

*The*  
**DAWN**

*SPIRITS IN PRISON*  
*CALLED, CHOSEN AND FAITHFUL*  
*THE VITAL TEST OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP*

**APRIL**

**1937**

## SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

<p>BROTHER J. A. BELL Passaic, N. J. .... April 18</p> <p>BROTHER C. P. BRIDGES Boston, Mass. .... April 11</p> <p>BROTHER DAVID DINWOODIE Baltimore, Md. .... April 11</p> <p>BROTHER EDWARD FAY Camden, N. J. .... April 4 Allentown, Pa. .... 11 Passaic, N. J. .... 25</p> <p>BROTHER J. C. JORDAN Duquesne, Pa. .... April 11</p> <p>BROTHER E. W. KEIB Duquesne, Pa. .... April 18</p> <p>BROTHER PETER KOLLIMAN Camden, N. J. .... April 11</p> <p>BROTHER HENRY KRUEHM Wilmington, Del. .... April 4</p> <p>BROTHER J. C. LAIRD Wilmington, Del. .... April 25</p>	<p>BROTHER OSCAR MAGNUSON Brooklyn, N. Y. .... April 4 Camden, N. J. .... 18 Wilmington, Del. .... 18</p> <p>BROTHER MARTIN MITCHELL Passaic, N. J. .... April 11</p> <p>BROTHER ROBERT NASH San Bernardino, Calif. .... April 11 Hawthorne, Calif. .... 11</p> <p>BROTHER WALTER SARGEANT Vancouver, B. C. .... April 2-4 Lynden, Wash. .... 5 Seattle, Wash., and vicinity .... 6-8 Victoria, B. C. .... 10, 11 Port Angeles, Wash. .... 12 Seattle, Wash., and vicinity .. 13-19 Ellensburg, Wash. .... 20, 21 Grandview, Wash., .... 22, 23 Spokane, Wash. .... 24, 25 Calgary, Alberta .... 27-29</p> <p>BROTHER J. S. V. SIDDON'S Camden, N. J. .... April 25</p> <p>BROTHER GEORGE RIPPER San Diego, Calif. .... April 18</p>	<p>BROTHER J. H. L. TRAUTFELTER Wilmington, Del. .... April 11</p> <p>BROTHER G. M. WILSON Duquesne, Pa. .... April 4, 18 East Liverpool, Ohio .... 11</p> <p>BROTHER W. N. WOODWORTH Allentown, Pa. .... April 11 Tonawanda, N. Y. .... 13 Detroit, Mich. .... 14 Ypsilanti, Mich. .... 15 Jackson, Mich. .... 16 Grand Rapids, Mich. .... 18 South Bend, Ind. .... 19 Aurora-Batavia, Ill. .... 20 Rockford, Ill. .... 21 Beloit, Wis. .... 22 Madison, Wis. .... 23 Rochester, Minn. .... 24 Minneapolis, Minn. .... 25 Colby, Wis. .... 26 Junction City, Wis. .... 27 Lake Mills, Wis. .... 28 Waukesha, Wis. .... 29 Milwaukee, Wis. .... 30 Chicago, Ill. .... May 1, 2</p>
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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### NEW EDITION OF DIVINE PLAN NOW READY.

The Divine Plan of the Ages, standard textbook of Bible Students for fifty years, already has a circulation of many millions of copies; but still there is a demand for it: and it is our hope that the new, cloth-bound edition which is now ready will increase this demand. It is the book supreme for imparting a full, rounded-out knowledge of God's plan for human redemption. Friends in various places are considering the possibility of taking up the pastoral work through the use of The Divine Plan of the Ages; and further announcements will be made in the event that plans along this line develop further.

The new edition is printed on a good grade of antique-finish, white book paper, and is bound in blue cloth, with title stamped in gold. It is well made and attractive. Single copies postpaid to any address, 50 cents. In lots of 10 or more, 30 cents each, plus postage. Special arrangements will be made for those who desire to use these books in the colporteur work.

We take this occasion to express our appreciation to the Pastoral Bible Institute for the use of their plates in the preparation of this new edition of the Divine Plan.

**INCIDENTAL PUBLICATIONS.** In addition to the Divine Plan of the Ages, we have a variety of incidental truth publications dealing with specific subjects, and all calculated to stimulate interest in a further study of the truth. A list follows:

"God and Reason," 128 pages, paper-bound, 20 cents each, 7 copies for \$1, postpaid.

"Zionism in Prophecy," 64 pages, 20 cents, 7 copies for \$1, postpaid.

"Evolutionists at the Crossroads," 128 pages, 25 cents each, 6 copies for \$1, postpaid.

"The Truth About Hell," 32 pages, 10 cents each, in lots of 10 or more, 5 cents each, postpaid.

"God's Plan in Brief," 100 pages, 15 cents each, postpaid.

"Hymns of Dawn," a reproduction of the original Millennial Dawn Hymn Book, cloth-bound, 85 cents a single copy, lots of 15 or more 73 cents each, lots of 100 or more, 64 cents.

**FREE TRACTS.** Order as many of these as you can use. Send for samples in order that you may select the kind desired. In lots of 1,000 or more, we will be glad to print your local address on the tracts you use, if you so desire. We also supply circulars for advertising public meetings, free.

**The Dawn, 136 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N. Y.**

**ROUTING AGENT FOR NORTHWEST.** In addition to the brethren named in the March issue of The Dawn who will serve in arranging pilgrim schedules, we are glad to announce that Brother Clifford R Miles, 1108 West 61st Street, Seattle Wash., will take care of this work in the Northwest.

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# The DAWN

*A Herald of Christ's Presence*

Vol. 5, No. 7

APRIL 1937

One Dollar a Year

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## NEXT MONTH

### KNOW THY BRETHREN

Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth." To what extent has the truth of the Bible been understood and adhered to down through the centuries? The article, "Know Thy Brethren," deals with this question in an interesting manner, quoting liberally from available historical records.

### THE LORD'S JEWELS

The first installment of this article appeared in the March issue. The discussion in the May Dawn will deal with the individual characteristics of the various kinds of jewels, and how these illustrate important phases of Christian character development.

### TRUTH GENERAL AND TRUTH DISPENSATIONAL

An article which is well calculated to increase our appreciation of the wonderful truths of the divine plan which in the Lord's providence have been brought to light during the harvest period of this Gospel age.

### PARADISE AND HEAVEN

This will be the last article in the general series "Hope Beyond the Grave," and will examine Scriptural testimony concerning paradise and heaven. It will also deal with the question as to whether Enoch, Elijah, and others of the Old Testament period are now in heaven. Also whether Christians in this age go immediately to heaven at the moment of death.

### JEWISH DEPARTMENT

Promised for this month, but delayed.

# NEWS and VIEWS

## "THEY SHALL COME AGAIN"



**N** MARCH 18 last, all America was horrified by news of the gas explosion in a rural school house in New London, Texas, which snuffed out the lives of half a thousand children—nearly all in the building at the time. This catastrophe, probably the worst of its kind in history, raised the question anew of what God has to do with matters of this kind. Did He cause the explosion? If so, for what purpose? Could He have prevented it? If so, why did He not use His power to save the lives of those helpless children?

While the news of the death-dealing explosion in New London was heart-rending and sad; while it brought intense sorrow to the hundreds of parents whose children were thus suddenly and cruelly wrested from them; yet, in reality there were many more than this number of minors who went down into death that very same hour, about which we know but little and consider less. We refer to the hundreds of infants and children that die from so-called "natural" causes every hour of every day—a casualty list that started with the death of Abel, and has continued to mount with increasing momentum ever since. Viewed from this comparative standpoint, the New London calamity is but a small and incidental ripple on the ever-swelling tide of death and sorrow with which mankind is afflicted.

Why does God permit evil?

This is a question that has puzzled thinking men and women in all ages. The only satisfactory answer to it is that which is disclosed by the plan of God as outlined in the Bible. Thousands have been comforted by understanding the divine plan, made plain to them through the book, "The Divine Plan of the Ages," published first in 1886, a new edition of which is now available. The divine plan reveals that while God permits evils of this kind, He is not directly responsible for them; and that this divine permission is for the purpose of giving mankind an actual experience with sin and its results?

God's love and pity in the permission of suffering and death are readily seen in the provision He has made to restore life to all who have died. The period during which this is to be accomplished is described by the Apostle Peter as "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21.) These "times of restitution," the apostle discloses, are to follow the second coming of Christ. It is for this reason that present world events which indicate so clearly that we are living in the "last days," should cause all students of the Bible to rejoice, because it means that the wonderful era of the world's blessing is near, yea, even at the doors.

A mass destruction of children, which was probably much greater than that of the Texas catastrophe, was that ordered by Herod about two years after the birth of Jesus. The total number of male children thus put to death in Judea is not given in the Bible, but it must have been tremendous. In Jeremiah 31 there is a prophecy concerning this in which these murdered children are said to be in the "land of the enemy"—the land of death. The Lord comforts the parents of these children, and all other parents, with the words: "Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears, . . . for thy children shall come again from the land of the enemy."

This, then, is the message of comfort which we are privileged to speak to a sorrowing world today. A message that sets forth the hope of the resurrection. Through the influence of the dark-age creeds, death is rendered even more horrible than it otherwise would be, due to the fear of what might lie beyond the grave. But the Bible portrays all the dead as being "prisoners of hope," being temporarily held in the great prison house of death, where there is "no knowledge, wisdom nor device," and where all are sleeping until the morning of the new day when they "shall hear the voice" of the Son of man, and "shall come forth."—John 5:28.

## THE SIT-DOWN STRIKE EPIDEMIC

THE SIT-DOWN strike is one of the latest innovations in the grim life and death struggle between capital and labor. The spirit of the "sit down" strikes has gripped the nation so tightly, that even school children are attempting it as a method of getting their own way with their teachers. And not alone in America, but in other parts of the world as well; and among all classes of those who "work for a living," even among some who don't, the sit-down fever is spreading.

Coptic monks, in Egypt, go on a sit-down strike because they are deprived of some of their liberties of visiting the townfolk adjacent to the monastery in which they are supposed to live a life of separation from the world. Geisha girls (professional entertainers) in Japan, betake themselves in a body to one of the "holy" temples and sit down therein, refusing to move until their demands are complied with. In factories, department stores, restaurants, laundries; and, in fact, in almost every line of occupation, people seem to be getting the idea that they are out of style unless they take their turn at "sitting down on the job."

And the sit-down strike is far more difficult for the employers to deal with than the old-fashioned "walk out." The laborer has learned by experience,

that with more than ten million people out of work, the risk of having his job taken by another in the event he walks away from it is becoming too great to take a chance. But when he sits down right in the factory, and defies the owners and the civil authorities to touch him, it presents a problem that is causing no little concern to both big and little business interests the country over.

The menace of the sit-down strike is becoming so ominous that government authorities are expressing fear that it will lead to a dictatorship in America. Obviously, if two opposing parties cannot reach an agreement, and it is necessary that the controversy be stopped, a powerful influence from the outside must be brought to bear upon them; and similar conditions that have developed elsewhere in the world indicate that "dictatorship" is the usual solution to the problem—although all will not agree that it is a very satisfactory one. On March 24 President Roosevelt "moved" to take some definite action in the crisis.

The student of the Bible, however, need not be concerned over the final outcome of this struggle of classes vs. the masses, because he will find from the sacred Word that this very condition of things was foreknown of God and foretold by Him thousands of years ago, as that which would climax the reign of sin and death, and which would immediately precede the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. To the student of prophecy, therefore, the sit-down epidemic, no matter what its final outcome may be, is seen as but another skirmish, so to speak, in the grim battle which is destined to humble and prepare all classes of the world to receive its new King, the Prince of Peace. Writing more than fifty years ago on the rapidly developing controversy between the Rightists and the Leftists, the author of the "Divine Plan of the Ages," said:

"The two rival parties to the battle are already visible. Wealth, arrogance and pride are on one side, and widely-prevailing poverty, ignorance, bigotry and a keen sense of injustice are on the other. Both, impelled by selfish motives, are now organizing their forces all over the civilized world. With our eyes anointed with truth, wherever we look we can see that the sea and the waves are already roaring and lashing and foaming out against the mountains, as represented in the attempts of anarchists and discontents whose numbers are constantly increasing. We can see, too, that the friction between the various factions or elements of society is rapidly getting to the point described by the prophets, when the earth (society) will be on fire, and the elements will melt and disintegrate with the mutually generated heat.

"But the saint should take no part in this struggle. His consecration vow was that he would strive and grasp and run for a higher, a heavenly prize, and hence he is weaned from earthly ambitions, and labors not for earthly things, except to provide things decent and needful; for he is giving heed to the course and example of the Master and the apostles.

"By probing and inflaming either real or fancied wounds and wrongs, we would do injury to those we should be helping and blessing, thus spreading their

discontent, and hence their trouble. But by fulfilling our mission, preaching the good tidings of the ransom given for all, and the consequent blessings to come to all, we shall be true heralds of the Kingdom—its ambassadors of peace. Thus it is written, "How beautiful upon the mountains [kingdoms] are the feet of him [the last members of the body of Christ] that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good."—Isaiah 52:7.

"The troubles of this 'Day of Jehovah' will give opportunity for preaching the good tidings of coming good, such as is seldom afforded, and blessed are they who will follow the footsteps of the Master, and be the good Samaritans binding up the wounds and pouring in the oil and wine of comfort and cheer. The assurance given such is that their labor is not in vain; for when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isaiah 26:9.

### MAN A WORSHIPPING CREATURE

ONE of the human characteristics which makes man so distinctly different from all other earthly creatures is his instinctive desire to worship a higher power. While individuals may for a time seem to successfully suppress this natural desire, and live their lives wholly apart from religious influence, yet it is just about impossible to entirely destroy in the hearts of the masses, the remnant of this quality which was originally implanted in the human breast. It was tried in Russia, but latest reports from there indicate that the effort is not proving to be as successful as the authorities had hoped it might be.

The Russian newspaper, *Izvestia*, declares that there has been an "alarming decrease" in the forces organized to stamp out religion in Soviet Russia. It said that the resulting situation was "intolerable." The number of Bezbojniks, members of the militant Godless League, in Russia, has fallen from 5,000,000 in 1923 to less than 2,000,000, and the organization has ceased to exist in many provinces, the newspaper asserts. Anti-religious work in thousands of villages has been discontinued as the Communist youth leagues have abandoned work among Russian youths. Lectures and propaganda in factories and workers' clubs also have ceased.

An interesting dispatch from Russia, published in the *New York Times*, of March 21, tells of many in the Russian Underworld, who, when given assurance by the government that they would be given a chance, gave themselves up to the authorities, confessed their wrong doings, and now are being given an opportunity to 'make good.' The dispatch indicates that this is having a powerful influence for good on the entire Underworld population of Russia. How quickly the people of Russia and the whole world will yield to the influence of the true religion of mercy and kindness; and how glad all will be, when the Messianic Kingdom is established, to learn of the true God.

**THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL**

15 ¶ And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time.

16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Gen. 22:15-18 Gal. 3:8

8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

Gal. 3:26-29

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Gal. 3:26-29

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and he shall be their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

Rev. 21:2-5.

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Acts 3:20, 21.

8 By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out not knowing whither he went.

10 For he looked for a city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Heb. 11:8, 10

10 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Lu. 3:6.

## SPIRITS IN PRISON

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."—1 Peter 3:18-20.

THAT the truth of God's Word cannot be properly understood and appreciated except by taking into account its entire testimony on a given subject, is well illustrated by its several statements concerning the condition and whereabouts of Jesus during the interim between His death and His resurrection.

In an Old Testament prophecy concerning Jesus, quoted by the Apostle Peter, and applied by him to the death and resurrection of the Master, Jesus is said to have been in hell. (Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:27-32.) Through a misunderstanding of what Jesus Himself said to the thief on the cross many have been led to believe that He went to "paradise" the moment He died; and from a surface reading of our present text it would appear that He went somewhere to preach to "spirits in prison."

In a previous discussion we learned that the Bible hell is the condition of death; that sheol in the Old Testament and hades in the New, are words which describe a condition of utter unconsciousness. (Ecl. 9:10.) As Jesus died a ransom, or substitute, for father Adam and his race, thus taking the sinner's place, it therefore was necessary that He go into this condition of death, the Bible hell.

"He made His grave with the wicked," declares the prophet concerning Jesus. (Isa. 53:9.) It is in harmony with this basic fact of Biblical truth that we must seek an understanding of whatever else the sacred Word may have to say concerning the whereabouts of Jesus between the time of His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead the third day thereafter.

In order to understand clearly just how it was possible for Jesus to preach to "spirits in prison" at a time when other Scriptures show that He was unconscious in death, it is necessary, first of all, to determine who the "spirits" were to whom He preached. It is this information that St. Peter gives us in the words, "which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah."

In his second epistle Peter furnishes us with an even more definite identification of the "spirits," saying: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but spared Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."—2 Peter 2:4, 5.

From the foregoing quotations it will be seen that the "spirits" to whom Jesus preached were a certain group of "angels" that had been disobedient to God back at the time of the flood. The Apostle Jude also mentions these same beings, similarly referring to them as "angels," and describing their special sin as being that they "kept not their first estate." Jude also explains, even as Peter does, that these "angels" are now imprisoned, Jude adding

that they are in "chains of darkness," waiting for the judgment of the great day.—Jude 6.

These "spirits in prison," then, are not the "spirits," or "ghosts" of human beings who have died, but are spirit creatures on the angelic plane of existence. This is an important truth to ever keep in mind.

