

The Dawn

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Highlights of Dawn

The Bible Versus Tradition Series—Part 2

Judgment Day Favors for Sinners

“Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the Day of Judgment than for that city.”
— Matthew 10:14,15

THE Bible clearly teaches that there is to be a future Judgment Day for the world of mankind, but tradition has attached many unreasonable and even repulsive theories to the Bible's teachings on this subject. In the minds of many it is considered to be a day of doom, when nearly all mankind will be consigned to an eternity of torture, while a favored few will be snatched away to heaven, where, within its pearly gates, they will sing hymns and play harps forever.

From the standpoint of tradition there is actually no good reason why there should be a future Day of Judgment, for supposedly the eternal destiny of every individual is fixed at death. Believers, tradition says, who are worthy, go immediately to heaven when they die, while unbelievers are consigned to a hell of torment. But tradition cannot entirely ignore the teachings of the Bible, and since the Bible clearly reveals that there is to be a future Judgment Day, an effort had to be made by the creed-makers to fit it into their theology.

Naturally this makes for confusion. In the first place, the Judgment Day of the creeds is visualized as being only twenty-

four hours in length. In a symbolic Judgment Day scene presented in Revelation 20:12, the dead, "small and great," are shown standing before God. This was given a literal interpretation—tradition seeing all the believers, who at death were judged worthy of going to heaven, brought back from heaven, and all the sinners, who had been condemned to hell-fire, brought back from hell, all to pass before the judgment seat of God in a twenty-four hour period.

Obviously no good purpose could be served by this. We could not imagine that any mistakes could have been made in the decisions which were reached at death. These decisions, according to tradition, place the dead into one of two classes, consigning them either to heaven or to hell. There is, of course, the Catholic tradition concerning an intermediate state of purgatory. But, then, tradition never is too concerned about reason. Nor is it our obligation to try to harmonize this view with the teachings of the Bible. As with most of the theories which have come down to us through the medium of tradition, this one also is unreasonable, and without actual support in the Bible.

More than a Sentence

Tradition is wrong in limiting the meaning of the word judgment to the passing of sentence. Just as a judge in court first hears the evidence for or against the one on trial before passing sentence, so those who are sentenced before the bar of divine justice are first given an opportunity to prove their worthiness or unworthiness of God's favor.

Our first example of the operation of this principle is the case of Adam. In Romans 5:16 the Apostle Paul speaks of judgment coming upon all through Adam—a judgment to condemnation. While the sentence which came upon Adam—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return"—was the culmination of his judgment, prior to this he had been given an opportunity to demonstrate his loyalty to God's law. Failing in this, he was sentenced to death.—Gen. 3:19

It is important to notice in connection with Adam's judgment day that he was given full information concerning the LORD's requirements. He was not in ignorance of the issue involved. Here is another important principle which operates in all God's dealings with his intelligent creatures. They are never on trial before him without knowing it, and without the necessary information concerning his will for them. No one will fail to receive the grace of God because of ignorance, and no one will attain salvation without the necessary knowledge concerning Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, and the will of God for those who accept this gift of his love.

Anclents Proved Worthy

When Adam sinned and began to die, it meant that all his progeny were imperfect, and therefore under condemnation to death. Nevertheless, from Adam's day to the first advent of Jesus, there were individuals who demonstrated their faith in God and their loyalty to him and to his cause. The first of these was Abel. The last, of record, was John the Baptist.

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The Apostle Paul mentions many of these faithful ancients. (Heb. 11) He points out the difficulties they encountered in proving their devotion to God. Paul explains that they endured the trials which came upon them that they might prove worthy of a "better resurrection." Paul speaks of their being made "perfect" in the resurrection, meaning, evidently, that when these faithful ones are awakened from the sleep of death they will be perfect human beings, and therefore be fully qualified to conduct the work of God which will then be assigned to them in connection with the messianic kingdom.—vss. 35, 39, 40

While these Ancient Worthies were not given a *full* understanding of the plans and purposes of God for the restoration of the human race to life through Jesus, the Redeemer, God did favor them with sufficient knowledge upon which to decide whether or not they would devote themselves fully to him, regardless of the cost. Even Abel knew of God's statement that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. (Gen. 3:15) From this Abel would have known that God had some plan for overcoming the havoc which had been wrought in Eden by the Devil, and he wanted to be on God's side and share in that future triumph of righteousness.

In Jude 14 we read that "Enoch, the seventh from Adam," prophesied concerning the coming of the Lord to execute judgment. This indicates that Enoch was given enough understanding upon which to base his decision to enable him to take his stand on the LORD's side. With the passage of time, the plan of God unfolded more and more. One after another of the holy prophets was caused to testify concerning this plan, giving the Ancient Worthies a definite basis for their faith and an inspiring incentive to faithfulness.

The Ancient Worthies

We might say, therefore, that the entire period from the fall of man in Eden until the first advent of Christ was a judgment day during which those faithful servants of old proved their wor-

thiness of being made "princes in all the earth." (Ps. 45:16) True, when they are awakened from the sleep of death and given perfect human bodies, as the Scriptures indicate will be the case, they will need to continue their faithfulness in order to attain everlasting life. But so far as their past is concerned, they did receive a good report through faith. They passed their trial successfully.—Heb. 11:39

Beginning with the giving of the Law to Israel by Moses, the nation of Israel entered upon a special day of judgment. Through the Law, as epitomized in the Ten Commandments, the will of God was expressed for the Israelites. If they could keep the Law they were promised life. "He that doeth those things shall live." (Rom. 10:5; Matt. 19:16,17) For the nation, faithfulness to the Law would have resulted in an honored position among nations as a priestly nation of teachers and blessers. They would have become a kingdom nation.—Exod. 19:3-6

The LORD granted the people of Israel a long period of probation in which to prove their worthiness or unworthiness of the blessings promised under the Law, but they failed. None gained life under the Law.

Paul explains: "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." (Rom. 5:14) Adam's sin was individual and willful, but his progeny shared in the condemnation regardless of their individual responsibility. But, as Paul indicates, so far as the Israelites were concerned the standards of the Law placed them under a greater responsibility.

The promise that if obedient to the Law they would become a kingdom of priests and "an holy nation," was made to the Israelites as a nation. In this they failed to qualify, and Jesus said to the representative leaders of the nation, that the kingdom would be taken from them and given to a nation "bringing forth fruits thereof," or the "fruits" expected. (Matt. 21:43) Later the Apostle Peter identified this new nation to which the kingdom was given.

He wrote: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: . . . which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."—I Pet. 2:9,10

The Present Judgment Day

The Scriptures reveal that with the first advent of Christ another judgment day began. Jesus himself was the first one involved. Jesus came into the world to accomplish the divine purpose of redeeming mankind from death and of restoring the willing and obedient to life. But to serve the divine cause in this manner, Jesus had to be tested.

In Psalm 40:7, Jesus is quoted as saying, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." While this translation is not too clear, the thought is, as stated by Jesus, that he had come to do all that had been previously written, or prophesied, concerning him. And this, as Jesus said, he delighted to do, for God's law was within his heart, a very part of his being.

As prophesied in the Old Testament Scriptures, the divine will for Jesus was that he was to sacrifice his flesh, his humanity, in death for the sins of the world. This he willingly and gladly did, and in doing it he proved his worthiness of the sacred responsibility his Heavenly Father had placed in him. Had he been unfaithful he would have lost all, even life itself.

That Jesus was severely tested is brought to our attention by the incident in which Peter urged him not to go to Jerusalem, where his enemies were lying in wait to arrest him and put him to death. To this Jesus replied, "Get thee behind me, Satan." He added the explanation that anyone who took up his cross to follow him, and then sought to save his life, would lose it. (Mark 8:31-36) Jesus knew that since he had covenanted to lay down his life for the sins of the world, any holding back to save his life, as

Peter had suggested, would mean unfaithfulness. This would result in the loss of his own life, in the sense that he would not be raised from the dead.

It is written of Jesus that he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. (Heb. 5:8) Actually, Jesus had always been obedient to his Heavenly Father. In his prehuman existence he had served his Father faithfully, and the Father was delighted with him. But not until he came to earth and encountered the prejudices, the jealousies, the hatreds of the fallen human race, as faithfully he served in the face of opposition engendered by these blighting manifestations of sin, did Jesus know, experimentally, what it meant to be obedient in suffering. This was the great lesson he learned during the three and one-half years of his earthly ministry. And Jesus proved faithful!

