

FOR THOSE WHO ARE DISCOURAGED

KEY VERSE: *"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail."—Isaiah 51:6, New International Version*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 51:1-6*

OUR LESSON BEGINS with the Israelites living in Babylonian exile. God understands their desire for deliverance, and speaks to them through the Prophet Isaiah with words of comfort and encouragement. Those who loved the LORD were promised a future freedom from their oppressors, and they were encouraged to look to him for salvation. "Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn." (Isa. 51:1, NIV) The nation of Israel had received abundantly of the grace of God in the past, and they were admonished to consider the

many blessings that had previously been given to them.

They were then reminded of their father, Abraham, and of his wife, Sarah. Special promises had been given to Abraham because of his faithfulness to God, who said to him, "I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."—Gen. 22:17,18, NIV

This grand covenant will go into effect when the

complete number of the promised seed has been found faithful. The Apostle Paul explains the important features of this when he says, "Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many; but referring to one, "And to your offspring," which is Christ." ~Gal. 3:16, RSV

Paul then shows that those who have responded to God's call during the present Gospel Age share in that seed of promise. He continues, "If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." ~vs. 29, NIV

Isaiah describes that future time of earth's rejoicing: "He will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing." (Isa. 51:3, NIV) Not only will Israelites be blessed by that kingdom, but so will the entire human family—including those who now

sleep in death. God's justice will prevail over all, and he will rule with equity. In this verse, "My salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations" (vs. 5), our Lord Jesus is represented as the powerful Arm of God, who will exercise that power in bringing all unrighteousness and opposition under control during his kingdom reign.

The prophet again says: "See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and his arm rules for him." (Isa. 40:10, NIV) He also says that "the LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God." ~Isa. 52:10, NIV

The Key Verse in our lesson assures us that God's salvation will last forever, although the present heavens and earth will pass away. These earthly institutions will vanish like smoke, and will be cast aside like an old worn-out garment when God's 'arm' takes control. ■

FOR THOSE WHO DESPAIR

KEY VERSE: *"To us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."—Isaiah 9:6, New International Version*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 9:1-7*

OUR LORD JESUS was born into the world as a perfect man to provide the corresponding price for Adam's transgression. Many had looked for Messiah to come at various times in history, but none knew that God was preparing a great gift for them.

The work of redemption was accomplished at our Lord's First Advent, and he will eventually be worshiped and highly exalted by the whole world. Because of his faithfulness to God, the rightful authority of governing will be given to him, and he will have total power to execute justice and judgment over the affairs of the world. When his reign begins he will assume the vari-

ous offices and powers outlined in our text.

The Prophet Isaiah reveals that the glorified Jesus will be a 'Wonderful' one to exercise this power. He will be the true embodiment of justice, wisdom, love, and power—as representative of the Heavenly Father. As the world's 'Counselor' he will guide, direct, and instruct the human family with the desire to lead them back to harmony with the laws of righteousness.

The title 'Mighty God' suggests that the glorified Jesus will be second only to the Most High God himself, in power, and above all the angelic hosts. The Father's plan was to send him for the very purpose of restoring mankind to life.

The term 'Everlasting Father' points to the great life-giver. He purchased mankind with his blood, and will be the life-giver to the world.

Jesus' title, 'Prince of Peace', will be a reality during the work of reconstruction and reconciliation, during the kingdom. It will require the entire Millennial Age to finally put down all unrighteousness and rebellion, and there will be no end to his rule of peace and goodwill among mankind.~Isa. 9:5-7; Rev. 20:6

Isaiah speaks of two tribes, Zebulun and Naphtali (vs. 1), who were part of the ten-tribe breakaway kingdom called Ephriam. They had been humbled by the Assyrians, and he describes their condition as being one of gloom and distress. There was hope for the future, however, as centuries later Jesus did many noble and mighty works during his earthly ministry in that very land of Galilee. "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death

a light has dawned."~Isa. 9:2, NIV

Jesus was the great light of the world that Isaiah described. The dawning light of Isaiah's prophecy will become the great light of the kingdom.

The prophecy continues with reference to the nation of Israel~the nation to be enlarged and increased with joy (vs. 3), "As in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor." (Isa. 9:4, NIV) Special power was exercised by God through the hand of Gideon against Israel's oppressors, which is symbolic of a grander deliverance at the end of the age. Israel, and the entire world, will be set free.

Our Lord will establish an everlasting kingdom of peace, and he will reign on the throne of David. As a king on Israel's throne, David represented our Lord, who will serve as earth's greater king. ■

FOR THOSE WHO SEEK PEACE

KEY VERSE: *"The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them."—Isa. 11:6, New International Version*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 11:1-6; Luke 2:10-14*

IN II SAMUEL 7:12 and Psalm 132:11, promises were made to David that his son would inherit his throne. In reference to this Isaiah says, "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit." (Isa. 11:1, NIV) Jesse was the father of David (I Chron. 2:13-15), and our Lord Jesus was from the offspring of David. (Matt. 1:6) Thus, as promised, Jesus became the new spiritual shoot from the root of Jesse.

The prophet continues, "The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD." (Isa. 11:2, NIV) This is a valid description of Jesus during his earthly min-

istry, but it will be even more true when he takes his great power to reign over the world in his kingdom.

Justice, wisdom, love, and power will be manifested in our Lord's actions, and together with his church he will judge the poor and the needy with justice and righteousness. Those who oppose his rule will be judged appropriately, as represented by the "rod of his mouth," and the "breath of his lips." (vs. 4) Truth will prevail, and all enemies of righteousness will be dealt with equitably, but with firmness.

The Key Verse of this lesson points to the time when peace will be triumphant over all of God's creation. It will be true that the animal world will also be at peace—

with the wolf living with the lamb, the leopard lying down with the goat, and the calf, lion, and yearling in harmony with one another—with a little child leading them. This tranquil scene continues with the cow and bear in accord, and the lion eating straw like an ox. Further, the child will be unafraid of the cobra, or the viper's nest. ~vss. 7,8

Nearly two thousand years ago our Lord Jesus was born into the world as promised. "The angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord'." (Luke 2:10,11, NIV) The Son of God left his heavenly home, and became a man to become earth's Savior. He was made flesh so that he could give his life as a corresponding price for the sins of the world. The good news spoken by the angel was a message of redemption, reconciliation, and restitution, to be manifested to all in God's due time.

Luke explains why Jesus was born in Bethlehem instead of at the home of his parents in Nazareth. Caesar Augustus was in power over the Roman Empire at that time, which included Israel, and he instituted a census that required all citizens to register in the city of their birth. Joseph returned to his native Bethlehem to comply with the census, and Mary, expecting a child, accompanied him. Because so many people were gathered in the town there was no place to stay at the inn, and Mary gave birth to her first-born son in the stable. She then wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger.

The Son of Man was born in very humble surroundings. (Luke 2:1-7) But there was great joy in heaven, and "suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests'." ~ Luke 2:13,14, NIV ■

FOR THOSE WHO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS

KEY TEXT: *"The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners."—Isaiah 61:1, New International Version*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 60:1-4; 61:1-4*

WHEN JESUS AROSE in the synagogue at his hometown of Nazareth, he read aloud the words of our Key Text from the scroll of Isaiah. (Luke 4:18) He had been immersed by John the Baptist in the waters of Jordan, and had recently returned from the desert where he was tempted by the Adversary. This prophecy concerned his own commission to preach the Gospel of his future kingdom, but he stopped short of reading the whole passage.

