hebrews, eleventh chapter, names twenty to thirty persons while alluding to others. But this is only a summary.

Paul says time would fail him to name them all. From Hebrews 11:32-38 we must conclude that the number will be large, certainly large enough to do their assigned work, which will be to administer the New Covenant throughout all the earth as the earthly representatives of the Mediator of the New Covenant. That will be their work and it will be given to no one else. The kingdom work will be vast. Billions of people all over the earth will have to be dealt with. So it seems that the Ancient Worthies will have to be a large class to accomplish their duties.

One of the reasons an understanding of the Ancient Worthies is important is that without a knowledge of God's dealing with this group one cannot understand the divine plan of the ages in its fulness. Even the reward of the Ancient Worthies is related to an understanding of other doctrines. No wonder the nominal church is confused. The Master said that in his time "no man hath ascended into heaven." Where, then, were these faithful ones? We are not at a loss. We know where they are, and how God will raise them from the sleep of death and reward them.

Some of the Ancient Worthies were tried more than we have ever been. But the Lord guided them and gave them strength to endure. So this is another lesson for us. He has promised to give strength. His arm is not shortened. His promises are as sure to us now as they were then. Faith is necessary to make our call and election sure. We can hardly speak of faith without referring to these examples of faith. They stimulate our faith. Daniel is but one example. Do we "dare to be a Daniel"? His experience should be a source of our spiritual courage, and we need courage every day.

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame,

and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” —Heb. 12:1-3

The knowledge of God's dealings with the Ancient Worthies should be a real inspiration to us, even as is the life of Jesus. Their lives describe faith in action. Let us learn from them. May our lives also demonstrate faith in action. Psalm 22:4 reads: “Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.” May this assurance be ours today! For remember, the arm of the Lord is not shortened.

There are many pictures in the Bible that show a close and beautiful association and communion between the church and the Ancient Worthies during the Millennial Age. Jacob's ladder dream is one of these. Genesis 28:10-15 tells of the dream and of the angels ascending and descending. You know the story. You can make the application. It is a beautiful one, isn't it? The close association of David and Jonathan may also picture this close relationship.

Isaiah 32:1 reads: “A king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.” Do not pass over this text quickly. The Christ is the King upon the throne. The Ancient Worthies are “princes in all the earth.” This text emphasizes their close co-operation in the work of the day of judgment.

Again, Psalm 45:16: “Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.” Here we are taught that the Ancient Worthies will be the children of the Christ. Again this shows a close and beautiful relationship in the work and in the family of God.

There has been discussion among Bible students as to whether the Ancient Worthies will have their faith further tested during the future Millennial Age. Let us look at some scriptures that bear on this point. First, of course, we have Hebrew 11:39, 40: “And these all, having obtained [past

(Continued on page 34)

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(Continued from page 31)

tense] a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

Also, in Hebrews 12:23 we have a text which we believe refers to the Ancient Worthies as "just men, made perfect." They were justified to friendship with God, and therefore, may be described as "just men."

In Acts 24:15 we read of the "resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." The Ancient Worthies are spoken of as just. This separation is also made in John 5:28, 29 where we read, "They that have done good unto resurrection of life: and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment," or trial, testing.

The Ancient Worthies certainly "did good." We cannot put them in the class who "did evil" and who will come up through judgments, can we? "They that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life," says Jesus. Surely this includes the Ancient Worthies.

Revelation 11:18 is interesting: "And the time of the dead that they should be judged and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets and to the saints and them that fear thy name." Here the reward for doing good is mentioned.

Then there are Luke 14:14, Matthew 16:27, and others. All these texts would seem to teach that the Ancient Worthies have passed their test; that they were faithful until their death. Certainly they were tried under severe circumstances. That is why we call them the Ancient Worthies, because they are worthy. Of course, they will go through the test at the end of the Millennial Age even though their judgment day is past.

Here is another Ancient Worthy text: Luke 13:28: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in

the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Verse 29: "And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God."

The unfaithful nominal house of the Jewish nation of Israel, like the unfaithful leaders of today, will give place to the Ancient Worthies in the Kingdom. But note, the Ancient Worthies will be "in the kingdom of God." This emphasizes again the close association of the church with the Ancient Worthies. They will be "in" the kingdom; that is, as a part of the administration of the kingdom; as associates rather than as the subjects of the kingdom such as those who come from the east and west and north and south. We also read of these that they sit down in the kingdom of God.

And here is another text, familiar to us all,—Acts 15:16, 17. Here we are told of the re-establishing of the house of David as the reigning house. As "princes" in all the earth, the Ancient Worthies are a part of the reigning house. Verse 17 speaks of the "residue of men" who may seek after the Lord.

A question often asked is, "Will the Ancient Worthies need a mediator during the millennial reign?" Of course we know that the Heavenly Father has placed the administration of the kingdom in the hands of the Mediator; that is, in the hands of the Christ, Head and body.

The work of the mediatorial reign will be to bring man into harmony with God,— Jew and Gentile. The Ancient Worthies will be instrumental in this. They will be "in" the kingdom, in its administration. In answer to the question, we say they will not need a Mediator but they will be under the Mediator as earthly representatives, responsible to the Mediator and under the supervision of the Mediator. Even so, none will have direct access to God, even though perfect men, expect through the Mediator, until the kingdom is

handed over to God at the very end of the little season following the Millennial Age.