Jesus' Followers Tested

Beginning with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the followers of Jesus have been on probation. They have the opportunity of proving worthy not only to live with Christ, but also to reign with him in his thousand-year kingdom. (II Tim. 2:12) As with the people of God in previous ages, these also have been enlightened with respect to the will of God for them. They have been invited to prove their worthiness of reigning in the kingdom of Christ. Thus Jesus said that it is given to them to know the mysteries of the kingdom.—Matt. 13:11

Through the acceptance of Jesus as their Redeemer, and upon the basis of faith in his shed blood, the faithful followers of Jesus surrender themselves to God, and to the doing of his will. The merit of Christ's shed blood releases them from the original condemnation to death, and they now have the privilege of laying down their lives in acceptable sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1) At the same time they are on trial for life. Paul speaks of their patience in well-doing by which they "seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life."—Rom. 2:7

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As in the case of Jesus, the trial of his followers is a difficult, exacting one. Peter wrote, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—I Pet. 4:12,13

The Apostle Peter understood full well that the fiery trials experienced by the followers of Jesus is in reality their judgment experience. A few verses further on in this chapter he wrote, "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear!"—I Pet. 4:17,18

'If the righteous scarcely be saved' is an expression which denotes the difficulties undergone by the followers of Jesus in this age—those who are laying down their lives sacrificially as Jesus did, proving their faithfulness. But there is a compensating reward. To these Jesus said, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) And again, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. 3:21

The World's Judgment Day

As we have seen, Peter explained that the judgment, or trial, of the Gospel Age "house of God" is a very exacting, difficult one, and he asks, "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" The very few who are willfully ungodly after having been fully enlightened, will not of course appear in any future judgment for they thus prove themselves unworthy of life. But the unenlightened, sin-cursed, and dying race of mankind will appear in the world's future judgment, which is a "day," or period in the divine plan—a thousand years in length.—II Pet. 3:7,8

Peter described that future Day of Judgment as one of perdition, or destruction, of ungodly men. This is in contrast with the present time, when all are dying, irrespective of whether they are righteously inclined or otherwise. But the apostle also explains that God is "long-suffering . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (II Pet. 3:9) This is why a thousand years has been set aside in the divine plan for the enlightenment of the people, and for giving all a full opportunity to repent, obey, and live upon the basis of that enlightenment.

In Paul's sermon to the worldly-wise Athenians, he spoke of the ignorance of the world, as represented in the many gods worshiped by the Athenians; and he explained that God had "winked" at this ignorance, meaning that he had not held and did not hold responsible those who are unenlightened. "But now," Paul further explained, "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts 17:30,31

The Apostle Paul's statement that now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent does not imply that this command has as yet actually reached all men. He is merely calling attention to the fact that, beginning with the first advent of Jesus, the plan of God moved forward. Through the Gospel, God was now call-

ing individuals to repent and to take up their cross to follow Jesus. This message is not limited to any one nation or race of people; but as Jesus commissioned his disciples, it has been taken by them to all nations.—Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 1:7,8

“Assurance”

Paul speaks of “assurance” in connection with the coming Day of Judgment. What assurance could possibly come from the tradition that the Judgment Day is ‘doomsday’ for the vast majority of the human race? The fact that all men, as they learn about the coming Judgment Day, are assured by this knowledge, suggests that it will be a time of blessing when they will have an opportunity to accept the provisions of life made for them through Christ, obey the laws of his kingdom, and live.

The work of that future Judgment Day will be based upon enlightenment. The Prophet David wrote, “The LORD . . . cometh . . . to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.” (Ps. 96:13) The Prophet Isaiah wrote, that when the LORD’s judgments are abroad in the earth, “the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”—Isa. 26:9

Jesus explained the source of the information which will reach the world during the future Day of Judgment. He said, “If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not.” To this Jesus added, “The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” Jesus explained that the words or commandments he had spoken were not his, that they had been given to him by his Father. And then he said, “I know that His commandment is life everlasting.”—John 12:47-50

Tradition would have us believe that those who hear the teachings of Jesus in this life, and for one reason or another do not accept and obey them, are judged unworthy of heaven, and forthwith consigned to eternal torture. But Jesus did not agree with this tradition. He said that he did not judge unbelievers, but that his word would judge them in the “last day.” This last day is simply the final age in God’s great plan of salvation.

The meaning of Jesus' words is obvious. Those who do not now accept the Gospel are not on trial for life. They are not now being judged. But the truth of God's Word will be made available in the last day. All the hindrances to belief will be removed, and then the commandments of God will constitute the basis of judgment for all mankind. Those who then accept and obey will, as Jesus explained, receive everlasting life, not in heaven with Jesus, but on earth as humans.

The Opening of the Books

This is the reassuring truth that is brought to our attention in Revelation 20:12. It is a beautiful, symbolic lesson revealing God's purpose to enlighten the people with his truth during the future Judgment Day of the world. John wrote, "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

Tradition tells us that the books which are opened in this wonderful text contain the records of the past lives of all humanity. The tradition is that these books will be opened to ascertain the worthiness or unworthiness of each individual to spend eternity in heaven, the unworthy being sent to torment. How crude and how cruel tradition can sometimes be!

This tradition is seen at once to be wrong, because the text mentions the "works" of those being judged as separate from the things written in the books—they are judged "out of the things written in the books, according to their works." Jesus stated that his "word," the "commandment of God," would judge the people in the "last day". Since the people are judged out of the things written in the books, then the opening of these books must symbolize the revelation to the people of God's truth, his commandments, upon the basis of which they are judged.

And this judgment is also according to their works—not their past works, for those who are awakened from death and

come up in the world's judgment are known by God not to have been worthy of everlasting life. Whether it has been in past ages, or in the present, all—except the elect classes who have proved faithful in the face of great difficulty—have continued under condemnation, the divine intention being to give them their opportunity when awakened from the sleep of death.

Book of Life

The text speaks of “another book” being opened, “the book of life.” The complete thought set forth in symbol in this text is that when the dead are awakened they will, through Christ, have a standing before God. They will be enlightened, as symbolized by the opening of the books. As their works are brought into conformity with the will of God as revealed by the open books, their names will be enrolled in the book of life. They will no longer be subject to Adamic condemnation, but upon the basis of their individual acceptance of and obedience to the truth concerning Jesus as made known by the opened books, they will be on the way to eternal life.

During that Day of Judgment those who do not then prove worthy to have their names enrolled in the book of life, will be remanded to death. This is called “second death,” and symbolized by the “lake of fire.” Fire is one of the most destructive elements known to man. The Apostle Peter states this truth plainly, saying, “It shall come to pass that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.”—Acts 3:23

Enlightenment Necessary

In our beginning text we find Jesus saying that it would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment than it would be for those who rejected the Gospel as presented to them by the disciples. The point involved here is the measure of enlightenment. The people of Jesus' day were more enlightened than those who lived in the ancient cities of Abraham's day, hence they were more responsible.

The Scriptures do not teach that anyone will be tortured forever for failing to believe and obey the Gospel. The Scriptures do not teach that anyone will fail to have an opportunity in the future judgment, unless in this life his rejection of divine grace has been based upon a comprehensive understanding of the issues involved, and has been wholly willful.

While it will be more tolerable for the Sodomites in the Day of Judgment than for the Israelites who rejected the message given them by Jesus and his disciples, even these are to be wonderfully blessed. The Apostle Paul explained concerning them that "there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn

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away ungodliness from Jacob." He stated that this is in keeping with a promise made to the nation of Israel concerning a "new covenant," in connection with which their sins would be removed.—Rom. 11:26-32; Jer. 31:31-34

The ultimate and full result of this will be, as Paul explained, that "all Israel shall be saved." Paul says concerning the Israelites that God has counted them all in unbelief, "that he might have mercy upon all." Yes, there will be mercy for unbelievers in the Judgment Day!

There will be mercy for the Sodomites for they were ignorant of God and his will; there will be mercy for the Israelites because they lacked full understanding, and were blinded by their prejudices; there will be mercy for all who have died without having had a full opportunity to know and serve God. The knowledge of the LORD will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea, and he will judge the people with his truth.—Isa. 11:9; Ps. 96:13



Growth in Fruits and Graces of the Spirit

WHILE the heights of perfection cannot be reached so long as we have these imperfect bodies, there should be in every child of God very perceptible and continuous growth in the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit; and each step gained should be considered but the stepping-stone to higher attainments. If there is no perceptible growth into the likeness of God, or if there is a listless standstill, it is a cause for alarm. Let us constantly keep before our eyes the model which the Lord Jesus set for our example—the complete fulfillment of the will of God, in which the whole Law was kept blamelessly. Let us follow his steps of righteousness and self-sacrifice as nearly as a full measure of loving zeal and faithfulness and loyalty to God will enable us to do, and we shall have a blessed sense of the divine approval now, and the glorious reward of divine favor in due time.



International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR APRIL 3

Victory Over Death

KEY VERSE: "Go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead."—Matthew 28:7

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Matthew 27:62-66

THE Christian world at this season of the year professes to believe that Jesus was raised from the dead, but because it believes that nothing has occurred since to indicate that anything is to come out of that miracle which will advantageously affect the experiences of this suffering and dying world, it exercises little faith that such will ever be the case.

There is not much in the world today to suggest the thought of the resurrection—rather, it is a time of slaughter and destruction. The grim spectre of death is hanging over practically every home in the world. These very conditions, however, emphasize the need of a resurrection, and give real point to the promises of God which assure us of hope beyond the grave.

The resurrection hope set forth in the Bible is centered in the fact that Jesus, the world's Redeemer, was himself raised from the dead, and with him Gethsemane and

Calvary preceded the joys of the resurrection. With Jesus, a miracle was performed in which God used his mighty power to raise him from the dead.

If we can believe in the miracle of Jesus' resurrection, and can believe that the God who raised him from the dead will fulfill his promises to raise all mankind from death, then the resurrection of Jesus, commemorated again this year, should mean more to us than ever before.

The sense of God's message is that he will use his miracle-working power to make an end of human suffering and death. The resurrection of Jesus is one of God's greatest guarantees of this fact. Actually, the resurrection of Jesus was but the beginning of a whole series of miracles which, before they are all performed, will see Edenic perfection and happiness restored worldwide, and mankind restored to life upon the earth, en-

joying peace, prosperity, and health forever.

