

The Dawn

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Highlights of Dawn

PART ONE OF TWO PARTS

The Prophet Isaiah called Israel "the valley of vision." (Isaiah 22:1) Indeed, today, the only authentic vision of the future that men have, is seen through the promises made to Israel as stated in the Bible.

The destiny of the world is inevitably tied to God's plan for Israel. Just what do the Scriptures reveal concerning the future of Israel and the world?

The Future of Israel and the World as Foretold by Israel's Prophets

SO FAR as human foresight is concerned, mankind today is standing at the portals of uncertainty, fearful that the unknown future may be one of annihilation for essentially all the human race. One of the lessons of history is that the wisdom of this world has never been very accurate in forecasting the shape of things to come, and this has been particularly true with respect to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At the beginning of the twentieth century, humanity had reached its highest pinnacle of civilization to that time. Education, science, and invention, while only in their infancy as compared with present-day attainments, had provided a more abundant and rewarding life for millions than mankind had ever dreamed would be possible. The world's philosophers hailed the new era as one in which the nations of earth would find a way to resolve their differences without going to war. It was optimistically believed that, through the application

of education, solutions could be found for the various problems which arise among nations, and that the world would move forward to ever greater heights of civilization and prosperity.

We now know that, to a large extent, this was merely a beautiful dream—a dream that turned into a nightmare. Within a few short years after the turn of the century, the world became drenched in blood through global strife. Education, science, and invention, instead of averting war, increased its potentials of horror and destruction beyond anything recorded in the annals of history. Nor is there now anything on the horizon of human endeavor to indicate that in the foreseeable future there will be any change for the better.

Through all the chaos and suffering of the century thus far, significant changes in the governmental arrangements of

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the world have taken place. Europe is no longer governed by hereditary ruling houses, as it once was. The Romanoffs, the Hapsburgs, the Hohenzollerns, the Savoyes and the Bourbons have been set aside and their places taken by communist dictators, and republics, so-called, with an interlude of Fascist and Nazi dictatorship in Italy and Germany.

While these world-shaking changes were occurring there was another significant development. Out of the First World War came an agreement by Great Britain granting the Jewish people the freedom to settle in Palestine, and to build up that country as a homeland for their race. Later came the bitter persecution of the Jews by the Nazi government of Germany, and the failure of Great Britain to live up to the terms of her agreement.

But through these difficulties the Jewish people forged ahead. In 1948 the Jewish State of Israel was formed, and was quickly given diplomatic recognition by most of the great powers of earth. To settle the dispute of Israel with the Arabs, the United Nations officially recognized the right of the Jewish people to possess and control at least part of their ancient homeland. As a nation, they have been admitted into the United Nations as a full-fledged member.

The unusual nature of these events has focused world attention upon the Jewish people for now these many years. The prominence of Israel in world news is out of all proportion to the size of the country and the number of her citizens. Undoubtedly one reason for this is that the historic and prophetic background of this people is so vitally associated with the outworking of the plans and purposes of God in the earth. The ancient prophets of Israel foretold the world situation as it exists today, and in their forecasts of events yet to come we can envision the future of Israel and of the whole world.

Some may be inclined to overlook the extent to which the Jewish people of ancient times were used by the LORD in giving to Christians God's inspired Word. All sixty-six books of the Bible, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelation are, under God's direction, the work of Hebrew writers, the only exception being the Book of Job. When we speak of events foretold by Israel's prophets we must include Jesus, the greatest of them all, and his apostles, who in their inspired sermons and writings also contributed to the foregleams which help to outline for us the true shape of the future. By the aid of Israel's prophets we are able to stand at the portals of a new age and see, not chaos and annihilation, but stability, peace, and "times of restitution of all things."—Acts 3:19-21

To obtain the full enlightenment of mind and heart possible from the forecasts of Israel's prophets, we must have sufficient faith to believe in miracles. All Israel's prophets believed in the

miracle-working power of their God, Jehovah, the great Creator of the universe, and many of them, under his direction and by his help, performed miracles. Strip the Bible of the many miracles which it records and we would have left merely an empty shell, void of any genuine message of assurance and comfort.

There was the miraculous deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt, followed by the miracle of crossing the Red Sea. The giving of the Law at Mount Sinai was accompanied by miracles. God's protection of his people during their forty years' wandering in the wilderness manifested the employment of powers and agencies beyond the human.

Then there was the parting of the river Jordan to allow the Israelites to pass through into the Promised Land, followed by the crumbling of the walls of Jericho, and other manifestations of divine power which enabled them to conquer Canaan. Later, through the period of the judges, and the era of the kings, the Israelites experienced many miraculous deliverances from their enemies.

And how wonderful were the providences of God on behalf of faithful individuals of this chosen nation! Outstanding among these was the preserving of the three Hebrews alive in the fiery furnace, and later, the deliverance of Daniel from the mouths of the lions. There was also the awakening of the dead by Elijah and Elisha. Coming to the New Testament we are confronted by the many miracles performed by Jesus, and later by his apostles, including the awakening of some from the sleep of death.

The fulfillment of the forecasts of events by Israel's prophets involves the resurrection of the dead. We would fail to comprehend the real meaning of many of the prophecies should we overlook this great fundamental Biblical truth. Since, as the Scriptures reveal, God has made provision for the resurrection of the dead, the fact that people die—whether his faithful servants, or the wicked world—does not in any way interfere with the out-working of the divine purposes. From God's standpoint the dead

are merely sleeping, and he knows that in the accomplishment of his plan they can and will be awakened from the sleep of death to take the place predicted for them by his inspired prophets.

Moses was one of Israel's outstanding prophets, and the one used by the LORD to give us the first five books of the Bible. In the Book of Genesis, Moses recorded a wonderful promise which God made to Abraham, the father of the Hebrew people. The promise was that the "seed" of Abraham would be used by the LORD for the blessing of all the families of the earth. (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:18) When, in this promise, God spoke of the blessing of all the families of the earth, he did not mean merely those living in Abraham's time. He meant ALL the families of the earth—those who had died previous to Abraham's time; those who lived in his day; and all future generations. Should we overlook the resurrection feature of the divine plan this reassuring promise God made to Abraham could have no vital meaning to us.

. . . Should we overlook the resurrection feature of the divine plan, God's promise to Abraham to bless ALL the families of the earth could have no vital meaning . . .

In the role of a prophet, Moses said to the Israelites of his day, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken." (Deut. 18:15) This is one of the prophecies concerning the coming Messiah of Israel. But note what it says! This Prophet was to be raised up *to* the people of Moses' day, but *from* among their brethren, obviously *of a future generation*. The fulfillment of this prophecy is possible only because of the resurrection of the dead.

The Apostle Peter, who also was one of Israel's prophets, quoted Moses' prophecy concerning the coming Prophet, and showed that it would have its fulfillment following the second

coming of Christ, and during what Peter describes as “the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-23) It would be impossible for Moses’ prophecy to be fulfilled—as Peter reveals it will be—without a resurrection of the dead.

The prophets of Israel believed in the resurrection of the dead. The Apostle Paul confirms this in a statement he made to Felix, recorded in Acts 24:14,15. Paul had firm faith in the resurrection of the dead, and asked King Agrippa, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” (Acts 26:8) Abraham believed that the power of God would be used to raise his son, Isaac, from the dead, and for this reason was willing to present him to the LORD as a burnt offering.—Heb. 11:17-19

The promise God made to Abraham had two points. It gave assurance, first, that there would be a ‘seed’, and second, that all the families of the earth would be blessed by that ‘seed’. When Abraham proved his full confidence in the LORD by his willingness to offer Isaac in sacrifice, God confirmed the promise by his oath. In this oath of confirmation an expression is used that does not appear in the former statements of the promise. It is that the ‘seed’ would “possess the gate of his enemies.”—Gen. 22:15-18

The Hebrew word here translated possess means ‘to occupy’, or ‘to take control’. The thought seems clear that the seed of Abraham which was to bless all the families of the earth would accomplish this work by taking control over the people, that the seed would be a ruler which would conquer and subdue all the enemies of God and of righteousness, and therefore of man.

Many years later, Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, in a prophecy concerning his son, Judah, said, “Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver

from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”—Gen. 49:9,10

Jacob’s prophecy concerning Judah was made while the Hebrew people were in Egypt. At that time in Egypt a couched lion symbolized the regal authority of the reigning Pharaohs. Thus the prophecy indicated that out of the tribe of Judah there would come a ruler to whom the title ‘Shiloh’ would apply. This title signifies ‘peaceful one’, so this ruler was to be one who would establish peace. “Unto him shall the gathering of the people be,” Jacob foretold. Yes, all the people—ALL the families of the earth—will be gathered in obedience to this great ruler, this promised ruling ‘seed’ of Abraham.

Centuries later another prophet of Israel—David—forecast the rulership of this peaceful one, and described some of the blessings which would result therefrom. He wrote, “He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.”—Ps. 72:4-8

By divine authority David himself was enthroned as king of Israel. Through the Prophet Nathan, God said to David, “Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever.” (II Sam. 7:16) This promise was based upon God’s assurance that he would exercise mercy toward David and toward the successors in his family who would reign as kings. Concerning David’s immediate successor—Solomon—God said, “My mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.” (II Sam. 7:15) Thus God’s covenant with David became known as the “sure mercies of David.”—Isa. 55:3; Acts 13:34

Beginning with David, the kings of Israel were said to sit "on the throne of the LORD." (I Chron. 29:23) This, however, was not the actual kingdom of the LORD envisioned in the prophecies concerning the seed that would possess the gate of his enemies. It was a typical kingdom, destined in God's due time to be succeeded by the genuine kingdom of the Messiah. It is in this sense that God's promise to David, assuring him of the continuance of his kingdom, is fulfilled.