We are well aware that on God's earthly plane of creation, which is visible and understandable to us, there are various levels of existence; from the lowest form of shell-fish life, up to man, who in his perfection was the king of this material, or earthly domain. Now the Scriptures show that this same variety in divine creation extends to a higher realm, far beyond that which is visible to us, that above man, the highest of God's earthly creatures, there is a spirit world; and that in this spirit world, even as in the natural, there are various orders of beings, such as angels, archangels, etc.

Concerning man the Psalmist declares, "Thou has made him a little lower than the angels." Psa. 8:5.) When Jesus came to earth to die as man's Redeemer, He was "made flesh," and as a man He died; but when resurrected He was highly exalted, "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." (Eph. 1:21.) Thus do the Scriptures point out a clear line of demarcation between the earthly and the spirit planes of existence.

The Bible indicates that at the present time there are both holy and unholy angels; although, when created, all these spirit creatures were in harmony with God, and served Him in various capacities. Of those angels which remained in harmony

with the Creator, the apostle says that they are now "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

Again, "And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire." (Heb. 1:7, 14.) Concerning these angelic servants of the Christians Jesus said: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 18:10.

#### Earthly and Heavenly "Angels"

The student of the Scriptures should not be confused by the fact that in the Bible the term "angel" is sometimes applied to human beings. The word literally means servant, or messenger, and it is always necessary to determine from the context whether or not the passage in which it is used has reference to human messengers, or to heavenly, or spirit messengers. The seven special messengers to the church, as mentioned in Revelation, are called "angels," yet it is evident that the Revelator is not referring to heavenly beings.

On the other hand, the Scriptures clearly indicate that there are spirit creatures called "angels." For example, the night that Jesus was born, an "angel" announced His birth to the shepherds. That it was a spirit being who performed this service is evident from the words: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:10-14.) Likewise, it was a spirit being that announced to Mary that she was to be the mother of Jesus, and it was also a spirit being that ministered to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus referred to heavenly beings when He said that He could ask of His Father, and more than twelve legions of them would be provided to assist Him.—Luke 1:26-38; 22:43; Matt. 26:53.

But, as we have already seen, not all of these angelic creatures remained loyal to Jehovah, their Creator—some of them having been "disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah." (1 Pet. 3:20.) These unfaithful ones, by common usage, have come to be designated as the "fallen angels." The Scriptures show that as a punishment for their rebellion, they are

now held, or imprisoned, in "chains of darkness."

#### Where Are the "Spirits"?

In a text already quoted, the apostle gives us some very important information as to what constitutes the prison-house of these fallen angels. We quote the text again: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."—2 Peter 2:4.

The word "hell" in the passage just quoted is not a translation either of the Greek word *hades* or of *Gehenna*. The term here used by the apostle is *tartaroo*; and this is the only time it appears in the Bible. *Tartaroo* is from the Greek word *tartarus*, a term used in Grecian mythology as the name for a dark abyss or prison. In the text under consideration, the entire expression, "cast down to hell" is used to translate *tartaroo*; so, evidently, the word refers more to an act than to a place. The fall of the angels who sinned was from honor and dignity, into dishonor and condemnation; so the thought seems to be: "God spared not the angels who sinned, but degraded them, and delivered them into chains of darkness."

These angels, in their original state of holiness were mighty and powerful and honorable. They evidently possessed great liberties; and in their service of God and of His earthly friends, they probably were frequent travelers between the earth and other parts of the Creator's vast universe. Jude says that these angels "kept not their first estate." This throws light on the words of Genesis 6:2, which reads, "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." In other words, the "sin" of these angels was, in part at least, that of materializing as human beings, and indulging in illegitimate relationship with the daughters of men.

At different times during the historical period covered by the Bible, various ones of the holy messengers, or angels, were sent to earth to deliver messages to the prophets and others; and on many of these occasions, they were permitted to materialize and appear as human beings. An example of this is furnished in the visit of the three angels to Abraham prior to the birth of Isaac. (Gen. 18.) Such materializations were permissible when sanctioned by

the Lord, and when the angels taking part in them, did not exceed their privileges. But the angels that sinned before the flood "kept not their first estate," that is, they preferred to continue their association with mankind, as human beings.

Having limited and degraded their own powers by illicit relationship with the fallen human race, how fitting it was that their punishment should be that of being cast down, or abased, and at the same time "restrained in chains of darkness." The thought contained in the use of the word "prison," as found in our text, is that of the restraint of liberty; so these "spirits" have indeed been in "prison," restrained of much of the normal liberty that was theirs while in full fellowship and harmony with the Creator.

There is much Scriptural evidence to support the thought that the place of incarceration of these fallen angels is that of our earth's atmosphere; their sphere of influence being limited largely to a more or less indirect contact with the human family. In the Gospel accounts of Jesus' ministry, we find frequent mention of His casting out "devils," or "demons." Later, the apostles were privileged to render a similar service for different ones. While higher critics try to prove that these cases of "obsession" thus dealt with by Jesus and the apostles, were but cases of insanity, or nervous disorders, yet there is altogether too definite a thought of personality attached to these "devils" to permit of any such liberal interpretation.

#### King Saul and the Witch of Endor

Not only in the New Testament, but in the Old as well, we find evidence of the limited activities of these fallen angels, or "spirits in prison." There is, for example, the case of King Saul and the Witch of Endor. All witchcraft was forbidden by the Mosaic law, yet these ancient spirit mediums persisted in their nefarious practices even though it was at the risk of death. Just as spirit mediums today claim ability to communicate with the dead, so, evidently, the Witch of Endor made similar professions. Anyway, when King Saul, because of his wickedness, lost the favor of God and saw that he was in grave danger of being defeated by his enemies, he appealed to the witch to get in touch with Samuel to see if the dead prophet could do anything for him.

The account of this ancient seance

is recorded in 1 Samuel 28:7-20. Many students of the Bible, in reading this story of Saul's supposed communication with the dead prophet Samuel, have concluded that it furnishes excellent Scriptural proof that the dead are not really dead at all, but alive somewhere, and that they can be communicated with under certain conditions, especially by the aid of a spirit medium. In fact, all down through the ages, Satan has used this same method of deceit in an effort to give the lie to the

earth? Or are we supposed to believe that this wicked witch, under condemnation by the Lord, had the power to thwart the divine will, and not only produce Samuel, but inveigle a message out of him to comfort this rebellious king? Evidently, then, this account is given us in the Bible merely as an historical record of important events in Saul's life, but with no thought of accrediting the witch's claim of having seen and talked with Samuel.

The methods used by the evil spir-

these "lying spirits," who impersonated the prophet and spoke to Saul in his name, through their medium, the witch.

"Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?" the witch represented the dead prophet as asking. It was generally understood by the Israelites in the days of King Saul, that the dead were actually asleep in sheol, hence the question, "why hast thou disquieted me," would not sound strange. But can we imagine for a moment that this condemned witch had the power to raise the prophet from the dead? Or, to look at the matter from the standpoint of modern spiritism, that Samuel was not really dead at all, but enjoying himself in the spirit world, does it not seem strange that he was declared by the witch to come "up" from the earth, instead of "down" from heaven?

And, from the standpoint of modern theology, how utterly absurd is Samuel's purported prophecy concerning Saul's defeat and death in the battle of the coming day! We quote: "Tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the hosts of Israel into the hands of the Philistines." Imagine the faithful Samuel, and the beloved Jonathan together in the spirit world with the wicked King Saul! Does this fit very well with the creedal theology of the dark ages? Certainly not! Ultimately, of course (but not the next day), all these were together in death, in sheol, the Bible hell, where they still are, awaiting the resurrection, when all will be called forth by the Son of Man; but it did not require any supernatural power on the witch's part to truly forecast the approaching defeat and death of Saul. In fact, Saul already feared it, hence his appeal to the witch.

Charles Wesley was evidently puzzled by the manner in which the "medium" of Endor put both good and bad together in death, for he wrote:

What do those solemn words  
portend?

A gleam of hope when life shall  
end?

Thou and thy sons shall surely be  
Tomorrow in repose with me:  
Not in a state of hellish pain,  
If Saul with Samuel remain;  
Not in a state of damned despair,  
If loving Jonathan be there.

Actually, of course, Saul was not in communication with Samuel at all, but with one or more of the "spirits



King Saul Visits the Witch

plain teachings of the Scriptures that the "wages of sin is death." As we examine, briefly, some of the facts concerning Saul's visit to the witch, we will readily discern that much the same analogy could be applied to modern seances, and with the same result.—Rom. 6:23.

First of all, it will be noted that according to Saul's own words, he was no longer in favor with God. He said to the witch, "God is departed from me and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams." While Samuel was alive he was a faithful servant and prophet of the Lord, and was never willing to go contrary to the Lord's wishes; yet here we find Saul, who himself admitted that God would not favor the idea, asking the witch to obtain a message from this faithful prophet.

Are we to suppose that in the event Samuel were alive, either in heaven or some other place, he would be any less obedient to the Lord than he was while here on the

earth through the medium at Endor were similar to those in use today. They caused to pass before the witch's mental vision the familiar likeness of the aged prophet, wearing as was his custom, a long mantle. When she described the mental or "astral" picture, Saul recognized it at once as a description of Samuel. But Saul himself saw nothing—he "perceived," from the description, that it was Samuel.

Easily convinced, as people under such circumstances usually are, Saul did not stop to question how it could be that Samuel looked as old and as stooped as he did while alive on the earth, if he were now a spirit being and far better off than before. Nor did Saul think to enquire why Samuel wore the same old mantle in the spirit world that he wore when he knew him as an earthly being—not even stopping to consider that the prophet's mantle, gray hair, etc., had long before decayed in the grave. Saul had been forsaken by the Lord, and now was easily deceived by

in prison" whose chief activity since the time of the flood, has been to deceive mankind, particularly with respect to the condition of the dead. The mention in the Scriptures of these necromancers, witches and mediums, leads us to infer that through mediums these fallen angels were seeking fellowship with Israel. But apparently, it is the custom for these mediums to change their manner of manifestation from time to time: just as witchcraft flourished for a time in New England and Ohio, and throughout Europe, gradually dying out and being succeeded by Spiritism, whose tipping and rapping manifestations also are gradually giving way to clairaudience and attempted materializations. In the days of the Lord and the apostles, the operation of these "spirits" had evidently changed from the witchcraft method to that of obsession and possession.

#### Modern Work of the "Spirits"

Having been once given the power to materialize as men, yet abusing it, these fallen angels still seem bent on exercising their powers through human agencies, either by the use of "mediums" or through direct control of the mind, as in obsession. It is evident, however, that the human will must consent to this foreign domination, before these "spirits" can take possession. But when they do take possession, apparently the will becomes so broken down, that there is no longer any power of resistance: hence the service of Jesus and the apostles was so much appreciated by those possessed of devils in their day.

But while these fallen angelic beings may change from time to time their method of contacting and deceiving the human race, yet their influence in general is always away from God and away from the truth of His Word. In modern times much ado is made about talking with the dead, yet in all the thousands of attempts that have been made—scientifically controlled, and otherwise—what has been the total result? True, by absurd "identifications" such as the Witch of Endor succeeded in foisting upon Saul, many have been convinced that they have been in touch with their dead friends and relatives.

It should be remembered though, that these wicked, fallen angels have the ability to read the human mind submitted to them. Thus it is that they are able to see mirrored in the mind of an unsuspecting victim the

features, clothing, mannerisms, and even the voice peculiarities, of the dead friend with whom he wishes to communicate. And when the medium, through the aid of the "spirit" controlling her, describes these "identifications," the victim is assured and waits expectantly for the "message."

#### "Spirits" Unable to Give Real Help

Now when the dead friends or relatives of those who visit the mediums were alive and with them, there was sweet, common-sense fellowship between them. They talked together about things worth while. They counselled and comforted each other in a helpful manner; and we would suppose that now that these dear ones were in the spirit world, where their powers of thought and action are claimed to be so greatly enhanced, they would send back information of an exceptional and extraordinary character. Yes, they should now be able to fully solve the difficulties of the family with which they were formerly associated; and if they had been statesmen, they should be able to impart knowledge to their survivors that would settle the world's difficulties. But not so. The facts are rather to the contrary. On this point we quote the words of Horace L. Hastings written many years ago, but still true and applicable today:

"According to the theory of Spiritualists there are a hundred times as many disembodied spirits about us as there are men in the flesh. Among them are all the poets, authors, orators, musicians and inventors of past ages. They know all they ever knew while they were in the flesh, and have been learning a great deal more since; and with their added powers and extended experience they should be able to do what mortals have never done before. They have had free access to the public mind and public press, with no end of mediums ready to receive their communications, and thousands and thousands of inquirers who have anxiously questioned them, and earnestly desired to obtain information from them.

"They have had tables and slates and pens and pencils and banjos and pianos and cabinets and bells and violins and guitars: and what have we to show for it all? Their business in the world has been to instruct men, to help them, to make them wiser and better. They have talked and rapped, they have tipped and rattled, they have fiddled and scribbled, they have materialized and

dematerialized, they have entranced and exhibited; they have told us many things which we knew before; many things which we do not know yet; and many other things which it was no matter whether we knew or not: but when we come to real information, or profitable and valuable knowledge, Spiritualism is as barren as Sahara, as empty as a hollow gourd."

#### How Christ Preached To the Spirits in Prison

Now that we have identified these "spirits" to whom St. Peter tells us Jesus preached, the question arises, How was this preaching accomplished? How could Jesus be in *sheol*, or *hades*, where there is no consciousness, yet at the same time, be preaching to these fallen angels? The explanation of this apparent difficulty is simple when we examine the passage a little more critically. According to the Common Version English Bible, the apostle said that Jesus "went and preached to the spirits in prison." But Greek authorities are agreed that the words, "went and" are used in the sense of accomplishing something and not in the sense of going to any particular place. In other words, these two words are a needless addition to the text. In olden times, it was customary to use expressions of this kind, and even today, we find it is sometimes used.

Dr. Benjamin Wilson, in his *Emphatic Diaglott* translates this passage of Scripture, "He preached to the spirits in prison," leaving out the two words, "went and," as being unnecessary to a proper understanding of the text. In the footnote to this text, he shows that other authorities agree with him in this respect. Leaving out then, these two, unnecessary words, the full text reads, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit; by which also He preached unto the spirits in prison." (1 Pet. 3:18, 19.) The meaning here is apparent, namely, that it was by His death and resurrection that Jesus preached to these fallen angels—an object lesson, taught by His faithfulness to the Heavenly Father and Creator, against whom these "spirits" had rebelled.

Lucifer was the first of these spirit beings to rebel against God; and he evidently exercised a great deal

of influence over those who later joined the ranks of the rebels. In Matthew 25:41, the expression, "the devil and his angels," indicates a close relationship existing between Satan and these other fallen spirit beings. It was the spirit of ambition and pride that led to Lucifer's fall (Isa. 14:14); and, apparently, the same spirit has pervaded the ranks of these lesser fallen angels. Jesus' faithfulness, therefore, a faithfulness that led Him to humble Himself, and become obedient unto

death would be a powerful sermon to these "spirits in prison." And the power of that sermon would be greatly increased when these "spirits" noted that Jesus, on account of His faithfulness, was raised from the dead and highly exalted to a place at the right hand of God; while they were degraded and abased because of their disloyalty.

Thus we find that one by one, when properly understood, the various Scriptural passages bearing on the condition of the dead, are seen to be

in harmony with that great fundamental truth, that the "wages of sin is death," and that the "dead know not anything." (Ecc. 9:5.)

Next month we will consider the words of the Master to the thief on the cross, "This day, thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." Also, the various passages concerning heaven which are thought to teach that all good people go to that place of bliss the moment they die.

## THE WAY OUT

IF EVER there was a time in the history of the world which called for calm and unbiased reasoning on the part of all, it is now. But mere reasoning, no matter how intelligent, can never bring hope to anyone unless there can be found some dependable foundation upon which reason may be based.

Today the world seems hopelessly adrift on the stormy seas of raging human passions. The motive power of unbridled selfishness is attempting to drive the storm-tossed vessel forward, but the little progress that is made is aimless and is as if the ship's rudder were broken in twain, or lost; and the voyagers know not whither they are headed. In the hearts of millions today there is fear and terror as they think of the unspeakable horrors that may at almost any time befall this already greatly harassed human family.

Jesus foretold the coming of just such a time as this, in which there would be "distress of nations with perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear" as they look forward to the things coming upon the earth.

Is there a way out?

This is a question that is now upon the lips and in the hearts of practically all thinking people the world over. Is there anything upon which we may build our hopes for better days ahead?

In this hour of world distress many churchmen are recommending religion as a sure solace for the suffering people. But if religion can point the way out of the billowy seas of uncertainty to a haven of rest and security, what particular kind of religion should we look for?

We hold that through Biblical truth alone will men find a true solution to the present world-wide con-

ditions of perplexity and distress; and it is from this standpoint that we approach the subject in this discussion. Yet on this point we are faced with the necessity of distinguishing between the pure teachings of the Bible and the confusing theories of traditional theology which too often masquerade in the name of Christianity.

We cannot hope to make progress in finding a reasonable basis for faith and hope except by identifying superstition as such, brushing it aside, and seeking to learn and apply the naked principles of undefiled Biblical truth to present-day problems. If, as all Christians claim to believe, the Bible is the foundation of ultimate truth and reason, then by all means let's find out what the Bible really teaches!