What about Samson? In the last act of his life he destroyed thousands of persons. No, Samson was not perfect, but neither was David, nor any of the others. Neither are we. But God dealt with Samson, and we know he is one of the Ancient Worthies. We know, that is, that "he pleased God." We know, therefore, he was a "man of faith," for without faith it is impossible to please God. For many years he was a faithful judge. So from this standpoint we should respect him. He received a good report from God.

Regarding those slain when he died, remember that Samson did not slay them. It was the Lord who gave him strength, and the Lord would not have done so unless it was his will. A realization of this should temper our attitude toward Samson. Read the account in Judges, chapters 13 to 17. Also, remember that the Philistines were engaged in an orgy of idolatry to Dagon at the time of their destruction. Idolatry and making sport of an Ancient Worthy caused God to destroy them.

Think of the role these men will play as visible representatives of the kingdom; as "princes in all the earth." In the exercise of the power and authority of their office they will assist the Christ in the noble work of elevating the human race. Isaiah 1:25-27 reads, "And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness."

Connect verse 26, "Thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city" with Revelation 21:2, "The holy city coming down from God," and with "the law shall go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jeru-

salem," because these texts combine to show the two phases of the kingdom. Remember Isaiah 32:1, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Judges, counsellors, administrators, educators, turning many to righteousness; having power to read motives and intents of the heart, closely associated with the Mediator and the result: Psalm 45:17, "Therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever."

Under what covenant do the Ancient Worthies receive life? The New Covenant is the only source of everlasting human life. So we conclude that they receive life under the New Covenant even though they assist in its administration. This conclusion is supported by the text, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children," which proves that the Ancient Worthies are the children of Christ and the church and, therefore, children of the New Covenant.

Certainly we know of no scripture that gives a heavenly hope to the Ancient Worthies. Hebrews 11:9, 10, 13-16 reads, "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. . . . These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

Abraham looked for a city. That is, he looked forward to that city, the New Jerusalem, the church. For until the church class is complete, Abraham could not have the

blessing of the kingdom. Verses 13 to 16 tell us that these worthy ones saw the fulfilment of the promises "afar off"; that is, beyond their lifetime. None of the Ancient Worthies were in harmony with the evil order in which they lived. They were pilgrims and strangers, "of whom the world was not worthy." But they wanted a country ruled from heaven, and God has provided that country; has promised that kingdom through the heavenly millennial mediatorial reign of Christ and the church: "They without us should not be made perfect." "Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad." Jesus said these words. What did he mean? What and when is Christ's day?

Another interesting correlation of texts is found in I Peter 1:4, "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you," or as the margin says, "for us." And verses 10 to 12, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." Certainly they did not expect a heavenly reward.

Our Master said concerning John the Baptist, the last of the prophets, and therefore an Ancient Worthy, "The least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he." How long will this text remain true? Our Master gave it no time limit.

I Corinthians 15:37, 38: "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." They are not begotten and developed as is the spiritual seed. Psalm

112:5, 6: "A good man showeth favor, . . . he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he will not be removed for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

The Ancient Worthies, like the rest of perfect humanity, no doubt, will be more than satisfied with their reward. Even after the Millennial Age, yea forever, the earth will need administrators, and this is the reward of these faith heroes, these men of old, these princes in all the earth, according to any promises we can find in the Bible.

Hebrews 12:1: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Let us consider these Ancient Worthies—how they demonstrated their loyalty; how they proved their devotion—so that we also may endure in faith and devotion, and receive our reward, rejoicing in the privilege of having associated with us these princes "in the kingdom of God."

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

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Sacrifice in the Plan of God

THE subject of sacrifice is a very prominent one in the Word of God. It is introduced early in the Book of Genesis, and continues to be mentioned throughout the Scriptures, including the Book of Revelation. In presenting the details pertaining to this subject in the plan of God, sometimes the word "offering" is used instead of sacrifice. This is the case in Genesis where the offerings of Cain and Abel are brought to our attention. (Gen. 4:3-5) Abel presented a flesh and blood offering to the Lord, while Cain, whose offering was not accepted, offered the fruit of the field. Commenting on this Paul said, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."—Heb. 11:4

Many sacrifices recorded in the Scriptures were presented on altars especially prepared for the purpose. The first mention of this is in Genesis 8, verses 20 and 21: "And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savor."

Abraham's Offering

We have another reference to an altar and to an offering recorded in Genesis, chapter 22. It is the account of Abraham offering up his son Isaac as a burnt offering to the Lord. We quote: "And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid

the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." —vss. 9-12

The slaying of the Passover lamb was also in the nature of a sacrifice, although no altar is mentioned in connection with this offering. The lamb was slain, his blood sprinkled upon the lintels and door posts of the home, and its flesh was eaten. This sacrifice opened the way for the exodus of Israel from the land of Egypt.