This is the blessed assurance that the Bible gives us over and over again! It is clearly set forth when the Apostle Paul emphasizes the importance of Jesus' resurrection in connection with the hope of the church, as well as the hope of the world, pointing out to us that if Christ were not raised from the dead, then our faith is vain, and they who have fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

As already noted, however, the resurrection of Jesus was but the beginning of a series of miracles on behalf of mankind. Paul says, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." The term 'firstfruits' indicates that others are to be raised from the dead, that there are to be 'after-fruits'. These after-fruits of the resurrection will eventually include all of the sin-cursed and dying world, redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Paul says, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." And again, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." This shows that the work of redemption through Christ is to be as far-reaching as the effects of the fall through father Adam.

The apostle, in explaining God's program of resurrection, indicates that there is a certain and definite order in connection therewith. He says, "Every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Thus we see that while all in Christ are to be made alive, it was not God's plan that this be accomplished all in one moment. There is an orderly sequence in God's resurrection program, beginning with Christ the firstfruits, and concluding with the resurrection of those who become Christ's during the thousand years of his presence.

The term firstfruits, as used by the apostle, includes the church of Christ as well as Jesus himself. The prophecies indicate that already we are living in the dawning of Messiah's second presence. The first manifestation of that presence, so far as the world is concerned, is in a great time of trouble, during which the kingdoms of this world are overthrown, preparatory to the reign of Christ.

We are witnessing this today, which means that we can look forward into the near future with confidence, realizing that the power which raised Jesus from the dead is soon to be used again. This fact should bring us much comfort. □

The Disciples' Commission

KEY VERSE: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world [age]."—Matthew 28:19,20

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6:24-34

THIS commission to his disciples contained some of the last words Jesus spoke before he ascended into heaven. Earlier, Jesus sent his disciples into the ministry, but restricted the field of their activity. They were not to go to the Gentiles, nor to any city of the Samaritans. (Matt. 10:5,6) But now these restrictions were removed. They were to continue their work among the Israelites in Jerusalem and in all Judea, but in addition were to spread the Gospel of the kingdom to other nations, even to the "uttermost part of the earth."

Actually there were still three and one-half years of exclusive opportunity for the Jews to hear the Gospel before it could go to the Gentiles.

But Jesus did not mention this detail when he gave his disciples the commission to go into the uttermost part of the earth with the message.

They were to begin in Jerusalem and in Judea, and he knew that in the natural course of events the short remaining period of special favor to the Jews would have expired before they were able to do any witnessing among the Gentiles, and this proved to be the case.

Cornelius was the first Gentile convert, but he did not hear the Gospel because of any effort the disciples were making to witness to the Gentiles. Indeed, it required a miraculous intervention of divine providence to induce Peter to go to the home of Cornelius and preach the Gospel to him. (Acts 10:9-48) Peter visited Cornelius' home, and he and all his household accepted Christ. From that time forward Gentiles came freely into the church and became fellow-heirs of the promises with the Jews.

Many have made the mistake of supposing that this worldwide proc-

lamation of the Gospel was for the purpose of converting the world and preparing all mankind to go to heaven. But this is not true. James informs us concerning Cornelius, "how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14) This people for his name are the sons of God who will be united with Christ as the divine ruling family during the Millennial Age.

The work of God in the earth during this present Gospel Age is to reach these through a general proclamation of the truth, that through their acceptance of and obedience to it they might be prepared to live and reign with Christ.

The Apostle Paul wrote that the preaching of the Gospel to many would seem foolish. "After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (I Cor. 1:21) Here the apostle is declaring that what the world calls 'foolishness', God is willing to use for our salvation. To worldly-minded people, the message that salvation is based upon faith in Christ's death and resurrection may appear absurd, especially is this so to those who believe that man is gradually saving himself through the processes of evolution.

The importance of witnessing for the Gospel is emphasized in Romans 10:10, where Paul says that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." This would indicate that simply to believe the Gospel oneself and not endeavor to proclaim it to others, would not lead to salvation.

But, as Paul points out, in order for one to believe on Christ and accept the Gospel, it must first be made known to him—"How can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14) Thus, from two standpoints, we see the importance of witnessing. It is essential to our own salvation, and in the divine plan of salvation, God has made it the means whereby his saving grace through Christ and the Gospel is made known to others. The apostle then quotes from the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 52:7, where the messengers of the Gospel are shown proclaiming "good tidings."

Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Who would be ashamed of such a message! It glorifies God and reveals his great love for all mankind. To know such a message, and to have it in one's heart, is to have a burning desire to tell it out to all mankind!

God's Living Word

KEY VERSE: "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."—*Heb. 1:1,2*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Hebrews 1:1-5; 2:1-5, 9,10*

NOT many people believe that God has ever spoken to them. No doubt this is because they have not recognized the agencies through which he has communicated.

Moses, as a leading spokesman for God, tells us how God first talked to man, saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [fill] the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living creature that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28) Here we have the voice of God explaining that his purpose in the creation of man was that he might fill the earth with his offspring, and have dominion over the earth.

God's voice was heard by Adam with respect to a forbidden tree. He was warned against partaking of it, and informed by God's voice that if he partook he would surely die. (Gen. 2:17) Here again, the voice of God is heard to speak definitely and

understandably. It revealed that the penalty for disobeying God would be death. Thousands of years later the voice of God concurred, through the Apostle Paul, saying, "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23) Soon another voice was heard in Eden, the voice of "that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan" (Rev. 20:2), and this voice said to mother Eve, "Ye shall not surely die."—Gen. 3:4

The ensuing transgression of our first parents did not thwart the Creator's purpose concerning his human creatures. Thousands of years later the Prophet Isaiah wrote, "Thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited."—Isa. 45:18

God spoke to Abraham and told him that it was his purpose to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen.

12:3; 18:18; 22:15-18) This promise was recorded in His Word for others to hear. If we receive these words and believe that God intends to bless all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham, then we have heard the voice of God speaking to us, even as Abraham did.

More than two thousand years later, Jesus was born. Paul identifies Jesus as the "seed" of Abraham. His birth was hailed by angels as being "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people," all the families of the earth.—Luke 2:10; Gal. 3:16

Our text declares that God has since spoken to us through this Son. Jesus explained that the words which he spoke were not his, but the Father's. (John 8:28; 12:49; 17:8) Much was revealed by God speaking through him. In his conversation with the young rich man who asked what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus said, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." To his disciples he enjoined, "Take up the cross, and follow me."—Matt. 19:21; Mark 10:21

This was the voice of God, explaining that those at this time who desire eternal life must sacrifice all their earthly possessions, and offer

themselves to serve God as Jesus had. This means following him into death. Paul explained this point further when he wrote, "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

Jesus explained that those who take this step will have treasure in heaven. Here was a new thought to Jesus' apostles. God's voice through the holy prophets spoke mainly of marvelous earthly blessings or treasures. It was not until Jesus came that a heavenly hope was made known to God's people.

These hear God's voice through Jesus saying, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) They also hear him say, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. 3:21) And again, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations."—Rev. 2:26

And how we rejoice to know, even as God's voice has proclaimed, that all the families of the earth are to be blessed with restitution during that kingdom in which, if faithful, we will live and reign with Christ!

God's Promise of Rest

KEY VERSE: "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."—Hebrews 3:14

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 3:12-19

TO EMPHASIZE the point of this text, Paul reminds us of the sad plight of the Israelites in their wilderness journey, who lost the beginning of their confidence in God, and, as a result, were unable to enter into his rest—their carcasses falling in the wilderness for forty long years.

At the beginning, the Israelites were started out for the Promised Land, ready to accept the deliverance which God was offering to them. Accordingly, they met at Rameses, and from there they journeyed to Succoth. The name Succoth means 'booths', and is a good reminder of the fact that their journey toward Canaan, while giving to them liberty and freedom from servitude in Egypt, was, on the other hand, a call to them for the self-denial of many of the conveniences and necessities which their homes in Egypt undoubtedly supplied.

As spiritual Israelites, traveling on in the narrow way, we do not look to *material* sources for our

protection, but to what we might call the 'little booth' over which God watches. And we have the assurance that he neither slumbers nor sleeps. His precious promises of grace and protection for every time of need furnish a blessed canopy between us and the storms and fiery trials which otherwise would overwhelm us.

The typical Israelites traveled on under the canopy of heaven, which, to us in our experiences, might well remind us of the boundlessness of God's grace with which we are surrounded and under which we have our protection and blessing. This grace must not be hindered or handicapped. No earth-born cloud should be permitted to come between us and our God.

There are times when, in the providences of God, we can do nothing to extricate ourselves from a difficult situation. At such times, we must put our trust wholly in God, realizing that he is the one who is able to bring us through.

God had started to lead them in a direction more northward, toward Etham, where crossing out of Egypt would seem relatively easy. Suddenly they were directed to turn southward. This course seems to have been inconsistent, for instead of increasing the distance between themselves and the domain of Pharaoh, it shortened it. Not only so, but they were increasing the barrier between themselves and the Promised Land. Their course from Etham brought them down to Pihahiroth, which means 'where sedge [sawgrass] grows'.

This was truly a place where, according to the flesh, their hearts would fail them for discouragement—a place where, instead of finding their deliverance from Egypt complete, they found themselves in an apparently worse condition than when they first undertook the journey. Did they then remember the God who had already done so much for them? No! They murmured and cried. They saw only the Red Sea before them, and the Egyptians behind them. They saw no way of escape, because they neglected to put their trust in God.