If in this search for truth we may seem to trespass upon some or many of your accustomed beliefs, and seem cruelly to wrest them from you, think not that this will destroy your faith in the eternal verities that are actually taught in the Bible.

It will not!

To whatever extent vain superstition is replaced with dependable truth and reason, one's faith becomes a far more comforting reality than mere credulity, and the Bible takes on a new and saner meaning. And how much need there is today that our faith be based upon a firm foundation of reason and truth; for we are surely confronted with many confusing paradoxes.

Evolutionists insist that we have made steadily progressive strides since the first "crude" beginning of civilization on this planet. Many today boastfully point to the marvelous achievements of this modern "brain age." Yet our highly "civ-

ilized" world is faced with the undeniable fact that its boasted civilization now stands at the very brink of destruction. With all our learning we are not able to maintain the standards of supposed culture to which we pretend to have arrived.

No longer is it possible to prevent a knowledge of these startling facts from edging in upon the public mind. Serious statesmen are frankly pointing out the necessity of something drastic being done if civilization is to be saved. Prominent religious leaders of all schools of ecclesiasticism are earnestly announcing that unless the people now quickly return to God the whole world will be plunged into the greatest and most deadly cataclysm of all human history.

When the outstanding religionists of the day declare that the world is doomed unless it returns to God, what do they mean? With the world facing ruin, unless something is done, and done quickly, it would seem that almost everybody would be willing to fall in line with the right thing. But alas, even these church dignitaries themselves do not agree as to what could or should be done to arouse the world to action.

Agreeing that it does look doubtful if mere human diplomacy will be able to prevent the cataclysm which nearly everybody fears, the necessity for hunting some other solution naturally becomes obvious and imperative if we are to have any hope for the immediate or distant future.

Do the religious differences that exist among the professed followers of Christ mean that we should give up our faith in the Bible itself as containing answers to the baffling

(Continued on page 19)

# The Christian Life

## Called, Chosen and Faithful

*These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.*—Rev. 17:14.



**A**BOUT three years ago, in one of the mid-western states, a group of newly consecrated Christians were gathered together to study the subject of symbolic immersion, in order that they might decide as to whether or not they should take this step of publicly witnessing to the fact that they had given their hearts in full consecration to the Lord. A brother was present at this meeting who had been many years in the narrow way, but who held the view that the door to the high calling had closed in the year 1916; so he raised the question as to what hope could be held out to these newly interested brethren. The question came as a surprise to these young Christians. However, after giving the matter a moment's thought, one of them responded somewhat as follows:

"This is the first time we have heard such a thought suggested, and it doesn't appeal to me as being in harmony with the God we have learned to know and love through the truth. This glorious truth reached us in an unusual way, while we were still members of the Roman Catholic Church; we are rejoicing in it. Our hearts have been touched by it so that we have presented our all in consecration to the Lord. This message has revealed to us the glorious hope of joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom; and in response thereto, we have entered the narrow way and are running for the 'prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' The truth is grand; and it has revealed to us a wonderful God; a wise, and just, and loving God. And for me, I do not believe that the God who has been revealed to us through this gospel, is the kind of a God who would lead us up to this point, giving us this marvelous vision of Himself and of the heavenly calling, and then, as it were, slam the door in our face."

To the nominal Christian, who believes that God is now doing all He can to convert the world, the discussion of a subject of this kind doubtless would seem childish and wholly uncalled for; but to those enlightened with the harvest message of present truth, it becomes a matter of serious concern; affecting directly and vitally every consecrated Christian who has come to a knowledge of this truth within the last half century. Through the truth of the divine plan, we have learned that the work of the Gospel age has been but a preparatory one—a work of selecting and preparing a "little flock" of consecrated believers who

are to reign with Jesus for the blessing of the world in the next age—Luke 12:32.

We have learned, furthermore, that this "little flock" of "called, chosen and faithful" ones is to consist of a foreordained number of 144,000. (Rev. 14:1.) We have learned also that in the selecting and testing of those who are to finally reign with Christ there is a possibility that some who have been called to this position, and tentatively accepted, may lose the "crown" apportioned to them, and others be called in to take their places—and especially is this true at the end of the age.—Rev. 3:11.

These various Scriptural truths concerning the privileges of the Gospel age lead us to the inescapable conclusion that the time must ultimately come when there would be no further opportunity to be accepted as probationary members of the heavenly Kingdom class. Also that as we near the full completion of this Gospel-age work, the number of new ones accepted would become less and less—such new ones being granted this blessed opportunity only because some who had previously been apportioned crowns had proved unfaithful. These seem to be well established Scriptural conclusions with which doubtless nearly all Bible Students, enlightened with present truth, will agree. The question is, How may we know, or can we know at all, when the full number of the church class is complete? Can we know this so definitely that we can with confidence say to those now becoming interested in the truth that there is or is not an opportunity for them to become partakers of the heavenly calling?

### How God Calls

Our text (Rev. 17:14) indicates the progressive steps which determine the eligibility of all who are finally to reign with Christ. The first of these is that of being "called," or invited. As Bible Students we have learned that the divine call comes through the truth. (Eph. 1:9,13.) Inasmuch as the truth of the gospel has been the medium used by the Heavenly Father by which He has extended the invitation to the high calling, our faith in God's wisdom and power would lead us to believe that His providences have so directed the promulgation of the truth as to accomplish just what He has desired to be accomplished, no more, no less. To think otherwise would be to suppose that once God gave the truth into the hands of a few of His people, He forthwith lost all

control of it Himself; and that its promulgation has been in a haphazard manner, subject merely to the whims, wishes, and prejudices of His well-meaning, but imperfect servants. No, God does not carry on His work in any such manner as this; although many times, from the human standpoint, this may seem to be the case.

The fact that in the early part of the Gospel age the Apostle Paul and others were directed to carry the gospel northward and westward into Europe rather than southward and eastward among the orientals, was not mere accident, but of divine providence and intention. That the servant of the harvest message was chosen in America, and that the work should emanate from this country, where everything was so favorable to its rapid spread, was also of divine arrangement. Surely we must believe that God still controls His truth and is directing its influence in the earth in order that His further purposes may be successfully accomplished.

### **Truth—the Drawing Power**

And let us note the clear-cut distinction that always should be made between the truth of God and the various organizational and group arrangements that from time to time may be permitted by Him to promulgate His truth. The truth itself in the calling, or inviting agency, not the individual or group that may handle the truth. If, then, irrespective of the agency used, we find that God's truth is still reaching one here and there, and these are responding in full consecration to the Lord, even as all of us did in times past, should we not insist upon more than a speculative theory of some sort in order to be convinced that this is not the work of God, that He is not still accepting some as probationary members of the "little flock"?

As the matter now stands, we are confronted with the fact that the truth, God's inviting agency, is still being permitted to go forth among the people; that some are heeding the call and responding to it by presenting themselves in full consecration to the Lord. Yes, it is the *truth* that is still producing this blessed result. At the present time, the truth of the divine plan is being made known by various individuals and groups in many parts of the world, but regardless of who may be thus promulgating it, the truth itself is the agency which God is using to accomplish His purpose—and blessed are any of us if we are among those whom the Lord is now permitting to thus hold forth the Word of life.

The truth is not now being preached as extensively as it was 25 or 30 years ago; nevertheless, it is still going forth. The limited measure in which God permits His message to be proclaimed is fully in keeping with what we should expect as we approach nearer to the end of the church's earthly pilgrimage; hence this in itself is no argument against the thought that God is now back of what is being done. Nor is the limited number of those who now respond and who make a consecration to the Lord a valid argument to prove that those few who do now enter the race, are not being accepted of the Lord as probation-

ary members of the church. What arguments are there then, if any, that God is not at the present time blessing the spread of His truth, and is not still accepting new members into the body of Christ to take the places of those proving unfaithful?

### **What Time Prophecy Discloses**

Some will doubtless claim that the time prophecies of the divine plan indicate that the church should now be complete. One of the most important lines of time prophecies given us in the Bible is that which pertains to the Gentile Times, which we understand ended in the year 1914. But this particular time measurement bears no relationship to the church. The consummation of that 2520 years merely points out the time when we should expect the gradual downfall of Gentile supremacy, and the coming into prominence of God's ancient people, Israel. It does, indeed, point out the fact that we are now living in the closing period of the Gospel age, and the early dawn of the Millennial age, but it in no way indicates definitely when the door to the high calling shall close, as it has nothing to do with the high calling of the church.

The parallel dispensations are somewhat more closely related to the church's experiences, although the most important application of this "double" period seems to be to the natural house of Israel. The seventy weeks of favor to natural Israel, ending in the year 36 A. D. after which time the gospel went to the Gentiles, finds a parallel in the year 1881, when we understand that the special favor was no longer extended to the nominal spiritual house of Israel. But just as Jews, as well as Gentiles, individually had the opportunity of accepting the Gospel and entering the narrow way subsequent to 36 A. D., so the year 1881 merely marks the end of special favor to nominal spiritual Israel as a whole—the end of the general call.

There is nothing in the 36-1881 A. D. parallelism to indicate the time for the closing of the door to the high calling. It is reasonable to suppose, however, that the year 1881 marked the time—probably the first time in the age—when the full number of 144,000 had been "chosen." If this conclusion be correct, then it means that all who have consecrated and been accepted since that time have had this privilege extended to them because some already "called" and "chosen" had not proved "faithful" under test. So far as we are aware there is no definite time prophecy to indicate that there has been any change in the church's status since 1881. As to what has been taking place in the more than half a century since that time, we suggest a careful re-reading of pages 93 to 96 inclusive, of Volume 6 of *Studies in the Scriptures*.

A passage of Scripture which has a bearing on this general subject is that of Revelation 7:1-3. Here we have a picture of the four angels holding back the "four winds," with the command to hurt not the earth nor the sea, nor any tree, until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. There is no question but what the sealing work here referred to has to do

with receiving a knowledge of the truth by those who are to be with the Lamb on Mt. Zion. What lesson then does this Scripture have for us as pertaining to the end of high-calling privileges?

### ***Is The Sealing Work Complete?***

It is claimed by some that the "four winds" here referred to were the winds of war that began to blow in 1914, and, therefore, that the door to the high calling closed back there, as the blowing of the "winds" would indicate that the sealing work was complete. Is this the proper understanding of the passage? We think not, and for the following reason: The blowing of the four winds is not given merely as a *sign* by which we might know that the sealing work is complete, but is clearly shown to be symbolic of something which would *effectively block any further sealing of God's servants*. This is in keeping with the suggestion already made, that God Himself is the One who is providentially overruling the proclamation of His truth, and that when the sealing work shall have been completed, He will permit circumstances to arise which will definitely prevent any further dissemination of the calling or sealing agency—the truth.

Did anything occur in 1914 to block a further dissemination of the truth? No! Two years thereafter Pastor Russell himself said, "The harvest work is still going grandly on." Has anything occurred since Pastor Russell made this statement to entirely stop the spread of the harvest message? No! It is well to note in this connection, however, that within the last few years, the gathering storm-clouds of the great time of trouble have so affected certain parts of the world as to make practically impossible a further preaching of the gospel in those sections. Russia and Germany are examples of this condition of things. It seems entirely reasonable to us that this indicates a gradual closing of the door, so to speak, a curtailing of the message with a resultant diminishing of the number of new ones being reached; as the coming in and going out process tapers down to a final conclusion. But certainly the "four winds" have not yet prevented the spread of the truth in this and a number of other countries. And the very fact that such a proclamation of the gospel is still possible seems positive proof, in harmony with this Scripture, that the servants of God *are not yet all sealed* with a knowledge of the truth—that the door is not yet shut.

### ***Message More Important Than Messengers***

There are others of the Lord's dear people who take the stand that the door to the high calling closed with the death of "That Servant," in 1916. There is no Scriptural basis at all for this thought. It is a conclusion that has been reached through an undue reverence for one whom the Lord so greatly used in His harvest field. Those holding this view seem to feel that God could not, or at least would not, carry on a harvest work after the death of the harvest messenger. These overlook the fact that the message of truth itself, and not the messenger, is the medium which God has used and is still using to accomplish the work of spirit-begetting.

The message of truth presented by the Apostle Paul is just as vital in the lives of God's people today as it was while that faithful servant was living. There have been but seven chief messengers to serve the entire church from Pentecost down to the present time, which means that many times during the age there have been long periods when the church did not have one of these servants personally present with it. And even during the period when the Laodicean messenger was ministering to the people of God, there were many who did not see or come in personal contact with him. The message that God gave through that servant was the power that wrought such mighty changes in the hearts and lives of the saints; and that same blessed message is still with us today, just as powerful, just as potent, just as soul-satisfying, as it was when the messenger himself was laying down his life among us.

No, the Pauline epistles did not die when Paul himself was executed, nor did present truth perish from the earth when Brother Russell passed beyond the veil. That message has continued to prosper in the thing whereunto God designed it should, and has continued to call one here and there throughout the years, to present themselves in full consecration to the Lord. That same message, under divine providence, has continued to be a begetting power, a nourishing power, a sanctifying power, even to the present time. And when in divine providence, we see that same blessed truth still reaching out and comforting the hearts of those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness," let us not say, by our own philosophy, that God is inconsistent in that He permits His truth to be preached, and yet denies the privileges of the truth to those who respond to it.

Could we but keep in mind the importance of the *truth*, as compared with the messengers whom God uses to dispense it, it would help many of us to get the thought out of our minds that there must be some one appointed to take the place of "that servant." If the apostolic messages have served the church throughout the entire Gospel age, should we not conclude that the message given to us through the Laodicean servant is sufficient to nourish us for the few remaining years of the harvest period? Should we not learn, upon the basis of the truth itself, to work out our own salvation, rather than to be looking continually for some human leaning post upon whom the arm of flesh can lay hold, lest we fall by the way-side?

### ***The Harvest Work Continues***

The harvest work is that of gathering and separating the wheat from the tares, the real from the imitation. The vital factor of that work takes place in the hearts of God's consecrated people. The dissemination of the truth is merely a means to an end in this work of separation. Through the truth the call goes forth, "Come out of her My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins"; but there is actually no separating work except as the individuals respond to the call of truth and obey it. It is important to keep this in mind, if we are to understand what has been

going on among God's people, since 1914.—Rev. 18:4.

Simply because the world-wide proclamation of the truth was considerably curtailed—although never entirely stopped—about 20 years ago, many have concluded that the harvest work ceased then; but not so. The work of separating the wheat from the tares, the coming out of Babylon, has still continued. At first, we thought that leaving the nominal systems was all that was involved in coming out of Babylon; but now it is apparent that this is but the *first* step in becoming free from human entanglements.

Now we realize more fully than ever before that we must stand absolutely as individuals before the Lord, that not even being a part of a Bible Students ecclesia will assure us a place in the Kingdom with Christ—although such individualism does not mean that we should neglect our privileges of fellowship and service with others of like precious faith. No doubt God, in His wise providence, removed His special harvest messenger from our midst in order that we might have an opportunity of learning this further lesson of separation from the Babylonish spirit of salvation by groups; although Brother Russell himself had taught us plainly on this point. Now this additional work of testing is just as definitely a part of the harvest work as was the original widespread publishing of the truth and the generous response thereto.

### **Take Heed Lest Ye Fall**

In the beginning of the harvest period, there were thousands in the nominal systems who, evidently, proved unfaithful when present truth came to them. Thousands of new ones came in to take their places. It does not seem reasonable that all of these latter would remain faithful under test, any more than the former. They came in under the influence of the truth—they were “chosen”—but how many of them have proved entirely “faithful”?

It is not within our province to judge, either individuals or groups; but the conclusion seems inescapable, that in all the departures from the truth that have taken place in the last 20 years, and in view of the fact that not a few have drifted back into the world entirely, there must be many who, through unfaithfulness, have forfeited their “crowns.” This, in turn, furnishes the obvious answer as to why the Lord is still permitting His truth to be published; and why there are still some who are responding thereto by presenting themselves in full consecration to the Father. The logic of events tells us that it could not be otherwise.

To conclude that the door to the high calling was definitely closed in 1914, or 1916, or at any other time in the past, would be equal to saying that those already accepted could not possibly fall away from their steadfastness. The last twenty years, as all will agree, has been a time of very special testing upon the church; and the very thought of *testing* implies the possibility of a *failure to pass the test*. To claim that all the members of the church were unalterably sealed twenty or more years ago, would be equivalent to saying that the present testing per-

iod is superfluous and a farce. Such a philosophy would be exceedingly detrimental to healthy Christian growth and progress in the narrow way. It would be tantamount, in principle, to the erroneous theory that once one becomes converted, his salvation is assured—“once in grace, always in grace.”

### **How Long Does it Take?**

On the other hand, the thought is advanced by some that it requires considerable time for the new creature to become properly developed; so there must be a period between the final closing of the door and the glorification of the last member of the body of Christ, when it would no longer be possible for one to fall away. Upon this method of reasoning is based the theory that the door to the high calling must of necessity close long years before the end of the church's career in the flesh.

It is not our thought to advocate “death-bed repentances,” in the sense that one may make a consecration to the Lord and be taken immediately into the Kingdom; yet we believe that the length of time required for one to prove his faithfulness to the Lord has been over-exaggerated in the minds of some of the Lord's people. We are reminded, for example, of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr of record. The evidence is, that he finished his course very soon after he made his consecration. And it is a noteworthy fact that many of those now embracing the truth, and making a full consecration to the Lord, progress very rapidly, both in knowledge and in grace.