The Lamb of God

In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah Jesus, the world's Redeemer and Savior, is symbolically described as a lamb—a lamb which was led to the slaughter without protest. When John the Baptist introduced Jesus to his disciples he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."—John 1:29

The slain lamb symbolism of sacrifice on the part of Jesus is continued in the Book of Revelation. This Lamb is shown on Mount Sion and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. These are described as those who follow the Lamb [in sacrifice] whithersoever he goeth." Rev. 14:1, 4, 5

Other Symbols

While the slain lamb symbolism, as it pertains to sacrifice in the plan of God, is thus seen to run throughout the Scriptures, other symbols are also used. This is particularly true in connection with the services of the tabernacle in

the wilderness—services, the significance of which were so important that any disobedience to God's commands concerning them was punishable by death. The Apostle Paul refers to the tabernacle and its services as being "shadows of good things to come."

Various Sacrifices

One of the principal services of the tabernacle was conducted on Israel's atonement day. It consisted basically of the offering of a bullock and a goat in sacrifice. These were called sin-offerings. In addition to the sin-offerings,—which were brought to the Lord under the arrangements of the tabernacle,—were burnt offerings, peace offerings, meat offerings, and trespass offerings.

The scriptural account of the atonement-day sacrifices carried out in the typical tabernacle is found in Leviticus, chapter 16. We wish to call special attention to the sacrifice of the bullock and the sacrifice of the goat. These are identified in the Book of Hebrews, and here the apostle shows that Christ fulfils the antitype of these typical sin-offerings. We read, "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:11-14) And then again Paul said, "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou

hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."—Heb. 10:4-10

There can be no doubt about the meaning of these scriptures, although we do need to read them with understanding. For example, the statement is made that the high priest entered into the holy of the tabernacle once with the blood of the sin-offering. The apparent reference is to the fact that this ceremony was carried out once each year. It was not something that was repeated every day or every month. Actually, however, on Israel's day of atonement the high priest entered into the holy of the tabernacle twice—once with the blood of the bullock and once with the blood of the goat, and this blood he sprinkled upon the mercy seat as an atonement.

The blood of the bullock and that of the goat was the only blood in the typical tabernacle arrangements which was taken into the most holy and sprinkled on the mercy seat for sin. In Leviticus 6:30 we read, "No sin offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire." The priests and the Levites who conducted Israel's religious affairs were given no inheritance in the land. They depended upon the other tribes to supply them with the needs of life, including food, and one of the ways they obtained food was by eating the carcasses of animals which had been offered in sacrifice. But here we are informed that they were not permitted to do this in the case of the animals whose blood was taken into the Most Holy for sin.

This feature of God's typical tabernacle arrangements is also mentioned by Paul in the Book of Hebrews. We quote: "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." (Heb. 13:10-13) Here again Jesus is identified as the antitype of the atonement-day sacrifice of Israel. Here we are given the additional information that we who are following in the footsteps of Jesus also share in the lesson of the type. Jesus suffered without the gate, and we are admonished to go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

Sharing with Jesus

The general teachings of the New Testament with respect to the relationship of Jesus and his followers bear out this same thought. Jesus invited his followers to deny themselves and to take up their cross and follow him. In Jesus' day the Romans used crucifixion for inflicting the death sentence. Those condemned to death were often compelled to carry their own cross from the judgment hall to the place of crucifixion. This was true in the case of Jesus, although he was so weak that he needed help. To see anyone carrying a cross, followed by soldiers and others, meant that he was on the way to death.

Jesus carried his literal cross only a few moments, but actually he was on the way to death from the time of his baptism until he cried on the cross, "It is finished." And it was this symbolic cross that he invited his disciples to carry. In other words, he invited them to die with him, to share with him in sacrifice and suffering. Paul wrote, "I am crucified with Christ."—Gal. 2:20

Suffering and Glory

The Apostle Peter, referring to the prophetic testimony concerning the suffering of Christ, wrote that the Holy Spirit had "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (I Pet. 1:11) In Colossians 1:24 the Apostle Paul explains that the followers of Jesus fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ. This indicates that the foretold sufferings of Christ referred to by Peter were not completed on Calvary; that is, followers share in this foretold suffering.

The Apostle Peter refers to this a number of times—sometimes by using the word suffering, sometimes by using the word sacrifice as in chapter 2, verse 5. In this verse the followers of Jesus are described as a priesthood, and the chief function of the typical priesthood was to offer sacrifices. In I Peter 2:9 Peter also refers to the church as a priesthood. I Peter 4:12, 13 reads, "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."

A fuller explanation as to the quality of this offering and its purpose is also given by Peter. We quote: "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (I Pet. 3:17, 18) This text is highly revealing. It states plainly that if we suffer for well-doing, it will be looked upon as the same type of suffering as that endured by Christ, and for the same purpose; that purpose being for sins—"For Christ ALSO hath once suffered for sins."

Paul's Further Testimony

The Apostle Paul had this thought clearly in mind, and

spoke of it in his epistles a number of times. We read, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8:16-18) Earlier in this same epistle Paul wrote, "know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Rom. 6:3-5) And again, "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."—Rom. 6:8-12

The fact that we are in the likeness of Jesus' death is an important point which is made by Paul in the 6th chapter of Romans: In the 11th verse two key words are used which should not be overlooked. One is "likewise," the other is "reckon." The preceding verse tells us that Jesus died unto sin once—Rotherham says "once for all"—and then Paul says "likewise"; that is, our death is also unto sin even as Jesus' death was. Jesus was never a sinner himself. He did not die unto sin in the sense that he overcame sin in his own body. He died unto sin because he died on account of the sins of the whole world. And Paul says, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin."