When he had read the first half of the prophecy, Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, sat down, and said, "Today this Scripture is ful-

filled in your hearing." (Luke 4: 20,21, NIV) It was fulfilled in him at that time because he had the witness of the Spirit as declared by Isaiah, and was about to testify to the people the message of the kingdom. The remainder of the prophecy was not to be fulfilled until the end of the Gospel Age.

The Day of Vengeance was not part of his First Advent message, nor was it the time to comfort all that mourn, to provide for those who grieve in Zion, to give unto the people beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for the mourners, nor the garment of praise for those who were in heaviness of spirit. Now, in our generation, at his

Second Advent, this part of the prophecy is being announced.

Our Lord came at his First Advent to suffer and die, and to give his life as a corresponding price for sin. He returns at the end of the age to call home those who are to be associated with him in his kingdom, and to make the necessary preparations for his glorious reign over the earth. It is a grand message that foretells the coming restitution work to be accomplished. "They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations." (Isa. 61:4, *NIV*) This prophecy is true not only for the regathered Israelites, but for the people of all nations.

Another passage from our Selected Scripture speaks of the glory of the kingdom. "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his

glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. (Isa. 60:1-3, *NIV*) Darkness still covers the earth and its people, as the prophet has stated, but there is much evidence to indicate that we are now living at the end of the Gospel Age.

It is true that Jesus was a light to the world during his earthly ministry. But now it is time for the fulfillment of the last part of Isaiah's scroll, from which our Lord read in the synagogue at Nazareth. Our Lord, together with his faithful bride, will be the great light that will arise in glory over the world. The darkness will then be taken away from the world and the human family will desire to come to that light to be taught the ways of holiness and truth. "Lift up your eyes and look about you: all assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the arm." (Isa. 60:4, *NIV*) Thus may we continue to proclaim this good news of the kingdom to all mankind. ■

THE GLORY OF GOD

"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

---II Corinthians 4:6,7

ONE OF THE main subjects of divine revelation is the glory of God. We shall touch only the fringe of two of its features in this treatise; namely: God's works and ways as manifested in Jesus Christ; and, the fact that none but God's Son, Jesus Christ, can reveal the glory of the Father, the 'light of the knowledge of the glory of God'.

Modern use of the term glory has robbed it somewhat of its true value as it pertains to our mighty Creator and to our beloved Redeemer, the "Lord of lords, and King of kings." (Rev. 17:14) It is something more than that which gives splendor, or a symbolic mantle as an insignia of high office. It may, of course, include these; as with the robes of glory and beauty of the High Priest of Israel. The Shekinah Light signified the presence of God with Israel in a restricted sense.

The glory of God must be explained as the august contents of God's own nature, embracing the aggregate of all his attributes, according to their undivided yet revealed

fullness. It is not merely an attribute of God, or one feature of his revelation, but the goodness of all and every feature of his fullness and perfection. It is the fullness of God, promised and in store for those who turn to him, as John's Gospel records: "We beheld his [Jesus'] glory," which reflects the glory of the Father, "full of grace and truth. . . . And of his fulness have all we received."—John 1:14,16

Sometimes, in referring to the glory of God, we think of the great works of Creation; at other times, of God's ways with man; his character or personality of splendor, magnificence, as expressed in his mercy, graciousness and love, his compassion and faithfulness. "The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." (Exod. 34:6,7) "His way is perfect."—Ps. 18:30

There are these two great aspects of the glory of God as revealed in the Scriptures. His works of Creation disclose to men and angels his wisdom and power. But God's ways are kept secret except as he is pleased to reveal them to others. Jesus said: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."—Matt. 11:27

The words of the apostle, "God, who commanded the light to shine" (II Cor. 4:6), take our thoughts back to Genesis, chapter one. "God said, Let there be light: and there was light." (vs. 3) "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (vs. 2) That is, God's attention and interest operated to create the planet as a home for man who was yet to be created.

"God divided the light from the darkness" (vs. 4), and subsequently the remainder of Creation was brought into existence. We are aware of the order of Creation as outlined in the first chapter of Genesis, of God's day-to-day performance; the light, the firmament, the bringing forth

of grass, herbs, trees, the sun, moon, and stars; creatures that hath life: fish, fowl, and beasts. Finally God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."—Gen. 1:26-28

In all God's creation, whether in the heavens or on the earth, his works are manifest. All men everywhere can behold those works, and by such observation should be drawn in adoration and worship to their Creator, to whom worship and praise are due. David was clear on this. He said, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Ps. 90:2) Again, "Bless the LORD, O my soul, O LORD my God. . . . Thou art clothed with honor and majesty."—Ps. 104:1

That which may be readily known of God's works is open to the eyes of all everywhere. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun."—Ps. 19:1-4

The character and the ways of God are withheld from man until he is pleased to reveal them. Paul wrote, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33) In speaking through Isaiah, God says: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isa. 55:8,9

It was at Pentecost, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples gathered in the upper room, that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shone in the face, or person, of Jesus Christ. Because of this, God's ways were then more readily comprehended, and to a remarkable

degree. "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." ~Eph. 1:17,18

There are three great and important aspects of the glory of God 'in the face of Jesus Christ'. These virtues are found in God's Beloved Son, and should be reflected in all who follow him and claim God as their Heavenly Father. They are: light, life, and love. God is the source of all light. God is light. He formed the light in the natural world, and he gives spiritual light and truth to those seeking to understand his Word and ways. He that desires to do God's will shall know of the teaching. ~John 7:17

Light is everywhere in the Scriptures an emblem of knowledge, purity, truth. Darkness is the emblem of ignorance, sin, and death. Habakkuk, speaking of God, says: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil." (Hab. 1:13) Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. (John 3:19) John tells us that Jesus "was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1:9) Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." ~John 8:12

The Pharisees in their prejudice said, "From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?" ~Mark 6:2,3

Jesus read in the synagogue on the Sabbath: "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that

are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the LORD. . . . And the eyes of all . . . were fastened on him. . . . And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. . . . And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power." (Luke 4:18-22,32) Here again was manifested the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

While the face of Jesus, the perfect man, must have been radiant with beauty, and an inspiration to behold, Paul probably had more than this in mind when he spoke of God's glory being revealed in the 'face' of Jesus Christ. After all, only the first disciples had the privilege of seeing Jesus' face; and even of these Paul wrote, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." (II Cor. 5:16) Jesus came to reveal God's grace and glory—as symbolized by the 'face' in contrast with the 'back'. Through his teachings and his sacrifice for the sin of the world, God's glory has shined into our hearts.

Moses earnestly desired to see the glory of God in all its perfection. He said, "If I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee . . . and consider that this nation is thy people." The LORD replied: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Moses said, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. . . . I beseech thee, show me thy glory." The LORD answered, "I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name." (Exod. 33:13-18) "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." (vs. 20) "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious." (vs. 19) "I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."—Exod. 33:22,23

Let us pause to meditate and praise God for the fullness of good in all his divine perfection as expressed to Moses in

these gracious terms! The glory of God should induce every beholder to stand and recognize and acknowledge the wonders and virtues of the Creator. The question forces itself on one's mind, What constitutes the glory of God? It embraces everything to be known of him. None but his Son Jesus Christ our Lord can reveal the glory of the Father, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.