It seems reasonable to suppose that as the end approaches, there may be some in an attitude of consecration, who have, in principle, passed many of the tests of discipleship; and, in the event that any fall out of the way almost the last minute, so to speak, these waiting ones would be invited to take their places. With very little further preparation, these would be ready for the Kingdom. Probably many of us have known of those who have been acquainted with the truth for many years, and who have been living in harmony with the spirit of the truth, but to whom consecration and the high calling did not seem to appeal. And then, for some reason we did not understand, the interest of these dear ones had become quickened, and almost over night, as it were, they blossomed out into fully consecrated Christians, entering into the life of sacrifice with a zeal befitting the house of God. Why may we not conclude that God has a hand in matters of this kind, and that, in His providences, He is thus saying to one after another, “Go ye also into the vineyard.” Viewing the matter thus, there seems to be no valid reason for concluding that the door to the high calling must be closed many long years before the church is glorified in order to give time for those who are “called” and “chosen” to prove “faithful.”

### **The Fulness of the Gentiles**

We have briefly examined the various reasons offered as to why we should conclude there is no more opportunity for new ones to enter the narrow way; and found that these reasons are based entirely on human philosophy, rather than upon sound Scrip-

tural proof. Let us now examine a direct statement of the Word which seems to prove conclusively that the door to joint-heirship with Christ is *not* yet closed. We have reference to Romans 11:25. In this passage, St. Paul informs us that "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

Here is then something definite upon which we can base a conclusion. It has to do with that which is now common knowledge to all of God's people; namely, the continued blindness of natural Israel as to who constitutes their Messiah.

Yes, this "blindness in part" is still upon Israel, which means that as yet the "fulness of the Gentiles" has not come in, that there is still opportunity of being grafted into the symbolic olive tree of Romans 11. At the same time the apostle's words help us to get our bearings as to where we are on the stream of time. While the "blindness of Israel" is still upon that people, there is evidence that God is dealing with them, preparing them for the time when He will remove the veil of unbelief that has thus far hindered them from recognizing their Messiah. This furnishes another evidence that we are in the transition period, when the work of the Gospel age is gradually closing, and that of the Millennial age opening up.

### **What Is The "Door"?**

Many times we use terms and expressions without giving due consideration to what they mean; and this often leads us to adopt wrong conclusions. This could easily be true with respect to our use of the expression 'door to the high calling.' By not taking into consideration what the Bible means by the "door," some are inclined to doubt the evidence of their own senses, and to base their doubts upon the Scriptures. For example, time and time again attention has been called to the fact that people are still coming into the truth. More than once Brother Russell cited this as evidence that the "door" was not yet closed in his day; similar evidence of the open door is still before us.

There may not be new ones coming into every ecclesia, but many of the Lord's people are seeing their efforts to spread the truth thus blessed. It may be of interest to the reader to know that out of sixteen brethren who helped with the mailing of the March issue of *The Dawn*, that six have embraced the truth and made a full consecration to the Lord within recent years. These dear ones worked side by side with some who have been in the truth for more than 40 years; yet they all had the same spirit of the Lord, the spirit of His truth. Their hopes and aims were one.

But alas, those who are disinclined to wait for the Lord Himself to close the door, by a misuse of the Scriptures, twist evidence of this kind to bolster up their own speculative and erroneous arguments and conclusions. They refer us to Luke 13:24,25, where Jesus tells us in effect that many would "strive to enter in," but would not be able. So the claim is that those now coming into the truth, and seeking to enter the narrow way, are those who are thus "striving" to

enter, in fulfilment of this statement, and is therefore proof that the door *is* closed, rather than evidence that it is still open.

This false reasoning is based upon a failure to understand what constitutes the "door." In Volume 3 of *Studies in the Scriptures*, pages 206-209, we are given a wonderfully clear explanation of what the "door," really is, and how the Lord, in His due time will cause it to close. We earnestly recommend a careful study of these pages, and a sincere, reverent consideration of the Scriptures therein cited. Briefly, we are reminded that the "door" is the same as the "gate" by which we enter the narrow way; and that this is the "narrow way of self-sacrifice in the interests of the Lord's plan and work." How beautifully is the thought expressed in the words, "To walk in this way, as our Lord set us an example that we should follow in His steps, implies not only a *passive* conformity to His disposition, or spirit, but also an *active, energetic zeal* in the *promulgation* of His truth at all hazards." Yes, even at the hazard of being told that our labors are sure to be fruitless because "the door is closed."

If this door represents the opportunity to sacrifice, serve, and suffer with Christ, then certainly it is not yet closed to newcomers, for those now coming into the truth are enjoying wonderful opportunities along this line. Doubtless the time will come when such opportunities shall no longer be open; and the manner in which they are to be cut off is evidently that of the loosing of the "four winds" which will make impossible any further efforts to serve the truth and to suffer as a result; but certainly that time has not yet arrived!

### **Too Wise to Err, Too Loving to be Unkind**

Coming back to the statement of that dear young Christian in the Middle West, to whom the truth had given such a wonderful vision of God that she could not believe He would permit her to see and aspire to the high calling and then "slam the door in her face," we must conclude that she was right. Writing on this very point, Brother Russell says, "The Lord is too loving and too just to authorize in the hearts of any hopes that could never be realized." (C. 223.) God's Word of authority comes to us only through His truth. So, dear one, if the truth has come to you and you desire to consecrate yourself to the Lord and He gives you opportunity of sacrificing for Him, do not hesitate to step out upon God's promises—"Go ye out also into the vineyard."

Our text shows clearly that one must first be "called," or invited by the truth; that upon the basis of his response thereto he must then be "chosen," or accepted by the Lord as a runner in the race for the prize of the high calling, and that, in addition to this, he must prove "faithful." Not until wholehearted faithfulness has been proved, demonstrated, can one be assured of a place with Christ in His Kingdom; and such faithfulness is fully demonstrated only by the completion of our sacrifice in death—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10.

Let no one erroneously suppose then, that his standing in the Kingdom class is already assured, or that it can be assured prior to the full consummation of his sacrifice. In view of this, let us also realize that some crowns are doubtless even yet being forfeited by reason of unfaithfulness. And let us have faith to believe, therefore, that while we are doing with our might what our hands find to do in the proclamation of Kingdom truths, that God's wisdom will so direct the issue that the message will fully

appeal, in the sense of ripening to full consecration, to those only for whom He has a place in the Heavenly Kingdom. Let us have faith to believe, that while we do the best we can to let our light shine that He will so overrule the result of our work that, in the end, it will be found that not a single one *too many* was invited, and that *all* who *were* invited through the truth to enter the narrow way, shall have been given every necessary opportunity and help to prove faithful even unto death, and thus to make their calling and election sure.

## The Vital Test of Christian Discipleship



IT IS customary for most persons embracing Christianity to think that all that is necessary in order for them to be considered good Christians is to live upright, moral lives, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, to be baptized or sprinkled and thus to be confirmed members of a church organization. Scripture texts to this effect are frequently cited in support of their position. But others who have been truly enlightened (Heb. 6:4) realize that there is much more than this to true Christian discipleship. These latter have learned that not only are they required to completely surrender themselves to their Heavenly Father through the medium of the Lord Jesus Christ, but, additionally, that they are required to carry out that full surrender by a life of Christlike service and sacrifice.

A great many persons have been thus enlightened and have been trying, in a more or less satisfactory manner, to perform that service and sacrifice. It would naturally be supposed that all such would have a common interest in, and concern for, each other and for the interests they represent. But such has not always been the case. It is true that great bodies of people and groups of one kind and another, have been formed in the name of Christ with the ostensible purpose of just such a commitment, but these have failed as denominations and groups to display, at all times, the love and consideration for one another so clearly set forth in the Scriptures as the primary object of Christian discipleship. And the surprising thing is that they all claim the Scriptures as the basis for their convictions.

All those who are now in present truth, having been enlightened as to what constitutes true Christian discipleship, can appreciate wherein they, as denominations and groups, have failed; and they know from the abundant Scriptural testimony, as well as from experience, that no denomination or group, as such, can expect to be fully approved or to feel entirely secure and certain of the ultimate rewards of the Lord. And has not this group aspect deprived many of a more effective use of their talents in helping others to see what has been so graciously shown to them? In many instances it has been one of the most effective means of discouraging the exercise of the love and

sympathy which fellow disciples should have one for the other.

It is, of course, true that the Scriptures refer to a group of persons in association, as the "Church of God," thereby indicating that the Lord recognizes groups and congregations; but who can say that all the members of such groups stand fully approved of God and of Jesus? In fact, the messages to the seven churches recorded in the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation, show most unmistakably that none of these "churches" was fully approved or commended. And it is understood by most Bible students that these churches are representative of conditions among God's people throughout this whole Gospel dispensation. Only certain individual members of those churches were approved. This, of course, doesn't mean that the true follower of Jesus is to dissociate himself from any group or congregational service and worship, but it does prove that our association with any group of the Lord's people will "in no wise" itself guarantee to us the Kingdom rewards. Only *individual* faithfulness will guarantee that.

Unquestionably, much of the confusion and discord among otherwise sincere followers of Jesus, is directly traceable to zeal for some group and the tenets of that group, and the belief that their views are primarily essential to Christian fellowship and discipleship. Groups sometimes become so busily engaged in spreading their views abroad that they fail of the vital interest in one another, basically established by the Law given to Israel at Mt. Sinai, directly commanded by Jesus and exemplified in His own life, and shown to be the *full intent* of the preaching and teaching by the Lord's own personally chosen representatives, the apostles. The truth and the preaching of the truth are but *means to an end*, and that *end* is the *finding* and *developing* of *Christians*; and incidentally to give a witness.

Surely, as stated by the Lord and His faithful apostle, Paul, the body is more important than the meat that nourishes and strengthens it, and life itself is far more valuable than the body it actuates. Remember how assiduously the Jews in the days of our Lord, sought to make proselytes to their cause—and they verily thought their cause was righteous—but utterly

forgot the weightier matters of the Law and its objective, which was the preparing of a people for His name by inculcating in them the principles of righteousness and truth for the purpose of right thinking and living, and *especially so among themselves*. The same holds true of those who now make service and the reaching out to interest others, the only important feature of Christian discipleship. But invariably these one-sided zealots utterly fail in their regard for, and interest in, their Christian associates.

If, as we surely believe, we have come to the very end of the Gospel era, then would it not seem that the most important consideration should be given to the interests and welfare of those whom we have good reason to believe are "wheat" and not "tares"? Surely there may be others in the world and in these various and sundry groups of avowed Christians who are of the wheat class and we should be trying to reach and assist them, but not to the neglect of those who are already *fellow-runners* in the race "for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Are not these indeed the prospective members of the Kingdom class, our brethren for whom we are to lay down our lives? And is it not for these that Christ died and arose from the dead, and whom He will deliver from sin and death and give eternal life? Do not the Lord and His apostles so present the matter?

### **Need of Mutual Helpfulness**

Another element that might appreciably reduce prejudice and inconsiderate treatment of fellow members of Christ, is the full realization that *all* who claim the distinction of being Christians, are in the School of Christ as disciples, *learners*. And so long as we remain in the flesh, we can learn something from our fellow members even though they may disagree with us on some of the minor details of the Divine Plan—though it may be but to confirm our own conclusions, through careful and diligent study; hence the importance of regularly meeting in class studies and other gatherings of the brethren.

Sometimes a fellow member may act like the governor of a piece of machinery—a device for regulating its speed. He may hold us in check from running away with our own, preconceived ideas and petty hobbies; or contrariwise, incite us to greater zeal and fervor of spirit. But often, when there is a difference of opinion on some point not altogether fundamental, the tendency is to treat the differing one with a measure of coolness and indifference, and, in some instances, even with meanness and rancor. This should not be! Where instances of this character occur, it indicates that the spirit of the adversary is at work among the Lord's people, that there is still much of the fleshly mind to be overcome. Brother Russell once made a statement to the effect that when anyone has reached a condition of mind wherein he felt he had nothing more to learn and was fully satisfied with his spiritual attainments, from that moment he could date his spiritual decline. And true that is.

Another test that comes to us as followers of Jesus, is the test of our love for and fidelity to the truth and its interests. But there is one thing upon which

we should assure ourselves and that is, that it is the cause of truth we are espousing and not some petty difference of opinion on other than fundamental doctrine; and by fundamental doctrine is meant those important *truths* relating to the ransom, restitution, our Lord's return and the establishment of His Kingdom, and our participation with Him both now and in the future. These are the *essentials* of our Christian knowledge and understanding as Christ's followers. But oftentimes harmonious conclusions cannot be reached on even these vital truths of God's Word. Resort is had to the use of parables and various and sundry Scripture citations to bolster the difference of opinion. Humanly speaking it would be a wonderful thing if all those who claim to be His consecrated followers could see eye to eye on every item of truth; but we know that such a state of affairs is beyond realization while still in the flesh, this side the "vail." Nevertheless, we should make every possible effort to bring about that condition. Our *"oneness"* should be as real as we are able to make it; not however by ceasing to contend earnestly for the faith. There are many who feel that to argue the truth with those who disagree with us in our views is a waste of consecrated time and energy; but this was not the attitude of the apostles nor of the early church. The early church had many tests similar to those now experienced by the brethren, but their interest in one another was *real* and *vital*, even as ours should be today. "Lukewarmness" with respect to doctrines and other important issues seems to characterize our times. May the Lord grant all of us strength to rise above this spirit of indifference, and in every respect be more enthusiastic Christians.

### **Love—The Principal Thing**

While a correct understanding of the truth is essential to our lives and well being as Christians, St. Paul reminds us that even if we are fully informed on every item of truth—"have all knowledge"—and that knowledge has not produced in us that vital, God-like characteristic called in the Common Version, "charity" (love in its fullest sense), we are *"nothing."* Although we may sacrifice every interest in this life in order that we might be of service to others—"bestow all my goods to feed the poor and though I give my body to be burned"—it will be considered valueless unless we have that quality of mind and heart which transcends every other feeling and motive by which our words and acts are prompted. That transcending quality of mind and heart is called "love."

The nearest approach to a definition for this quality of mind and heart might be said to be the selfless benign doing of something for the benefit of others, prompted by a joyous motive based upon holiness and purity and divine righteousness. At first thought, this definition may seem abstruse and involved, but divine love is so great and wonderful that it is beyond our powers of expression, therefore it is difficult to formulate an adequate definition that will properly convey the true meaning of love to our minds. As a matter of fact, love can best be understood by noting what it does and how it acts; which

is the method of instruction pursued by Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter thirteen.

Notwithstanding that we know these things, how often we fail to put them into practice. And if we do *not* put them into practice, wherein are we justified in our assurance of being recipients of God's greatest gifts and rewards? For only as we display these characteristics of the greatest thing in the universe—"Love divine all love excelling"—can we properly claim the heritage of the saints—to become "joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:17.) Note in the expressions of St. Paul and all the apostles, their intense earnestness for the welfare of their brethren, reflecting the various qualifications mentioned in our definition of love. In this connection we quote, in part, from St. Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians, chapter two:

"Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children; so being *affectionately desirous of you*, we were willing to have imparted unto you, *not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us*. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail; for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how *holily and justly and unblameably* we behaved ourselves among you that believe: As ye know how we *exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children*, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His Kingdom and glory. For this cause also we thank God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. . . . But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, *not in heart, endeavored the more abundantly to see your face*

*with great desire*. Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us. . . . *For ye are our glory and joy.*"

### Love—The Test of True Discipleship

In John 13:35, our Lord is recorded as saying: "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." It may seem strange to some that our Lord failed to place the emphasis on our knowing and preaching the truth as an indication of our true discipleship, but when we understand that the truth is the *means* employed to the *end* that we may become disciples indeed, and through it, also, to develop characters suitable for so high a station in the future, we can see why the Lord placed the emphasis on our love for one another. If we do not have that disposition now, toward our fellow-members in Christ, how can we ever demonstrate our worthiness to be among the blessers of humanity in the future? It should be our love for one another that prompts us to endeavor to help others see the grandeur and glory of His purposes as He has given us to understand them.

Not only do the Lord and St. Paul affirm that the vital test of our discipleship shall be our love for one another but the apostles Peter and John also attest this fact. (See 2 Pet. 1:4-13.) St. John, in his first epistle, third chapter and fourteenth verse, writes: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, *because we love the brethren.*" Brother Russell, the most outstanding servant of God and the truth in these last days of the Gospel age and the forepart of the Millennium, has said, that in his opinion, the final and most crucial test upon the church will be love for the brethren. Can we discount the value of such an array of testimony?

Our service, our sacrifice and self-denial, our preaching and teaching are all merely an index of our relationship to Him as brethren and fellow-heirs. So, in conclusion, we can confidently assert that the *vital test* of our Christian discipleship is *unfeigned, fervent love for the brethren.*

## God's Messages to Two Churches

*And to the angel of the church of Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is; and thou holdest fast My name, and hast not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.*

*"Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.*

*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."—Rev.2:12-17.*



THE language of this passage of Scripture is very significant. The fact that this church dwelt where Satan's seat was, indicated the great apostasy that had taken place at that time. The word Pergamos itself signifies "citadel," or "fortified." The citadel of Troy was called by that name. The Pergamos of Apostolic times was situated in Asia Minor. It was distinguished for science and arts. Regarding it a commentator has said:

"The sumptuousness of the princes raised Pergamos to the rank of the first city of Asia as regards splendor. It was a sort of union of a pagan cathedral city, a university town, and a royal residence, embellished during a succession of years by kings who all had a passion for expenditure and ample means of gratifying it."