The typical kingdom of the LORD ceased with the overthrow of King Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C. It was then that the Prophet Ezekiel said to Israel's typical king, "Thus saith the LORD God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: . . . I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him."—Ezek. 21:25-27

Thus the typical kingdom ended with an assurance that the one whose right it is would ultimately come to establish the anti-typical kingdom. But the future, real kingdom of the LORD, as Ezekiel explained, was not to be the same as the typical. There are to be many differences, one of which is that it will be a world government.

Isaiah, another prophet of Israel, foretold the birth of the one who would "possess the gate of his enemies," and gave a brief outline of his qualities and his rulership. We quote: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9:6,7

This prophecy of the coming Messiah of Israel began to be fulfilled with the birth of Jesus. He is the one whose 'right it is'

to be a world ruler, the Shiloh unto whom the gathering of all the people will be. He is the one destined to possess the gate of his enemies. The angel who announced his birth said that he would be a Savior, and that he was Christ, or Messiah, the Lord. A "multitude of the heavenly host" proclaimed that his birth was an expression of God's goodwill toward men, which would result in "peace on earth."—Luke 2:10-14

The message which Jesus, the most outstanding prophet of Israel, proclaimed pertained to the kingdom of promise. His parables related to the kingdom, but in one of them he revealed that he was going away, and that the kingdom would not become a reality until he returned. (Luke 19:11,12) Instead of establishing his kingdom at that time, Jesus permitted his enemies to crucify him. The angel announced that Jesus was born to be a Savior, and in order to save all the families of the earth from sin and death, it was essential that he give his flesh, his humanity, for the life of the world.

While Jesus was necessary in order that he might save the world from sin, his enemies did not realize that he had scored a victory over this world which was a menace to Israel. They realized the

. . . How little Jesus' enemies realized the limitless power which guaranteed the successful outcome of the divine purpose! . . .

which guaranteed the successful outcome of the divine purpose which was centered in the one who now lay dead in the tomb! They did not know that he would be raised from the dead!

The significance of Jesus' resurrection in connection with his world rulership is brought prophetically to our attention by the Apostle Paul. Preaching at Antioch in Pisidia he said, "We

Jesus knew that it was for him to die in order to redeem the death, his enemies knew, and doubted, and believed that they had scored a victory over this world which was claimed was a victory. But how little they realized the limitless power

declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.”—Acts 13:32-34

Jesus was a direct descendant of David, and selected by God to be the one who would sit on David’s throne as the Messiah of Israel and the world. The angel, Gabriel, made this clear when, in an announcement to Mary, he said, “Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the LORD God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”—Luke 1:31-33

As we have seen, the fact that Jesus was put to death did not interfere with the fulfillment of this prophecy, for God raised him from the dead! After his resurrection, Jesus announced to his disciples, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. 28:18) But Jesus did not at that time begin to exercise his power over the nations. As he previously indicated he would do, he returned to the heavenly courts, to remain there until another feature of the divine plan was accomplished.

He said to them, “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:2,3) Other promises reveal that purpose as being to reign with him in his kingdom of blessing. Together with Jesus as their Head and Chief, they also are the ‘seed’ of Abraham. Paul assures us of this, saying, “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—Gal. 3:29

The condition upon which the followers of Jesus may hope to reign with him as part of the seed of Abraham for blessing all

the families of the earth, is that they suffer and die with him. God has designed this arrangement in order that they prove their fidelity to him and their trustworthiness for such a highly exalted position in the divine arrangements. Paul stated it this way: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:16,17

When Jesus was raised from the dead he was exalted to the divine nature. Previously he had explained to Nicodemus that this would constitute being "born of the Spirit," and like the wind, in the sense of being powerful and invisible. (John 3:8) The Apostle John wrote, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear ["hath not yet been disclosed," **New English Bible**] what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear ["when it is disclosed," **NEB**], we shall be like him; for we will see him as he is."—I John 3:2

It is made plain that Christ and those who will be associated with him as the seed of Abraham which is to bless all the families of the earth, will be spiritual, invisible rulers. Just as Jesus, when raised from the dead, was highly exalted to the spiritual, divine nature, so those who suffer and die with him will also be raised from the dead to live and reign with him as spiritual kings and priests.—Rev. 20:6

Hebrews 3:1,2 reads, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house." The 'house' over which Christ Jesus is head, is a ruling house of sons. These, the text declares, are partakers of the heavenly calling. In order to qualify for exaltation in this house, to actually live and reign with Christ, they must make their "calling and election sure" by faithfulness to the terms of the calling.—II Pet. 1:10,11 ■

(To be concluded in the August Dawn)

Obituaries

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

Sister Louise Comparato, Rochester, NY—March 16. Age, 95.
Brother Manford L. Mull, DeKalb, IL—March 24. Age, 94.
Sister Ann Zwahlen, Oak Park, IL—Early May. Age, 79.
Sister Bertha Kelley, Rancho Cordova, CA—May 7. Age, 84.
Sister Blenda Clarke, Havre, MT—May 11. Age, 95.
Brother Sam Krypos, Chicago, IL—May. Age, 96.
Brother James Patterson, Chicago, IL—May. Age, 101.
Sister Bales, Victoria, B.C.—May 20. Age, 90.
Sister Marie Pelle, Los Angeles, CA—May 28. Age, 97.



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International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR JULY 2

Dealing with a Nation's Sins

KEY VERSE: "When the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge."—Judges 2:18

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Judges 2:11-19

FROM the Exodus to the death of Joshua, the nation of Israel was held in restraint by a consistently righteous leadership; a leadership upon which God manifested his favor and in support of which he used his power. It was challenged, as in the case of the two rebellious sons of Aaron, but the LORD demonstrated whom he was using, and generally speaking, the people rendered at least nominal obedience both to Moses and to Joshua, although they frequently complained.

But when Joshua died, the situation began to change. Throughout the days of Moses and Joshua, and through these stalwart servants of righteousness, the LORD had manifested his love for the Israelites, and his

ability to care for them. However, with the passing of Joshua, the entire generation of which he was a part also soon died, "and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel."

Concerning this generation which did not know God, the record is that they "didevil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim." Those who truly know God want to serve and obey him; and with such there is no need that they be held in restraint by fear, either of eternal torture or any other dire punishment. Under Joshua's leading the people knew God, and knowing him, they served him. But the new generation sought after and served other gods because they

did not know Jehovah, the true God.

Even under the iniquitous conditions which developed, the LORD did not entirely forsake Israel. When they departed from him he allowed them to fall into difficulties for their punishment; and then, in his own due time, he raised up judges to deliver them. This era in their national experience lasted for 450 years, and is known as the period of the judges.—Acts 13:20

Judges 21:25 reads: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." One needs but to read the Book of Judges to discover the low standard of righteousness which 'every man' considered to be 'right in his own eyes'. It reveals clearly the degradation into which the human race even at that time had fallen, the low plane of morality to which human minds will revert if, en masse, the people are allowed to find their own preferred level. True, individual encroachments upon each other in the sense of theft and murder may not have been as prevalent then among

the Israelites as it would be to-day in a large city left unpoliced; nevertheless, the general course of the nation was downward deeper and deeper into sin. This illustrates the necessity of the 'iron rule' which will be imposed upon the people during the Millennial Age, and the disciplines which will be associated therewith.—Rev. 2:27

The judges whom the LORD raised up really became their deliverers. These are used in one of the prophecies as typical of the earthly phase of Messiah's kingdom. We read, "I will restore thy judges as at the first and thy counselors as at the beginning: after thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city."—Isa. 1:26

Because of the service rendered to the Israelites by the judges whom the LORD raised up to deliver them, we may well understand the foregoing prophecy to mean that the LORD, through the agencies of the kingdom, will judge and deliver Israel and all nations from the oppressive hands of sin and death, turning to them a pure message of truth. ☐

Working Together for Justice

KEY VERSE: *"Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go."—Judges 4:8*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Judges 4:1-9, 14, 15*

BARAK, one of the notable judges of Israel, leaned heavily upon the support of an outstanding woman of their time named Deborah. It is a question with some as to whether or not Deborah should be classed as one of the divinely appointed judges of Israel. The record is that she was a prophetess. It is obvious that the LORD used her, although the account does not say he especially appointed her. However, the text states that she judged Israel at that time. True it is that God is able to use all humble and willing instruments to accomplish his purposes.

Deborah seems to have been of this humble disposition. She gladly communicated to Barak essential information as to how an invading army could be defeated, but preferred to keep in the background herself.

It was only when he refused to carry out the instruction unless she accompanied him that she consented to go with him. Even then she warned him that he would thereby lose much of the glory which otherwise would accrue to him as a result of victory over Israel's enemies, and the deliverance of the nation from a menace which had been plaguing the people for twenty years.

This being the period in the nation's history when 'every man did according to what seemed right in his own eyes', the tribes had become virtually separate states, and there was no cohesion between them—the divinely intended bond of union, the true religion, having been relaxed. It was about this time that Deborah appeared on the scene, and the LORD saw good to

use her. She moved from her home in the northern part of Palestine to a more central place in the highlands of Ephraim. From there she sent encouraging, stimulating messages to the chief men of various tribes. She was respected. Her counsel was appreciated. Her advice was sought. In this sense she judged—admonished, guided, assisted—Israel.

God used Deborah to bring deliverance to his people. Properly enough she worked through Barak, who greatly depended upon her guidance and the inspiration of her indomitable courage. They together went out with Israel's army to do battle with an invading enemy named Sisera, and through them God gave victory to his people. Sisera and his mechanized divisions, including 900 chariots, were defeated. This in reality was the first Armageddon battle, for it was fought at Megiddo. This battle, together with many others which were fought in this ancient valley, provided its background of historical significance which the LORD uses as a basis of many prophecies re-

specting the 'time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation', which precedes and prepares the way for Messiah's glorious reign of a thousand years.