It is a very great honor to have the illumination of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Grace with us has preceded glory, and God has bestowed upon us the sacred secrets of himself, before giving these to the world of mankind. How wonderful to realize, however, the promise, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." ~Hab. 2:14

What a privilege it is to realize this graciousness! How so many of God's children, by faith, have reveled in his promises and been delighted with the fulfillment of many of them in their daily lives. They have 'eaten' his words and have been sustained these many years in hope, faith, and confidence.

Another great virtue and power of God is life. It is also by and through Jesus Christ that life may be obtained. The prerogative of God is to give life, and to raise the dead. He endowed Jesus with power to give life and to raise the dead. John says: "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." (John 5:21) Jesus told the people, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10) "The bread of God is he [Jesus] which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." ~John 6:33

Jesus is now the fountain of life for man ~ natural life, spiritual life, eternal life. He purchased life by his redeeming sacrifice, and prepared it by entering triumphantly into the presence of God for us. (Heb. 9:24) He promised it to his followers during the present Gospel Age (John 17:3), and

will presently, as the everlasting Father of the human race in the age to come, bestow it upon all the willing and obedient. (John 5:28,29) Jesus explained to Martha and Mary, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." ~John 11:25

Love is also a predominating virtue of God. God is Love, divine and inexpressible. God's love for believers is manifested in the sacrifice of his beloved Son. The love of Jesus is described as 'surpassing knowledge'. (Eph. 3:19, RSV) "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8) God's love is everlasting: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." ~Jer. 31:3

God's love is boundless, sovereign, free, and all these virtues of love are manifested to us in the 'face' of Jesus Christ. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (I John 4:9,10) Jesus, being the brightness, the effulgence of God's glory, and the "express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, . . . sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." ~Heb. 1:3

Whatever the height of God's glory, as seen in all his attributes and perfections, the same glory is manifested in Jesus. There is not one of the divine perfections which has not its counterpart in him. If the divine character is to be seen at all, it is to be seen in and through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All spiritual thought and saving light to man has come through the revealed truth of God. Man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4) "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." ~John 6:63

Jesus explained to his disciples as he was about to leave them, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. . . . If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him." Philip said, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus replied, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" ~John 14:6-10

How thrilled both Thomas and Philip must have been when, at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon them and brought to their remembrance all things that Jesus had said. The full beams of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shone out in splendor and magnificence before their vision of the one they had followed and whose teachings they had embraced! So completely was the glory of God manifested in Jesus that despite all the criticism of Pharisee and Jew, he was able to pray, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. . . . O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." ~John 17:4,5

All these perfections, these virtues, or attributes of light, life, and love, we, as followers of Jesus, are admonished to attain by his grace. We are the receivers of the gift of light of the knowledge of the glory of God which Moses was not permitted to enjoy. Let us, then, seek earnestly to become more completely copies at heart of God's dear Son, and make our theme and quest in this life the quest and theme of the Apostle Paul: "God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son." (Rom. 1:9) May we with him, in the spirit of love and service for each other, be "determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." ~I Cor. 2:2

This will involve doctrines and teachings to be embraced or discarded; principles of life to be observed; dispensations and signs to be carefully weighed; but all for one purpose ~to be 'in Christ'. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall

appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:3,4) "God has not given us a timid spirit but a spirit of power and love and discipline." ~II Tim. 1:7, *Moffatt Translation*

The spiritual understanding disclosed and imparted to the disciples, all of whom manifested in a remarkable way the light of the glory of God, reveals so marvelously the emotions and character of God. As we have looked into the face, or person, of Jesus, we have seen God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," said Jesus. (John 14:9) It is all revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, shed abroad in our hearts, and in this way we have come to know God personally, and Jesus Christ our Lord. ~Rom. 5:5

For the followers of Christ, he is our pattern, and a personal friend. To attain the blessedness, the sweetness of really knowing him, we need to see the vision of God's glory in Jesus Christ. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD." ~II Cor. 3:18

Let us then keep in mind the importance of our theme: "The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Let us copy Paul in his confession: Jesus Christ, "whose I am, and whom I serve." (Acts 27:23) We have received of his grace. Let us attain to his glory: "The glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father." ~John 1:14 ■

<p>AS WITH GLADNESS men of old did the guiding star behold; As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright; So, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.</p> <p>Holy Saviour, every day keep us in the narrow way; And when earthly things are past; bring our ransomed souls at last Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>"Hymns of Dawn," #16</i></p>

JESUS AND THE APOSTLES

"The names of the twelve apostles are these; the first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him."

---Matthew 10:2-4

OUR APPRECIATION OF Jesus increases as we study him in association with his chosen representatives, the twelve apostles. They are 'his chosen representatives'. It is true that Jesus invited these twelve to the position of apostleship; however, he knew that they were given to him by his Heavenly Father.

In the well-known prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus referred to his apostles as the "men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me."---John 17:6

The word apostle means 'one sent forth'. While every devoted, truth-enlightened follower of Jesus is commissioned by the Holy Spirit to go forth to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom, to these twelve a special commission was given, and extraordinary powers were conferred upon them which were not given to the disciples as a whole.

The commission first given to the twelve is recorded in Matthew 10:5-8, and reads: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

In this commission Jesus associates his apostles with the great theme message of the entire Bible: that is, the kingdom. The Old Testament prophets had foretold that Jehovah would send a king, the Messiah, who would set up a kingdom, and through that kingdom would extend blessings of peace and health and life to all mankind. Jesus was that king. The apostles accepted him as such, and now they were commissioned to preach that the kingdom was at hand.

It was 'at hand' in the sense that the king had made his first appearance. The holy prophets had said that the king would come, and that "of the increase of his government and peace" there would be "no end." (Isa. 9:7) Now the king had come. The royal majesty of the heavens was in the midst of Israel, and the responsibility was laid upon the apostles to make this known.

The foretold kingdom of the Messiah was to benefit the people of all nations, but when the apostles were first sent forth their commission limited them to proclaim the message only to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel'. But this was only a temporary restriction, conforming to the divine arrangement to give the Israelites the first, and, for a limited time, the exclusive opportunity to share with Jesus in the rulership of the kingdom. This temporary limitation was in fulfillment of the prophecy recorded in Daniel 9:24-27. Later the commission to proclaim the Gospel was enlarged to include all nations.~Acts 1:8

Not only were the apostles sent forth to preach that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, but they were also commanded and empowered to perform works like those which the kingdom would do on behalf of humanity when it was fully established. That is, they were to heal the sick, cleanse

the lepers, raise the dead, and to cast out devils. As opportunity afforded, they performed all these miracles, much to the joy of those who benefited from them.

A LESSON IN FAITH

Jesus said to his apostles, 'Freely ye have received, freely give'. These chosen apostles were to be ambassadors of Christ. They were to represent him in both word and deed. It was essential, therefore, that they be filled and controlled by his Spirit, which was a spirit of unselfishness, of generosity, of giving. This spirit of Jesus was the spirit of his Heavenly Father, whose greatest exhibition of giving was in the gift of his beloved Son to be the Redeemer and Savior of the world.