### **Nicene Council and the "Trinity"**

The Pergamos period dates from the time when the Roman Emperor Constantine espoused the cause of Christianity. The first ecumenical council was held in 325 A. D. in the city of Nice. At this convocation a notable controversy took place over the doctrine of the Trinity. On account of the many foreigners, believing in a multiplicity of gods—and the Romans themselves having worshipped many deities for centuries—it seemed expedient to build up the theory of more than one god.

Indeed a monotheism seemed to be a poor affair in the minds of the great majority of the people of that time. It was a clever stroke of politico-religious diplomacy to stick to one God and yet make him appear as three Gods. In its mysticism, it was completely baffling to reason, and hence all the more appealing to those who had been accustomed to much mystery in their religious rites; and this meant practically all the people of the Roman empire. Indeed, it *was* all, with the exception of an extremely few lovers of truth who were willing to brave the wrath of the emperors and the hierarchy for a faith that was pure and undefiled—and there have been a few of these in every century.

At this time, an earnest and humble exponent of the truth stood forth to champion the cause of the divine Word. His name was Arius. Buck says of him, "He maintained that the Son of God was totally and essentially distinct from the Father; that He was the first and the noblest of those beings whom God had created—the instrument by whose subordinate operation He formed the universe; and therefore inferior to the Father both in nature and dignity. However, the exponents of the Nicene creed condemned Arius as a heretic. His books were burned, and he himself was excommunicated and banished; and the great adversary of truth seemed to have achieved a triumph of considerable importance.

"From the time the Nicene Creed was promulgated and accepted, A.D. 325, there was practically no more Bible study for over twelve centuries. During all that time Bible study was considered unnecessary, because the 'Apostolic' bishops had formulated the creeds as proper statements of the Church's faith. To study the Bible would have meant the studying of how to fight against the Emperor and the bishops."—Z. '15-253.

The message to the Pergamos church begins with the words, "These things saith He which hath the sharp sword with two edges." The speaker here is Christ. He is the great Captain of the Lord's army. We are informed that in early times, just before the capture of Jericho, a warrior in glitter-

ing armor appeared to Israel's new leader. Joshua challenged him in the words, "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" And the reply was, "Nay; but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." So this indicates that Christ has always been the mighty Chieftain of God's true people. The sword with two edges is the truth. It cuts both inward and outward. The Apostle Paul refers to it as "the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." The appearance of Christ with the great implement used so much in war would naturally impart hope, encouragement, and assurance of final victory to those hard beset by the opposing forces around them.

### **The Lord's Commendations and Reproofs**

Our Lord tells the church at Pergamos that He is fully cognizant of her works, that He has not overlooked anything that she has done. He also says, "Thou holdest fast My name, and hast not denied My faith." All this is very good. It speaks of loyalty and an honest heart. And yet this church is not without its imperfections. Among the brethren of that time had come certain ones who, for the sake of gain, would betray the people of God, even as Balaam of old coveted the gold and the approval of Balac, and thought he could be a prophet of Jehovah and at the same time parley and compromise with the enemy, thus acting as a stumbling block to the Israelites, and not proving himself to be an open opponent to the idolatry so prevalent in his day. Then, too, there were some exponents of Nicolaitanism, who favored some kind of overlordship of the people. The Lord has no use for such abominations as the ones mentioned, and He frankly makes this fact known to the church.

Christ says, "Repent." Now repentance means more than merely being sorry for something. It also means a sincere effort to get away from the evil. The Master wants a pure church. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump," says the Apostle Paul, for "ye are unleavened." And again he says, "What concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." 2 Cor. 6:15-17.

It must, indeed, have meant a hard fight for those dear, devoted ones who really belonged to the Lord, to stand up against the ecclesiastical powers that held the sword of persecution and who scrupled not to use it. It is hard on one who is pure of heart to behold the truth perverted, set at naught, and trampled in the mire of tradition and worldly policy. Truly such a one needs to live very close to the Lord, to lean very hard on that strong arm that is mighty to deliver and defend, and to daily try to realize that final victory will perch on the banners of the Most High, who knows how to take care of His own cause.

Then the Lord promises the overcomers of this period that He will give them to eat of the hidden

manna. In a golden pot in the Ark of God there was a quantity of this hidden manna provided by the Lord. It did not corrupt as did the daily manna, hence would fittingly typify the immortal life yet to be enjoyed by the saints. The white stone would seem to symbolize the seal of the holy spirit in the heart of the true Christian. Here, too, is a new name written, which is doubtless the name of the heavenly Bridegroom; for is it not always the name of the bridegroom that is written in the heart of the prospective bride?

And who knows this name save him that receiveth it? The apostle says, (Rom.8:16,17) "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 also be glorified together." Then again we read, (1John 3:14) "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." The Bridegroom's name stands chiefly for the quality of love; for "God is love." And the Christian sings

"Write Thy name upon my heart,  
Thy new best name of Love."

### THE MESSAGE TO THYATIRA

*"And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and the hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

*"But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.*

*"And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of My Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."—Rev. 2:18-29.*

The word Thyatira is said to mean "the sweet perfume of labor." It evidently applies to the period during which the church was said to be "in the wil-

derness," the time of papal supremacy. During this period the Waldenses came into being, strongly advocating a purer and simpler form of worship. They first preached their doctrines in France, then in England, and afterward throughout Europe. Their zeal was manifested under conditions of the most merciless persecution, and in spite of all opposition, their teachings gained ground. Speaking of them Buck says:

"They denied the supremacy of the Roman pontiff, and maintained that the rulers and ministers of the church were obliged, by their vocation, to imitate the poverty of the apostles, and to procure for themselves a subsistence by the work of their hands. They considered every Christian as, in a certain measure, qualified and authorized to instruct, exhort and confirm the brethren in their Christian course. They affirmed that confession made to priests was by no means necessary. . . . They maintained that the power of delivering sinners from the guilt and punishment of their offences belonged to God alone. They looked upon the prayers and other ceremonies that were instituted in behalf of the dead, as vain, useless and absurd, and denied the existence of departed souls in an intermediate state of purification. . . . They prohibited and condemned in their society all wars, and suits of law, and all attempts toward the acquisition of wealth."

From such statements we can see that the Waldenses enjoyed a considerable measure of truth, and that they were energized by the spirit of self-denial and of sacrifice. To them, therefore, the Lord says, "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience." He realized all they had to go through because of their loyalty to Him. He beheld the strenuous efforts made by Pope Innocent III to crush the so-called heresy; for this pontiff commanded the scattering of all such non-conformists and the confiscation of their property, and consigned their souls to eternal perdition. Then Dominic instituted the Inquisition, and we all have read something of its untold horrors. The purpose of such persecution was to utterly wipe out all opposition to papal power. Verily, the true church was in the wilderness, and the powers of evil were enthroned for a time.

In saying, "I have a few things against thee," the Lord evidently is referring to the church in general, including the nominal system. Possibly the indictment is set forth chiefly for our instruction, "upon whom the ends of the ages are come." It points out the Lord's abhorrence of the Jezebel system. We know that Jezebel was the chief persecutor of Elijah, and that her power was exercised through the husband, Ahab. Elijah fled from this persecution into the wilderness where he was taken care of, and nourished by the Lord. During the three and a half years of the prophet's wilderness experience no rain fell, and the people suffered from a great famine. Then Elijah returned from the wilderness, the true God was recognized, and rain fell in abundance.

And all this experience of Israel's prophet found its antitype in the true church of Christ. It, too, was

driven into a wilderness condition for the long period of 1260 days (1260 years—a day for a year). During that time a great famine was in the land—"not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." (Amos 8:11.) Then the errors of papacy were made manifest by the Reformation movement, and there fell a rain of truth concerning justification by faith, the errors of confession to priests, of the worship of the Virgin Mary, the custom of praying to saints, etc.

"I gave her space to repent of her fornication," says the Lord. The word translated space here is "chronos," a time of 360 years, which probably ended three years after Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the church door at Wittenburg. "These he proposed not as points fully established, but as subjects of inquiry and disputation. The learned were invited to impugn them, either in person or in writing; and to the whole he subjoined solemn protestations of his high respect for the apostolic see, and of his implicit submission to its authority. No opponent appeared at the time prefixed; the theses spread over Germany with astonishing rapidity, and were read with the greatest eagerness."

For certain reasons a suspension of proceedings against Luther took place for some considerable time; but in 1520 the blow fell. Forty-one of Luther's propositions were condemned as heretical. All persons who had his writings in their possession were commanded to burn them. Luther himself was to be branded as a most obstinate heretic unless he publicly recanted within sixty days. Then he was excommunicated, and all princes were commanded to seize him, if possible, so that he might be given over to the tribunal for punishment.

"Behold, I will cast her into a bed," said the Lord. And certainly He did not mean a bed of ease and quietness, but a bed of pain and sorrow. "And them that commit adultery with her." Elsewhere we find this church system termed "the mother of harlots." At the beginning of her career she formed a false alliance with the world. The result was a mixture of church and state called "The Holy Roman Empire." Here was an abomination that made deso-

late. The Apostle Paul referred to it as "the man of sin" that must be revealed or shown up in due time. Then the Lord said, "I will kill her children with death." This assuredly He will do. "And all the churches shall know that I am He that searcheth the reins and the hearts." He knows how bad "mother of harlots" is and He also knows that the truth is not being preached in the systems which are called the "daughters"—the Protestant systems.

Then the Lord says that He will give unto every one according to the character of the works wrought. This indeed is a fair way of dealing with all. Speaking of mystic Babylon, the Revelator says, "Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." (Rev. 18:5.) Verily her iniquities have been great; for we read that, "In her was found the blood of prophets, saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." And again we read: "The light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."—Rev. 18:23, 24.

Ah yes, her condition is very dark. There is very little, if any, light shining in her today. Nor is it easy to find there, the voice of the Bridegroom calling for His bride. Truly, the best thing the Christian can do is to become entirely separate from her and her pernicious ways.

The great promise made to the church at this period is especially significant. The Lord's saints could see the mighty power of papal control. So then to them the Lord says, "I will give power to you some day, and this power will be so tremendous that it will enable you to break the nations to shivers. So do not lose faith because you are not in a position to overcome the might of error just now. The time will surely come when you will be able to do this. So keep on in patience and maintain your trust in Me. I will keep all My promises to you. And I will give you Him who has said, "I am the bright and morning star." In substance, this was the message of divine promise made to the Thyatira church.—Rev. 22:16.

## THE WAY OUT

(Continued from page 8)

questions with which the world is now confronted?

We think not!

Should we conclude that the great Intelligence who brought into existence the countless billions of heavenly bodies, and who causes them to move about ceaselessly in their orbits with such absolute accuracy, has signally failed in His attempt to produce a race of sentient creatures here on this small planet that can continue to exist under conditions of unimpaired and uninterrupted peace and happiness?

Reason answers, No!

## "Thy Kingdom Come"

When Jesus was here on earth He suggested to His disciples something very definite in the way of world-betterment. He said: "Pray ye, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is done in heaven." All down through the centuries earnest Christians have been repeating that prayer and patiently waiting for its answer.

Is it ever to be answered?

This Messianic prayer is very definite—but will such a universal Kingdom ever really come to this old earth? Will the Lord, in answer to this prayer, ever establish a new social order on this planet that will be based upon absolute justice and

love? If so, is there any evidence that this blessed Kingdom is near?

What kind of laws will the world be required to obey if, and when, the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," is answered? These are but a few of the many important questions which Reason demands must be considered if we are to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion in the discussion of this subject which is so vital to all who are seeking a true solution of present world distress—the divine solution.

NOTE:— This article is adapted from the preface and first chapter of the book, "God and Reason," It will be continued in May.



# International Sunday School Lessons



## THE SIN OF ADAM AND EVE

April 11—Genesis 3:1-15

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

And He said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?

And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me,

she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

**GOLDEN TEXT: The soul that sinneth, it shall die.—Ezek.:18:4.**



ACCORDING to the Bible narrative, there can be no question as to the origin of sin. It began in the mind of Lucifer, who was a free moral being. Evidently he wanted to gain control of our first parents. Concerning Lucifer, the Prophet Ezekiel wrote, "Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God. . . . Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth [protecteth]; and I have set thee so. . . . Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." (Ezek. 28:13-15.) The prophet Isaiah wrote, "Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars (the other angels) of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High."—Isa. 14:13,14.

This shows a wrong ambition on the part of Lucifer. He wanted to have autocratic control of the earth, just as God maintains absolute rule in heaven. So he began to carry out his inordinately ambitious designs by instilling distrust of God into the mind of mother Eve. The first woman listened to the tempter. His

words seemed to her, to be true; for there appeared to be nothing harmful in the forbidden fruit. Perhaps, the serpent himself partook of that fruit and in this way, gave a convincing object lesson. The suggestion offered was that here was something calculated to make her wise. It was the lure of the unknown, which seemed most desirable.

The woman hesitated no longer; she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave it to her husband, and he also ate it. The eyes of both were then opened, and they realized fully what they had done. The woman had been deceived by the serpent, but the man had not been deceived. Adam knew that the consequence of his act would be death. Therefore, the Apostle Paul, when speaking of this incident, said, "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.—1 Tim. 2:14.

It was at the time of the deflection of our first parents that the Lord God made the first prophecy concerning the great Seed of promise. The Lord said (Gen. 3:15), "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."

The picture presented by this saying is that the serpent (Satan) would follow the Seed of promise and would inflict a painful wound whenever it would be possible for him to do it, but that he would not be permitted to destroy the Seed. However, in due time, the Seed would turn upon him and crush his head, thus terminating his nefarious operations.

The complete fulfilment of this prophecy is in the future. The Seed referred to is to be the glorified Jesus and the exalted church, which is called His body. Another figure of speech used to describe the church is that of the "bride" of Christ. What a balancing of affairs we thus find in the Bible! The first man and his bride brought sin and death into the world. The second

man (Christ Jesus) and His bride (the church) will bring into the world both righteousness and life. Eternal torment does not figure at all in this transaction, for that God-dishonoring doctrine is a fabrication of the Dark Ages. According to the Scriptures, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18: 4, 20.) It shall not live in any state or condition. This proves that the soul is mortal, not immortal. The two great opposites of the Bible are, life on the one hand, and death on the other—life to those who obey the divine law, and death to those who disobey it.

#### QUESTIONS:

Is the garden of Eden story of the fall of man true to what we know about human nature? If so, explain how.

Is the soul of man mortal or immortal? Prove your statement from the Scriptures.

Who was the first sinner? and what was the first sin?

How will Satan finally be overcome? How is this pictured in the book of Revelation? See chapter 20.

Who is the great Seed of promise? Point out the wonderful balancing of human affairs set forth in the Word of God.

Is the dark-age theory of eternal torture in any way a part of the divine plan of human salvation?

\* \* \*

#### THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

April 18—Gen 13:13; 19:23-25;  
Deut. 32:31-33; Prov. 23:29-32.

But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.

The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven;

And He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter:

Their wine is the poison of dragons and the cruel venom of asps.

Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babblings? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

**GOLDEN TEXT:** At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.—Prov. 23:32.



ACCORDING to the Scriptures drunkenness was one of the sins of Sodom. Perhaps her other sins arose out of this one. They are mentioned in Ezek. 16:49,50, as follows: "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abominations before Me: therefore I took them away as I saw good."

The fact that alcoholic beverages have proved a terrible curse to the world is beyond question. Man has enough to fight against in the shape of weakness and disease without enfeebling his will-power and his nervous system by the use of strong drink. It is a deplorable thing, indeed, that man should make a fool of himself in such a manner. Speaking of intoxication the Prophet Isaiah says: "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of His hands. Therefore My people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge; and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. Therefore hell [sheol, the

grave, oblivion] hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

"The mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled: But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness." Isa.5:11-16.

In *Zion's Watch Tower* for 1901, we read:

"We concede that literal wine and intoxication in general are a dreadful bane to Christendom; we concede that many who occupy influential positions, as well as a mighty host of the common people, are greatly injured by intoxicating liquors. We urge and warn all the Lord's people against this evil, insidious and contaminating influence. However, we are not sure that the Lord here refers exclusively to literal intoxicating liquors. It is true, at least, that there is another kind of intoxication that is very prevalent at the present time: it is scripturally termed the wine of Babylon: it produces an intoxication along religious lines, and hinders people from discerning and comprehending the divine Word, character and plan. It is the wine of Churchianity, which confuses those who use it, and beclouds their minds in respect to true Christianity. It addles their judgment and brings the people into captivity to false doctrines and false teachers.

"Concerning this symbolic wine and intoxication, the Lord declares that Babylon has made 'all nations [inhabitants of the earth] drunk' with the wine of her incontinency and unfaithfulness to Him. (Rev. 17:2; 18:3.) The stimulating power is not the spirit of a sound mind, but the delusion of a false doctrine; as the Prophet declares, they are 'drunken,' but not with wine.—Isa.29:9-13."

A man who becomes inebriated stumbles about, gets in the way of other people, and says things that are foolish and that dishonor his manhood. So likewise it is with those who are spiritually drunk. Their walk is a most unsteady one; they stumble over objects that are in their pathway, and are anything

but helpful to other wayfarers. Moreover, they say the most absurd and unbelievable things about God. They misrepresent the divine character and make out the kind and loving Creator to be a monster of cruelty. At least, most of them do this, while others say blasphemous things about God in other ways. No wonder then that the Lord, through the Revelator, says, (Rev.18:4.) "Come out of her [Babylon, the great city of intoxication] my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Those who are not enfeebled by Babylon's wine of false teaching are sturdy on their feet to press forward, to stand for the great cause of truth, and to witness for the Lord and His glorious kingdom.