After this signal victory, Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise to God "for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves." Two humble and noble thoughts are expressed in this phrase. It gives God the credit for the victory, and properly acknowledges the part Israel's army played in the effort. It was not merely that Deborah and Barak worked with the LORD, but in addition, the people willingly offered themselves.

In this song Deborah and Barak continue to give glory to God for his miraculous guidance of his people. If they express feelings of elation over their part, they should not be blamed. There are many opportunities of service among the LORD's people today. May each of us rejoice in whatever part the LORD indicates as being ours, as faithfully and courageously as did Deborah and Barak. ☐

Gideon: Reluctant Leader

KEY VERSE: *"The angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valor."*—Judges 6:12

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Judges 6:11-16, 25-29, 32

GOD spoke with Gideon through an angel who, when he first appeared, "sat under an oak which was in Ophrah." This was a section of land which belonged to Gideon's father, and where at the time "Gideon threshed wheat by a winepress, to hide it from the Midianites." The words of our text were the angel's message. Gideon was not, at first, too much impressed by this assurance. To his reasoning mind there seemed little evidence of the LORD's favor and help as long as the nation was being oppressed by enemies. He knew of the miraculous manner in which the children of Israel had been delivered from Egypt, and of many other miracles God had wrought on their behalf. But now he said, "The LORD hath forsaken us."

Then through the angel the LORD assured Gideon that if he would courageously make the effort he would be able to deliver the Israelites from the hands of the Midianites—not in his own strength and wisdom, but in the LORD's, because, "Have I not sent thee?" But Gideon hesitated. He asked the angel of the LORD to remain where he was until he returned, and then went and prepared meat and broth and brought it to him. Instead of eating this meal, the angel caused fire to come out of the rock upon which Gideon placed it, and it was consumed. Then the angel vanished. Gideon was impressed, even frightened, for he realized that he had been speaking face to face with an angel. But the LORD said to him, "Peace be

unto thee; fear not; thou shalt not die.”—vs. 23

Following the instructions of the LORD, the first thing Gideon did was to destroy the altar of Baal, “and to cut down the grove” which was near it. This center of heathen worship was operating right on his father’s farm, and apparently by his father’s consent, if not by his special arrangement. To obey the LORD in the destruction of this altar and grove meant that Gideon had, first of all, to take a stand against his own father.

But Gideon was cautious. Taking ten men with him, he destroyed Baal’s altar and the grove by night. This was because, as the account states, “he feared his father’s household.” Naturally it was soon discovered what had happened, and who was responsible for it. Then the “men of the city” demanded of Joash, Gideon’s father, “Bring out thy son, that he may die.”

But Joash had a good sense of reasoning. He realized the implications of what had occurred. He told the men of the city that a god worthy of

worship should be able to protect his own altars, so why did they feel it necessary to plead for Baal. Surely, if Baal could not protect his own altar, could it be hoped that he would protect Israel from their enemies? The people were convinced and were then willing to cooperate with Gideon in his further mission to end the Midianite oppression.

Later, seeing his marvelous success in battle, the people assumed that it was because of Gideon’s own shrewdness, and decided that Israel could not have a better man to rule the nation. So they proposed to exalt him to this high and honored position, and even extended the invitation, saying, “Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.”—Judges 8:22,23

This was a natural expression of appreciation, but Gideon refused the offer. He answered plainly, but eloquently, “I will not rule over you, . . . the LORD shall rule over you.”

Gideon: Relying on God's Power

KEY VERSE: *"It came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand."*—Judges 7:9

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Judges 7:2-7, 19-21

A TREMENDOUS army of Israel's enemies had camped in the valley of Jezreel, and Gideon needed some direct assurance from the LORD that such an array of armed strength could be routed by a mere three hundred men. So "the same night" the LORD instructed Gideon to take with him Phurah, his servant, down into the camp of the Midianites "and thou shalt hear what they say." The LORD told him that what he heard would give him courage for the attack which was to be made later.—vss. 9-11

This visit to the ranks of the enemy was made by night, and unobserved by the enemy's watchmen. "And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley

bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for unto his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host."—vss. 13,14

Hearing the account of this dream and its interpretation gave Gideon the assurance he needed that the little band of three hundred whom the LORD selected to be his army could actually rout the Midianites. Returning to his soldiers, he said, "Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian."—vs. 15

Gideon's three hundred soldiers had been given no arms, but now he gave each one a trumpet, a lamp or torch,

and an earthen pitcher. It is doubtful if any other army in the history of mankind has been equipped in this manner! Although the record does not say so, it is likely that Gideon's method of fighting and plan of attack were directed by the LORD. Furnishing them with their weapons, Gideon separated his troops into three groups, deploying them on the sides of the hills surrounding the host of Midian encamped in the valley below.

Apparently there was more involved in Gideon's strategy than appears on the surface. Small though his army was, he had them deployed in such a manner as to virtually surround the camp of the Midianites. Ordinarily only the captains of an army would be sounding trumpets and carrying torches, and for the Midianites to hear three hundred trumpets sounding, and see three hundred flickering torches surrounding them on all sides, would certainly give the impression that they were being attacked by a tremendous army. Fear and panic

spread through the ranks of the enemy. Thus the "LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host." (vs. 22) As the Midianites attacked each other they fled, and Gideon's victory was complete.

Gideon is one of the humblest, and at the same time ablest, statesmen of the Bible. When the angel of the LORD first spoke to him, he explained that he was the least of his father's house, and he maintained this spirit of humility. He heard the Midianites use the expression, "The sword of Gideon," but when he instructed his little army to use this as a battle cry, he added the LORD's name, and put it first—"The sword of the LORD and of Gideon."

Gideon continued his campaign against the enemies of Israel until they were completely routed out of the land. In keeping with our key text, the LORD was with Gideon by teaching him his ways. It was because he followed the LORD's ways that the enemies of Israel were defeated. ☐

Choosing Trustworthy Leaders

KEY VERSE: *"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."*—Proverbs 16:18

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Judges 9:1,2,4,5

THE Bible tells us that Gideon was the father of seventy sons, one of whom was named Abimelech. Departing from his father's example, Abimelech aspired to be a king, and managed to be accepted as such for a time, having first mercilessly slain his brothers.

He intended to kill them all, but Jotham, the youngest son, hid himself and escaped. Later, and apropos to the desire of the people that Abimelech should be their king, Jotham related one of the very interesting and pointed parables of the Old Testament. (Judges 9:7-21) In this parable, Jotham describes the trees endeavoring to persuade one of their number to rule over the others. The olive tree, the fig tree, and the vine, all refused, giving good reasons. Then all

the trees invited the bramble to rule over them, and the bramble accepted. In its acceptance speech the bramble said, "If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon."—vs. 15

Jotham then explained to those who had made Abimelech king that if they had acted sincerely, and if they had dealt properly with his father's house, then they could expect Abimelech's rulership to be a blessing to them. If not, then much trouble was ahead for them, for they would find that, as with the bramble, a fire would go out from their king and destroy many, and that finally the king himself would be destroyed, bringing to an

end the unhappy experiment. The latter proved true—"upon them came the curse of Jotham, the son of Jerubbaal."—vs. 57

Jerubbaal was another name for Gideon, meaning to contend with Baal, because when he was young he had destroyed the altars of Baal.

While Abimelech used his father's good name and reputation to gain power, he was not interested in preserving the good name of Jehovah. Some of his followers stole silver from the shrine of Baalberith, called the Canaanite "god of the covenant," and gave it to Abimelech to buy the services of the evil men he hired to kill all the other sons of Gideon, and to set himself up as king. Actually he never became king of Israel—his influence did not extend much beyond the fortified city of Shechem where he ruled as a petty tyrant, causing much bloodshed and grief to the people. Abimelech's pride and evil ways led him into a life of violence, and he died the way he lived, with his head crushed by a millstone cast by

a woman from a tower. His life was a good example of where pride and haughtiness can lead.

Pride is a poisonous manifestation of selfishness. It is, as someone has well said, selfishness gone to seed. Everyone should be on the alert to resist the encroachments of pride, because to whatever extent it is permitted to influence our thoughts and actions, it will distort our outlook in keeping with its own ugly form.

One manifestation of pride is undue self-esteem. Paul speaks of it as thinking more highly of one's self than is warranted—than one ought to think. Self-esteem manifests itself in many and unsuspecting ways, and if not corrected can rapidly bring us into a situation where God resists rather than supports us.

Humility is a quality of character much esteemed by our Heavenly Father. In his arrangements, those who humble themselves shall be exalted, and those who exalt themselves shall be abased. This is an ultimate working principle in his kingdom. ☐

Christian Life and Doctrine

With Us in the "Fire"

"Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

—Daniel 3:25

BY FAITH they "quenched the violence of fire," wrote Paul in a reference to the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. (Heb. 11:34) Faith is "the evidence of things not seen," and certainly Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, from the natural standpoint, could "see" no way of escape from the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar in the event they should defy his command to worship the golden image he had set up. (Heb. 11:1) But their faith in God's ability to care for them took the place of sight, so they were determined "to obey God rather than man." And one "like unto the Son of Man" took his place with them in the fire and delivered them from what otherwise would have been certain death.

Jesus taught that his followers should "render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22:21) The Apostle Paul wrote that we should be subject to the powers that be. (Rom. 13:1; Titus 3:1) However, with the servants of God in every age, there have been times when their allegiance to God has prevented them from rendering unqualified obedience to earthly rulers, and they have had forced upon them the necessity of deciding what belongs to God and what could properly be rendered to Caesar.

This was the position in which the three young Hebrews found themselves when confronted by Nebuchadnezzar's demand that they worship the golden image which he had caused to be erected. This was an especially severe test which had been thrust upon them, for it came soon after they had been given high positions of trust in the government at the personal request of their

great friend and brother-in-exile, Daniel. From the standpoint of their own personal interests and advantage, it would have seemed much better for them to have obeyed the king's edict to worship the image.