So Jesus wanted his disciples to be generous in their giving of themselves and the message of the kingdom. In order that this spirit of giving all and gaining nothing from it might be inculcated in them, his instructions were that they were not to provide themselves "gold" or "silver," or apparel—that was not beyond their barest needs. (Matt. 10:9,10) In giving these instructions he quoted from the Old Testament: "The labourer is worthy of his hire," indicating that if they were faithful in the discharge of their responsibilities, their physical needs would be provided.~ Deut. 24:15; Luke 10:4-7

When the apostles returned from their first missionary tour, Jesus asked them if they had lacked anything so far as their material needs were concerned, and they answered, "Nothing." (Luke 22:35) This restriction pertaining to the taking of supplies of money, food, and clothing was later removed. Apparently Jesus wanted his disciples to learn the lesson of trust, and by actual experience to sense his own position in the world, concerning which he said that while the birds of the air have nests, and the foxes of the field have holes, "the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matt. 8:20) Jesus 'freely gave' everything he had.

(Cont'd on p. 36)

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(Cont'd from p. 31)

FUTURE PROBATION

Hearing the Gospel of the kingdom as proclaimed by any of the LORD's duly commissioned servants imposes a measure of responsibility upon those who hear. But Jesus did not want his apostles to feel that they were under obligation to convince and convert all to whom they witnessed; or to think that those who failed thus to respond would be given no further opportunity of salvation. They were to faithfully bear witness to the kingdom message, but were not to coerce their hearers into accepting. When their message was not received they were to shake the dust off their feet, and go elsewhere.

Jesus added to this that so far as those who rejected the message were concerned, it would be less "tolerable" for them in the Day of Judgment than it would be for "Sodom and Gomorrah." (Matt. 10:14,15) An important point in this statement to be noticed is that it will be tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, and for those who rejected the message presented by the apostles, but differing in degree by the amount of knowledge available to each.

THE UNFRIENDLY WORLD

Jesus said to his disciples, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (vs. 16) What a vivid illustration! It applied to the apostles, and has applied since then to all the true followers of the Master. The divine qualifications for the ministry require all of the LORD's people to have dispositions like sheep. They are forbidden to fight for their rights. If smitten on one cheek, they are to turn the other. They are not to render evil for evil.

The only force in the life of the true Christian is the force of love. Their only message is one of love. In proclaiming this message they are to be meek, and humble, and nonaggressive. How like the defenseless sheep! Yet these sheep-like ambassadors of the Master perform their work

surrounded by 'wolves', howling, snapping, biting—ever threatening to attack and kill.

The 'wolves' do not mean to act like wolves. But, controlled by selfishness, and supposing that the ambassadors of Christ are a menace, they resort to the only methods they know in order to rid the world of these so-called intruders—that is by threats, persecution, false accusations, and, as it was in the case of Jesus and many others in the Early Church, by putting them to death.

Surrounded by 'wolves', the apostles were to be 'wise as serpents, and harmless as doves'. They were not to compromise for the sake of peace, but to pursue a course of peace as best they could. If harm was to come to anyone as a result of their ministry, it was not to stem from them, but would be due to the opposition of the 'wolves'.

"But beware of men," Jesus said to his apostles, "for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles." (Matt. 10:17,18) This is an interesting statement. Obviously, the purpose of bringing the apostles before governors and kings would be to accuse and condemn them, but Jesus said that actually the testimony would be against the accusers. This is because their efforts to persecute and destroy the LORD's harmless 'sheep' would reveal the deep degradation of their hearts and the blind prejudice which ruled their lives.

As for the apostles, they were not to be overly concerned about these experiences, unpleasant though they were sure to be. They were not to endeavor in advance to decide just what they would say under trying circumstances. The events would help to indicate the appropriate words; and besides, Jesus promised that it would be given to them by the Holy Spirit what they were to say.—vss. 18-20

This promise was of great strength to the apostles, and to all the followers of the Master. The apostles were to be

the inspired representatives of the LORD. While the inspirational power of the Holy Spirit had not been received by them in full until Pentecost, yet even in their pre-Pentecost ministry they occupied a more favored position in the LORD's arrangements than did the other disciples.

However, many of the LORD's people have testified of the wonderful manner in which the LORD has helped them in their witness for him under difficult circumstances. All true Christians should be ardent students of the Scriptures. They should be ready at all times to give a reason for the hope that is within them. Those who do live up to their privileges as students of the Word will find that they do have an answer for their opponents when needed. No doubt the LORD helps them recall the points of truth they have learned. And, because they learned them from the LORD's Word, it is the LORD who gives them utterance.

But Jesus' promise to his apostles went beyond this. In the early days of their ministry especially, and prior to Pentecost, they did not have the opportunity of becoming fully acquainted with the divine plan, as revealed in the Word, and this lack was to be made up to them by special help from the LORD when needed. During this period they were in special training for their later ministry when Jesus would no longer be with them in the flesh, and these special manifestations of divine grace and power were essential for them.

MASTER AND PUPILS

The association of Jesus and his apostles was as Master and pupils. This was not with the thought, however, that Jesus was a dictator over his apostles, but more the idea of his being their teacher, their schoolmaster. As in every other respect, Jesus was faithful to his apostles as their teacher. When relating his parables to a mixed group, he was always ready, when asked, to explain them to his apostles.

When they reported to him that some thought he was the foretold Elijah, others that he was John the Baptist raised from the dead, and still others that he was the resurrected Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets, Jesus asked, "Whom say ye that I am?" (Matt. 16:13-20) When Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus was pleased, and said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

The apostles believed that Jesus had come as the great king and Messiah of the Old Testament prophecies, and they expected that he would establish his authority as king of the Jews very soon, and that this governmental authority would spread until it embraced all nations. Jesus knew that they would be greatly disappointed in this expectation, but did all he could to prepare them for it. He related a parable of a certain nobleman who went into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return. (Luke 19:12) The introduction to this parable states that Jesus related it because his disciples thought the kingdom was to be established immediately. He wanted them to understand that he must first go away, and that the kingdom would not become a reality until his return.---Luke 19:11

Learning from this parable that their Master was going away, they later asked him about it. They wanted to know what sign would indicate the time of his return. (Matt. 24:3) It was in his reply to this question that Jesus presented the many signs described in the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew. The final one of these signs mentions the time when the willing and obedient of mankind, as portrayed by the sheep in the parable of the sheep and the goats, are said to inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. This, of course, will be at the close of the "times of restitution of all things."---Matt. 25:34; Acts 3:19-21

HOLY SPIRIT PROMISED

Jesus realized that without the aid of the Holy Spirit, his apostles were not able to grasp his teachings clearly, and there were some points of truth that he did not even try to make plain to them. He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." But he added that he would send the Holy Spirit, referring to it as the "Spirit of truth" (John 14:16,17) which would guide them into all truth. He promised also that the Holy Spirit would help them to recall the many things he had said to them. (vs. 26; 16:12,13) This promise was fulfilled at Pentecost.