The zeal with which the natural Israelites began their wilderness journey did not continue. In this we have a very vivid illustration of what may occur in our own individ-

ual experiences if we do not carefully watch ourselves. There is the possibility, yea, the danger, of losing our confidence in God. Perhaps the LORD may lead us, as it were, to the Red Sea, where every visible means of escape seems to be cut off. At such times do we fear and quake at the apparent impending doom? We should not, because it is here that God is afforded his great opportunity to give us deliverance. It is through such experiences that we learn the much-needed lesson that deliverance is not of ourselves, but of God. It is at such times that he says to us, as he did to Israel of old through his servant Moses, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD."—Exod. 14:13

To have full faith in God means that we will trust him under all circumstances. It is only thus that we can enter into the rest which is provided for us by faith in Christ Jesus.

His promises give us the assurance that no matter what may happen, all things *are* working together for our good. Thus, in anticipation of the final end of the way, and the Canaan of rest that will be found there, we can, even now, amidst the strife and the difficulty of the way, give thanks to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Seed, Part I
Genesis, Chapters 1-5

Joy—Tragedy—Hope

“I HAVE gotten a man from the LORD.” (Gen. 4:1) Thus did mother Eve announce the birth of her firstborn son, whom she named Cain. The name Cain means ‘Acquired’. It probably seemed to Eve that at long last she had acquired a token of favor from the Creator, a measure of compensation for the heartbreaks both she and Adam must have experienced since that all too brief period of joy they had shared together in Eden. That was a happiness which had been made rich and full because of the constant realization that the Creator was their friend, their Lifegiver, and the fountain of all the myriad blessings with which they were surrounded.

Eve was, no doubt, especially sensitive to the adverse circumstances which had come upon this first family, for she would remember that she was the one who had taken the first step which led away from their Creator, to the loss of his friendship, and of the provisions of life which he had made for them. We can well imagine that she and Adam would discuss the sequence of events which followed each other in quick succession as a result of their yielding to the Tempter in disobeying the law of their Maker.

That Garden Home

Can we wonder that more than once Adam’s mind turned longingly back to those blessed seasons of fellowship he had enjoyed with his Maker, and with ever-increasing regret for his own wrong course which had led to the loss of divine favor. Adam had been created in the “image of God,” which, among other

things, means that he had the ability to appreciate and enjoy the blessings with which his Creator had surrounded him. It also meant that he had been endowed with the ability to know right from wrong, and that he had the power of reflection and could look back upon his wrongdoing with a bitter sense of guilt.

The story of the provision God made for Adam is told in a few words: "The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil."—Gen. 2:8,9

The poem reminds us, "Only God can make a tree," but just think of all the variety of trees which he has made! In Eden there was every beautiful tree that bore delicious fruit for nourishment. We need not be too literal in our understanding of this sweeping statement. It is generally agreed that the Garden of Eden was located somewhere in the general area which is now known as Iraq, and that it seems evident that the phrase, 'every tree', is a reference to the varieties that were native to that particular part of the earth.

However, what a panorama of beauty must have been on display in Eden, and all designed by the Creator for the enjoyment of the first creature on earth who had been created in his own image. There were also trees in Eden to provide food for our first parents. But it is significant that the trees which were designed for beauty are first mentioned. God desired that his creatures should not only live, but also that they should enjoy life through their appreciation of the Creator's handiwork.

The continued enjoyment of life was properly made dependent upon obedience to the Creator. He chose a simple arrangement by which his creatures could demonstrate their obedience. That arrangement was to forbid eating the fruit which grew on a certain tree of Eden. God said to Adam: "Of every tree of

the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—vss. 16,17

Adam was given some time to acquaint himself with all the various lower animals over which he had been given dominion, and to give them names. Among all these, there was none suitable to be a companion for him. “The LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him.” Then came the creation of Eve, brought about in such a manner that Adam observed, She is “bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. . . . Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”—vss. 18-25

Adam was now no longer alone. We can imagine, in part at least, his ecstasy of joy in having this beautiful creature on his own plane of life to share the blessings of Eden with him. His own experiences up to this point had been limited, but they were rich with meaning, and blessed by the realization that he enjoyed the favor and love of his Creator.

Surely Adam escorted Eve to the many beauty spots of Eden, and together they would sample the delectable and life-giving food which the LORD God had caused to grow in this sublime home which he had provided for them. At the same time Adam would be sure to tell his beautiful companion of the one restriction with respect to the fruit of the garden which the Creator had placed upon them. And telling Eve about this, he also told her that the penalty for disobedience would be death.

Doubt

It was after this, and quite unexpectedly, that seeds of doubt concerning the motives and the integrity of the Creator were planted in the mind of Eve. This was done by the great adversary of God and of men, Satan, the Devil, who communicated to Eve through the ‘serpent’. First he asked her a question, “Hath God

said, "Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" To this Eve replied, "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."—Gen. 3:1-3

It is evident that Adam had instructed his helpmeet very thoroughly concerning the forbidden tree, cautioning her to be very careful not to even seem to disobey. But this did not prove sufficient to avail against the vicious attack of Satan, who replied, "Ye shall not surely die." Thus Satan, in effect, charged God with being a liar when he told Adam that death would result from partaking of the forbidden fruit.—vs. 4

Eve yielded to this subtle influence, and "gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." (vs. 6) Suddenly their peace and joy, their blessedness of companionship with each other and their fellowship with the Creator was lost. Fear filled their hearts, and they "hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden." When the LORD called to Adam, he frankly admitted that he was afraid and had hidden himself. Then followed God's sentence of death upon Adam:

"Because thou hast harkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—vss 7, 17-19

Expulsion from Eden

All those trees of Eden which were pleasant to the sight, and good for food, were no longer to be enjoyed by this perfect pair who had been created in the image of God; for they were driven out of the garden, out into the unfinished earth to die. Had

they been permitted to remain in Eden, as the LORD explained, they could have continued to eat of the life-giving fruit of its trees, and would not have grown old and died.

What a background upon which our first parents could reflect—first of delight; and then of tragedy! Many times their thoughts must have reverted to the lost Eden, and they would talk over the various details of their experiences. Surely they must have remembered and often remarked about the strange statement the LORD made to the ‘serpent’, who, more realistically, was none other than Satan, the Devil. Probably they could still hear the LORD saying to this deceptive and malicious enemy:

“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.”—vs. 15

While this statement was vague, it did speak of a ‘seed’, an offspring, which the LORD would use to bruise the head of that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan. (Rev. 20:2) This seed was referred to as masculine—the seed of the serpent was to bruise **his** ‘heel’.

The passing of years is seldom accounted for in the brief narratives furnished us in the Bible, and the birth of female children is almost never recorded except in a very general way. In Genesis 5:3-5 we are informed that all the days of Adam were 930 years, and that during this time he “begat sons and daughters.” It is quite possible that one or more of these daughters were born to Adam and Eve before they had any sons. If so, this might well account for the expression of joy on Eve’s part when her first son was born—“I have gotten a man from the LORD.” In reflecting upon the past, Adam and Eve might well have believed that the birth of Cain, their first son, was in some way related to the LORD’s statement concerning the seed. Soon after, Abel was born, and the joy of Adam and Eve must have been great!

While driven from Eden and its life-giving trees, this first human pair, having been created perfect, and in the image of

God, still revered their Creator, and held in high esteem all that he had said. They had already learned that he was true to his word—that having forewarned them of the penalty of disobedience, the penalty was already in process of being inflicted upon them. Already the elements of death were working in their formerly perfect bodies.

Under these circumstances they would certainly be alert to see any possible ray of hope which might have been contained in the Creator's statement to the serpent, and surely he had promised them a seed, one who would bruise the serpent's head. They could not know exactly what this meant, but to their acute and almost perfect minds it evidently implied that God intended to do something which would, in a measure at least, offset the result of the great tragedy of their disobedience.

And now, as Eve observed, they had gotten a man from the LORD. Later another son was born, so they had both Cain and Abel. Thus they could have been doubly assured that their Creator had loving designs toward them, and that in some unknown way, great blessings were eventually to come to them to compensate for their loss of Eden; and their loss of life.

The Offering of Sacrifices

It seems clear, not only that Adam and Eve still had great respect for their Creator, but also that they had imparted to their offspring the limited knowledge they had gained concerning him through his instruction and by their experiences. The evidence of this is in the fact that both sons, in reaching manhood's estate, presented offerings to the LORD to show their reverence for him, and the appreciation which their understanding afforded.

So far as the livelihood of the first two sons of Adam and Eve was concerned, the record states that Abel was a keeper of sheep, and that Cain was a tiller of the soil. Both were honorable occupations. It would seem natural that in expressing their devotion to the Creator, these two men should present to him a thank offering from that which he had given them. So Cain "brought of

the fruit of the ground" for his offering, while Abel "brought of the firstlings of the flock and of the fat thereof."—Gen. 4:1-4

The record states that the "LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." Turning to the New Testament we get a clue as to why this was so. The Apostle Paul wrote, "By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous."—Heb. 11:4

In order for Abel's faith to enter into the offering of a more excellent sacrifice, it must be that, aside from the information



concerning the Creator which had been imparted to him by his parents, the LORD himself must have revealed in some manner not indicated in the record that a flesh and blood offering would be more pleasing to him than any other. Of course, Abel could not have understood why this was, and this in itself afforded a greater opportunity to demonstrate his faith in his Creator.