The LORD often tests his people by permitting circumstances to come into their lives which offer an easier way to serve him, and with plausible reasons why the way of fewer hardships would be better. It could easily have been so reasoned by the three Hebrews. Certainly their exaltation to positions of authority in the kingdom had been the result of divine overruling, and it seemed evident that the LORD wanted them in these strategic positions for the purpose of rendering some special service to him and to his people. This being true, from the standpoint of human reasoning it would seem foolhardy to take a stand against the king which would destroy this advantage, and cost them their lives as well.

But these ardent servants of God did not take this view of the situation, for a very definite principle was at stake. The law of their God clearly stated that they were not to worship other gods, neither were they to bow down to images, and these facts overshadowed every other consideration in reaching their decision. To them, no matter what good might result, or what advantages might be gained by yielding to the king's demand, to do so would still be disobedience to divine law; and like the Apostle Paul, they did not believe that they should do evil that good might follow.—Rom. 12:17-21

It is so easy, and so pleasing to the flesh, to fall in with the crowd, especially when the band plays, and the conformists are hailed as heroes and receive the blessings of the powers that be. This was the alluring opportunity offered to the three Hebrews, but they chose to be nonconformists, thus refusing the deliverance that was offered to them in return for obedience to Nebuchadnezzar. (Heb. 11:35) The issue was clearly stated when a herald or spokesman for the king announced to the gathered

representatives of the kingdom, "O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltry, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: and whosoever falleth not down and worshipeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."—Dan. 3:4-6

It must have taken considerable time to erect the golden image which stood for Babylon's gods; and the three Hebrews, being highly placed in the government, would be aware that sooner or later they would have to face the issue of loyalty to their God as against bowing down to this graven image. It was not something which had been forced upon them suddenly when the band began to play. Undoubtedly they had made up their minds in advance just what they would do when the crisis came, and they could not be swayed from their position, either by the emotional appeal of the music or by the mass hysteria of heathen worshippers.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego trusted in the LORD. They knew that he was able to deliver them, and would, if he chose to do so. They did not know just how their God would intervene to save them. Faith does not need to know just how and when God will make good his word on behalf of his people. It is enough to know that he is able, and that his infinite wisdom directs the time and manner in which his grace is made to abound toward those who put their trust in him.

Neither Daniel nor the three young Hebrews were popular among the other rulers of the realm, who were always glad when they could find, or even make, an opportunity to discredit them in the eyes of the king. And here was just such an opportunity. Doubtless the three Hebrews were especially watched by the others to see if they would bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's image when the music began to sound, and when they did not, were quick to report their disobedience—vs. 12

The king was understandably angry. He was a dictator over his empire, and was not accustomed to having his decrees ignored or flouted. But he was in a peculiar position. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego had been especially honored by him at the request of Daniel, and he felt under some obligation to Daniel because of the wonderful service rendered in the recalling and interpretation of his dream in which he saw himself as the golden head of a great image. Perhaps it was because of this, and despite his rage, that he gave the disobedient Hebrews a second chance.

Seemingly, the king spoke personally to the three, and asked them if it were true that they deliberately had not bowed down to his image. The marginal translation reads, "of purpose." The king did not doubt the report that had been given to him, but he wanted to make sure whether the Hebrews had willfully refused to obey, or whether it had been merely a case of misunderstanding. To make sure of this he said, "Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"—vss. 14,15

The issue was now clear-cut. Nebuchadnezzar had not only threatened the three Hebrews, but had defied their God. The faith and courage reflected in their reply to the king are somewhat obscured by a poor translation. The **King James Version** reads, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter." The **Revised Version** uses the words, 'no need' instead. A free translation of the thought would seem to be, "We have no need to reply in a manner to restore ourselves to your favor in this matter."

Then they gave the reason—and what a wonderful reason—"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we

will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." (vss. 16-18) The king had endeavored to frighten them with the assertion that their God would be powerless to interfere with what he proposed to do. But this did not cause their faith to waver in the slightest.

"Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us." This the three Hebrews knew. What they were not sure of was whether it would be his will to deliver them from the fiery furnace, but even if it were not, they did not propose to accept deliverance on the condition offered by Nebuchadnezzar. While they did not understand God's great plan of salvation as his people are privileged to know it today, they did believe that they would be raised from the dead—that death was not the end of their experience. Thus, while they were confident of God's ability to thwart Nebuchadnezzar's purpose to destroy them, yet if this were not his will, they would still be faithful to him and thus prove worthy of deliverance in a "better resurrection."—Heb. 11:33-35

When Nebuchadnezzar learned that the failure of the Hebrews to worship his image was by design, and that they could not be frightened into changing their minds even when another opportunity was afforded, he was "full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against" them. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual, and commanded that the most mighty men in his army be used to bind these disobedient ones and cast them into the furnace. The heat was so intense that even the 'most mighty men' were killed as they cast the three Hebrews into the flames.

The king had made good his threat. As dictator of the realm, there was no other course he could take. He had satisfied the demands of his fury, and perhaps relaxed, quite pleased with the thought that nothing could interfere with the supremacy of his rulership. Through Daniel he had learned to know something of the ability of Israel's God—the God who enabled Daniel to recall and interpret his dream when all the wise men of the kingdom

had failed. It was not a reassuring thought. Under ordinary circumstances probably a king of Babylon would not be especially concerned over the fate of criminals he had condemned to death. But this was not an ordinary circumstance, and it would seem that as soon as the heat of the furnace subsided sufficiently to permit inspection, Nebuchadnezzar went personally to peer into the flames.

We do not know the thought which went through the king's mind, nor why he troubled himself to look into the furnace. However, had he been sure of his position, he would have known that there would have been little or nothing to see in that furnace except the flames. But he was "astonied [Hebrew: 'amazed' and 'alarmed']" by what he saw. Daniel's God, and the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego had delivered them, not by removing them from the fire, but by preserving them alive in the flames!

The king called his rulers and inquired of them concerning the number who had been cast into the furnace. He was told it was three, but now as he said, he saw "four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." What occurred then is what we should logically expect. The three Hebrews were bidden to leave the fiery furnace; a proclamation was issued by the king forbidding anyone in the whole empire to speak against Israel's God; and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were promoted to even higher positions in the government than they had formerly occupied.

Many have wondered about Nebuchadnezzar's reference to the Son of God. In the Hebrew text, however, there is no definite article to warrant the translation "the." The expression would be more properly translated "a Son of God." In verse 28 the king identifies this fourth one in the furnace as an angel whom the God of Israel had sent to deliver his servants. The expression "the" Son of God does not appear to have been used earlier than

the New Testament where it is applied to the Only Begotten of the Heavenly Father. In the New Testament, angels are referred to as "sons" of God. As for example, the "angels which kept not their first estate."—Jude 6; I Pet. 3:19,20; II Pet. 2:4,5; Gen. 6:2

However, the important consideration in this reassuring illustration is that God is able to deliver his people from the hands of their enemies. To Moses, God said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." (Exod. 33:14) This means that he could be assured that the LORD would know of his needs, and would supply them, of whatever nature they might be. In a beautiful statement concerning God's care over ancient Israel, we read, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: . . . and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."—Isa. 63:9

"Without faith it is impossible to please" God, wrote Paul. (Heb. 11:6) It was the faith of the three young Hebrews that was on trial—their faith in God's ability to deliver them from the fiery furnace, and their confidence in the wisdom of God as to whether it would be best to deliver them from the flames, or to deliver them in the "better resurrection." True faith in God implies more than a belief in his almighty power for it includes confidence in the rightness of his decisions with respect to every detail of his plan for the whole world, and his will for us as individuals.

When we behold the marvelous works of creation, it is not too difficult to believe that the Creator of it all is able to care for us, and to deliver us from evil. But to have confidence in his way and time to deliver is more difficult. The three Hebrews' faith in God extended to the 'if not' view of the matter. It is in this respect that all the LORD's people have their severest tests of faith.

The situation today is quite different for the LORD's people than it was for the three Hebrews. We are not commanded to bow down to a golden image, although the deceitfulness of riches might tempt some to bow down to the god of gold. We are not

called upon to worship heathen gods, but we need constantly to guard against the danger of bowing down to gods of our own making—idols which our wayward hearts set up in place of God.

There is the god of ease, the god of pleasure, the god of pride, the god of self. We might conceivably worship our home or our family, and allow them to take the place in our hearts which belongs to our Heavenly Father. We might have special interpretations of the Bible to which we bow down—hobby gods. It is only by resolutely refusing to bow to any of these modern gods that we demonstrate our faith in the true God, our loving Heavenly Father.

Let us resolve to be loyal to our God, not for reward, but because it is right. If the LORD delivers us from trial, which we know he has the power to do, we will rejoice and endeavor to use the favorable experiences of life to his glory. If he allows us to suffer, regardless of what may feed the flames, we know that he is with us in the 'fire', that he has sent his angel to protect us from harm, so that when we reach the end of the way there will be no hurt to the new creature—all that will have happened being the burning of those fetters of flesh that we may be free, and exalted to rulership in the kingdom with Christ.

The three Hebrews were exiles in Babylon, and were subject to the powers that be. They had little or no choice as to whether they would occupy honored positions in the government, or be thrust into prison, or into a fiery furnace. The changing scenes of their lives were brought about through their loyalty to God. And the great lesson to us in their example is that they were loyal, regardless of the result.