IN THE 'UPPER ROOM'

Jesus' great love for his apostles is clearly revealed by the record of his association with them in the 'upper room' the night before he was crucified. It was here that he instituted the Memorial of his death, asking them to eat the bread and drink the cup containing the "fruit of the vine" which, he said, represented his broken body and shed blood.---Matt. 26:26-30; Luke 22:10-20

It was in the 'upper room' that Jesus washed his apostles' feet, teaching them a lesson in humility. (John 13:4,5) It was also in the upper room that Jesus revealed to the eleven that Judas would betray him. (John 13:21-30) By contrast, and very sincerely, Peter avowed his willingness to lay down his life for Jesus, but Jesus foretold that Peter would deny him.---John 13:36-38

One of the remarkable things Jesus said to his apostles in the upper room was that they would be able to do the same miraculous works as they had seen him do; yes, "and greater works than these shall [ye] do," he added. (John 14:12) The apostles were given the power to perform miracles, but the larger fulfillment of this prophecy will be during the thousand-year reign of Christ when, in association with Jesus, all his true followers will participate in the great work of healing all the sick and of raising all the dead.

Jesus made many wonderful promises to his apostles while with them in the upper room that night. One of them was, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it." (John 14:13,14) The implication is that those who make requests in Jesus' name would be in full harmony with him and his teachings, hence their requests would be in harmony with God's will. But this was a wonderful assurance for Jesus to give to those who shortly were to go out into the world as his ambassadors.

Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Enlarging upon this he said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (vss. 15,23) This is another reassuring promise, but again with a condition attached to it: 'If ye love me, keep my commandments'. We cannot doubt that many times in later years the apostles rejoiced in the fulfillment of this promise. What a blessing it must have been to them when in prison, or otherwise suffering for Jesus' sake!

Jesus knew that the success of the apostles' ministry would require that they also love one another, so he said, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." (John 15:12) Jesus' love for his disciples was so great that he gladly laid down his life for them, and he expected his disciples to be willing to lay down their lives for one another.

Jesus also realized that the world would not be friendly to his disciples, even as it was not friendly to him. We quote Jesus on this point: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:18,19) On this point Jesus explained further, "In the world ye shall have tribulation:

but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—John 16:33

Surely Jesus was lavish in his assurances to his apostles that they could depend upon him and upon his Father to be with them in their every experience. The reality of these promises depended upon the degree of faith which they were able to lay hold upon. If they believed fully, they would have complete rest of mind and heart. Indeed, Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."—John 14:27

Finally, in the upper room that night, Jesus prayed for his apostles, and, indeed for all who believed on him through their word. (John 17:20) It was a wonderful prayer. He said to his Father, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine, . . . and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."—vss. 9,10

He continued: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."—vss. 15-18

Jesus further prayed "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me," and further, "hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." (vss. 21,23) Jesus not only desired that his Heavenly Father's love be shared with his apostles, and those who believed on him through their word, but he also wanted them to share his heavenly home and glory. So he prayed, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—vs. 24

TO GETHSEMANE AND THE CROSS

Following this prayer, Jesus and his disciples left the upper room, walking out of the city, across the brook Cedron, to the Garden of Gethsemane. As they walked Jesus said to them, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." To this Peter replied, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." (Matt. 26:31,33) In the upper room Peter had said to Jesus, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." ~Luke 22:33

Reaching the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus left his apostles behind to rest, while he went deeper into the garden to pray. They did not fully grasp the great strain that was upon their Master at this critical time, and, it being late at night, they fell asleep. While they slept, Jesus prayed: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." ~Luke 22:42

During this period of communion with the Father, Jesus returned to the disciples and found them sleeping. The first time he addressed Peter, asking, "Coudest not thou watch one hour?" Perhaps Jesus singled out Peter because he had made such an outspoken avowal of loyalty. Jesus returned to the sleeping disciples twice more, and the last time said, "Sleep on now, and take your rest: It is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." ~Mark 14:37,41

But the apostles did not continue to sleep. They accompanied Jesus to the exit from the garden, and there they met the mob which had come out from Jerusalem to arrest their Master. It was here that Peter drew his sword in defense of Jesus, and was directed to desist this attempt to prevent the arrest. Here was one of the most important lessons which Jesus wanted his apostles to learn; namely, that he was voluntarily surrendering to his enemies to be

put to death. Later they were to understand why, for they were to learn that Jesus had come not only to be the ruler of the world, but its Redeemer and Savior as well.

Jesus had very little contact with his apostles subsequent to this time. Peter followed the mob into the judgment hall, where, as foretold, he denied his Lord. Apparently John was nearby during the crucifixion, for Jesus addressed him concerning his mother, saying to him, "Behold thy mother!" (John 19:27) Jesus thus indicated that he wished John to be responsible for the physical needs of his mother.

We have but briefly noted some of the main experiences in the association of Jesus and his chosen apostles. In all of them we have seen his loving interest in his disciples, and his desire that they be properly trained to be his ambassadors, and that they be imbued with the proper spirit of unselfish devotion to the cause which he had come into the world to promote, which was his Heavenly Father's great plan of salvation. ■



OBITUARIES

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian courses. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to the families and friends in the loss of these dear ones. We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.

Brother Edward Pockoski, Groton-New London, CT

—March 8. Age, 85.

Sister Gertie Taylor, Hitchin, England—June 6. Age, 82.

Sister Violet M. Pazucha, Milwaukee, WI—September 24.

Age, 77.

Sister Jeannie Prutzman, St. Louis, MO—September 27.

Sister Ruth Hagensick, Monona, IA—September 29. Age,

86.

"HE HATH PERFECTED THE SANCTIFIED"

"The Law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the Law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For

by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."---Hebrews 10:1-14

IN THIS SCRIPTURE, the Apostle Paul seeks to show the Hebrews that the sacrifices of bulls and goats enjoined for a time have come to an end; and that the Jewish priesthood has been supplanted by a higher one---Christ and his members---a "royal priesthood." (I Pet. 2:9) He pictures our Lord as addressing the Father in respect to the matter, saying, 'Sacrifice and offering [of bulls and goats] thou wouldest not [these do not satisfy the demands of the Law as the redemption price for sinners], but a body hast thou prepared me. . . . Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O God'. (Heb. 10:5,7) There, says the apostle, he takes away (or pushes aside) the first, or typical, sacrifices of the Law Covenant---bulls and goats---that he may establish, or bring into place, the second, the antitypes of those sacrifices.

As the Father prepared a special body for our Lord Jesus, one that was holy, harmless, and undefiled, and suitable as our sin-offering, so he has also provided a body of Christ in the flesh on a larger scale, and this for sacrifice, by providing for our justification through his blood. As the apostle says, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." And then he adds, "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."---Rom. 5:1,2

We receive this grace by sharing in the glory of Christ and his kingdom, by reason of the opportunity which our justification gives us of becoming members of the High Priest, sharers in his sacrifice. Paul refers to this elsewhere, saying to the justified ones: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) Here we have the declaration that we are participants in this sacrifice, and that our sacrifice is acceptable to God and counted by him holy

because of our faith in, and relationship to, the great High Priest who has adopted us as his members and is sacrificing us. In harmony with this we read our text: "By the which will we are sanctified [set apart as holy and consecrated joint-sacrificers with our Lord] through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ."---Heb. 10:10

The apostle's argument is that by one offering Christ has perfected forever them that are sanctified or set apart for a holy purpose. Through his merit there is naught against us now, and nothing to hinder us from accepting the gracious invitation to suffer with him as his members, yielding our bodies as living sacrifices through the merit of his sacrifice.

Under the New Covenant, God will remove the sins of Israel and Judah, and all that come into relationship with him under that covenant. And when that remission of sins is complete it will be an evidence that the sin-offerings of the Atonement Day are at an end, as the apostle stated in verse 18. The remission of sins has not yet come for Israel and the world, because the offering for sins is not completed. Christ, the High Priest, is still offering up himself. The great Day of Atonement is not yet closed, though nearly so.