Nor is there any information in these opening chapters of the Book of Genesis which, taken by itself, indicates just why the lamb which Abel offered to the LORD was a more excellent sacrifice, and more pleasing to the LORD than the fruit of the ground which Cain offered. However, as God's design toward his human creation unfolds from book to book of his precious Word, light is thrown upon this incident.

Actually, as the Bible reveals, God's statement concerning the seed that was to bruise the serpent's head was an assurance of a coming Redeemer and Deliverer of the human race from the results of that tragedy in Eden. The Bible reveals that God's plan for the recovery of that which was lost is based upon the sacrificial work of his beloved Son, Christ Jesus, who is referred to by John the Baptist as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."—John 1:29,36

So it was, that soon after the fall into sin and death, not only did the Creator indicate that his love would yet rescue the condemned and dying race from death, but he also began to illustrate that this would be made possible through a flesh and blood sacrifice, even the offering of his own Son, who would give his flesh, his perfect humanity, for the life of the world.—John 6:51

The First Death

But so far as Adam and his immediate family were concerned, further tragedy soon followed Abel's more excellent sacrifice. Cain, the firstborn son of Adam, resented the fact that the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering, and that his own offering was not acceptable. In a fit of jealousy Cain rose up and slew his brother. Previous to this climax of his wrath, the LORD

(Continued on page 37)

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ONTARIO		
Hamilton	CKOC-1150	7:00 a.m.
Leamington	CHYR-710	5:00 p.m.
St. Thomas	CHLO-1570	10:45 a.m.

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

SASKATCHEWAN		
Prince Albert	CKBI-900	7:30 a.m.
Rosetown	CJYM 1330	10:00 a.m.
Weyburn-Estevan	CFSL-1190	8:45 a.m.

YUKON		
Whitehorse	CKRW-810	9:30 a.m.

OVERSEAS BROADCASTS

BRITISH ISLES		
Dublin	Christian Broadcasting	9:00 p.m.
	Radio Caroline-Tues. KHZ 962	8:45 p.m.

BRITISH WEST INDIES		
Grand Cayman	Radio Cayman	9:30 a.m.

CEYLON		
Columbo-Sat.	Radio Sri Lanka	7:15 p.m.

FRANCE (French)		
Lyon-Sat.	Radio Clé	6:30 a.m.

HONG KONG		
	Radio Villa Verde-Fri.	6:00 p.m.
ITALY (Italian)		
	Europa Radio Milano 83.3-FM	11:30 a.m.
	Euro Tele Radio Calabria-Fri.	
	MHZ 102	5:30 p.m.
	Radio Corleone Centrale	
	FM-88-500 FM-92	11:00 a.m.
MEXICO (Spanish)		
	Cullacán Ranchera XEQC	8:30 a.m.

NEW ZEALAND		
Dunedin	4XD	11:15 a.m.
Whakatane	IXX	8:45 a.m.

NIGERIA		
	Radio Africa-Wed.	6:00 p.m.

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

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

PHILIPPINES		
	Manila-Sat. DZAM 1026 KHZ	7:15 p.m.

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

SPAIN (Spanish)		
	Radio Gerona-Mon.	9:45 p.m.

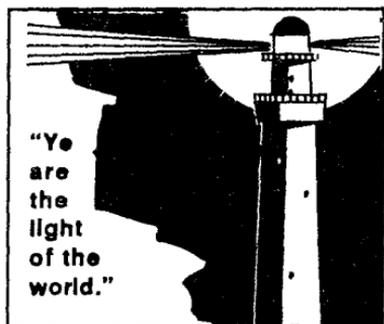
TONGA		
	Nuku' Alofa-Mon.	10:15 a.m.

URUGUAY (Spanish)		
	MontevideoRadio El Espectador 810	9:15 a.m.

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

SHORTWAVE BROADCASTS

(Beamed to Africa, Europe, U.S.)		
	Eastern U.S. (Sat.)WRNO 15.20	12:45 p.m.



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FLORIDA Miami Jacksonville	WKID Channel 17		MISSISSIPPI Jackson	WAPT
GEORGIA Atlanta	WATL		MISSOURI Springfield	KOLR
ILLINOIS Champaign- Springfield	WBHW		NEW MEXICO Roswell	KSWs
IOWA Cedar Rapids Mt. Vernon- Libon (every weekday)	KTS-13 WMVL Cable	7:00 a.m.	NORTH CAROLINA Hickory	WHKY
MICHIGAN Ann Arbor-Sun.	WIHT-31	12:00 noon	OHIO Dayton	WHIO
			TEXAS Lubbock	KCBD
			WEST VIRGINIA Logan-Mon.	Channel 12

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said unto Cain, "Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."—Gen. 4:6,7

But when selfishness and jealousy take possession of the heart, the ability to reason rationally is lost. The all-important consideration to Cain at the moment was that he, the firstborn, the man whom his mother had gotten from the LORD, had been set aside, and that Abel, his younger brother, was now the favored one. Failing to realize that he, too, could enjoy the Creator's favor through obedience and faith, the only thing he could think of was to get his brother out of the way. Murder followed—the first murder—and probably also the first death experienced by the Adamic race.

This was, of course, permitted by the Creator, and his wisdom in allowing it is understandable only in the light of his plan for the recovery from death of the entire human race, including Abel, and, as a matter of fact, Cain also. But, putting ourselves into those immediate circumstances, we can realize to some extent the shock Abel's death must have been to his father and mother.

We can imagine that for a few years Adam and Eve had rejoiced in the evidence of the Creator's favor which was theirs in the persons of these two sons, whom they had gotten from him. They knew that God had indicated his acceptance of Abel's offering. They could not, of course, understand clearly just why Cain's offering had not been pleasing to the LORD; but certainly they had no idea the effect this would have upon their firstborn son, so were quite unprepared for that tragic first murder.

The brief record presented in the Book of Genesis does not reveal how Adam and Eve first learned that Cain had murdered Abel. It seems quite unlikely that Cain informed them of it. Perhaps they simply found his body. This is not important, for, no matter how they found out about it, the bitterness of their sorrow must have been great—as great, perhaps, as when they became

aware of the awful reality of what their disobedience of divine law had brought upon them.

How sweet must have been the companionship of that first family, and the more so in the case of their two sons, Cain and Abel, for they would see in them a reminder that all was not lost, that in some way, and at some time unknown to them, they would again see the smile of their Creator's countenance, and might even be permitted to return to Eden. As the poet, Alexander Pope, wrote, "Hope springs eternal in the human breast," and this must have been very true of Adam and Eve.

Did they not have that statement by the Creator concerning the seed? And had they not gotten two men from the LORD? To us this might not seem to be much upon which to build a hope, but it was all our first parents had, and now even that had been swept away, and by the gruesome spectacle of murder. Abel no longer lived, and God had placed a curse upon Cain—a curse which, among other things, was understood by Cain to mean that henceforth the face of the LORD would be hidden from him, that the Creator would no longer in any way manifest his favor toward him.

Enmity

Sorrowing over the loss of Abel, and with no assurance that God's promise concerning the seed would ever again have any vital meaning to them, Adam and Eve must truly have been dejected and hopeless. Yet even in this tragedy of murder there was that which could have given them good reason to continue trusting in the promises of God. Not only had God forecast the coming of a seed, but he had explained that there would be enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

Four thousand years later, Jesus said concerning those whose hearts are filled with jealousy and hate, that they are of their father the Devil. (John 8:44) This helps us to identify the seed of the serpent: that seed being any and all whose principal activities are motivated by selfishness, jealousy, and hate. Cain

was in this class, and, in his murder of Abel we see the first evidence of the enmity of the seed of the serpent manifested toward the seed of the woman.

As we have already noted, the *true seed* of the woman is revealed by the Scriptures to be Christ Jesus. But Satan, not knowing the plan of God for human redemption and salvation, manifested his enmity through his servants—his seed—toward all those who in any way have been favored by the LORD. God manifested his favor toward Abel, and this was reason enough for Satan to stir up the heart of Cain to jealousy which led him to kill Abel.

This could have been seen by Adam and Eve as the enmity foretold. It may have given assurance to our first parents that God did foreknow coming events—reassuring them that this tragedy of Abel's murder was in no way a defeat of the divine purpose. The murder of Abel was a prototype of all the injustices and persecutions which have been heaped upon the righteous servants of God in every age. Millions, not aware of the foretold 'bruising' of the seed by Satan, have wondered why such tragedies have been permitted, and how any possible good could come from them.

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God's holy prophets were persecuted, many of them to death. Jesus was crucified. Many of his faithful footstep followers were imprisoned, beaten, beheaded, thrown to the lions, and burned at the stake. We thank God that such cruelties are not generally permitted today. Although there are frequent evidences that, even as in the case of the first family, when the human heart is stirred to jealousy, the results are little different now than they were then.

The Bible reveals why the righteous have been permitted to suffer. It is in order that their fidelity to God, and their faith in the rightness of his ways, might be thoroughly tested and demonstrated. Those who are thus proved to be loyal to God regardless of what the cost might be, are to be honored with special responsibilities in connection with his loving plan for the recovery of the human race from sin and death. Even Abel will receive a special compensation.