So with us today, we are as exiles in the present evil world. (Gal. 1:4) Although we are in the world, we are not part of it. Let us be true to our God, and to his standards of righteousness. Only our faith will enable us to do this, and to gain the victory. Let us not become "weary in well-doing"!—Gal. 6:9 ☐

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PLEASE TAKE NOTE of the many adjustments which are being made in the **"Frank and Ernest"** schedule. Each month, for several months, new stations will be added, and some old ones will no longer carry our program. You may wish to check this schedule regularly, to see what is happening in your area.

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Pottstown WPAZ 1370 12:45 p.m.

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Charleston WOKE 1340 7:06 p.m.

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Pearshall KVVW 1280 9:15 a.m.

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Duncan	CKAY-1500	9:00 a.m.
Duncan	CKAY-1500	7:30 p.m.
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MANITOBA

Winnipeg	CKJS-810	9:00 a.m.
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ONTARIO

Leamington	CHYR-710	5:00 p.m.
St. Thomas	CHLO-1570	10:45 a.m.

QUEBEC

Montreal	CFMB-1410	5:15 p.m.
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SASKATCHEWAN

Rosetown	CJYM 1330	10:00 a.m.
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Radio Villa Verde	Fri.	6:00 p.m.
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	MHZ 102		5:30 p.m.
Radio Corleone	Centrale		
	FM-88-500 FM-92		11:00 a.m.

MEXICO (Spanish)

Cuhtacán Ranchera	XEQC	8:30 a.m.
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NEW ZEALAND

Dunedin	4XD	11:15 a.m.
Whakatane	IXX	6:45 a.m.

NIGERIA

Radio Africa-Wed.	8:00 p.m.
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PANAMA

Panama City	HOQ 1250	10:30 a.m.
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PERU

Lima-Sat.	Radio Unión	880 AM	2:00 p.m.
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PHILIPPINES

Manila-Sat.	DZAM	1026 KHz	7:15 p.m.
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SOUTH AFRICA

Joubert Park-Thurs.	SWAZI Music		
Radio	1400 & shortwave	49 & 60	9:00 p.m.

SPAIN (Spanish)

Radio Gerona-Mon.	9:45 p.m.
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TONGA

Nuku' Alofa-Mon.	10:15 a.m.
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URUGUAY (Spanish)

Montevideo	Radio El Espectador	810	9:15 a.m.
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VIRGIN ISLANDS

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

SHORTWAVE BROADCASTS

(Beamed to Africa, Europe, U.S.)

Eastern U.S. (Sat.)	WRNO	15.20	12:45 p.m.
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The Bible Answers



Television Broadcasts

We are happy to announce that each Sunday afternoon, **The Bible Answers** television programs will be aired on Channel America and affiliates from 12:00 to 12:30 p.m. The list below represents the current stations under contract, and as additional stations are arranged we will update the list. Two stations showing the programs at other times and on other days are also listed.

CALIFORNIA

Arroyo Grande Channel 66

FLORIDA

Daytona Beach Channel 42

Ft. Myers Channel 7

St. Petersburg Channel 35

Tampa Channel 57

IOWA

Cedar Rapids KTS-13

Mt. Vernon WMVL Cable

Lisbon—every weekday 7:00 a.m.

LOUISIANA

Jenning Channel 13

MICHIGAN

Detroit Channel 26

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis Channel 13

MISSOURI

St. Louis Channel 7

NEW YORK

Syracuse Channels 14, 18

NORTH CAROLINA

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PUERTO RICO

Humacao Channel 28

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Experimentation with a new witness approach began in February and will be tried for one year in the state of New Jersey. Large outdoor advertising signs offering to the public the **Armageddon** booklet without charge, will be circulated throughout the metropolitan area on heavily trafficked highways leading to New York City. We ask your prayers for the LORD's blessing.

Christian Life and Doctrine

PSALM 23 SERIES, PART 7

“They Comfort Me”

“Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

—Psalm 23:4

A MORE intimate relationship with the divine Shepherd of Israel was expressed by David in the fourth and fifth verses of the Twenty-third Psalm, than is apparent in the opening verses of this beautiful song of praise to the LORD. They are suggestive of David's unfailing trust in God's gracious care. Instead of speaking *about* the LORD, the psalmist speaks *to* him. In this way, the psalm changes from a testimony to a prayer. At first David was content to observe that the LORD was his Shepherd, who led him beside still waters and caused him to lie down in green pastures. He was a Shepherd, moreover, who was willing and abundantly able to restore his soul, and to lead him in paths of righteousness—yea, even through the valley of the shadow of death—a wonderful Shepherd indeed!

But as David gave expression to the great truths concerning his God, the thought of the Shepherd's loving care gave him such a sense of nearness that it impelled him to pour out the remainder of his testimony *to* the LORD, rather than merely to write *about* him. David continues, “Thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Happy are we for whom this psalm was especially written, because we can see in our Good Shepherd's rod and staff, evidences of the LORD's special presence with us—his nearness to us. We can go to him with prayers of thanksgiving for the bountiful manner in which he supplies all our needs, even our discipline.

In days gone by, in Oriental lands, a shepherd carried two invaluable pieces of equipment. He used the rod, or crook, to guide the sheep while leading them through narrow and dangerous passes. The staff was used to assist him in driving off wild animals which may have attacked the flock. It was also apparently used by the shepherd as a sort of walking stick, or support.

The Hebrew word translated 'rod' is the same one used in the prophecy of Christ's kingdom, where we read that the LORD will break the nations with a "rod of iron," (Ps. 2:9) The thought is that of using the rod to keep the sheep in the right way, and to protect them from danger if they are not holding to the path along which the shepherd leads. As the sheep are thus forcibly guided back into the right way—sometimes by hooking the crook of the rod around their necks and gently lifting them back to the path, and sometimes around the hind legs to steer them aright—so the nations will be held in line by an inflexible law, a "rod of iron."—Rev. 2:27

Transferring the lesson of this symbol to the Christian life, we see in it a loving illustration of the chastenings of the LORD which are a special evidence of the LORD's love. "Whom the LORD loveth he chasteneth." (Heb. 12:6) We are not to think of these corrections as punishments which the Good Shepherd administers because he is angry. Rather they are disciplinary in nature, designed to train or guide the Christian to walk in the right way. And it is because the LORD loves us that he uses such measures to keep us close to him. Indeed, in the symbol, it was essential that the sheep be very close to the shepherd in order for him to use the rod to keep him in the path of safety.

It could not have been very pleasant for a sheep to feel the crook of the shepherd's rod hooked around its neck. It would be hard, unyielding, and severe, and the sheep would have no choice as to the direction in which it walked. To the onlooker such treatment of the sheep could seem harsh. But when David put himself in the position of the sheep, knowing the viewpoint of the shep-

herd—having himself served so faithfully as one—he realized that what seemed an unyielding attitude on the part of his God was in reality an evidence of his care. God loved David and so would not permit him to continue in a straying path. The psalmist knew this, and explained, “Before I was afflicted I went astray.”—Ps. 119:67

Yes, sometimes the restraining influences of the LORD come upon us in the form of afflictions. In such experiences we might get the discouraging thought that the Good Shepherd is displeased with us and is administering punishment. In reality, however, behind that “frowning providence” he hides the “smiling face” of his love. The trials come because the Good Shepherd is exercising his loving care over us. These experiences are designed by him to train us to walk more circumspectly day by day.

It is said that when a shepherd in the East is leading his flock through dangerous mountain passes he frequently looks back to his flock, and if he notices one of the sheep going too near the edge of the precipice, he gently draws it toward the other sheep and away from danger by applying the crook to its hind legs. Possibly David had this in mind when he wrote, “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.”—Ps. 37:23,24

Although David fell into iniquity on more than one occasion, the LORD did not permit him to be utterly cast down. No doubt David knew of the comforting promise God made concerning him, recorded in II Samuel 7:14, 15: “I will be his Father,



and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. But my mercy shall not depart away from him.” How wonderfully this was fulfilled in the life

of David. When he did wrong, God's chastening rod was not withheld, but it was used in mercy, and with the object of keeping the psalmist in the "paths of righteousness."

He was chastened with the "rod of men." This might indicate that God used human agencies of one kind or another to keep David from going too far astray. In the case of the Christian, this chastening can be far from pleasant; indeed, as the Apostle Paul pointed out, it is sometimes grievous, "nevertheless afterward," he adds, "it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."—Heb. 12:11,

The shepherd's staff, as we have noted, was used to help him to protect the sheep from an attacking enemy, and also was used as a support, or a walking stick. The staff of the Good Shepherd comforts us in both respects. Although the enemies of the Christian do not attack in a physical sense, the attacks are against our faith. This is the reason we can resist these enemies only by being "steadfast in the faith." (I Pet. 5:9) Nor could we successfully resist the Adversary alone, without the help and wisdom given us by the Good Shepherd. It is *his* staff, not *ours*, that wards off the attackers.

However, if we are to be protected by the Good Shepherd's staff it is essential that we remain very close to him. And if we do, we will be protected by it. The attacks of our enemies being along spiritual lines, they are to be warded off, not by carnal weapons, but by the Word of God. In reality, the Word of God is the staff which is provided to sustain and protect us. As the green pastures and still waters in the psalm are symbols of the Word of God, so the staff also pictures the Scriptures. We can rest assured that we will be victorious over all our enemies as long as we use this means which has been provided for our protection—God's precious Word.

If we think of the staff as the Word of God, it is necessary to depart from the strict interpretation of the symbol in order to appreciate the full value of the lesson. Actually a sheep never

takes the staff from the shepherd's hand and wields it for his own protection, but the Christian does use the Word of God in this way. The Good Shepherd provides the staff for us, but it is essential that we use it to combat our enemies, and to lean upon in our weakness.

We usually think of our enemies as the world, the flesh, and the devil, and we are to use the Word of God in combating all of these. But there are other enemies of the Christian. We are attacked by temptation, by discouragement, by pride, and by weariness. Against any of these, the Word of God is the only sure protection.