In this connection let us note the apostle's words, that, having confidence in the merit of Christ's sacrifice for us, we may have boldness---courage---to enter into the Holiest. Who have entered the Most Holy in the type? The High Priest alone, once every year on the Day of Atonement. Who in the antitype will enter the Most Holy in the end of the antitypical Day of Atonement? The antitypical High Priest---Jesus, the Head, and the church, his body. It is because of our faith and obedience that we are accepted as members of the High Priest's body, whom he is now sacrificing. We have hope to enter soon into heaven itself, the Most Holy, as his members; and there we are already entered by faith. ■

JESUS, THE FIRST AND THE LAST

*"I am Alpha and Omega,
the beginning and the end,
the first and the last."*

—Revelation 22:13

IT HAS BEEN said that Jesus is the center of history. Certainly he is the center of the divine plan of salvation which is revealed in the Bible. Jesus said to the Jews of his day, "Before Abraham was, I am" —that is, 'I existed'. (John 8:58) Even before Adam was created, Jesus, as the *Logos*, the Word, was participating with his Heavenly Father in the works of Creation. He was the "beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. 3:14) He was the only direct creation of God, and as John testifies, "Without him was not any thing made that was made." —John 1:3

Although Jesus did not write any of the Bible, Revelation, the last book, written by the Apostle John, is introduced as "the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Rev. 1:1) In next to the last verse of the Bible, Jesus speaks through the Apostle John, saying, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen." Realizing that the Second Coming of Jesus would result in the glorious triumph of righteousness, and the promised blessing of all mankind with health and life provided through Jesus' work of redemption, John responded, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." —Rev. 22:20

The name Jesus signifies 'Savior'. It is the Greek form of Jehoshua (Joshua). How appropriate is this name when we realize that Jesus came to be the Savior of all mankind—a savior from sin and from its penalty, death. The title Christ, as in Jesus Christ, signifies 'anointed'. It denotes that he is the one sent and authorized by Jehovah to fulfill all the wonderful promises recorded by the Old Testament prophets pertaining to the redemption and restoration of the world from sin and death.

It has been prophetically stated that the name of the anointed of God would be "Emmanuel," which means, 'God with us'. (Isa. 7:14; 8:8; Matt. 1:23) This, indeed, is properly one of Jesus' titles, because he was, and will continue to be, God's representative among mankind. John expressed the thought correctly when he wrote, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John 1:18

Jesus said concerning his Heavenly Father, "Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape." (John 5:37) This proves that the only way the people of Jesus' day heard and saw Jehovah was through the example and teachings of Jesus. But Jesus did the works and spoke the words of his Heavenly Father, so properly the title Emmanuel belongs to him.—John 12:49

HIS BIRTH

Jesus was born of the virgin Mary. God was his Father in the sense that it was by divine power that the life principle of the *Logos*—one of Jesus' titles, particularly during his prehuman existence—was transferred to the womb of Mary, and in due time Jesus was born as a human babe and became a man. Paul wrote concerning this that Jesus was "made in the likeness of men," and was "found in fashion as a man."—Phil. 2:7,8

Jesus' birth marked a division in the reckoning of time, so that now we have the B.C. and A.D. dates, meaning

before and after Christ. However, this division of time was not used until several hundred years after Christ. Even now this turning point in time is not wholly correct. According to a more accurate reckoning, the birth of Jesus occurred about one year and three months prior to the generally accepted B.C. date. *

PROPHECY FULFILLED

Jesus was born in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, one of the most important of which reads, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9:6,7

Another prophecy, one which identifies Jesus' birth-place, reads, "Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."—Mic. 5:2

These prophecies clearly revealed that this Great One who was to be born was destined to be a king, a ruler; that he would set up a government which ultimately would be worldwide in control over mankind. Thus John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, when announcing his presence, said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," or, more properly translated, "The Royal Majesty of the heavens has approached."—Matt. 3:2, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*

* For a more detailed explanation, See Vol. 2, Studies in the Scriptures, "*The Time Is at Hand*," pages 54-62.

Much of Jesus' own teaching was associated with this hope of the kingdom. Many of his parables were introduced by the statement, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto . . ." His disciples thoroughly believed that he would establish a kingdom in Judea, and that they would be associated with him in that kingdom.

When, near the close of Jesus' ministry, the disciples became disturbed over the fact that he intended to surrender to his enemies and allow them to put him to death, Jesus related a parable to them concerning a nobleman who went into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return. This parable was designed to help the disciples understand that the kingdom they expected Jesus to establish must await his return at his Second Advent.

THE COUNTERFEIT

It has been truthfully said of Jesus that no other life has so profoundly influenced the course of the world. This has yet to be still more wonderfully true. Up to the present time much has been said and done in the name of Jesus which has been a discredit to him and contrary to the principles of righteousness which he taught and exemplified. It probably could be said that the life and teachings of Jesus have been more misrepresented and distorted than those of any other person.

The fact that Jesus came to be a king has been used by ambitious and misguided men to establish themselves in power in his name. This was done—and contrary to Jesus' teachings—through the church-state governments of Europe. These governments, it was claimed, were in reality the kingdom of Christ, that he was ruling through the civil and ecclesiastical heads of these governments.

Throughout the many centuries when these corrupt systems flourished there was almost continual strife between various factions. This has left on the pages of history a bloody record of crime, war, persecution, inquisition, and other evils which are utterly contrary to the spirit and

teachings of Jesus, although they were perpetrated in his name.

In his parable of the wheat and the tares, Jesus foretold this growth of evil in his name. The good "seed" of this parable, Jesus explained, pictured the "children of the kingdom" (Matt. 13:38), that is, those who were begotten with the hope of his return and with the expectation that then they would reign with him in his kingdom.

But there was to be another "seed"—the tares. Jesus explained that these represented the "children of the wicked one." This does not mean that they were to be wicked, immoral people, but simply that they would come under the influence of Satan's counterfeit kingdom of Christ, and lend themselves to its support.

Satan attempted to obtain Jesus' support for a similar scheme. He told the Master that if he would fall down and worship him, he would give him all the kingdoms of the world. Jesus knew that in his Heavenly Father's due time and way, all the nations of the earth would be brought under his control and he did not propose to accept them on the Devil's terms.

But many professed followers of Jesus, losing sight of the divine plan for setting up a world government, yielded to Satan's temptation. They joined hands with the state, and called the union Christ's kingdom—Christendom. We mention this in order that we may have clearly in mind that while Jesus' influence has indeed been practically world-wide, and while this one marvelous life of his influenced the course of history as none other has ever done, much that has been ascribed to him has been a discredit to him, and diametrically opposed to his teachings and example.

HIS SYMPATHY AND LOVE

In contrast with the cruelties practiced in Jesus' name during the Dark Ages, we find the Master himself a man of tender sympathy and self-sacrificing love. In Acts 10:38 we read of Jesus that he "went about doing good," and that he

healed all who "were oppressed of the Devil." His heart went out in loving sympathy to those who suffered. Standing beside the tomb of Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, and realizing that these two sisters were broken-hearted over the death of their brother, "Jesus wept." ~ John 11:35

The way of life taught and exemplified by Jesus is one of kindness, of nobility, of love. In his sermon on the mount, Jesus taught the real blessedness of meekness, humility, pureness of heart, and mercifulness. "Blessed are the peacemakers," he said, "for they shall be called the children of God." ~ Matt. 5:1-12

To the extent that men and women have been influenced by these precepts they have been ennobled. Communities and nations have been happier places in which to live when these principles have been adopted and sincerely practiced. To whatever extent the world has been influenced by them, it has been a better world.