"Another Seed"

Adam and Eve were not to be left comfortless and without hope, for in due course another son was born to them. They named him Seth, which means, 'Appointed'. Concerning him, Eve remarked, "God . . . hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." (Gen. 4:25) Again Eve, and doubtless Adam also, demonstrated their belief that they recognized the hand of the LORD working on their behalf for the purpose of fulfilling his promise concerning the seed of the woman. Can we question that now their hope was revived!

After Seth was born Adam lived another eight hundred years, "and he begat sons and daughters." (vs. 4) No special mention is made of any of these other sons. Evidently our first parents saw in Seth the fulfillment of the LORD's promise concerning the seed, and yet, Seth was not actually the seed of promise, nor did God tell them that he was.

To whatever degree our first parents were comforted by their hope that Seth was the one appointed by the LORD to be the

seed that would bruise the serpent's head, it made the hardships of their condemned and dying life a little more bearable. If they conceived that idea from what God said concerning the seed—that one day they would be permitted to return to Eden, and that the sorrow, bitterness, and suffering which resulted from their disobedience would be erased—they were right!

Adam and Eve could not possibly have realized how far-reaching God's plan of redemption and recovery would turn out to be—that the seed of promise would actually be God's own beloved Son who would give his life to redeem them and all their progeny from death. But this, Adam and Eve *will* quickly comprehend when they are awakened from the sleep of death. It will be then that the joys of paradise will once again be available to them if, through faith and obedience, they desire to obey God's righteous laws and thereby enjoy the provision of life which has been made for them, and for the entire human race. □



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

APRIL 7—"My God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."—Philippians 4:15 (Z. '96-163 Hymn 61)

APRIL 14—"[Jesus] hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors."—Isaiah 53:12 (Z. '99-125 Hymn 5)

APRIL 21—"We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Hebrews 5:15,16 (Z. '98-23 Hymn 71)

APRIL 28—"We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."—Romans 5:3-5 (Z. '96-31 Hymn 92)

The Messiah's Kingdom Is Near

THE majestic theme of Bible prophecy is focused upon the coming of the Messiah, and the establishment of his kingdom of blessing. Prophecies foretold the first advent of the Messiah, pointing out many events which would occur in connection therewith. They foretold the time of Jesus' birth, and even the town in which he would be born. Various aspects of his ministry were prophesied—his lack of acceptance among his national fellows to the point of persecution, and finally death. The prophecies mentioned in considerable detail what occurred at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. (Ps. 22:1,18) And they also foretold the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!—Ps. 16:10; 68:18; Eph. 4:8-11

The Apostle Peter speaks of the sure word of prophecy as "a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." (II Pet. 1:19) The sure word of prophecy has indeed been a bright light which, throughout the centuries of the world's dark night of sin, has continued to illuminate the earnest and dedicated servants of the LORD for their guidance and encouragement.

There was high hope on the part of Jesus' disciples. They had accepted him as the foretold Messiah, and they believed that the kingdom was to be immediately established. (Luke 19:11) They did not then know that the particular work to be accomplished at his first advent was the redemption of Adam and his children from sin and death—that Jesus would lay the foundation for this by his own death on Calvary's cross.

Nor did they realize that Jesus would be going away—that he would not return for many centuries,—that it would not be until his second visit to earth that his kingdom would be established. They rejoiced in the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead! When he appeared to them on the Mount of Olives they made bold to ask, “Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” Jesus replied, “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.”—Acts 1:6,7

Our Lord did not imply by this statement that his disciples would never know anything about God’s times and seasons. He was simply emphasizing the fact that this information is controlled by God, who divulges it to his people only as they need more understanding, in due time, for encouragement. For Jesus to have explained to his inquiring disciples before his death that he was not about to establish his kingdom forthwith—and that, in fact, he would not do so for nearly two thousand years—would have been very discouraging.

Jesus' Prophecies

During the three and one-half years of his ministry, Jesus uttered a number of prophecies; some of these were contained in parables. A very important one on the point of giving his disciples some idea of the length of time which must transpire before the establishment of the kingdom is the parable of the wheat and the tares. (Matt. 13:24-32, 36-43) In this lesson, Jesus said that ‘good seed’ was sown by the Son of man, and that ‘tares’ were sown by the Devil.

The parable reveals that the tares—the children of the Wicked One—and the wheat—the children of the kingdom—would grow together until the end of the age, when there would be a separation and a harvest. The tares were destined to destruction, while the wheat was to be gathered into the barn.

Here we have a prophecy concerning a corrupting influence which would enter in among the followers of the Master, the chil-

dren of the kingdom. This work was to continue right down to the end of the age, at which time the tare class would be destroyed, while the wheat class would be exalted to be with Jesus in his kingdom. Malachi foretold of the time when the faithful followers of Jesus would shine forth like the sun as part of the prophetic "Sun of Righteousness," which will rise "with healing in his wings."—Mal. 4:2

History records the fact that a great falling away from the true faith of the Gospel did occur, beginning shortly after the death of the apostles, those faithful watchers over the LORD's people. Practically every aspect of true Christian belief became corrupted and confused. The great hope of believers concerning the return of Jesus, at which time they expected that they would be exalted in the resurrection to live and reign with him, was pushed aside by all except a small remnant. A counterfeit messianic kingdom was set up in place of the true kingdom. The corrupt church-state systems of Europe claimed to be the kingdom of Christ on earth, or Christendom.

End of the Age Prophecies

Toward the close of Jesus' ministry, his apostles began to sense in a vague way that he might be going away for a while—although they did not seem to realize that he was to be killed by his enemies, and that the promised kingdom was a long way off. They went to him on the Mount of Olives, and asked, "Tell us when these things shall be, and what the sign of thy presence, and the conclusion of the age?"—Matt. 24:3, **Rotherham**

Jesus gave a lengthy reply to this inquiry. One of the clarifications he gave was that, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24) We understand that, in this prophecy, Jerusalem represents the Jewish polity. That polity had been trodden down beginning in 606 B.C., when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed the literal city of Jerusalem, and took the people of the nation captive.

It was then that the nation of Israel lost her national independence, becoming a subject people, first to Babylon, then to Medo-Persia, then to Greece, and finally to Rome. They were vassals to Rome when Jesus came at his first advent. The disciples evidently had in mind the many prophecies concerning restoration of their own governing entity when they asked Jesus, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"—Acts 1:6

When Jesus said that Jerusalem would continue to be trodden down by Gentile nations until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled, he indicated that a specific length of time had been set aside in the plan of God during which the Jewish nation and people would be subject to Gentile overlordship. Leviticus 26:24 is a prophecy of a period of 'seven times' during which the LORD would punish his people. We believe that these are symbolic 'times', and that the actual length of this period is 2,520 years corresponding to 'the times of the Gentiles' referred to by Jesus during which Jerusalem, or the Jewish polity, would be trodden down.

As we have noted, this period began in 606 B.C., which means that it would end in A.D. 1914. The year 1914 is now more than a half century in the past, which fact enables us to look back on national and international events to get a fairly clear perspective of what has taken place during all those years.

Prior to the year 1914, this particular year had been pointed out by Bible students as being the end of the times of the Gentiles, but prior to the actual events it was not possible to know

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clearly just what would occur. Now we have a better vantage point from which to see the events which had been foretold in the sure word of prophecy. It was in 1914 that the first World War in history broke out. Much happened as a result of that war, and it was the war itself that led to the opening of Palestine to the Jew.

There were many difficulties to overcome, but gradually step by step, the land was developed. Finally, and as a result of what occurred in 1914, Israel became an independent nation among nations. This was in 1948, and now Israel no longer is a vassal nation to any other nation. She has taken her place among the free nations of earth, and is a member of the United Nations. She still has many obstacles to overcome, but so do all the other nations of earth. However, she is *not* now being *trodden down* as a servile nation to other nations.

Church-State Systems Destroyed

The Gentile aspect of the 'times of the Gentiles' during which the Jewish nation would be trodden down, was depicted by a great human-like image which King Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream. It had a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, thighs of brass, and legs of iron. A stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, which smote the image on its feet. Then the image fell, was ground to powder, and the wind carried it away. Then the stone which did the smiting grew to be a great mountain which filled the whole earth.—Dan.2:31-44

Interpreting this dream, Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." The head of gold, then, pictured the fact that God had given dominion to Nebuchadnezzar, or Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar had been king before this, but now he had been given dominion by God.

This is true also of the empires represented by the brass, silver, and iron of the image—they all rose and fell from the scene of world dominion by the hand of God. Babylon was destroyed as a world power not long after Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Medo-Persia, the brass; and Greece, the silver, also lost their positions as empires over the then-known world. Rome became divided, as represented by the two legs, the feet and toes of the image, and its divisions still existed at the beginning of 1914. However, the prophecy stated that when the image was smitten, it fell, and the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, were broken to pieces together.

As we have noted, the various kingdoms involved in this prophecy of Gentile times each fell separately. But there was one thing which was destroyed at the same time, common to them all, and that was their dominion or authority which the God of heaven had given to them. This is the background of the now outdated church-state system of government. The concept of what God bestowed upon Nebuchadnezzar had become so terribly distorted through the centuries that it developed into the corrupt church-state system of government which ruled Europe until 1914—the close of the times of the Gentiles. Now it has been destroyed, and the pieces are being ground to powder.