There is no misunderstanding the meaning of this language! The word reckon should also be given its full weight of meaning in this connection. We are not dead unto sin sacrificially because we are entirely free from sin ourselves, but Paul authorizes us to reckon it this way because our imperfect sacrifice is made perfect through the shed blood of Jesus. That is why we can present our bodies, imperfect as they are, as living sacrifices, with the assurance that in God's sight they are holy and acceptable.

Our Participation

Our participation in the sacrificial work of Christ, our being planted together in the likeness of his death, adds nothing to the ransom feature of Jesus' work. The likeness is not in what is accomplished by Jesus' sacrifice and what is accomplished by ours, but in the fact that his sacrifice was voluntary and sacrificial, and our sacrifice is voluntary and sacrificial and made acceptable to God by the merit of his blood.

A simple illustration might help at this point. We might think of a patient in a hospital, threatened with death by cancer. There is only one person who can prevent this, and that person is a qualified surgeon. The surgeon removes the cancer. No one else could do that. But from this point onward the internes and the nurses and the orderlies, and all who participate in any way in the work of the hospital, have a share in nursing that patient back to health. So Jesus made possible the removal of the cancer of sin through his ransom sacrifice; but his followers have the privilege also of laying down their lives, and in due time will share in the privilege of nursing the world of mankind back to health.

Returning to the 13th chapter of Hebrews, where Paul admonishes us to go to Jesus without the camp, bearing his reproach, we are not only reminded that we have the privilege of sharing in the sin-offering type, but as Paul

continues in this chapter he reminds us of other features of the atonement-day sacrifices. Verse 15 reads, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Paul's reference here to the sacrifice of praise might well be based upon the offering of the incense on the golden altar within the tabernacle. He describes it as the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks in his name.

But what does this really mean in the practical sense of the word? It is interesting and encouraging to have the apostle interpret for us the meaning of the praise sacrifice on the day of atonement, but to bring this knowledge right down to a practical force in our own lives, what does it imply? Paul seems to answer this question in verse 16, where we read, "For to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well-pleased." God was not always well-pleased with the tabernacle sacrifices of bulls and goats, but he is well-pleased if we understand the lesson which these sacrifices teach; namely, that we are to lay down our lives not on literal altars, but in doing good and communicating blessings to others. The truth is the greatest source of blessing we can communicate, but we are not to close our hearts to needs along other lines, especially among the brethren, for as Paul says, "With such sacrifices God is well-pleased." A thought similar to this is presented to us in Galatians 6:7-10: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Thus seen, our sacrifice is indeed on behalf of others, and made

acceptable through the blood of Christ. When Jesus instituted the memorial supper he explained that the cup represented his blood, and he invited his disciples to partake of this. Under the Jewish law the penalty of death was imposed upon those who drink blood, but here Jesus is inviting his disciples to drink of his blood with the thought that they will have his life. It is his life, inspiring them to sacrifice, which makes their sacrifice acceptable. How precious indeed is the blood of Christ, and all the divine arrangements for carrying out his plan, but thrice precious is his blood to us when we realize that through it we can participate in Jesus' sacrifice; that the receiving of it leads unto sacrificial death, but if we are faithful, will be followed by glory, honor, and immortality.



PASSED OVER. During April two faithful co-workers in the Lord's vineyard passed to their reward. One of these was Brother Charles Cornell, well-known in the truth movement in England. Brother Cornell served many of the brethren in the United States and Canada as a pilgrim. He will be greatly missed in his home class, which was the Aldersbrook Ecclesia. In addition to his wife, Brother Cornell is survived by two daughters, Mrs Ruth Shear and Mrs. Eunice Turner. Our sympathy goes out to Sister Cornell and her daughters at this time of their great loss.

Brother Daniel J. Morehouse of Chicago also passed beyond the veil in April. Brother Morehouse was immersed in 1905, and served the Lord faithfully in many capacities. He will be well-remembered by the brethren generally from his service as a pilgrim and as a member for many years of the program committee of the Bible Students General Convention. In addition to Sister Morehouse, he is survived by his daughter, Mrs. Violet Jurek. Our sympathy goes out to Sister Morehouse and her daughter in this time of their great need. We rejoice with all the brethren who finish their earthly course, but realize that it leaves a void in the lives of their loved ones who are still in the pilgrim way.

The British Section

"The Counsel of His Own Will"

THE Scriptures show that for more than eighteen centuries, dating from the death of Jacob, God's favour was confined to his descendants, the nation of Israel, down to the coming, and Israel's rejection, of their Messiah. When Jesus came he began to fulfil the prophecies relating to Messiah, as well as giving other evidence that he was the One that was to come: but as the scripture says, Israel "knew not the time of their visitation." And as we again read: "Because they knew . . . not . . . the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them by condemning him."—Acts 13:27

Nearly five centuries prior to the coming of Israel's Messiah and the world's Saviour, God saw fit to give a prophecy to Daniel which indicated the exact year in which Messiah would appear. He said to Daniel, "From the going forth

of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince [that is, unto the anointing of Jesus, which constituted him the Messiah, the Anointed] shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks. (Dan. 9:25) This command was given by Artaxerxes, the ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire, where many Jews were still in captivity in 454 B. C. (Neh. 2:1-8), and reckoning on the basis of a day for a year (compare Ezek. 4:6), the 69 weeks or 483 years (69x7=483) brings us to the very year our Lord began his public ministry; namely, A. D. 29 (454 B. C. plus 483 years—A. D. 29). In the midst of the last week of seven years (Dan. 9:24, 27), Jesus was "cut off"—crucified.