THE DIVINE IMAGE

Our first parents were created in the image of God, and in their original perfection must indeed have been virtuous and noble. In the noble and upright of the world even now we can see traces of the original divine likeness still remaining. But in what rich abundance they must have been exemplified in Jesus, the perfect counterpart of the "first" man, Adam. Of Jesus it is written that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." ~ Heb. 7:26

Toward the close of his ministry Jesus said to his disciples, "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." ~ John 14:7-9

Jesus, like Adam, was the image of God, and with him that image was unmarred, unsullied, radiant, full. Every

lovely trait of character seen in Jesus was just that much of a reflection of the Heavenly Father. It was the image of God in Jesus that caused him to be the noble character that he was. His every thought, word, and act reflected the characteristics of his Father. This was so completely true that Jesus could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

This was true not only with respect to Jesus' personal purity and nobility of character, but it was exemplified also in his teachings. He said, "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." (John 12:49) Again, "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."—John 14:24

Thus Jesus stands separate from and above all the other servants of God who make up the people of the Bible. In its straightforward manner of presenting the truth, the Bible records both the virtues and the failings of its heroes. By reason of the miraculous manner in which his life as the Logos was transferred to earth, he was born into the world untainted with the imperfections of the Adamic race.

Thus Jesus stands wholeheartedly in harmony with his Father's purpose in sending him into the world. So completely was this true that he could say, "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30) He came to do the Father's will, and he permitted nothing, not even life itself, to interfere with his divine mission.

THE DIVINE PURPOSE

Hebrews 2:9 reads, "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Jesus knew that his ministry would be crowned with victory only through his faithfulness in laying down his life in sacrifice for the sins of the world. This great objective of his being "made flesh" (John 1:14) governed his entire course of action. And even for us

it serves as a background which helps to interpret much of what he said and did.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) When saying this, however, Jesus knew that he could be the life-giver of mankind only because he would give his human life as the redemptive price for the lost world. So, on another occasion, he said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—John 6:51

Jesus realized, however, that there was a "due time" (I Tim. 2:6) in his Father's plan for him to die. Until that time he did not recklessly expose himself to danger. But finally the "hour" (John 12:23,24) for his supreme sacrifice drew near, and we find him voluntarily putting himself in a position of danger.

The circumstances are most interesting. Jesus was in Galilee to avoid his enemies. (John 7:1) Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, became ill. This little family that lived in Bethany was much loved by Jesus. The brother's illness was fatal, and after his death Jesus announced to his disciples that he was returning to Bethany to awaken Lazarus.

They understood the dangers involved in returning, and said to Jesus, "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him."—John 11:8-10

Jesus' reference to there being twelve hours in the day, and to stumbling in the darkness of night seems to indicate his understanding that his 'day' was rapidly drawing to a close, and that his 'night' was coming when he could work no longer. Later, in connection with his arrest in Gethse-

mane, he said to the chief priests and captains of the Temple, and the elders, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." (Luke 22:53) In that mountainous country, 'stumbling' in the darkness could well be a reference to the loss of life.

In any event, Jesus knew that the time was nearing for him to die, so he did not hesitate to return to a location where he was sure his enemies were lying in wait to find occasion against him and kill him. His disciples knew of this danger and Thomas said to the others, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." ---John 11:16

And Jesus was crucified only a short time after he returned to Bethany and raised Lazarus from the dead. Indeed, it was this very miracle that helped to incense his enemies into a bitterness intense enough to cause them to take murderous action against him. Jesus realized that this would happen, but he did not let it deter him from taking a course that would lead to his death; for it was for this cause that he came into the world. Only if he gave his flesh for the life of the world would the world have life.

Later, after his arrest, Jesus said or did nothing to interfere with the wicked purpose of his jealous enemies to have him hung upon a cross and killed. When asked by the High Priest if he claimed to be the Son of God, Jesus replied, "Thou hast said." (Matt. 26:64) He knew that this reply would be misconstrued as blasphemy; and as a result the religious rulers of Israel would judge him worthy of death.

When brought before Pilate and accused of being a king, he affirmed the charge, saying to his Roman ruler, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." (John 18:37) When hanging upon the cross and hearing the crowd cry out, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross," he did nothing about it. (Matt. 27:40) At the beginning of his ministry Jesus was tempted by the Devil to prove his divine sonship by casting himself from the pinnacle of the

Temple. He did not yield then to temptation, nor did he yield when the same Adversary, working through the mob, called upon him to prove his sonship by coming down from the cross.

Jesus had come into the world to die as man's Redeemer. It was on the cross that this sacrifice was consummated. He took the sinner's place so completely that for one brief, awful moment the smile of his Father's approval was hidden from him, and in agony he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46) A few moments later, he cried out, "It is finished," and committed his life to his God—"Into thy hands I commend my spirit."—John 19:30; Luke 23:46

THE RESURRECTED JESUS

On the third day the Heavenly Father raised his beloved Son from the dead. (Matt. 17:23; I Pet. 1:21) He had given his life as a ransom, a corresponding price for Adam and his race, and now all power was given unto him "in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18), in order that he might, in God's due time and way, set into motion those agencies through which the life he had made available by his death might be extended to mankind.

First, there was need to establish the fact that he had been raised from the dead. Concerning this Peter later said, "Him [Jesus] God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead."—Acts 10:40-42

Peter's statement concerning Jesus, 'He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify', refers to another aspect of the divine purpose which was initiated by Jesus; namely, the calling out of the world a company of disciples who would be willing to share in his suffering and death,

inspired by the hope of being raised from the dead to live and reign with him in his kingdom.

This little company the Bible refers to as the “church,” meaning ‘called out’ ones. (Acts 11:26) Jesus’ apostles were the first of these to be selected. In faithfulness to the commission their Master gave to them, they laid down their lives testifying that it was he ‘which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead’.

The expression ‘quick and dead’ refers to those of the Adamic race whom we speak of as being alive—even though they are still under condemnation to death and dying—and those who are in the sleep of death. After his resurrection Jesus said, “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”—Rev. 1:18

During his second visit, Jesus uses these ‘keys’ to unlock the great prison-house of death and set its captives free. The church will be exalted to the divine nature to live and reign with him. The world will be placed on probation to determine worthiness or unworthiness of everlasting life on earth.

He who was the ‘first’ and the ‘last’ of God’s direct creation, the one who throughout the age has been the Counselor and Advocate of the church, the one who from the time of his creation was the *Logos* of God, promised to ‘come quickly’, as John wrote at the beginning of the age. Now the ‘first and last’ has come. (Rev. 1:17) This means that the great and glorious kingdom promised by God’s holy prophets is about to be manifested in power and great glory for the blessing of all the families of the earth. ■

“BLESSED be the LORD God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people, . . . as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets of old, . . . to perform the mercy promised to our fathers.”
—Luke 2:68,70,72

SOUTH AMERICAN RADIO WITNESS

WE ARE VERY happy to report that through the cooperation of the brethren in the United States and in Peru, South America, a broader witness of the kingdom message is now being broadcast in South America. We know it is the LORD's doing, and we give thanks to God, acknowledging that only by divine grace and his overruling providence is this proclamation made possible.