Thus we have not only the fact that the nation of Israel is no longer in bondage, but also this clear fulfillment of the prophecy pertaining to the destruction of the Gentile governments which were largely responsible for her being trodden down. Can there be any doubt that we are living at a most important time in the outworking of the plan of the ages! It is the time, according to Daniel 2:44, when the God of heaven is preparing to set up his kingdom.

The Days Shortened

When answering his disciples' questions concerning the sign of his second presence, Jesus told them there would be a time of 'great tribulation'—a tribulation so great that unless those

days were shortened, no flesh would be saved. To this he added, according to a good translation, that "by" the elect, these days of tribulation would be shortened.—Matt. 24:21,22

It is only since 1914 that we have seen such a situation develop—one which, indeed, does threaten the destruction of all flesh, the entire human family. We refer to the horrendous possibilities threatened by nuclear warfare, which make possible the killing of millions in a matter of minutes. This is a clear fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy concerning the end of the age. What conclusions are we to reach from these various developments, especially those which have taken place since 1914? Nothing in the prophecies themselves gives us an inkling as to the final time for their complete fulfillment. In this respect it is still true that our Heavenly Father is keeping the time and the seasons in his own power.

However, we can come to a very certain conclusion. It is the same conclusion reached by Jesus, and included in his prophecies. In Jesus' day the fig tree was a symbol of the Jewish nation, and therefore he used this symbol when speaking a parable concerning Israel: "Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."—Luke 21:29-31

What a blessed assurance! Since God first began to make promises concerning the coming of a Messiah and the establishment of a righteous kingdom of blessing throughout the earth, each generation of his people looked for, hoped for, and prayed for the coming of that kingdom. Not all of them have known the extent to which the blessings of peace, health, joy, and life would come to the people, but all have sensed that this kingdom would mean a brighter and happier time for them, and for all.

So the question has been repeated "How long, O LORD, how long?"; and again, "Wilt thou at this time?", etc. And now Jesus

has given us the answer! "When ye see these things!" and we are seeing them! During the half century which has elapsed since the end of the times of the Gentiles, we have witnessed rapid progress in the major developments which Jesus foretold. We have seen the vassal-like bondage lifted from Israel; and we have seen the development of that terrible potential of destruction which threatens the destruction of all flesh. There is no mistaking the meaning of these developments. They are the very ones described by Jesus, and they have come at the very time that the prophecies foretold they would come.

Let us heed what our Lord Jesus has given as the conclusion to the meaning of these events: "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." There will now be no more centuries of waiting. The kingdom is nigh at hand! Just how near we do not know, but that we are in the end of the age there can be no doubt. And this means, as Jesus so clearly stated, that the kingdom is surely near. What an incentive to faithfulness this should be!

With the establishment and functioning of that kingdom will come the end of war, of revolutions, of crime, of riots, of starvation, of vice, of illness, of pain, and of death. (Rev. 21:1-3) There will come also the end of Satanic deception, for then the knowledge of the LORD will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Satan, the evil one who has deceived and continues to deceive all nations, will then be bound, and the LORD will turn to the people a pure message so they will all be enabled to serve him with one consent. What a blessed prospect! And how we should rejoice in Jesus' assurance that it is nigh at hand. □



May the fullness of God's *blessings* encompass all our way;
The fullness of his *promises* crown every brightening day;
The fullness of his *glory* come beaming from above,
While more and more we learn to know the fullness of his *love*.

Voices from the Past

Discourse by Brother Edward E. Fay,
Los Angeles, CA

Fellowship/Eldership

OVER the years, discussions regarding distinctions which should be made between those with whom we fellowship, and those whom we choose to serve as our elders, reveal that it is possible that there are some for whom we could not conscientiously cast our vote for eldership, but with whom we would greatly enjoy and appreciate fellowship. It is most important in these instances, as well as in every other issue of our lives, that our principles and rules of action are based upon the sure Word of truth.



A good illustration of the true basis for Christian fellowship is contained in Matthew 12:46-50. On this occasion Jesus was speaking to a large group in a crowded room. His mother and brothers had arrived outside, but because of the crush they could not reach Jesus. Someone at the window or door quickly took in the situation, and interrupting the Master, called out, "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee." Our Lord's reply might seem strange to us, for he answered with the questions, "Who is my mother? And who are my brethren?"

No doubt, all in attendance were aware of the identity of our Lord's mother; this reply must have been confusing to them. But Jesus had designed to take advantage of the situation in order that his listeners would take special note of the great truth he wished them to learn.

Slowly and deliberately he stretched forth his hands toward the apostles and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren!" This statement would not have clarified any confused thoughts to a great degree, but his next words did. They have been of particular comfort to all with whom the Lord has since dealt: he said, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Our circle of fellowship is composed of all those who have become part of the family of God—those who have been called, have consecrated, who have been justified and Spirit-begotten. This is why we can sing: "Blest be the tie that binds, our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of *kindred* minds is like to that above." *Kindred* means those who have a *family* relationship, and in our case it is a spiritual family since we have been begotten by the Holy Spirit to be the sons of God, and brethren of our Lord Jesus. We should, of course, welcome with Christian love any believers in our Father and Jesus, whether or not they have taken the full step of discipleship.

However, in selecting our teachers or elders, we must set requirements which go beyond being members of the family of God, as outlined in Titus 1:5-11, and I Timothy 3:1-7. The combined testimony of these texts suggests four main points:

1. **Consecration.**—It is obvious that all teachers in the church must be consecrated, else they could not even be members of the church class themselves!
2. **Blameless.**—(Titus 1:7) Those who would be elders must live so as to demonstrate an appreciation of the principles of righteousness.
3. **Apt to teach.**—(I Tim. 3:2) This is readily understandable because one of the chief functions of an elder is to impart knowledge to others.
4. **Holding fast the faithful Word.**—(Titus 1:9) An elder should have a clear concept of the Word of truth.

There is general agreement on how to interpret the first three points in our list. But there are a variety of understandings on the fourth point. We all realize that the Apostle Paul meant that elders must be clear in the basic doctrines, such as the nature of man, his fall, the penalty for sin, the relationship of God and Jesus, the ransom, the call and preparation of the church, and restitution. Some go further and feel that the "harvest" truths must also be clearly seen by those who would teach. By harvest truths, we mean the doctrines of Lord's presence, the understanding of the covenants, the church's share in the sin-offering, and a recognition that Christians are to be engaged in the witness work at this time. These great tenets apply specifically to our present time, and have been revealed to the church at this end of the age by the Holy Spirit shining on the holy Word, the Bible.

If only we had Paul in our midst, we could ask him to clarify his statement that an elder should "hold fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers"! But perhaps we can get an effective answer to our queries by noting carefully how Paul interpreted his own instructions.

What about the doctrine of our Lord's presence? We realize that some in Paul's day were teaching the Lord's second presence was then an actuality, and that the resurrection had begun! In II Timothy 2:15-18, Paul urged Timothy to learn well the skill of rightly dividing the truth. The advice of his letter strongly implied that he believed an understanding of the correct time of our Lord's return, and of the resurrection, was indeed important.

Referring to those who taught error regarding this doctrine, he wrote, "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." (II Tim. 2:18) If Paul thought a correct knowledge of the time of our Lord's return was essential in his day, is it not logical that he would just as earnestly contend for such correct knowledge now, in the actual time of our Lord's second presence?

What about the covenants? This truth was not specifically mentioned by Paul in either of his lists of qualifications for eldership. Did Paul believe a correct understanding of the covenants to be important in his day? According to his testimony in Galatians, some had been teaching error regarding the covenants. They contended that the brethren should consider the Sinaitic Law binding upon them. Concerning the ones teaching this error, Paul wrote, "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you." This passage reveals how strongly Paul felt regarding the essentiality of an understanding of the covenants for eldership.

The great Apostle Paul often demonstrated in his writings his firm belief that elders should see truths clearly concerning the presence, covenants, witnessing, and the church's part in the sin-offering. So also taught our dear Brother Charles T. Russell. Such high standards for our elders will do much to keep the church free from error—"the truth shall make us free!"

Obituaries

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

Sister Julia Mae Roedus, Pulaski, TN—August 1, 1987. Age, 47.

Sister C. Ziembiec, Angola, NY—September 1, 1987.

Brother Ian Cipperly, Warm Mineral Springs, FL—January 28.
Age, 90's

Sister Hattie M. Jones, Salem, NJ—February 1. Age, 89.

Brother Fred Heilman, St. Petersburg, FL—February 13. Age, 86.

Brother Wilbur Twelker, Palm Desert, CA—February 10. Age,
94.

Sister Genevieve Curley, Syracuse, NY—February 11. Age, 69.

General Convention Bulletin

BIBLE STUDENTS around the country are beginning to get excited about the prospects of the 1988 General Convention. Many, we know, are eagerly awaiting their reservation forms, and are already making their traveling plans to Chattanooga. On the pages following is some of the detail you will need in order to complete your reservation form. To help the university prepare for our visit, it would be best to send your completed form to them as soon as possible.

Remember the dates of **July 23 to July 28th, and Chattanooga, Tennessee,** where a bountiful table of truth and fellowship is being prepared!

In order that you will be able to make early reservations with the University of Tennessee for the General Convention, we are providing the following registration information:

1988 CONVENTION RATES

GENERAL INFORMATION: The Registration Fee is included in the cost of the room and meals. There are three different rates for rooms and meals, according to the ages of the registrants. It is



necessary that young people be accompanied by at least one adult. All rooms are air-conditioned.