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When Jesus was attacked by temptations instigated by the Adversary, the Word of God was his defense. "It is written," was the Master's reply to every subtle suggestion made to him. So it should be with us. Whether we are tempted to depart from the narrow way, or to believe a false doctrine, or to lay down our cross for just a short while, these enemy thoughts can always be beaten off by a "thus saith the LORD." This is a staff that never fails!

Is discouragement threatening us? Let us again use the Word: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," it assures us. (Heb. 13:5) Upon this blessed promise we can lean, and be assured of strength to sustain us until we reach the end of the way. Again we turn to the Word and find it saying to us, as Moses said of Asher, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." (Deut. 33:25) With these and similar promises to reassure us, we can ward off discouragement and take our place among those who are following the Good Shepherd victoriously, faithfully, and safely.

Pride may be lurking near our hearts, seeking an opportunity to strike us down, to lure us away from the paths of righteousness. Again the Word may be used to protect us. In it we are warned not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. (Rom. 12:3) We are also admonished to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. (I Pet. 5:6) "Pride goeth before destruction," the Word tells us, "and an haughty spirit before a fall." (Prov. 16:18) And again, "Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD." (Prov. 16:5) These are only samples of passages which may be, and should be, brought into action when we notice the first symptoms of pride—the first suggestions that perhaps we are superior in various ways to our brethren.

"Let us not be weary in well doing," wrote the apostle, "for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." (Gal. 6:9) How this text should help us to fight off weariness as we walk in the narrow way! "In due season," Paul said. How essential that we rec-

ognize the LORD's due time, waiting on him with the recognition that our times are in his hands. "They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength . . . they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isa. 40:31

How wonderfully true it is that the rod and staff are sources of comfort to us. David again wrote, "Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy Word hath quickened me." (Ps. 119:49,50) Yes, it is the Word of the LORD that comforts all the LORD's people in their times of need. The Word of God is sufficient for all our needs if we apply ourselves to its study and practice. Paul wrote, "All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (II Tim. 3:16,17) What a wonderful rod and staff the LORD has provided! How comforting to realize that all we need to guide, warn, and strengthen us as new creatures, is abundantly supplied in his Word!

The Old Testament, as well as the New, serves to keep the sheep of the Gospel Age in the pathway of righteousness. It is a special source of comfort. Paul wrote, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."—Rom. 15:4

Because he was fully aware of the prophecies of the Old Testament, the many reproaches heaped upon Christ Jesus could have been avoided by him, if he had been governed by selfish considerations. But he sought not to please himself. And we have the privilege of sharing in these reproaches of the Christ. If we endure them faithfully, we too will receive a crown of life which fadeth not away.

Every part of the Word of God is a comfort to the Christian. As we look about us in the valley of the shadow of death we would be dismayed and discouraged if we did not have an under-

standing of why this valley is permitted, and the assurance that in God's due time its mists of darkness will be dispelled by the healing rays of the rising "Sun of righteousness." (Mal. 4:2) We see much about us that is unjust in this world, and perhaps we would be tempted to try, in our feeble way, to right these wrongs, if we did not know from the Scriptures that this is not now the plan of God for us.

Instead of wasting our time with moral and social reform efforts which, despite their good intentions, are incapable of solving the world's evils, the Good Shepherd urges us to remain in the narrow way of sacrifice. By so doing we will be prepared to share with him, by-and-by, the glorious work of actually restoring the world to full perfection of health and life, making available to all the willing and obedient the joys of everlasting life! What comfort it is to realize that this better way is the LORD's way; therefore, the only right and perfect way!

At times the road of life may seem unduly long and grueling. Many hills present themselves for us to climb, many obstacles to surmount stand in our way, and we long for rest. But the reminder of the Word is that we must be faithful *even unto death*, to be with him on Mount Zion. This is a glorious hope set before us—a hope which, when we contemplate it, fills our hearts with joy. And it is this joy that urges us to continue on in the way of sacrifice.

The fruition of the Christian's hope will be realized at the second coming of Christ. The Early Church looked forward to this great event in the plan of God with high anticipation—it was indeed the mainspring of their Christian lives. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians about it, saying that the Lord would descend from heaven "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." He then adds, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (I Thess. 4:16-18) Comforting indeed are these words today, more especially, because the shout can be heard, the voice is causing the earth to melt, and the trump is re-

sounding its joyful notes of encouragement throughout the earth! But the world neither sees, nor hears, nor heeds these indications of the new day of his presence. Their eyes are blind; their ears have not been unstopped.

Knowing that Christ is present, we have this added incentive to follow him as our Good Shepherd faithfully even to the end. And in addition to inspiring us to zeal in the doing of the LORD's will, the knowledge of Present Truth serves to guide us in the way the LORD would have us walk. There is nothing more disconcerting nor discouraging than uncertainty as to what the LORD's will may be. The LORD's people would perish if they did not have sufficient knowledge to guide them in the right direction. What could be more comforting than to realize that through Present Truth the LORD is guiding us, during this wonderful time in which we are living, with the rod and staff of his Word.

It is indeed a wonderful time in which we are living! It is also an evil day—a day when the enemies of God and of the truth are attacking the LORD's sheep from every direction. We surely need the protection of his rod and staff, because only those who are protected by the truth of the LORD's Word will be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. As we hear our Good Shepherd's voice, however, our hearts leap for joy when we realize the great privilege offered to us of following him, who once, as the Lamb of God, laid down his life for us and for the whole world.

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Christian Life and Doctrine

Seek Ye First

***"Seek ye first the kingdom of God
and his righteousness."***

—Matthew 6:33

THESE words of our Lord, taken from his sermon on the Mount, make an excellent theme text for our lives. If we follow this key advice daily, we are absolutely guaranteed that we will be faithful and pleasing to the LORD, will ultimately reach our goal, and will receive our reward! It is important for us to continually remind ourselves that seeking the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, has first priority in our lives.

The Master had been preaching to great multitudes of Israelites. Many had followed him throughout Galilee all the way to Jerusalem in Judea, and even from beyond the Jordan River, realizing what a great teacher was in their midst. (Matt. 4:25) They saw his marvelous works and heard his ethereal words, and were moved to leave their homes and families to follow him wherever he traveled. But our Lord had special words which were only for the ears of his disciples. And so he climbed high up into the Mount, "and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them."—Matt. 5:1,2

The sermon on the Mount comprises three chapters in Matthew's Gospel—the fifth to the seventh. This was Jesus' special message to his true followers; he was their teacher, and these chapters include important lessons concerning his new doctrines. This sermon was not meant for the ears of the multitude, it was not for the world, but it *is* for you and for me, as we endeavor earnestly to be his followers, just as the disciples were in Jesus' day.

The Lord's lesson on Christian priorities actually begins with verse twenty-four of Matthew 6. Here he states, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate [love less] the one, and love [more] the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Our first reaction to this statement might be that it cannot have any reference to us as Christians, because there is no possible way that we could ever hate our Lord and Master! We love him. He is our Lord, our Redeemer!

Wilson's *Emphatic Diaglott* gives a slightly different perspective of this verse; it says, "No man can serve two masters, . . . for *at least* he will *attend to* one and *neglect* the other." This is a lesson in priorities! The master whom the servant loves more will receive his best service, and the other master will be given whatever time and energy the servant has left over after he has done well by his more favored master. It is impossible for anyone to serve two masters well, giving them both full, undivided attention and service.

The expression in the *Diaglott*, 'at least', conveys the idea that the servant is actually trying to serve both masters well, but is finding it impossible to reach this goal. We simply cannot serve two masters; the things that one master wishes us to do for him will, no doubt, be in conflict with the other's wishes. And if this is not the case, we still cannot be at the instant beck and call of both.

In the life of a Christian there comes a time when he must decide whom he will serve. Will he serve God? Or will he serve Mammon? Once he has determined to serve the LORD, he becomes his only Master and must be served fully. We cannot divide our service between several masters, and still be completely faithful servants to our one LORD.

Who might this other master be, who is attempting to have us become his servants? Our initial answer to this question would undoubtedly be—our great Adversary, Satan. But it seems as though in this lesson Jesus is conveying the thought more particu-

larly, that our own flesh, with its desires to gain the mastery over our old natures, is a formidable adversary. Mammon, which, of course, Satan is quick to advantage himself of to ensnare us, is the competing master. This word 'mammon' simply means 'earthly riches or wealth'. The acquisition of wealth, bringing ease and pleasure to our flesh, is indeed very tempting to contemplate, although it is diametrical to the sacrificial nature of a Christian's life. Therefore a state of constant warfare exists between the "new creature," seeking for the spiritual things, and the "old nature" which constantly seeks after earthly things, be they good or be they evil.

The Apostle James has something to say on this subject. His words are few, but very succinct: "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." (James 1:8) An unstable person is one on whom we cannot rely; a person who is double-minded would certainly be unreliable—not only to others, but even to himself. He cannot decide whom he wishes to serve, or how he wishes to serve them! This is certainly not a trait which we find in our Lord Jesus, and it should surely not be a characteristic found in the followers of Jesus. If we are double-minded, we are unprofitable servants.

The words of Matthew 6:24 set the stage for the remainder of the chapter. After stating unequivocally that no man can serve two masters, and following that statement with the words, "Ye [followers of me] cannot serve [both] God and mammon," Jesus goes on to give us some powerful illustrations. He helps us to understand how we should view the satisfying of fleshly *aims* and *ambitions* in our lives. Nowhere are we told that it is wrong for us to satisfy the *needs* of our flesh. But what is wrong for us is to allow the acquisition of earthly wealth or possessions to become more important than the acquiring of spiritual treasures. Our Great Teacher's lesson is that if we become distracted from the pathway of sacrifice, giving more attention to our earthly lives and possessions than we do to our spiritual lives, this would constitute wrong-doing on our part.