#### QUESTIONS:

Just why did God condemn and punish Sodom?

What are the injurious effects of literal intoxication?

What other kind of drunkenness is mentioned in the Scriptures? How are people drawn into such intemperance?

How has great Babylon made all nations drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication?—Rev.18:3.

While wine imparts a feeling of false strength, how is real strength obtained, and what are the various stages in its development?

\* \* \*

### THE OBEDIENCE OF NOAH

April 25—Gen. 8:20-22; 9:8-17.

And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.

While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

And I, behold, I establish My covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

And I will establish My covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there be any more a flood to destroy the earth.

And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

I do set My bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth.

And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

And I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

**GOLDEN TEXT:** By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house.— Heb. 11:7.



HE faith of Noah was placed implicitly in the word of God. Noah had never seen a rainfall; for such a thing had never taken place. Thus we read: "The Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, . . . but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground." (Gen.—2:5,6.) Adam, therefore, did not see a rainstorm during his lifetime of 930 years. Owing to the great canopy of water vapor entirely surrounding the earth, such a thing as

rain could not have taken place until the floodgates of heaven were opened in the mighty deluge of waters that came down in Noah's day.

Noah was therefore called upon to take a course the world could not possibly appreciate or understand. When a man predicts something that has never taken place before, he is generally considered out of his mind. Imagine constructing a great ship over five hundred feet in length. Doubtless the question in the minds of the people was, How could such a vessel possibly be launched? To suppose for a moment that the water would come up to the vessel, must have been the standing joke of the time. It took faith, determination, and strength of will to go ahead with such a task as this. Truly, the world was sunk in gross materialism at this time. But the life of Noah is a bright star that shines out amid all the darkness of the wickedness of that evil day. He prepared the means of his own salvation; and in due time, he and his family sailed away from that world, and after a season became the progenitors of human life in the second world or age.

The bow in the clouds is a scientific proof that there cannot be another flood similar to the one that took place at the end of the first world. A rainbow is caused by the sun's rays being broken up into their constituent parts by an aqueous envelope that lies in the earth's atmosphere. Before the flood, there was too much water vapor in the air to permit this prismatic effect to occur; but subsequent to the flood, the amount of water in the air was just enough to cause the sun's rays to be bent in the required manner. Therefore the rainbow is a sure and unfailing sign of a sure and unfailing covenant, made by God between Himself and every living creature upon the earth, that never again will the earth be destroyed by a literal flood.

A faith similar to Noah's is required on the part of God's people today. Jesus predicted that at the end of the present age conditions in the world would be comparable, in a sense, to what they were in the days of Noah. His words are,

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming [parousia, presence] of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall the coming [presence] of the Son of man be."—Matt. 24:37-39.

Here, then, is a parallel that is plainly set forth in the Scriptures; viz., the ending of the first world, and the closing period of the present world or age. As Noah was present when God was preparing to send down the flood, so Christ is present now and the elements are in the process of preparation for the overthrow of the system of things constituting the social, political and ecclesiastical world. Today, those who can read the signs of the times require the faith of Noah so that they may loyally stand on the side of right, and bravely proclaim the coming cataclysm and the subsequent establishment of the Kingdom of God.

#### QUESTIONS:

In what particular ways was the prediction of a coming deluge a great test to the faith of Noah?

How is a rainbow formed? Is it a scientific as well as a Scriptural proof that there will never again be a flood like the one that overwhelmed the first world?

Is a faith similar to that of Noah required of God's people today? How should such a faith be manifested?

Point out the parallelism between the closing period of the first dispensation and the closing time of the present world or age.

Was the ark itself a kind of type or picture? If so, of what? How do we get into the ark of safety? And how do we maintain our position there?

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## ABRAHAM A MAN OF FAITH

May 2—Gen. 12:1-9; 13:14-18.

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east; and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.

And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord.

**GOLDEN TEXT:** By faith Abraham, when he was called to go into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed. — Heb. 11:8.



HE first great proof and test of Abraham's faith was that he was willing to break up housekeeping and move out into the wilderness at the call of God. It was a big undertaking, and he had nothing but the word of the Lord to rely upon. He first settled in a place called Haran, and here it was that his father Terah died and was laid to rest. Then Abraham took his wife and his nephew and departed from Haran. He was seventy-five years old at this time, so was not a young man. In due time, the party arrived in the land of Canaan.

The next test placed upon Abraham was that he should offer up his son Isaac. The Lord was quite explicit about this, and nothing else but Isaac would do. It meant a three days journey to go to Mount Moriah, which was the place set for the sacrifice. Abraham did not argue with the Lord about the astounding command that had been given to him. He made up his mind to do exactly what was required of him, even though the killing of Isaac would mean the destruction of the seed of promise. So the patriarch arose early in the morning and took his son and some other young men and went forth to Moriah. Arriving there, he built an altar and placed the wood in the accustomed way, then lifted the knife to slay his son, when the angel of the Lord stepped in and prevented the deed.

The Apostle Paul throws light upon this matter. He says that Abraham was willing to obey God's command because he knew that God could raise Isaac from the dead. This shows that he trusted God implicitly. God was so pleased with Abraham that he made with him a

(Continued on page 33)

# CHILDREN'S HOUR



## The Creation of Adam



IT IS interesting to be in a warm country in the winter season," observed Uncle Eb, as he began to tell our Bible Story. "In lands lying near the equator there is no snow, and one does not need to wear a heavy overcoat and warm gloves or mitts, as we do in this country. Then there are beautiful flowers there, when everything in the woods and gardens here appears withered and lifeless.

"In the place where God made man it was pleasant all the year round. It was just a large, beautiful garden. You know its name of course. It is called the Garden of Eden. Many fine trees and plants were in this garden. Then one did not need to go hungry, for there was plenty of fruit. It must have been very pleasant work for man to attend to a place like this. Everything must have seemed wonderful to him at first, for everything in nature is wonderful. An earthworm seems to be a common thing indeed, but please remember that man with all his education and all his power cannot make an earthworm. In fact, man cannot make a single thing that has life.

"One day I was walking along the shore of the Gulf of Mexico when I picked up some curious looking shells. One of them was a bi-valve, and very tiny; but I pried the shell apart, and there was a living creature in it, as snug as you please. And it moved its head as much as to say, Please do not hurt me. And I didn't hurt it, for it was a cute little chap that was making its home on the shore of the great ocean. I thought to myself, How wonderful are the works of God! All the men in the world could not make a creature like that, dwelling so comfortably within its white palace walls.

"And as for a tree, what an interesting thing that is, with its great branches waving in the air, and its thousands of leaves, which are really its lungs. There are many different kinds of trees. Some trees bear apples, some bear pears, others peaches, apricots, olives and different kinds of nuts. And there are orange trees, date palms, besides hundreds of other kinds of trees. It was God who made all the trees; and He made them before He made man.

"God also made millions of fishes, and put them in the ocean as well as in the rivers and lakes to live. Then He made the animals, such as the rabbit, the fox, the bear, the elephant, the lion, the tiger, and many others that roam the forests and wild places of

the earth. And He did not forget to make our friend the dog; also the cat, the horse, the cow, and other animals that serve man in various ways. You see, the Lord God took a long time to prepare the earth for human beings before He made them. He wanted to have a nice place for them to dwell. And I think that He succeeded very well; for the garden of Eden was more beautiful than any part of the world that we have ever seen.

"If I should make any mistakes in this story," remarked Uncle Eb, "I want you children to put up your hands and to correct me; for it is possible for any one to make a mistake.

"Well, the Bible tells us that on the sixth creative day, God made man. Because He wanted a being on earth like Himself, He created man in His own image. The first man's name was *Joshua*.

"Why, how is this? I see a lot of hands up. Was I wrong, Peter?"

"Indeed you were," replied Peter, with quite a bit of satisfaction, "the first man's name was *Adam*."

"Well, now, sure enough, you are right. Adam is the name the Bible gives us—my mistake! It is claimed that the name Adam means "red earth," because God made man out of the dust of the earth. You see, the Lord just took the same things that everything else is made of and with these made man. He made this wonderful human body. He created a framework of two hundred and six bones, and He put flesh over them; and He made hundreds of muscles and nerves, and connected all these things together. He made the feet and legs to enable man to walk and run. He made the hands so that man could pick up things and carry them around; and do so many things, indeed, that I could't name the half of them.

"Man uses his hands to write letters, to run a typewriter, to play on musical instruments, to paint pictures and buildings, to build bridges and great buildings, and thousands of other things. Then God made the eyes. And what wonderful eyes they are! How could we possibly get along without them? These eyes of ours can see the green grass, the leafy trees, the flowers of the garden, the birds, the clouds, the blue sky, the majestic hills, the rivers, lakes and seas, the faces of our friends, the golden sunshine, and all the beauties in the world around us. How

thankful we ought to be for the gift of our eyesight!

"And God didn't stop with the eyes, but He made the ears, too. In the ear there is a little drum, and this drum picks up the sound vibrations and by means of nerves sends them to the brain, and in this way we are enabled to hear the sound of the running brook, the songs of the birds, the wind in the tree tops, the noise of thunder, the roaring waves of the ocean, the mewling of Miss Pussy as she asks for a taste of milk, the barking of doggie as he tells us that he wants to play or run off after some four-footed friend of his. And best of all, we can hear the words we speak to one another. Sometimes those words are not nice to hear, and they make us angry when another person says them; but on the other hand, frequently they are pleasant to hear; for we all like to hear kind words. Let us all seek to speak words of kindness.

"Then the kind Creator has given us a sense of smell, so that even if we are in another room, we can tell there is a good dinner awaiting us out there on the table. Then we have the sense of feeling or touch, and the sense of taste. Now who can tell me how many natural senses I have named? Can you, John?"

"I think you named five," replied John.

"Five is right," said Uncle Eb. "And we feel that we could not get along very well without any of these senses. Who can tell me just what is the most important part of the human body?"

"I think it must be the heart," said Esther.

"Perhaps the tongue," suggested Paul.

"Well, now, those are very important things," commented Uncle Eb; "but my thought is the brain. You see, the brain is situated in the head, enclosed in a bony structure, called the skull, and is the part of the body we use when we think. All of our thoughts are manufactured in this factory of the brain. The brain has millions of tiny cells, and it is connected with every part of the body by means of nerves. If the nerves connecting your arm with your brain were cut, you could not move your arm. And the same is true of the limbs, and of every other part of the body. This gives you some idea of what an important organ the brain is.

"But there was something that God had to put in man before he could use his brain, or other organs of the body. What was this? Who can tell us?"

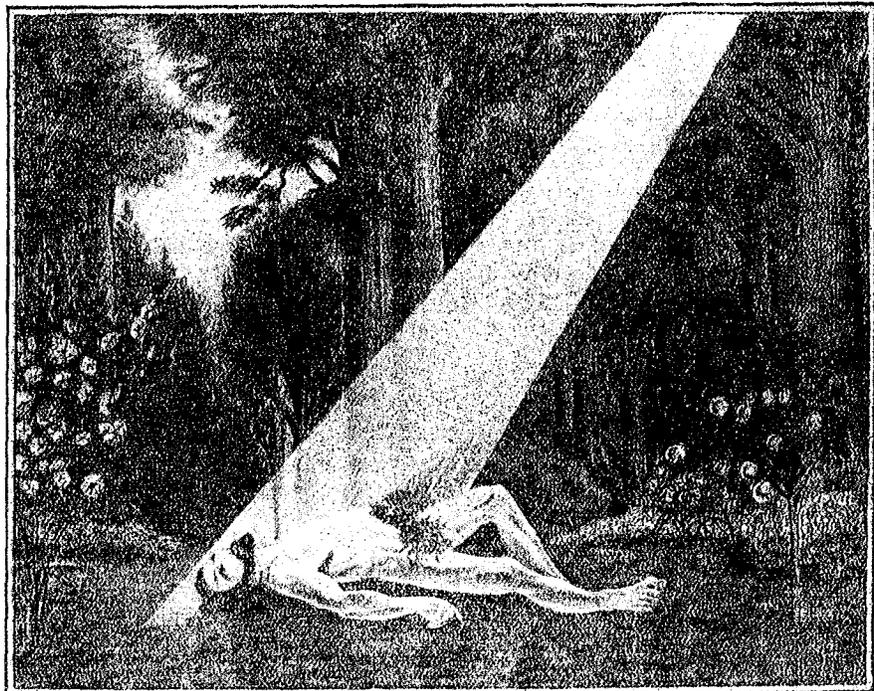
"It must have been strength," Ruth suggested.

"Well, you are not far from the right answer,"

replied Uncle Eb. "It was something that gave strength, for it was the 'breath of life,' which, when it came in proper contact with the wonderful body that God had made, produced that strange thing we call life. No one knows just what this thing is, but we know that we have it in our bodies; and that when it leaves us, we become dead, and do not know anything at all.

"So then, God put the breath of life in the first man and he became a living being. He could then breathe the air into his lungs. He could behold the wonderful world around him. He could smell the fragrance of the flowers. He must have felt very grateful to God for having made him the fine, noble creature that he was.

"Then God made a fine big monkey to be with Adam—I see some hands up. What does this mean?"



An Artist's Conception of the Creation of Adam

"God *didn't* make a monkey to live with Adam, Uncle Eb," protested Peter, "He made a woman."

"Well, well, now, I do declare! Didn't I make a tremendous mistake," exclaimed Uncle Eb, with a twinkle in his eye. "Of course it wasn't a monkey that God made at all—not then, because He had created monkeys long before that. There is a big difference between a man and a monkey and between a woman and a monkey. And if God had given a monkey to Adam for a companion, I feel sure that he would not have been at all satisfied. Monkeys are all right in their place, but they can't take the place of human beings. Yes, it was a woman that God made; and her name was Eve, and He gave this beautiful woman to Adam in the garden of Eden. They lived together there very happily for a time—well, I'll tell you about that in the next story."

# THE FACT FINDER



## GOD'S KINGDOM NEAR

**QUESTION:** In Matthew 24:33 we read, "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." The marginal note on this text suggests "He" instead of "it," making that part of the passage read, "know that He is near, even at the doors." Would not this prove that all the various signs given in this great prophecy of our Lord, are signs that He is soon to come, rather than that He is already present?

**ANSWER:** The personal pronoun "He" appearing in the margin of our Common Version Bible is merely in the nature of a suggestion on the part of the translators, as they doubtless thought it would add clarity to the passage. These translators had no hope for anything beyond the second coming of Christ, except that a few of the saintly ones of the earth would be taken to heaven, and that all the remainder of mankind would be consigned to a burning hell, while the earth itself would be destroyed by a literal fire. Obviously, then with these views, the pronoun "it" wouldn't convey any great depth of meaning to these sincere men: so they decided it would be more meaningful if the pronoun "He" were used.

Fortunately, however, we do not need to depend upon the suggestions of the translators as to what this text really has reference to, as St. Luke, recording the same statement by Jesus, goes into greater detail than does St. Matthew. Instead of abbreviating this part of his report of Jesus' prophecy, Luke indicates what the "it" really refers to, saying, "So likewise, ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the *Kingdom of God* is nigh." — Luke 21:31.

This makes the matter plain, showing, as it does, that the same signs which betoken the *parousia*, or presence of the Master, were also to be signs of the nearness of the Messianic Kingdom. The old world order must be destroyed before the new Kingdom becomes operative for the blessing of the people, and the Scriptures show clearly that the Master would be present during the overthrow of Satan's empire. It is very important to keep clearly in mind the chronological order of events relative to this subject, if we are to understand it properly.

In the interlineary translation of the *Emphatic Diaglott* the personal pronoun "He" is given, although Prof. Wilson in his arranged translation in the right-hand column, changes it to "it." But he could hardly be blamed for this, for he held to the traditional, dark-age conception of the coming of Christ and the end of the world, so his translation would be influenced by his views. That Jesus was

in this prophecy presenting signs of the nearness of His Kingdom as well as of His own personal presence, is also indicated by the first verse of the next chapter, which reads, "Then shall the *Kingdom of heaven* be likened unto ten virgins," etc.

It has long been understood by nominal church students of the Bible that the end of the world follows the second coming of Christ. So far as we are aware, no one has ever taught that the earth would first be destroyed, the good people all sent to heaven, the bad to hell, and then, after that, Christ would come. No, all have agreed that the reverse of this is the manner in which it is presented in the Bible. The difficulty with many sincere students has been that they did not recognize that the destruction of "this present evil world" did not imply the literal burning up of the earth. They saw clearly that the end of the world would follow the coming of Christ, but supposing that the destruction of that day was to be literal, they tried to imagine Jesus coming, followed almost instantly by a mighty upheaval of nature, the earth bursting into flames, with the whole affair completed within one 24-hour day. No wonder these good people failed to properly understand the subject of our Lord's second presence.

The Apostle Paul says that the "day of the Lord" comes, and then "sudden destruction." (1 Thes. 5:1-5.) St. Peter says, "the day of the Lord" will come, "in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (2 Pet. 3:10.) It is passages of this kind that our nominal church friends use to prove that Jesus will come before the earth is "burned up," and they are right so far as the chronological order of the events are concerned; but wrong, of course, as to the nature of the burning.