Because they crucified the One sent to them as their Saviour, the exclusive favor of God which Israel had enjoyed for eighteen centuries was

taken away. Nevertheless, the apostles and other Jewish disciples of Jesus, for another three-and-a-half years, in order to complete the 70 weeks, or 490 years of favour, preached exclusively to their own countrymen. However, as the majority continued to reject the message of salvation, we have the statement of the apostles, "Seeing ye . . . judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life [and other blessings Messiah came to offer], lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46) And so, three-and-a-half years from our Lord's crucifixion the first Gentile, Cornelius, came into relationship with God, and was accepted by him as a son, and a member of the church of Christ. This acceptance of Cornelius was the beginning of a new work—not a work of converting all the Gentiles or nations, but as Peter puts it, it was to "take out of them [the Gentiles] a people for his name."—Acts 15:14

God had previously said of Israel through the Prophet Amos, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) They were the only nation that God, through all this long time, beginning with the death of Jacob, recognised as his people.

During this time, then, it is quite evident he was not endeavouring to convert or save the world. Neither has God been endeavouring through the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles to convert the world during the Gospel Age. But, as James says, during this period it has been God's intention to gather out from the world a class described as "a first-fruits [unto God] of his creatures" — the Christian church — composed partly of Jews, the remainder of the number being made up of Gentiles.—James 1:18

A Difficult Way and a Difficult Work

It is helpful to realize the very difficult conditions under which the apostles and early disciples carried forward the work of preaching the message of salvation, setting forth the conditions upon which Gentiles might become members of the church, the body of Christ. Not only has the way to life in this age been narrow and difficult, so that few can find it, but the work of finding and assisting this class to come into relationship with God has also been "strait"; that is, difficult, involving much patient endeavour and sacrifice. For instance, considerable numbers among

the Gentiles who in apostolic days came into the church from such places as Antioch, Ephesus, Philippi, Corinth, Rome, etc., could, in all probability, neither read nor write. And even for the benefit of those who could, copies of the Scriptures were very few in number, and there were no printing presses that could multiply copies of the sacred Volume.

The preachers of the message of salvation among the Gentiles to take out of them "a people for his name"—that is, a people to come into his family as sons of God to bear the Father's name, even as human sons usually bear the family name of the father—continued to experience these apparent handicaps for nearly fourteen centuries. Then in 1440 A. D. movable type printing was invented, and copies of the Scriptures were, in God's providence, the first to come off the press. A multitude of books, periodicals, and tracts followed, and brought with them an incentive on the part of the people to read and understand, the Word of God.

Not only did the Lord's work and its servants for fourteen centuries have the aforementioned obstacles with which

to contend, but as a result of the opposition of Satan—which again was foretold in the Word of God—a great falling away from the true faith of the Gospel began to take place, particularly after the death of the apostles. Foretelling this, Paul said, "In later times some [many] shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." (I Tim. 3:1, R.V.) And as our Lord foretold in his Parable of the Wheat and the Tares, "while men slept" [after the apostles fell asleep] the great enemy [Satan] began to sow tares among the wheat. The "wheat" in this parable, we are told, represents "the children of the kingdom"; that is, a class who had been brought into the church, their full consecration to the Lord and justification by faith resulting in a begetting of the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 5:1; 12:1) And the "tares" that were brought in and allowed to grow among the wheat represent a class of worldly people that Satan's influence causes to invade the sacred precincts of the church in order to hinder the Lord's work and corrupt the true faith.—Matt. 13:25-30

Then, after a century or

two, as all know, came the period we look back upon and call "the Dark Ages," when a false and extremely corrupt system began to control the multitudes of tares. As a result of the preaching of false doctrine (particularly the teaching that all at death who are not Christians would be eternally tormented in a hell of fire, or go to a place of purgatorial suffering), many were induced to class themselves as Christians and to begin to perform mechanically the forms and ceremonies the false church system imposed upon them.

However, by the time the fifteenth century was reached, as a result of the invention of movable type and the consequent multiplication of books and periodicals—and especially of copies of the Bible—larger and larger numbers were beginning to receive the principles of an elementary education, and were beginning to read and write. The Scriptures reveal how God in his wisdom saw fit to use these outwardly favourable conditions, and began to use some of his servants, under the leadership of Martin Luther, to point out from God's Word some of the errors which had come into the church with the tares, "the

children of the wicked one," during the Dark Ages, and to promote the Lord's work of taking out a people from the Gentiles—"a people for his name." These servants of God also began to make increasing use of the printing press to convey God's message to the people, employing books and tracts in addition to the living voice to this end. Thus many were caused to read and study in their homes, and in this quiet way the message of the love of God in providing a Saviour began to work in their hearts.