In the next few verses Jesus gave several illustrations concerning eating and drinking, and being clothed—all of which relate to our necessities as human beings. (Matt. 6:25-32) Everyone requires food and drink to sustain their lives; we find clothing essential to protect us and to keep us warm; we need shelter from the weather. Immediately we see that by using these simple examples, Jesus is not instructing us that we should not provide for these things. But what priority we give the acquisition of them, is the important lesson.

“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” (vs. 25), said our Lord Jesus. The phrase, ‘take no thought,’ could just as easily be translated, ‘Do not be distracted.’ Let not the earthly things distract you from what is most important. Which is more important, what you eat or drink, or what clothes shall adorn your body; or is the life you possess, and how you live it, more important?

“Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?” (vs. 26) Birds are a wonderful illustration of faith. They are so tiny and helpless. They are beautiful, airy little creatures, having brightly colored feathers, and delightful mannerisms. But they cannot go out forcefully, like a lion or a tiger, and overpower another animal for food. They must rely on what the LORD provides for them to eat. And although they evidence no anxious thought concerning their next meal, they receive abundant provision of their needs—seeds, and berries and bugs. “Are ye not much better than they?”

Sometimes in a family with several children, the mother might panic if she runs out of milk! Or even worse, if she runs out of laundry detergent! Once in a while, the insignificant things of the flesh can become overly important, and can get the best of us. Occasionally we become a bit anxious about earthly provisions.

Our Master continues with the question, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" (vs. 27) He knew that we poor frail human creatures would worry about all sorts of things! These concerns will harm us, and will not help us. As Christians we should particularly remember that our lives have been given to the LORD. We are not our own, we are bought with a price, and we are precious in His sight. It is not at all proper for us to become anxious about anything, because we have put all our concerns into the LORD's hands, and we know that he will provide for us far better than we could ourselves.

Then Jesus gave us another illustration which puts an additional earthly need into its proper perspective. Man today, as well as in past centuries, emphasizes the importance of fine clothing. It is a status symbol, and a person's worth is often judged by how finely he is dressed. But the Lord asked, "Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith."—vss. 28-30

Every springtime the wildflowers come up in profusion, they bloom in a whole rainbow of colors; they are beautifully and delicately shaped, and man does nothing to make them grow. God provides the sunshine and the rain which nourishes them, and they carpet the landscape with their glory. Not even King Solomon, the wisest and one of the richest men in the world, could clothe himself more gloriously!

One robe was all that our Lord Jesus possessed when he went to his death. But it was a beautiful one, and well made; certainly it was white and spotless. Today, at least in this country, everyone owns more than one suit of clothing, more than one dress, no matter how poor they might be! And how much more richly will God clothe us when we have been faithful to our call-

ing. "The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework" (Ps. 45:13,14), is one description of the bride, the Lamb's wife.

It is interesting to notice the reference Jesus made to concern over material needs, indicating that this anxiety is due to a lack of faith. It is certain that one who evidences symptoms of being over-anxious concerning earthly things is putting undue emphasis on their value, and shows a lack of faith in and appreciation for the far more weighty matters of a spiritual nature. Setting wrong priorities in life is a clear indicator of possessing only a "little faith."

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1) If we are distracted by storing up earthly treasures, how are we going to be successful in seeking after the spiritual treasures? Just as a man cannot serve two masters, neither can he have as his priority goal the gaining of both earthly and heavenly treasures!

Concluding this line of reasoning, Jesus went on to say, "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." (Matt. 6: 31-33) Sometimes in our thinking we limit God's providences in our lives to the spiritual aspects. And there is no doubt that they are by far the most important part of our lives. But God overrules and directs the provision of our temporal needs in life as well. Therefore we should not feel that we must carry all the anxiety and care pertaining to our needs, or our family's needs by ourselves, leaving the care of the spiritual needs in God's hands. No, he realizes the necessity for our having a job, a home, food, and clothing, and he makes ample provisions for our having what we need.

This thought is put into such beautiful words in verse 34, which reads: "Take therefore no [over-anxious] thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” There are people in the world who are ‘compulsive planners’; they plan their whole lives out—sometimes for months or years ahead! But we do not know what may happen tomorrow to upset all our finest plans. It is far better to wait patiently on the LORD’s leadings, and to follow his direction day by day. Our one goal in life toward which all our plans should be directed is to make our calling and election sure; to be faithful, to be obedient to the LORD; to carry out our vows of consecration.

Verse thirty-three is our theme text: “Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” The emphasis is upon the word ‘first’. This means not only first in order of time; but first in importance. The kingdom of God is our hope. It is the hope of the entire groaning creation. We seek for glory, honor, and immortality as rulers in that heavenly kingdom. We seek the kingdom of God because we long to see God, to be with him, to share his fellowship, and the fellowship of his dear Son. We seek the kingdom of God because we desire to have eternal fellowship with others who likewise have this same hope. We seek the kingdom of God because we have a tremendous yearning to bless all the families of the earth. We seek the kingdom of God because we want to be used of God in the ages of eternity in whatever plans and purposes he has in store for his great universe.

But without a doubt, the reason that most completely sums up why we seek the kingdom of God, is one that our Lord Jesus gave concerning himself. In John 17:1, he said: “Father, the hour has come, glorify thy Son that the Son also may glorify thee.” This is our highest motive for seeking the kingdom of God—that we might be able, if faithful, to glorify God in a perfect and far more effective way than we can at the present time.

Not only did Jesus say that we are to seek first the kingdom of God, but we are also to seek his righteousness, his godliness, and we know this must be accomplished if we are to attain to the kingdom of God. None will be worthy to live everlastingly in the

kingdom of righteousness unless they themselves are righteous. At the present time we are imperfect beings, with the need to be clothed upon with the robe of Christ's righteousness to cover our imperfections.

How do we seek righteousness? Even as our human bodies need food and drink, clothing, and shelter, so also do we have need for spiritual food and drink, clothing, and shelter. In John the sixth chapter we read Jesus' words, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." This symbology indicates how necessary it is for us to appropriate his message, his pattern, his sacrifice, his precious blood. We must keep his robe of righteousness on, and we must embroider it to add to its beauty by developing the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit in our characters. This is what is meant by 'eating' and 'drinking' the bread and water of life.

We are assured that "all these [needful] things shall be added" unto us (Matt. 6:33), if we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. God will see to it that we have everything necessary in life, so that we can serve him. The *Diaglott* says all these things shall be "super added" to us, which carries the thought of great abundance. How generous is our God!

The following questions will present a little test we can apply to ourselves of just how properly we have set our priorities in order in our lives. If we answer 'yes' to any of these six questions, we need to apply some remedies, which are suggested by the Scriptures following the questions:

1. Do we have a desire to pamper our fleshly bodies?
Romans 7:18
2. Do we spend a great deal of time or means catering to earthly matters? Ephesians 5:16,17
3. Do the thoughts of our minds dwell habitually on real or perceived human needs? Romans 8:5-14
4. Do we feel a measure of discontent when we think any of these perceived needs are not satisfied? I Timothy 6:6-8;

Philippians 4:11

5. Do we have the desire to accumulate temporal wealth or possessions? I Timothy 6:10,17
6. Do we work at prolonging our human lives as long as we possibly can? Matthew 16:24, 25; John 12:25

The questions above are not intended to be discouraging, but rather a simple, useful tool to measure the progress we are making in keeping our hearts closely in tune with the pattern the Lord has set for us. We will all need to apply some of the "remedies" from time to time to keep our human natures in line.

At the conclusion of this sermon on the Mount, Jesus summed up by saying, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock."—Matt. 7:24,25

The LORD Will Provide

In some way or other, the LORD will provide,

It may not be my way, it may not be thy way,
And yet, in his own way, the LORD will provide.

At some time or other the LORD will provide:

It may not be my time, it may not be thy time;
And yet in his own time, the LORD will provide.

Despair then no longer; the LORD will provide;
And this be the token—no word he has spoken
Was ever yet broken, The LORD will provide.

Then we'll trust in the LORD

And he will provide;

Yes we'll trust in the LORD,

And he will provide.



Talking Things Over

General Convention—July 22-27th

THE next few pages contain this year's program! See you there!

(PLEASE NOTE CORRECTION IN TELEPHONE NUMBER)

SPECIAL BULLETIN FROM U.T.C.:

WE HAVE secured a contract with Delta Airlines to provide discount air fare for participants in the 1989 Bible Students' Convention.

Tickets must be purchased seven days in advance, and will be 40% off the regular air fare.

Reservations may be made at any time by calling either

**JOY or KIM, at
ALL-SEASONS TRAVEL
Telephone# (615) 892-5235**

SPECIAL BULLETIN FROM THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL COMMITTEE FOR 13-17 YEAR-OLDS PLANNING TO ATTEND THE CLASSES AT THE GENERAL CONVEN- TION THIS YEAR:

Please write as soon as possible, or phone (after July 4th), giving your name and address, to:

**Ernest M. Kuenzli
330 Jasmine Road
Casselberry, FL 32707**

Telephone: (407) 831-2098

He will mail you your copy of the Outline prepared for this year's program in order that you can look it over in advance and become familiar with the material to be covered.