This witness is now being presented from a shortwave radio station in the city of Trujillo, Peru. Since the radio station was donated to the Dawn, we are now able to broadcast the message of truth without any time limitation. For identification purposes we are using the name, "ECO of the Dawn" Radio Shortwave 4920 kHz.

The radio station will cover the whole country of Peru and the borders of Ecuador, Brazil, Bolivia, and Chile. The "*Frank and Ernest*" radio programs will be presented in the Spanish, English, Portuguese, and Italian languages. In addition to the "*Frank and Ernest*" programs, we can present other truth messages. We are confident that the brethren will remember this effort in their prayers, and that the LORD will bless it.

It is a blessed privilege to labor together with the LORD's people and to make known the glad tidings of the kingdom. Our desire is to exalt the name of God in the minds and hearts of those who have hearing ears for the truth. ■

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

QUESTION:

Dear Friend:

A matter has been discussed in our group recently. The question was asked, "When we confess our sins, accept Jesus as our Savior, and are baptized, are we saved regardless of anything we do thereafter?" What do you say?—KS

ANSWER:

The answer is no! The Apostle Paul wrote, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (I Cor. 9:27) Paul had repented of his sins. He had accepted Jesus as his Savior, and he had consecrated his all to the service of God, having buried his will in the divine will, as symbolized by water immersion. Nevertheless he realized that continued faithfulness to the terms of his consecration was necessary if he were not to become a 'castaway'.

In Philippians 3:13,14, Paul writes, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Paul did not consider that he had attained that for which he had been called simply because he had accepted Christ and had devoted his life to divine service.

In Hebrews 2:3 we read, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." Here again is the implication that through neglect one might lose the prize of the 'great salvation'. This, and the other texts quoted, do not, however, refer to the position of the unbelieving world: but as Paul indicates, their application is to those who have been called to the 'great salvation'.

The commonly accepted, but erroneous view, that God is now trying to 'save' as many as possible, and that all who are not in this life 'saved' will be tortured in a fiery hell forever, does not have a place in the logical presentation of the Scriptures. The 'great salvation' is what Paul describes as the 'prize of the high calling'. It is the opportunity offered to consecrated believers of this age that if they are faithful to the LORD—even unto death—they will receive the "crown of life," and will "live and reign with Christ a thousand years."—Rev. 2:10, 20:4,6

The calling and testing of these during the present age, however, is in preparation for the work of the Kingdom Age, when salvation from death, and restoration to life on the earth as humans will be offered to all mankind. Peter describes this as the "restitution of all things." But this opportunity for restitution must await the completion of the present Gospel Age work of calling and preparing those who will share with Christ in the Millennial Age work of extending restitution opportunities to mankind in general.—Acts 3:19-21

Editorial Committee

Dawn Bible Students Association ■

"NOW there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the LORD's Christ. . . . And when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, 'LORD, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared in the presence of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel'." —Luke 2:25-32, RSV

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Divine Plan Makes True Sense

Dear Friends: Thank you for sending me literature and *The Dawn* several weeks ago. Again, thank you. I have been unemployed for 88 days as of today, and have no income. My oldest son and his family live with me, so I live off their goodness at present. I am studying with Bible Students here in Texas at their monthly meeting. A brother of that group takes me there as he comes through my town. They are a small meeting, but they have the truth and are fine people to teach me more fully of God's Plan. Most of my life has been spent in other Christian faiths. My wife died last year, and things have been hard and, of course, I miss her very much. According to some, my wife has no opportunity of everlasting life; to others she is 'in heaven'. Only the divine plan of the ages makes true sense to me, and fills me with hope for my wife and the whole

world of mankind. Blessed be the name of the LORD! I thank you for all you do for others in your work in the LORD'S vineyard. God continue to bless you. Sincerely.---TX

A Conscientious Objector in a Polish Prison:

Dearly beloved in Christ: I greet you in the name of our dear Redeemer, Jesus Christ. I must admit that even though they took away my liberty in this prison I thank the LORD that my faith and hope has not faltered. I am writing you a few words and am glad to do this in spite of the difficult circumstances that I find myself in. There are seventy of us in this cell, so you can imagine what it is like. Nevertheless I can see the LORD'S care and I am rejoicing in him. Many thanks for the literature and for your love and prayers and I wish you the LORD's blessing.---
Poland' ■

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Speakers listed below are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Dept., East Rutherford, NJ 07073. Visits are arranged whenever possible.

M. Balko

Pittsburgh, PA December 10

The listings in this schedule have been arranged by local ecclesias cooperating with the Dawn:

C. Chandler

Phoenix, AZ December 29-30

N. Kasperowicz

Middletown, NY December 17

J. Panucci

Phoenix, AZ December 29-31

G. Passios

Claymont, De December 17

P. Cooper

Phoenix, AZ December 29-31

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CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed at the request of the classes who sponsor them. In order to ensure your convention being accurately placed in these columns, please make your request IN WRITING two or three months before the date of the convention: Convention Listing, Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

PHOENIX, AZ, December 29, 30,31; January 1, 1996---Wyndham Garden Hotel, 427 N. 44th St. Phone: (602) 220-4400. Contact: E. Bachorski, 13223 Palmwood Dr., Sun City West, AZ 85375 for information and reservations:

Phone: (602) 546-0430

or, if no answer:

J. Bieniak, Phone: (602) 584-0943

CHICAGO, IL, December 30,31; January 1, 1996---Elk Grove H.S., 500 W. Elk Grove Blvd. Elk Grove Village, IL 60007. Phones: (708) 956-2956, (815) 922-2028. For further information, write: Mrs. Joy Kandel, 802 Fairmont Ct., Des Plaines, IL 60018. Phone: (708) 298-6579

ST. PETERSBURG, FL, January 14---Majestic Park Homes, 8300 Seminole Blvd. (Alt. 19) Seminole, FL. Contact: Stella Slavich, 3847 Tarpon Pointe Circle, Palm Harbor, FL 34684. Phone: (813) 786-3795

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA CONVENTION, February 10,11---Cape Coral Masonic Temple, 244 Santa Barbara Blvd, Cape Coral, FL 33910. For information, con-

tact: Brother Ed Futchkar, 3460 North Key Drive, #306E, North Fort Myers, FL 33903. Phone: (941) 997-3008

SACRAMENTO, CA, February 16-18---The Beverly Garland Hotel, 1780 Tribute Road, Sacramento. *Cut-off date for reservations, January 31, 1996.* Please send your reservations directly to Betty Lankford, 6000 19th Ave., Sacramento, CA 95820. Phone: (916) 457-0569

ROCKLAND BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, February 26---Green Meadow Waldorf School, Spring Valley, NY. For programs write: Mrs. Russell Shallice, 1041 Johnston Drive, Watchung, NJ 07060

FLORIDA BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, March 2,3,4---Holiday Inn, 304 West Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL 32801 (Route 50. & I-4, Exit 41). For reservations, request our special convention rate before February 1. Phone toll-free (800) 523-3405. For other information, contact: Stephen Jeuck, 471 Kentia Rd., Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 834-7592

JOSEPH and his (Jesus) mother "marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." --- Luke 2:33-35