In other words, the good seed began to take root in the hearts of many and bring forth fruit, causing them to draw near to the Lord and to be accepted by him as members, not of a great corrupt human organization, but of the church of Christ, the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. These reform movements of the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries are pictured in the grand series of visions of "things that were shortly to come to pass" given to John on the Isle of Patmos, and symbolized by seven trumpets. These seven great proclamations of truth, beginning in Luther's day,

gradually became clearer and more forceful as the end of the present dispensation approaches, following which mankind are to be ushered into the thousand-year reign of Christ and his church, which in turn leads on to the time when "death shall be no more, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." (Rev. 21:4; 8:2; 10:7) The final proclamation that the Lord uses his people to make is located at the very end of the age, when the work of taking out the true church is about complete, and when "the kingdom dominion of this world" (under Satan) becomes "the kingdom dominion of our Lord and his Christ."— Rev. 11:15, R. V.

Preaching Through the Printed Page

As God began to use the printed page in connection with the beginning of the reform work, so we may see how, in addition to the preaching of the Word by the living voice, he has continued to use this method increasingly as the various reform movements have followed one another in quick succession. This went on until "the days of the voice of the seventh angel," a symbol of the proclamation of the mes-

sage of present truth. For "this Gospel of the kingdom" was to be "preached in all the world for a witness" before the full end of the present dispensation. "Then [Jesus said, as soon as this work is accomplished] shall the end come." (Matt. 24:14) And that there would be a great unfolding of truth at the end of the age when the Master would again be present is not only revealed by many scriptures (Matt. 24:45; Luke 12:37, 38; Rev. 3:20), but we also see from actual fulfilment how the printed page as well as other mechanical agencies—such as radio and television—would be used to sound the trumpet, giving a wide proclamation of the kingdom message.

Those who realise that the end of the age is near, to bring with it the early completion of the true church, and to be followed by the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom, also know that the opening up of the message of present truth—the "meat in due season"—as well as its public proclamation, has been largely accomplished by means of the printed page.

Thus we have seen, in addition to the preaching of the truth by word of mouth, more than at any time in the

past the Lord has sent forth his message by means of the printed page—a method in which all can share, however lacking in speaking ability they may be. And so in harmony with the prophet's exhortation, let us "lift up the standard" of truth for the people. (Isa. 62:10) How thankful we are that we are not holding up a tattered and torn standard divested of some of its most important parts, but the divine

standard of truth and righteousness; the standard that reveals the great divine plan for man's salvation in its fullness, to which the prophet doubtless refers, saying, "All ye inhabitants of the world, and ye dwellers on the earth, when an ensign [standard] is lifted up on the mountains, see ye; and when the trumpet is blown, hear ye." Isa. 18:3, R.V.

BRITISH SPEAKER'S APPOINTMENTS

E. T. NADEL

Newport
Dewsbury

June 22
July 6

Subscriptions and Literature—70 Station Road, Gidea Park, Romford,

Essex. RM2 6DA

Tapes and cassettes on loan—15 Southwood Gardens, Gants Hill, Ilford, Essex. IG2 6YF

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.....
The Dawn, 70, Station Road, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex. RM2 6DA.
.....

Encouraging Letters

Appreciates Bible Answers

The Bible Answers: May I say how wonderful your TV programs are? They help millions of people who are so depressed and broken-hearted with life. I hope we can have lots more of them.—Canada.

Appreciates Gift

Dawn Bible Students Association: I appreciate, with deep sincerity, your pamphlets on "Hope" which you sent to us. That was one of the most gracious and valuable gifts that our firm has ever received. Persons who have received them have spoken to us concerning the help they have received from them. They have had deep spiritual significance to those people. Again, may I say thank you and God bless! Yours very truly, Maxine L. Stark, president, Bruce Funeral Home—Missouri.

Helped in Time of Grief

Dear Christian Friends: In 1970 on Thanksgiving morning my husband had a heart attack. Of course, I was grief stricken, and I received a little booklet from afar—"Hope." I have read it so many times and I want to thank you very much. I would like to have a few copies, also "God and Reason." A dear friend lost her twenty-seven year old daughter very suddenly, leaving an eighteen-month old little son. I also lost my own daughter (only one) in 1948. I would like

to have this booklet "Hope" to give to this sad and heartbroken lady. And I want to thank you again. I am enclosing at least postage. Thank you and may God bless you all, whoever you are.—Wisconsin

A Minister Appreciates

Dear Sir: I listen to your program on TV. I am greatly inspired, and would like to have the book on "Bible Answers" and any other books you might have that you think would be of service to me. If there is any charge, please let me know. I wouldn't miss that program for anything. It is the greatest I have ever heard.—Maryland.

Bible Answers Helpful

Dear Friends of Bible Answers: Your splendid programs are so helpful. We watch each program every week, and receive enlightenment. Am sending you a check to help you, and perhaps you could send me several of your books. I do not have the names at hand. All good wishes to each of you. Most sincerely—Ohio.

People Interested

Dear Friends: This is to let you know that we received the 3,000 "Hope" booklets and are very much pleased. We are putting them out as "pick up" items on our front table, and people seem to be interested. Thanks again for sending them to us.—Nebraska.

Vineyard Echoes

The 1974 General Convention

THE 1974 General Convention will be held at Albion College, Albion, Michigan. The dates are August 3 through August 8.