So far as the literal earth is concerned, the Bible makes it clear that it is to abide for ever. (Ecl. 1:4.) It is the symbolic earth that is destroyed following the Lord's coming. The symbolic earth is composed of the various "elements" which make up our modern "civilization." Everybody knows that these "elements" are even now disintegrating, which means a "melting," or breaking down of the old order of things. Daily, and on every hand, the close student of prophecy can see the fulfilment of one after another of the divine forecasts relative to this day of distress and destruction. Yes, "this present evil world" is almost literally tumbling down on the heads of those who are feverishly endeavoring to uphold it.

Now if the *parousia* or presence of Christ were to precede this time of destruction, as the Scriptures so

clearly show, we can arrive at only one conclusion, and that is, that His coming is already in the past, that He is now present as the great spiritual King, directing the overthrow of Satan's empire, and preparing for the full establishment of the Kingdom of God—the "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." All the various signs, therefore: the "distress" of nations, "men's hearts failing them for fear," the budding of the fig tree, etc., are evidences both of His *parousia* and of the *nearness* of His Messianic Kingdom.

### AS THE LIGHTNING

**QUESTION:** When Jesus said that His *parousia* would be as the "lightning," did He not mean a sudden appearing and manifestation to all mankind?

**ANSWER:** Our Lord's statement which is referred to in this question, is that of Matthew 24:27, which we quote: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming [*parousia*, presence] of the Son of man be." Here, as with every text of Scripture, it is important to take the context into consideration if we are to arrive at a correct understanding of what it means. Doing this, we find that Jesus is not seeking to illustrate *how long* it would take Him to come, but rather, the *manner* in which His presence will become manifest, or the *effects* of His presence.

The preceding text reads: "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold He is in the desert; go not forth; behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not." Then follows the illustration of the "lightning." Clearly, thus, does the Master teach that His second presence would not be like the presence of a human being, in the sense that he could be located in some secret hiding place, or isolated in some one definite spot in the earth; or that by organizing a searching party there would be a possibility of finding Him. Rather, His presence would be known through a world-wide diffusion of light, shining from the east even unto the west. Certainly Jesus could not have used a better illustration to show us that His presence would be recognized by the effects it would produce in the earth, rather than by seeing Him as an individual in some certain part of the earth.

The Greek word translated "lightning" in this text is *astrape*. Professor Strong tells us that this word is a derivative of *astrapto*, which in turn is from the Greek word *aster*, meaning a star. It is from these original roots that we get our words *astronomical* and *astronomy*. *Astrape*, then, is associated with the thought of a "bright shining" produced by heavenly bodies, or God-given light. Once (Luke 11:36) it is used to describe the light that comes from a candle; but even here, the bright shining of the candle is used to illustrate the light of divine truth enjoyed by those who are in heart-harmony with the Lord.

In Matthew 28:3 the Greek word *astrape* is used to describe the bright countenance of the angel of the Lord that rolled away the stone from in front of Jesus' tomb—this evidently was a supernatural bright-

ness. Again, Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning [*astrape*] fall from heaven." (Luke 10:18.) In the Old Testament the fallen Lucifer is described as having been one of the bright *stars* of God—one of the morning stars. It was this bright, shining one that Jesus saw fall from his high position in the divine arrangements.

In Revelation 4:5; 8:5; 11:19, and 16:18, this same word *astrape* is used and translated "lightnings." It is interesting to note that in each of these instances the thought conveyed is that of the diffusion of light. These lightning flashes are shown to come, either from the "throne," or to be closely associated with the "great earthquake"—so great that never was there anything like it before. This evidently is the great time of trouble which follows the lightning-like *parousia* of the Master.

In every instance, therefore, this word *astrape* has to do with the diffusion of light. This is the same thought suggested by the Psalmist when he said, "His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth." (Psa. 97:4,5.) Jesus said that the *astrape* or "bright shining" of His presence would be so all-pervading that it would reach from the east even unto the west. In this respect, it will be as the light of the sun. Indeed, Jesus is referred to as "the Sun of righteousness" which shall arise, "with healing in His wings."—Malachi 4:2.

There is no single Greek word that adequately describes in full, all the details or phases of the Master's second presence. It is only as we put together all the various passages bearing on the subject that we obtain the complete thought of what it will mean to the church and the world. Had Jesus indicated that His *parousia* was to be exactly as the rising of the literal sun, it would not have been in harmony with other statements of the Scriptures. So far as its world-wide aspect is concerned—"from the east even unto the west"—it *is* like the sun. It is like the sun also, in that all during the Kingdom reign it will bring "healing" to the people; but as to the diffusion of light, it will not be as the sun, because the sun fills the earth with bright light, from the time of its rising until its going down in the evening. This will not be so of the light of Christ's presence.

Concerning the thousand-year day of the Lord's *parousia*, the prophet says, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." (Zech. 14:6,7.) The prophet describes two peculiarities of this day; namely, that *during* the day it will be partly dark and partly light, and that in the *evening*, it shall be light. Most days are the opposite of this, in that prior to the evening they are light, and then, with the approach of evening, it gradually becomes dark.

Thus we see, that while the light of the new day will be *general*, from "east to west," yet, not until the evening, will it be as full and bright as the light of the sun. First of all, the light of the Lord's *par-*

*ousia*, will be recognized only by the faithful watchers, because "ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." "Ye are the children of the day," said the apostle, and as children of the day, we should be enjoying the light of the day—light that reveals the presence of the Lord to the watchers now, even as it will reveal His presence to all mankind later, when the day-time of His Kingdom is fully ushered in.

### PAROUSIA, EPIPHANEIA, APOKALUPSIS

**QUESTION:** I understand that the New Testament uses three different words with reference to the time of Christ's presence. Are we to understand that these three words are descriptive of progressive stages or periods of His presence?

**ANSWER:** No! The word *parousia* alone is used to describe the fact of Jesus' presence, while the other two words, *epiphaneia* and *apokalupsis*, are terms which are used in the Bible to describe the effects of His *parousia*, or presence. The period of Christ's presence, first as Chief Reaper in the harvest, and then as King in the Kingdom, continues all the way through to the end of the Millennial age. His *epiphaneia* (bright shining), and *apokalupsis*, (revelment), are also going on during this entire period.

The *epiphaneia*, or bright shining of His presence has to do with the great increase of knowledge that accompanies His *parousia*; and it is this bright shining that reveals His *parousia*. The bright shining first of all, reaches and blesses the faithful watchers with a knowledge of events pertaining to the day of the Lord. It is in this day of the Lord, or "time of the end," that knowledge along all lines is increased. Not only is the church blessed by this knowledge, but it is designed to accomplish other things as well. For example, speaking of the great anti-christ system, the apostle says, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness (*epiphaneia*) of His coming (*parousia*, presence)."—2 Thes. 2:8.

Thus does the apostle tell us that the destruction of the "man of sin," or antichrist, will be accomplished by the brightness of the Master's *parousia*. Has not the great increase of knowledge resulting from the Master's presence already had devastating effects upon that apostate system? The antichrist system is composed of the union of church and state, and this system is already practically destroyed in the earth. True, the various elements that composed it are still in existence, but even these are rapidly disintegrating and losing their hold upon the people—and all because of the great "increase of knowledge" resulting from His presence.

This brightness of His presence is to continue and increase until at the very close of the Kingdom period. It shall be fully light when the knowledge of the glory of God will completely fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. And just so, shall the *apokalupsis*, or revelation of the Master's presence continue, until finally, not only the faithful watchers, but all men, "every eye," shall see or recognize the fact of

His *parousia*. The great time of trouble will have much to do with His revelation to the world of mankind.

### HOW JOHN THE BAPTIST KNEW JESUS

**QUESTION:** In the February issue of The Dawn, you state that John the Baptist recognized the Messiah, not by His facial expression, but by properly interpreting signs which the Lord gave. In John 1:29, where John says, "Behold the Lamb of God," it seems to show that he, in some way, recognized Jesus by His appearance. How do you explain?

**ANSWER:** We need merely to read verses 30-34 of this same chapter to find the answer to this question. Twice in this passage, John is recorded as saying, "And I knew Him not," that is, by His appearance. Explaining the manner in which he knew that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah, John says, "but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me. Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the holy spirit. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God"—because he saw the spirit descend upon Jesus.

### IDENTITY IN THE RESURRECTION

**QUESTION:** Are there any Scriptures which indicate clearly that persons will recognize each other in the resurrection, and remember anything about their past lives?

**ANSWER:** Yes, there are many Scriptures which show unmistakably that those who are restored to life upon the earth during the Messianic Kingdom period will recognize each other as former friends and relatives; and also that all the resurrected ones will have a definite recollection of their past lives. This, indeed, is one of the blessed features of the resurrection hope as presented in the Word of God. Were the identity of the individual to be lost, to himself and others, the resurrection hope would be valueless; in fact, it would be no hope at all. A few of the Scriptures bearing on the subject, follow:

"Therefore, thus saith the Lord who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed; neither shall his face now wax pale [as when he formerly lived]. But when he seeth his children, the work of Mine hands in the midst of him, they shall sanctify My name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel." (Isa. 29:22, 23.) This promise was made long years after Jacob died; hence can be fulfilled only in and by the resurrection.

In God's promise to the Israelites of a resurrection for them, He shows that they will then remember their former iniquities, and will be filled with shame when brought face to face with the Sodomites, who will also be resurrected during the Kingdom era. We quote: "When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then shall I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst

of them: That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them. . . . Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And I will establish My covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. That *thou mayest remember and be confounded*, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God."—Ezek. 16:53, 54, 61-63.

God's promise to mothers that their dead children will be restored to them would be meaningless if the mothers were not able to recognize their little ones when resurrected. Notice the language of the prophet on this point: "Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, for they were not. Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border."—Jer. 31:15-17.

## Outline For Berean Study

### THE DIVINE FAMILY

**TEXT:** To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one *Lord Jesus Christ*, by whom are all things, and we by Him.—1 Corinthians 8:6.

*Summary of First Part:* God the Father—His name; His character; His four principal attributes, and the ways in which they operate or are manifested during the various ages of the divine plan.

### Second Part—The Lord Jesus Christ

- (1) Did our Lord exist as a spirit being before He was made flesh?  
John 1:1, 2; John 8:14, 23, 58; John 17:5; John 6:51.  
**Scripture Studies**—Vol. 5, page 84, par. 1 and 2; page 85, par. 2, 3 and page 86; pages 88 to 90.
- (2) What do we know of His position and activities in His pre-human state?  
John 1:3; Col. 1:15-17.  
**Scripture Studies**—Vol. 5, page 87, par. 1; page 92, par. 3; page 93, par. 1 and 2.
- (3) Did the Logos actually give up His spirit nature and become a man?  
Phil. 2:6, 7; 2 Cor. 8:9; John 1:14; Heb. 2:9; Gal. 4:4.  
**Watch Towers**—1907, bot. page 362 (Reprints, 4098, par. 1); 1911, page 298, par. 1-3 (Reprints, 4095, par. 1-3); 1915, page 248 (Reprints, 5748, col. 2, par. 3 and 4).  
**Scripture Studies**—Vol. 5, bot. page 93 to page 95, par. 1.
- (4) What purposes of God were accomplished by Christ's earthly life and sacrificial death?  
(a) Redemption of Adam's race:  
Heb. 2:9; John 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; 1 Cor. 15:21; Mark 10:45; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19.  
**Scripture Studies**—Vol. 5, bot. page 393.

- (b) The way to immortality was opened for Himself. Phil. 2:8, 9; Heb. 12:2; Eph. 1:20, 21; John 5:26.  
**Watch Towers**—1895, page 146, par. 1, 2 (Reprints, 1829, par. 4, 5).
- (c) The way to joint-heirship with Christ was opened to the church:  
Heb. 2:10; Rom. 2:7; 2 Pet. 1:2-4; 1 John 3:2.  
**Scripture Studies**—Vol. 6, page 721, par. 1, 2; Vol. 5, page 394-396.
- (5) What is Christ's relationship to the church?  
(a) **Example:** 1 Peter 2:21; John 13:13-17, 34.  
**Scripture Studies**—Vol. 1, page 196, par. 1; Vol. 6, page 66, 67.  
**Watch Towers**—1890, page 6 (Reprints, 1262, col. 2, par. 3 to page 1263); 1900, page 262 (Reprints, 2689, par. 3-6); 1916, page 38 (Reprints, 6040, par. 1-4).
- (b) **High Priest:** Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:15, 16; 5:5; 7:26; 8:1; 10:21.  
**Scripture Studies**—Vol. 5, page 128, last par.; page 161, last par.  
**Watch Towers**—1891, page 154 (Reprints, 1335, col. 1, par. 7).
- (c) **Advocate:** 1 John 2:1; Rom. 8:34.  
**Watch Towers**—1906, page 25 (Reprints, 3708, col. 2, par. 2); 1914, page 200 (Reprints, 5491, col. 1, par. 6, col. 2, par. 2).
- (6) What are some of the ways in which Jesus is pictured in the Bible?  
(a) **Bridegroom:** John 3:29.  
(b) **Captain:** Heb. 2:10.  
(c) **Lamb of God:** John 1:29.  
(d) **Shepherd:** John 10:14.  
(e) **Corner Stone:** Eph. 2:20.  
(f) **Bread:** John 6:33, 48.
- (7) What does the Bible tell us of Jesus' exaltation?  
Phil. 2:9; Heb. 1:1-19.  
**Scripture Studies**—Vol. 5, page 39, par. 1.  
**Watch Towers**—1898, page 372 (Reprints, 2407, last par. to conclusion); 1915, page 248 (Reprints, 5748, col. 2, par. 5, 6).

# Talking Things Over



## SPRINGTIME—LITERAL AND SPIRITUAL



SPRING, beautiful spring, is here again. It is a time when all nature takes on new life. And with the coming of spring there is also an increase of spiritual activity among the people of God. With the exception of the few who are privileged to live in the "sunny southlands," the winter period is a time during which many of our activities are more or less curtailed. But the spring time for the Christian means the budding of opportunities for more frequent association with others of like precious faith, and for putting into active practice in other ways the principles of Christianity that should always be dominant in the heart.

The increased number of conventions to be held in various parts of the country is already indicating that the pent-up desires of the friends to associate with their brethren are, with the coming of better weather, beginning to assert themselves. We call attention to the announcements of these conventions, which appear on the inside rear cover page of this issue of *The Dawn*. Let us pray that the Lord may bless the brethren in the various localities who are arranging for these gatherings; and also that He may bless all who find it possible to attend one or more of these holy convocations.

In the individual lives of many of us there seems to be "winter" periods during which, while our hearts remain loyal to God and to His truth, the inward life fails to be outwardly manifested. This is also sometimes true of God's people in a collective sense. These are times when, inadvertently, perhaps, we hide our light under a bushel. Probably all of us have had experiences of this kind; and how refreshing it is when, in the Lord's providence, conditions change so that we may again assume the normal activities of Christian life and growth.

We should not be discouraged if circumstances over which we have no control bring about these "winter" experiences; yet, let us ever be on the alert to recognize the signs which indicate the coming of "spring" and "summer," when we can again become active in laying down our lives for the Master. For a number of years past various conditions have contributed to a curtailment of activity among those who are holding to the pure truth of the divine plan; yet gradually, for some time now, the signs of "spring" have been more and more manifesting themselves; and friends all over the world are responding, and being blessed. In the March issue of *"Bible Students Monthly,"* published by the Bible Students Committee, 20, Darwin Road, Welling, Kent, England, there is a short article which reveals that in Great

Britain, as elsewhere, the friends are realizing an increased sense of their responsibilities as ambassadors of the truth. We quote the article, as follows:

"The decision of several leading church systems to initiate a 'recall to religion' during this year is of tremendous significance to the observant Christian. This is no half-hearted attempt to translate into reality a vague desire to see more people at church and to embrace within the confines of the creeds a larger number of those whose apathetic attitude to any form of religion is so often bemoaned. There is no reasonable doubt that the leaders of the churches—or their advisers—perceive that conditions in the world to-day are leading an increasing number of thinking people, especially among the younger generation, to think along lines which must inevitably bring them face to face with the message of Christ; and it is with the hope that some of these will turn to the church for instruction and guidance in these difficult times that this appeal is made.

"Now we as a community realize that the established systems have no message that will satisfy. There is no clarion note of assurance and comfort. They cannot speak, as did our Master two thousand years ago, 'as one having authority.' That is the penalty which must be paid by every system which has brought itself so much into line with the standards of this world that it has become blinded to the plain implications of the teachings of Christ. And as we read the urgent and earnest appeals to all and sundry, to return to the institutions which have so notably failed to lead men and women in the way of the Kingdom, we know of a surety that those entreaties can bear but little fruit.

"In late years the brethren have been quiet in this same direction—with a few exceptions there have been little effort to herald forth in any organized manner the message of the Kingdom. Internal perplexities; some measure of caution whilst watching the rapidly changing course of events; the influence of teachings regarding the 'closing of the door,' the 'glorification of the church,' and so on, have all combined to stay our hands. Economic difficulties have almost precluded the possibility of that volunteer work which was attended with such encouraging results in older days.

"Yet still the commission is ours, 'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me,' and in a time such as this, when men's hearts are failing them for fear and we know the answer to the problems which perplex so many we shall be unfaithful servants if we fail to make known the message of life which is entrusted to us. Let us shake off the apathy which has been bred of previous discouragements, and in the confidence of our mission as ambassadors of Christ 'go out in the highways and search them all'—and may God give the increase."