Saturday, July 22

Chairman: Brother R. Gorecki
Detroit MI

- | | | |
|-------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 9:30 | Morning Devotions | |
| 9:45 | Welcome by the University | |
| 10:00 | Welcome Address | Brother G. Eldridge
<i>Orlando FL</i> |
| 10:45 | Intermission | |
| 11:15 | Discourse | Brother C. Boughton
<i>Pittsburgh PA</i> |
| 12:00 | • Close of Morning Session • | |
| 2:00 | Discourse | Brother Julius Panucci
<i>New London CT</i> |
| 2:45 | Intermission | |
| 3:15 | Discourse | Brother S. Jeuck
<i>Orlando FL</i> |
| 4:00 | Intermission | |
| 4:30 | Discourse | Brother D. Bruce
<i>Seattle WA</i> |
| 5:15 | • Close of Afternoon Session • | |
| 7:00 | Discourse | Brother F. Binns
<i>Chesham, England</i> |
| 7:45 | Vesper Service | |
| 8:15 | Songs in the Night | |
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Sunday, July 23

Chairman: Brother F. Nemesh
Detroit MI

- 9:30 Morning Devotions
- 9:45 Discourse Brother M. Balko
West Newton PA
- 10:30 Intermission
- 11:15 Convention Theme Discourse
Brother E.K. Penrose
Columbus OH
- 12:00 • **Close of Morning Session** •
- 2:00 Praise & Testimony Brother C. Zubowsky
LaSalle IL
- 2:45 Intermission
- 3:15 Discourse Brother G.M. Jeuck
New York NY
- 4:00 Intermission
- 4:30 Discourse Brother A. Debski
France
- 5:15 • **Close of Afternoon Session** •
- 7:00 Music
- 7:15 Public Meeting Chairman: Brother R.J. Krupa
Film: ***"Archeology and the Bible"***
- 8:15 • **Close of Evening Session** •
-

Monday, July 24

Chairman: Brother E. Kuenzli
Orlando FL

- 9:30 Morning Devotions
- 9:45 Discourse Brother S. Roskiewicz
Grand Rapids MI
- 10:30 Intermission
- 11:15 Discourse—"Cloud of Witnesses"
Brother T. Krupa
Portland OR
- 12:00 • **Close of Morning Session** •
- 2:00 Praise & Testimony Brother N. Kasperowicz
Paterson NJ
- 3:00 Intermission
- 3:45 *Discussion of Hebrews 10:25*
Moderator: Brother M. Nekora
Panel: Brother W. Blicharz
Brother L. Post
Brother S. Suraci
- 5:15 • **Close of Afternoon Session** •
- 7:00 Discourse Brother R. Luke
Jersøy City NJ
- 7:45 Vesper Service
- 8:15 Songs in the Night
-

Tuesday, July 25

*Chairman: Brother S. Krystek
Los Angeles CA*

- 9:30 Morning Devotions
- 9:45 Discourse Brother E. Blicharz
Orlando FL
- 10:30 Intermission
- 11:15 Discourse: "Weight that Besets Us"
Brother C. Chandler
Portland OR
- 12:00 • **Close of Morning Session** •
- 2:00 Baptismal Discourse Brother B. Brown
Los Angeles CA
- 2:45 Intermission
- 3:00 Immersion Service at University Pool
- 4:15 Praise & Testimony Brother W. Vrooman
Orlando, FL
- 5:15 • **Close of Afternoon Session** •
- 7:00 Elders' Meeting
-

Wednesday, July 26

*Chairman: Brother H. Snyder
Portland OR*

9:00	Morning Devotions	
9:15	Discourse	Brother D. Rice <i>San Diego CA</i>
10:00	Intermission	
10:30	Convention Business Meeting	
12:00	• Close of Morning Session •	
2:00	Discourse	Brother C. Hagensick <i>Chicago IL</i>
2:45	Intermission	
3:15	Praise & Testimony	Brother R. Mottie <i>Greenfield OH</i>
4:00	Intermission	
4:30	Discourse: "Run with Patience"	Brother E. F. Lankford <i>Sacramento CA</i>
5:15	• Close of Afternoon Session •	
7:00	Discourse	Brother R. Suraci <i>New Haven CT</i>
7:45	Vesper Service	
8:15	Songs in the Night	

Thursday, July 27

Chairman: Brother C. Martig

Pittsburgh PA

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|-------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 9:30 | Morning Devotions | |
| 9:45 | Discourse | Brother Michael Balko
<i>Orlando FL</i> |
| 10:30 | Intermission | |
| 11:15 | Discourse: "The Race Before Us" | Brother E. Herrscher
<i>Phoenix AZ</i> |
| 12:00 | • Close of Morning Session • | |
| 2:00 | Praise & Testimony | Brother W. Harp
<i>Cincinnati OH</i> |
| 2:45 | Intermission | |
| 3:15 | Discourse | Brother R. Rawson
<i>St. Petersburg FL</i> |
| 4:00 | Intermission | |
| 4:30 | Discourse | Brother Jos. Panucci
<i>Groton CT</i> |
| 5:15 | • Close of Afternoon Session • | |
| 7:00 | Melodies of Praise | Brother T. Krupa |
| 7:45 | Closing Discourse | Brother H. Montague
<i>Brooklyn NY</i> |
| 8:30 | Love Feast | |
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Encouraging Letters

Cannot Fully Express Thanks

Dear Friends: On December 1, 1988 I had a cataract lens implant and have a bit of trouble writing. Please excuse. Am enclosing a check for \$1,026 for a donation, and one year's renewal of *The Dawn* magazine. Also wish you would continue sending us the tapes for another year. We listen to them over and over and over again! We have a tape box that holds 24 tapes. When it gets full we will cancel this service and play these. We cannot fully express our thanks to and for the Dawn Bible Students Association—for all they are doing for us and the world. Sincerely.—MN

So Plain A Child Could Understand!

Dear "Frank and Ernie": I really enjoy your program on WTJH, Atlanta, Georgia. You two make the question and answer period so plain a child could understand it. Please

send me the gift booklet, "The Lord's Return." Thank you.—GA

Pleasant Surprise

Dear Sirs: I was switching channels last Sunday, looking for another program, when to my pleasant surprise I tuned in yours on Channel 13 in Bowling Green, KY. It was there again this Sunday though it was not listed in the TV section. I hope it will continue. Naturally you did not ask for money, but someone has to pay, and if you accept contributions, I would be happy to contribute as I want the program to continue. Please send me a copy of "The Judgment Day." Thank you very much.—KY

Sends His Agape Love

Dear Brothers: It's so good to know of an organization like yours who sticks to the truth of the Bible and not apostatizing, like so many religions are doing today. I miss your radio program that was on WMAX;

but I had taped some of these
and I now replay them and

some of your video tapes. God
bless your work. Agape.—MI



Speakers' Appointments

A. Debski		E.F. Lankford, Continued	
Portland, Or	June 22-30	Kalispell, MT	6
New York, NY	July 1-9	Vernon, B.C.	8,9
Allentown, PA	10	Calgary, Alberta	11
Pittsburgh, PA	11	Luseland, Sask.	12
Cincinnati, OH	12	Prince Albert, Sask.	13
Columbus, OH	13	Sturgis, Sask.	14
Orlando, FL	14-19	Winnipeg, Man.	16
Chattanooga, TN	21-27	LaSalle, IL	18
E. Herrscher		Chattanooga, TN	21-27
Los Angeles, CA	July 1-4	Kansas City, MO	30
E.F. Lankford		L. Post	
Boise, ID	July 3,4	Middletown, NY	July 9



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

July 6—"What man is he that feareth the LORD? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose."—Psalm 25:12 (Z. '99-13 Hymn 145)

July 13—"Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness."—II Corinthians 11:14,15 (Z. '99-62 Hymn 57)

July 20—"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. . . . Every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."—John 15:1,2 (Z. '99-109 Hymn 78)

July 27—"We shall find no occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."—Daniel 6:5 (Z. '99-167 Hymn 22)

Conventions

*These conventions are listed at the request
of the classes sponsoring them.*

LOS ANGELES, CA, July 1-4
—248 E. Olive Ave., Burbank
91502. Contact: Michael Nekora,
1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades,
CA 90272

Phone: (213) 454-5248

OKANAGAN, B.C., July 8,9—
Silver Star Ski Resort, Vernon.
Contact: Margaret Bailey, 3607
23rd Street, Vernon, B.C. V1T 4K2

CINCINNATI, OH, July 9—At
the Harp's Home, 2609 Merrittview
Lane.

Phone: (513) 825-4112

**BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL
CONVENTION, CHATTA-
NOOGA, TN—**July 22-27. See
bulletin on pages 55-61

CHICAGO, IL, July 23—
Elmhurst Masonic Temple, York
and Arthur Streets, Elmhurst. Con-
tact: John Trzyna, 4614 N. Potaw-
atomie Ave., Chicago 60656

**NIGERIAN CONVENTION,
August 10-13.** Held in Ibadan.
Contact Ray Luke, 143-67 Cherry
Ave, Flushing, NY 11355 for de-
tails. Phone: (718) 445-5129

DENVER, CO, August 11-13—
Viscount Hotel, 200 W. 48th Ave-

nue. Contact: Marcia Kuehmichel,
10201 Riverdale Rd. #53, Thornton
80229

Phone: (303) 450-0582

**JACKSON, MI, September
2,3,4—** Holiday Inn, I-94 at U.S.
127, North. Contact: Mrs. Ray
Lumley, 2531 Ashton Road, 49203
Phone: (517) 782-7252

**NEW YORK, NY, September
1,2,3—** Holiday Inn, Route 46, To-
towa, NJ. Contact: Leo B. Post, 24
Lexington Rd., New City, NY 10956
Phone: (914) 634-5876

**SEATTLE, WA, September 1-
4—** Convention held in Bellevue.
Contact: David Bruce, 200 99th
Ave, N.E., #34, Bellevue 98004, for
information.

Phone: (206) 454-6337

**KALISPELL, MT, September
22-25—** Flathead Lutheran Bible
Camp. Contact Mrs. Joy Th-
ompson, P.O. Box 716, Columbia
Falls 59912 Phone: (406) 892-2574

**MILWAUKEE, WI, September
30-October 1—** Myron Reed
Lodge, 4300 W. Villard Ave. Con-
tact: Violet Pazucha, 4454 S. 14th
St. #3, 53221

Phone: (414) 282-4667