The year 1974 has turned out to be an uncertain one so far as automobile travel is concerned, and since a large number of the brethren travel to the General Convention by automobile, many are wondering what the situation will be. As yet no one really knows the answer to this question, but we are going ahead with plans for the convention in the hope that when August arrives the energy crises will be eased sufficiently for the brethren to use their automobiles as usual. Regardless of how the energy crisis affects us, we should rejoice to see a further development of the great time of trouble, in which there are many circumstances for which the wisdom of this world cannot find a way out. So we will continue to rejoice in the Lord and in his truth, regardless of what outward circumstances may be.

The Convention Program

The Convention Program Committee has outlined what we are confident will prove to be a spiritual uplift for all those who attend. The convention theme text for 1974 is well-known to Bible Students; that is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." In addition to the theme address itself, which will be based directly on the text, plans have been made for two symposiums to discuss various aspects of the truth suggested in the text; a panel discussion; and besides these there will be a question meeting in which questions submitted by the brethren

will be considered by a panel of well-versed brethren.

There will be an immersion service. And one of the main features of the program will be the public witness on Sunday evening. A film will be used for presenting the message in this witness. The convention theme song will be Appendix N in Hymns of Dawn, entitled "Blessed Assurance."

The convention theme text, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," will be displayed on a banner stretching across the front of the auditorium, and should be a potent impact for good as day after day the brethren enter and leave the auditorium. It is a simple text, suggesting three main things with which the faithful follower of the Master is concerned—being faithful not for a time but for a lifetime; being faithful not in a few things but in all things—faithfulness that ultimately will lead to the complete sacrifice of self in the service of the Lord, the truth, and the brethren. The text also reminds us of the glorious reward which awaits those who are thus faithful: "I will give thee a crown of life."

A Panel Discussion

Why do Christians die? This is one of the thoughts which come to mind when we think of the theme text, "Be thou faithful unto death," because the provision God made through Christ is that those who believe on him will live. Jesus himself said, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." Indeed, the great objective of the divine plan of salvation is to give life. But Jesus admonishes his followers to be faithful unto death, and then adds, "I will give thee a crown of life."

This is in harmony with the plain teachings of the Scriptures concerning those who believe on Jesus during the present age and who enter into a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice. They agree to lay down their lives. Paul speaks of it as being baptized into Jesus' death, and Jesus described it as a denial of self and a taking up of one's cross to follow him. The cross itself is a symbol of death. It was on the

cross that Jesus died, and Paul said, "I am crucified with him."

So in the panel discussion the brethren will point out that the matter of following Jesus into death is God's provision for the Master's followers in the present age, and that those who are faithful will have a special reward—a crown of life. They will be exalted to glory, honor, and immortality, and will live and reign with Christ a thousand years.—Rev. 20:6

Two Symposiums

There will be two symposiums, in which qualified brethren will discuss various aspects of truth suggested by the theme text. The first one will stress the privilege of being faithful in doctrine; faithful in trials; faithful in service, and faithful in prayer. To display a lack of faithfulness in any of these segments of the Christian life would mean that one was not wholly faithful to the Lord. We can not be faithful in doctrine and at the same time fail to meet the trials which result from our belief in the doctrines of the truth. Faithfulness in service is acceptable to the Lord only when other aspects of the divine will are heeded and obeyed. We cannot pray our way into the kingdom, although prayer is essential to every Christian. Someone has said, and truthfully, that it is the vital breath of the Christian, but our responsibility toward the Lord in being wholly faithful includes more than being faithful in prayer.

The second symposium will deal with such subjects as faithfulness in patient endurance; faithfulness in confidence. Paul wrote, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." (Heb. 10:35) One brother in the symposium will discuss what is involved in being faithful in watchfulness. Watchfulness enters into many experiences of the Christian. We are to watch the fulfilment of prophecy in order to know where we stand on the stream of time. We are to watch our own conduct and see that it is in keeping with the high standards

of righteousness which the Lord has set forth in his Word. And whether it be faithfulness in doctrine, in trials, in service, in prayer, in patient endurance, in confidence, or in watchfulness, we need to be faithful even unto death if we are to attain the crown of life.

Question Meeting

The convention committee decided that this year we would have a question meeting. The brethren will be invited to put their questions in a box, and they will be considered by a panel of those sound in the truth and known to exercise good judgment. We believe that this will be one of the very interesting and spiritually profitable sessions of the convention.

Testimony Meetings

As always, one of the main features of the convention in 1974 will be the testimony meetings, in which all the brethren will have an opportunity to express their joy in the Lord and their love for him, and their devotion to him, to his truth, and to the brethren. There will be six of these testimony meetings—one for each day of the convention. There will also be approximately thirty regular discourses.

Surely, on the whole the convention will be a blessed season of fellowship and refreshment in the Lord, marking as it will another year forward in the narrow way; another year nearer to the full fruition of our hope that if faithful unto death we will receive a crown of life.

Rate Coupon

An accommodations coupon giving rates and other information concerning rooming facilities at the Albion General Convention will be found on the last two pages of the June and July issues of *The Dawn*.

We are pleased that Brother S. J. Sundararajan, from Bangalore, India will be one of the speakers at the convention. He will be accompanied to the United States by his wife, Sister Jessie, and Sister Rachel Phillips.

Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

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

P. HATGIS		Kalispell, MT	23
Will be serving the Greek friends		Havre, MT	24
in Greece from May through Sept.		Prince Albert, Sask.	26
		Melfort, Sask.	27
G. JEUCK		Canora, Sask.	28
Allentown, PA	June 9	Winnipeg, Man	30
M. MITCHELL		L. POST	
Catawissa, PA	June 23	New Haven, CT	June 23
G. PASSIOS		H. W. PRICE	
York, PA	June 30	Wenatchee, WA	June 2
H. PASSIOS		Peachland-	
Denver, CO	June 5	Kelowna, B.C.	3-4
Kansas City, MO	7	Langley, B.C.	5
Winnipeg, Man.	30	Vancouver, B.C.	6
		Victoria, B.C.	9
E. K. PENROSE		Seattle, WA	16
Los Angeles, CA	June 1-4	Portland, OR	18
San Diego, CA	5	San Francisco, CA	21
Fresno, CA	6	Sacramento, CA	23
San Francisco, CA	7	Chico, CA	25
Sacramento, CA	9	Sacramento, CA	26
Chico, CA	10	Fresno, CA	27
Salem, OR	12	San Luis Obispo, CA	29-30
The Dalles, OR	13		
Portland, OR	14	R. SURACI	
Seattle, WA	16	Sayville, NY	June 2
Bremerton, WA	17		
Tacoma, WA	18	F. WASSMANN	
Wenatchee, WA	19	Baltimore, MD	June 9
Spokane, WA	20	Philadelphia, PA	9

Conventions

JACKSON, MI, June 1,2—Jackson Community College, 2111 Emmons Rd. Mrs. Ray Lumley, 2531 Ashton Rd. 49203

MINNEAPOLIS, MN, June 2—2601 Fillmore St., N.E. Mrs. Mike Nekora, 2601 Fillmore St., N.E. 55418

WATERBURY, CT, June 2—Waterbury Girls' Club, 35 Park Place. Miss Anna Tsimonis, 227 Willow St., 06710

GARY, IN, June 9—Hobart YMCA, 601 W. 40 Place, Hobart, IN. Mr. John Ulicni, 6703 Tyler St., Merrillville. 46410

CINCINNATI, OH, June 16—2850 Dunaway Ave. Mr. John Slovich, 126 S. 22 St., Richmond, IN 47374

CHICAGO, IL, June 23—Masonic Temple, 5352 W. Chicago Ave. Mr. Adam Miskawitz, 1905 Connie Ct., Aurora, IL 60505

BUFFALO, NY, June 30—Unity Temple Lodge, 1940 Niagara St. Mr. Stanley Borowicz, 1329 Bay View Rd., Hamburg, NY 14075

WINNIPEG, Man., June 30, July 1—Lithuanian Club Hall, 240 Manitoba Ave. Mr. Sidney E. Jones, Box 2, Grp 10, RR 1, Garson, Man. ROE ORO

LOS ANGELES, CA—July 4-7

DETROIT, MI—July 6, 7

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ—July 6, 7

PRINCE ALBERT, SASK.—July 11-14



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

JUNE 6—"Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life,"—**Luke 21:34** (Z. '95-201 Hymn 145)

JUNE 13—"I shall be satisfied when I awake, with Thy likeness."—**Psalms 17:15** (Z. '95-251 Hymn 105)

JUNE 20—"Love not the world,

neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—**I John 2:15** (Z. '96-67 Hymn 306)

JUNE 27—"Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us."—**II Corinthians 1:21,22** (Z. '96-212 Hymn 21)

RESERVATION FORM

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION
Albion College
Albion, Michigan
AUGUST 3-8, 1974

Put an X in each square
for which you will require accommodations:

| AUG. |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |

No food will be served on August 2.
Breakfast will be served on August 8.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, and Zip code: _____

Names of all of the other persons included in this reservation:
(Give age if 5 through 18 years of age.)

Total number of persons for which reservations are being
made _____.

SEE OTHER SIDE FOR RATES AND OTHER INFORMATION

This year it is important for better food service, to register and pay in full in advance. This will enable the University to more accurately estimate food requirements. Your cooperation in this matter will also greatly facilitate the checking-in process. Please make payment before July 1.

Payment should be made to:

Bible Students General Convention
P. O. Box 96
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The weekly rate for food and lodging is \$56.00 per person, two to a room.

The daily rate for room and meals is \$8.00 per person.

SPECIAL DISCOUNT FOR CHILDREN

The convention will pay half the above listed rate for children 5 through 18 years of age.

REGISTRATION

Registration will start Friday morning at 9:00 a.m. and will continue Saturday until midnight. Thereafter registration will be from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. Registration will be in the upper lobby of Baldwin Hall.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation will be available from airports, bus stations, and railroad stations to the college at a nominal charge. Indicate with your registration the time and place of arrival.

FIGURE YOUR ADVANCE PAYMENT HERE

Adults

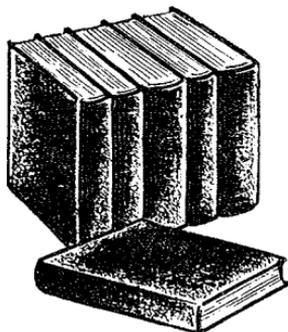
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To us the SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH...

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

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

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

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

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

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 55