## AN EVIDENCE OF "NEW TIMES"

A LETTER from Brother G. Russell Pollock, of California, echoes the same sentiments as those expressed by the brethren in Great Britain. He writes:

"Dear Brethren: I am constrained to write you regarding a one-day convention at Phoenix, Arizona, held on February 21st. While I have been at larger conventions I have never attended one where the spirit of the Lord was more manifest. As you know, Arizona belongs to the wide open spaces and in order to gather together a group of forty-five Bible Students several had to travel over four hundred miles to make the round trip from their homes to Phoenix, where the table was set by the Lord.

"The meetings began in the morning and culminated in a public witness given in the Masonic Temple Sunday night. The whole day was profitable and I know that I was blessed through association with those of like precious faith and encouraged also by the zeal exhibited by the Phoenix class. One of the things which impressed me was that the class is composed of a goodly number of young people, and I am informed that many of these did not see consecration until after some believe that all spirit-begetting had ceased; and yet, these brethren are giving every evidence of having been 'enlightened,' and of having 'tasted of the heavenly gift,' and of being 'partakers of the holy spirit.'

"In advertising the public service the friends made use of the newspapers and also had printed fifteen thousand hand bills on the topic, 'World Peace—A False Dream or a Living Hope?' These were distributed to the homes and also placed in the automobiles around town. Where the doors of the cars were locked we placed the circular in the door on the side where the lock was so that the owner was bound to find it when he returned to his car. On Sunday morning the brethren scattered over Phoenix and some went to surrounding towns and put circulars in the autos around the various churches. I mention these details because they seem practicable for other communities and because they brought results.

"An audience of more than three hundred persons gathered to hear the divine plan, and forty-seven names were handed in with a request for further literature. I am frank to admit, brethren, that my heart burned within me as I saw the spirit of the Arizona friends, and when I saw the public coming into the hall to listen to the words of life. Some said, 'It seems like old times,' and that is true—it did! But I also wonder if it isn't also an evidence of 'new times' for those who realize that there is still some work to do for those who glory in the Cross of Christ and who count it a privilege still to show forth the praises of the One who has called us out of darkness into this light of truth.

"My object in writing this letter is to pass on to you some of the encouragement which I received, and I trust that it may be the means of strengthening you a little as you continue to hold up the banner of the Kingdom.

I am, by His grace, —Brother G. R. Pollock "

## THE WILMINGTON, DEL., CONVENTION

APPROXIMATELY 150 friends assembled in Wilmington, Delaware, over the week-end of March 20, 21, when the Lord showered rich blessings upon them as they mingled their hearts and voices together in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," making melody of praise unto the "Giver of every good and perfect gift" for His lovingkindness to them. This was the annual pre-memorial convention, and the opening and closing discourses were specially in line with the occasion. All the talks were well calculated to encourage the brethren in their efforts to "gird up the loins" of their minds, not only for the duration of the memorial season, but also for faithful endurance as they "fight the good fight of faith" unto the end.

Brother Bullock, of Federalsburg, Md., was scheduled to give the opening talk of the convention, but he was unable to be present; so his place was ably filled by Brother Siddons, of Philadelphia. Brother Siddons, appropriate to the time, gave a brief outline of the principal thoughts pertaining to the Memorial Supper, beginning with the typical passover in Egypt, tracing the theme through to Jesus, the anti-typical Passover Lamb, and to the Memorial as the commemoration of *His* death; reminding us as well of our own share in His sufferings. Many helpful thoughts were emphasized in this talk. Brother Edward Fay followed Brother Siddons, with a timely and encouraging talk based on some of the wonderful truths found in Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

It was not unusual that there should be a public meeting scheduled on the program of the Wilmington convention, as the friends there feel that a convention would not be complete unless an opportunity was given for others to hear about the truth that has so rejoiced their own hearts. But the *time* for this meeting *was* unusual, in that it was held on Saturday night, rather than the usual time on Sunday. This was partly in the nature of an experiment, and partly because a suitable auditorium for the public meeting could not be secured for any other time. Brother Wilson, of Pittsburgh, gave the public address, using as his subject, "Life, Death and the Hereafter."

This meeting was well advertised, and naturally the friends were all interested to see how well a Saturday night meeting would be attended. The weather was against it, however, as one of the worst storms of the season blew up about six o'clock in the evening, and continued until well past the hour scheduled for the lecture to begin. But, in spite of this, at least 50 strangers turned out, braving the hardships of the storm in order to hear the message of hope which they felt would be given. And they were not disappointed. It was with difficulty that even "seasoned" Bible Students kept back tears of joy as they listened once more to the good old story that "satisfies our longings as nothing else can do." It was the opinion of many of the friends that, had the weather been favorable, the auditorium would have been filled to capacity, even though it was Saturday night. A number of strangers who attended the public meeting, took programs of the convention home with them, and

some of these came back to attend the meetings the following day.

On Sunday morning Brother Fay addressed the friends again, this time on the life of Abraham—and how inspiring it was to be reminded afresh of the outstanding example of faith we have in the life of the one whom we think of as the “father of the faithful”! Brother Wilson followed Brother Fay, giving a talk on “The Principal Thing”—love. 1 Corinthians 13 was used as the basis of this talk; and how heart-searching it was to be brought face to face with the vital realities of the Christian life as set forth by the apostle in this wonderful chapter.

Brother Oscar Magnuson's subject, at the opening session Sunday afternoon, was: “The Secret Place of the Most High. He called attention to many of the pitfalls now being planted by the adversary, by which he is endeavoring to draw us away from the Lord; and to the fact that God's truth is our “shield” and “buckler.” He admonished the friends to remain loyal to the truth as their protection against “all the wiles of the devil.” The last talk of the convention was a brief review of some of the closing experiences in our Lord's life, showing how He was tested to the very limit, yet was faithful, “even unto death.” Then came the “love feast,” with its genuine and deep-felt expressions of “God be with you till we meet again,” and “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.”

Friends gathered for this convention from Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, and from various places in Delaware in addition to Wilmington. Brother Kemp, of Boston, came the greatest distance of all; and while there told of plans being made by the Boston class for their forthcoming convention the latter part of May.

### AUSTRALIAN CONVENTION

THE BRETHREN in Australia send us the following interesting report of a convention held there at Christmas time.

“It is a pleasure to report a most helpful and refreshing season on the occasion of the recent Christmas Convention held by the Melbourne Class in this city, over the four days—December 25-28. Our heartfelt praise ascends to the Lord for all rich blessings bestowed, and it appeared that these were appreciated to

the full by all in attendance. The presence of visiting brethren added greatly to the encouragement of the local friends, and from the expressions of the visitors we were assured that the effort and zeal manifested as well as the expense entailed in coming long distances were more than compensated by the spiritual good things from the presence of the Lord.

“Each day of the Convention was opened with praise and prayer, followed by Bible study, fellowship meeting and addresses; tea also being served by the local sisters, which was appreciated, and during which there was the opportunity of more informal fellowship among the friends. The passages of Scripture taken for the Bible Studies are as follows: Col. 1:21-29; 2 Cor. 4:1-11; Heb. 12:18-24; and 2 Tim. 4:1-8; and it will be understood how much of valuable instruction and encouragement was received from these beautiful portions of God's Word, when we say that each day one of these studies engaged the attention of the assembly for an hour and a half.

“Addresses by the brethren comprised a wide range of topics—‘Character’; ‘John 14:27’; ‘Signs of the Times’; ‘Watch Ye, Stand Fast, Be Strong’; ‘Feasts of the Lord's Table’; and the Bible characters of Joseph, David, Moses, St. Paul, St. John, and Timothy. The thoughts expressed were very encouraging indeed, each speaker bringing out in his own way many helpful lessons and exhortations.

The Fellowship Meetings gave further opportunity for praise and testimony; and there was also a question meeting. On the closing day the session on ‘Helpful Thoughts from the Convention,’ enabled the brethren to give expression respecting the particular thoughts with which they had been most impressed.

“At the conclusion of the closing address the brethren gathered round and partook of the Love Feast, while singing ‘Blest be the Tie that Binds.’ Then came the parting hymn, ‘God be with you till we meet again.’ The concluding prayer commended all the Lord's people present and in all parts of the world into the care of our loving Heavenly Father, the Great Shepherd of the sheep.

“A number of the addresses from the above convention are now appearing in the monthly ‘Peoples Paper,’ published by the Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew E. 4., Melbourne, Australia. Subscription price is 60 cents a year—free upon request, to those unable to subscribe.”

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## COMING CONVENTIONS

**ITALIAN CONVENTION, New Britain, Conn., April 11.** For information write Sebastian Mallia, 15 Willow Street, New Britain, Conn.

**ALLENTOWN, PA., Sunday April 11.** Sessions morning and afternoon in the P. O. S. of A. Hall, 38 South 5th Street. There will be a public meeting at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. All the friends who can find it convenient to attend, are invited.

**DUQUESNE, PA., Sunday, April 18.** All sessions for the friends will be held in the regular meeting place of the Duquesne Class, which is on North First Street. There will be a special public meeting at 3 o'clock in the afternoon at Carnegie Library Hall, South Second Street. It is expected that this will be a day of rich blessing from the Lord. All are invited.

**CHICAGO, ILL., May 1, 2.** This is the Chicago friends' semi-annual gathering, and many are looking

forward to it with joy. Saturday night lodgings are being provided for a number of friends. Information can be obtained by addressing the Secretary, Mr. I. C. Foss, 5944 N. Knox Avenue, Chicago, Ill. All sessions of the convention will be held in Central Masonic Temple, 910 North LaSalle Street.

**PITTSBURGH, PA., Tri-State Convention, Sunday, May 16.** All sessions to be held in the regular meeting place of the class: O. of I. A. Temple, 610 Arch Street, N. S. Pittsburgh, Pa. A cordial invitation is extended to all who can attend.

**GENERAL CONVENTION, Boston, Mass., May 29-31.** Friends near and far are cordially urged to plan ahead for this convention, which it is hoped will be a season of rich blessing and fellowship. The Boston friends are deeply appreciative of the cooperation already received from other classes. Address, Associated Bible Students, 30 Huntington Ave., Boston, Mass., care of Miss Lillian F. Thain, Secretary.

**CINCINNATI, Ohio, May 29-31.** The Cincinnati friends write as follows: "A most cordial invitation is extended to the brethren everywhere. The convention will be served (D. V.) by brethren believed to be sound in the faith, possessing the Scriptural requirements for eldership in the church. Your prayers are asked in behalf of our humble efforts to be of service to the Lord

and the brethren. Address inquiries to: Mrs. W. N. Poe, Secretary, 2128 New Linden Road, Newport, Ky."

**RUSSIAN GENERAL CONVENTION, Charleroi, Pa., May 29-31.** All sessions to be held at 1024 McKean Ave. For information, address, Peter Hazy, Box 757, Perryopolis, Pa.

**WHITSUN CONVENTION IN GREAT BRITAIN.**

"The Annual Whitsun Convention arranged for the British friends by the Bible Students Committee is to be held this year at Dewsbury. The brethren in that town are very busy preparing for the comfort of all who attend, and it is our earnest prayer that the gathering will prove to be in very truth a 'holy convocation to the Lord.' Programs and full particulars can be obtained from the Committee, and it is particularly requested that brethren requiring accommodation and those desiring to symbolize their consecration write as soon as possible to Brother A. Carrington, 6 Greenmount Street, Leeds 11, so that arrangements may be made."

**LOS ANGELES, CALIF., GENERAL CONVENTION, July 3-5.** Plans are proceeding for this gathering of the friends, and the outlook is promising for a large attendance, and for rich blessings from the Lord's storehouse. Further details will be announced from time to time.

**ABRAHAM A MAN OF FAITH**

(Continued from page 23)

great and wonderful covenant and promise, that through him and his seed, He would bless the entire world. The Apostle refers to this promise in Heb. 6:13,14, in the words. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."

We remember that back in Eden God had foretold that in due time the seed of the woman was to bruise the serpent's head. When God called Abraham to go to the land of Canaan, He reiterated this promise, at the same time intimating that the seed of promise would be of Abraham's line. Isaac was Abraham's immediate seed, but he did not fulfil the prophecy; yet God confirmed His covenant with Isaac and with Jacob and with Israel for an everlasting covenant. Eventu-

ally the Jewish age passed away, and the Gospel age opened up. Then it was that more light was shed on the great Seed of promise: for the Apostle Paul said, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:16, 29.

Those who are called the Seed of Abraham, therefore, should manifest the faith of Abraham. As Abraham left his country, so, also, they should be willing to leave their country, the world, and travel on to the heavenly Canaan. And as Abraham was willing to give up the dearest and best thing he had, so they should be willing to devote themselves and all their powers to the Lord, remembering that Jesus came to earth and gave his life for them as well as for all mankind. To be the Seed of Abraham indeed, is to be the Seed of God, begotten of the divine spirit of the truth;

and to such comes the assurance, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." What an honor is this, and what a wonderful thing to be numbered with that Seed that is to bless all the families of the earth!

**QUESTIONS:**

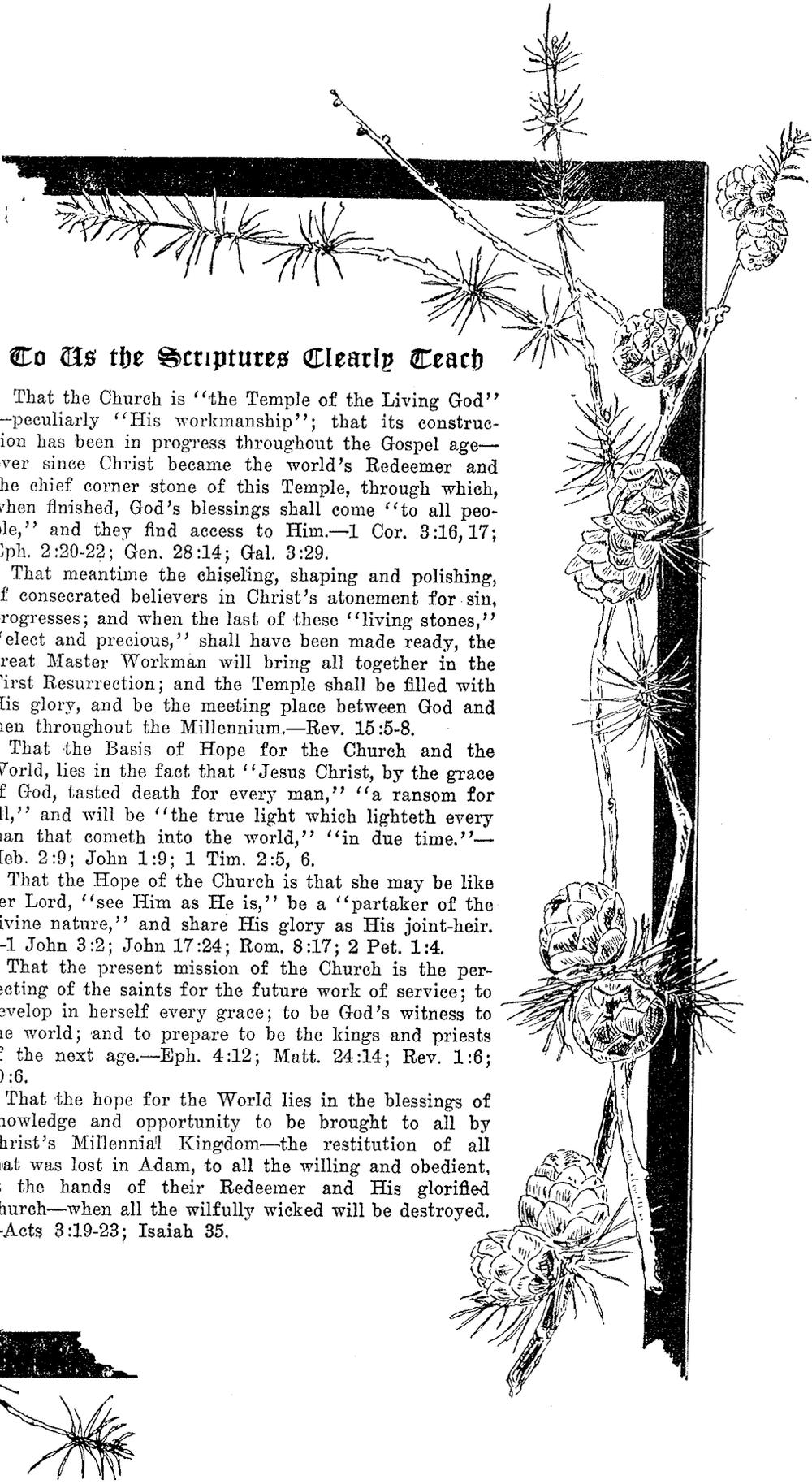
Why did God call Abraham to leave his country and go to the land of Canaan?

What other test was put on the faith of Abraham? And tell just why this was a very special test touching the Seed of promise.

Who constitute the Seed of Abraham? Why is this called one seed if it consists of many members?

What special tests are applied to the Seed? Are they similar to the tests applied to Abraham?

What are the most practical demonstrations we can give of our faith at the present time?

A decorative illustration of a pine branch with several pine cones, running vertically down the right side of the page and curving at the top. There are also smaller pine branches and cones in the bottom left corner.

## To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to Him.—1 Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

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

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

That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," be a "partaker of the divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

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

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