Prices, per person, are as follows:

WEEKLY RATES FOR LODGING AND MEALS

	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy
Ages 13 and over:	\$218.00	\$253.00
Ages 7-12:	\$165.00	
Ages 6 and under:	\$ 60.00	

DAILY RATES FOR MEALS ONLY

Ages 7 and over: Breakfast-\$4.00 Lunch-\$6.00 Dinner-\$8.00
Ages 6 and under: Breakfast-\$2.00 Lunch-\$3.00 Dinner-\$4.00

DAILY RATES FOR LODGING IF NOT STAYING FULL WEEK

	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy
Ages 7 and over:	\$20.00	\$25.00
Ages 6 and under:	\$10.00	

It is important to know that all sleeping rooms are set up as *apartments*. There are two double-bedded rooms to each apartment, sharing a bath. Double occupancy applies to two people in a *bedroom*. Single occupancy applies to one person in a *bedroom*. If you wish to share an *apartment* with a particular party, please follow the instructions given on page 58, part 2, or else the other bedroom in the apartment will be assigned by the university.

RESERVATION INFORMATION

DEPOSITS: UT-Chattanooga requires a minimum deposit of \$50.00 with each reservation. However, we are urged to send full payment whenever possible for the complete stay at the Convention when reservations are sent in.

CANCELLATIONS: To receive a total refund of all prepayment, you must notify the university of the cancellation of your reservation by July 15th. Cancellation notices received by UT-Chattanooga after this date will not have the \$50.00 deposit refunded when prepayment is returned to you.

(Continued on Page 58)

Registration Form

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION
University of Tennessee • Chattanooga, Tennessee
July 23-28, 1988

Number staying for the whole week, attending all meals.
(If you have filled in above box, you need not complete the form below.)

Fr	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Lodging
Sa				
Su				
Mo				
Tu				
We				
Th				

Please indicate above which meals you wish to attend, and how many for each meal, if you are not staying the entire week, or do not wish to eat certain meals at the convention.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Please list names of **all + ages** of children, included in this reservation:

NAME

AGE of CHILD

(SEE OVER)

SEND RESERVATIONS TO:

Office of Conference Services
 615 McCallie Avenue, Univ. of Tennessee at Chattanooga
 Chattanooga, TN 37043

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Please indicate *how many* in each category:

WEEKLY RATES FOR LODGING AND MEALS

	Double Occupancy	Single	Number	Cost
13 to adult	\$218.00	\$253.00	_____	_____
7-12	\$165.00		_____	_____
6 and under	\$ 60.00		_____	_____
			Total	_____

DAILY RATES FOR LODGING

(For Partial Week as Indicated on the Reverse Side of this Form.)

	Double Occupancy	Single	Number	Cost
Ages 7 & over	\$ 20.00 daily	\$25.00 daily	_____	_____
Ages 6 & under	\$ 10.00 daily		_____	_____
			Total	_____

DAILY RATES FOR MEALS

(For Partial Week as Indicated on the Reverse Side of this Form.)

	Number/Cost for all Meals	
Ages 7 to adult: B-\$4.00 • L-\$6.00 • D-\$8.00	_____	_____
Ages 6 & under: B-\$2.00 • L-\$3.00 • D-\$4.00	_____	_____
	Total	_____

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK FOR \$50.00

DEPOSIT, OR AMOUNT OF THE Grand Total _____

AIRPORT PICKUP INFORMATION:

_____ Airline _____ Date _____ Time of Arrival _____ Flight Number _____ No. of Persons _____

TO AVOID DELAY UPON ARRIVAL: The University suggests that even though you sent a deposit for your room earlier, they would like to receive the total balance due them before July 15th. This will facilitate the processing of your registration upon arrival.

1. Designate on your Reservation Form all nights lodging required, all meals desired, and for how many persons. On the reverse side of the Form, list each family member included in the reservation, add up the costs according to ages, multiply by number of days (if you will not be there the full week; otherwise use the weekly rate), and enter the total.

2. Those who desire to room together, but do not live at the same address, must: (a) indicate with whom they wish to room; and, (b) must send in separate Reservation Forms, at the same time.

3. Complete the portion of the Registration Form concerning Airport Pickup, if it is applicable to you.

AIRPORT PICKUP INFORMATION: Pickup will be made at the Chattanooga Airport (Lovell Field). Give the airline company, date, time of arrival, and flight number, in the space provided on the Reservation Form. There will be no charge to you for this service.

In the event of problems, the telephone number to call is: (615) 755-4344, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., E.S.T.

SUBSIDIES FOR CHILDREN: The Convention Committee has made provision for a 50% subsidy to be paid at the close of the convention for young people between the ages of *six and seventeen* years of age *who have qualified* by attending at least 75% of the Young People's Bible Classes. This subsidy is designed to help make it possible for young people to attend the General Convention and to enjoy the Bible Classes provided for them. A 50% subsidy for *all children under six* years of age is also provided.

HOW PARENTS OBTAIN THE SUBSIDIES FOR THEIR CHILDREN: Pay the full children's rate (according to their ages) to the university for your children when making reservations. Near the end of the convention, see the Convention Treasurer, Brother Stephen Roskiewicz, to obtain the 50% subsidy.

Encouraging Letters

Receives Hope and Greater Faith

Gentlemen: Your publications are a great help to people with troubles and worries. Your interpretation of the Bible gives us all hope and increased faith. Without the hope of a resurrection, the grave would be the end for all of us. Sometimes my faith weakens, but The Dawn gives me hope. Thanks for all your work.—NY

Baptism Made Clear

Dear Sirs: Please send your booklet, "The Church," to the above address, and include the radio schedule of your program. I first tuned in one night when the topic was that of Baptism. Your explanation and where to find it was the clearest I ever had the privilege to hear.—NJ

Clearer Understanding

Dear Sirs: I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your radio broadcast. It really helps me to get a clearer understanding of the Scriptures, as

well as draw me nearer to God. I am a sixteen-year-old graduate of high school, and am still quite uncertain of my future vocation. I am thinking seriously of going into a church-related career, but am lacking a lot of information. Please send me a copy of both "Peace through Christ's Kingdom," and "God and Reason." Both are greatly appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation. God bless you.—BRITISH WEST INDIES

Knows Booklet Will Enlighten

Dawn Publications: I sincerely request that you forward a copy of "Archeology Proves the Bible," as per your offer in the recent issue of the **Reader's Digest**. Certainly this is a kind offer and one I am sure many will exercise their option to receive. Surely it will enlighten, erase doubts and skepticism, and hopefully bring many back to the realization of the principles on which our great country of America was founded. In my opinion, we as a people or as

a nation cannot survive by eliminating the Bible and its teachings from our lives. Thank you for this tremendous offer, and God bless you.—VA

Spiritual Life Enhanced

Dear Sirs: I have enclosed a money order as payment for a variety of books offered in The Dawn. Your Bible literature has greatly enhanced my spiritual life and I would like to thank you greatly as I receive more. I believe I will not have adequate space to write out the full titles of all the publications, so I ask that you kindly refer to The Dawn, on the inner cover, the last page, and on pages 32 and 33. Again, thank you for your inspirational magazine, and may the LORD continue to bless you. Your friend in Christ.—
BRITISH WEST INDIES

Creation VS Evolution

Gentlemen: I thank the LORD for people like you who try to help promote His Word. My daughter had problems in school recently with a teacher presenting evolution as a fact, or almost. We discussed the issues of

Creation versus Evolution at home, but I am sure there is more to be learned on the subject which would help her, and me, in our conversations with others on the subject. Therefore I would appreciate it if you would send me the booklet, "Archeology Proves the Bible." I clipped your advertisement from the Reader's Digest. Thank you.—
CT

A "Delightful" Book

Friends: I want to start by thanking you for the delightful little book sent to me last week, "Archeology Proves the Bible," which has glued me to the chair! I was telling my best friend about it and she wants to read it! Well, the truth is, when I finish it I am going to turn right around and re-read it. So, if you can, please send a copy to her. The little book you have listed on the back of this one I am reading sounds very interesting, so I am sending you a check and please send me, "The Creator's Grand Design." Thanking you for the book you sent me, and for the ones I am ordering. Sincerely.—VA

**Pastor
Appreciates Program**

Dear Friends: Heard your broadcast today for the first time in years. As a pastor I am always in church while you are being aired, but, bless the Lord, today, while on vacation I was led to turn the radio on.

Thanks for your faithfulness to God's Word. May I have a copy of "God and Reason"—it sounds like a big help in some of my sermon preparation. Also, if you are aired at another hour in the area, please let me know. I would appreciate it. Sincerely yours.—NY

Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

W. Bilcharz		L.B. Post	
New York, NY	April 10	Middletown, NY	April 17
London, Ont.	17	J.H. Snyder	
G.M. Jeuck		Allentown, PA	April 3
Boise, ID	April 23,24	Columbus, OH	22
M. Nekora		Detroit, MI	24
San Gabriel Valley, CA	April 3	Milwaukee, WI	25
		Minneapolis, MN	26
		Havre, MT	29

Overseas Pilgrims

F. Binns		T. Krupa	
Yeovil, England	March	Cysoing, France	April 2
Bury —St. Edmunds	April	Paris, France	6
Storrington, Worthington	April	Metz, France	7
"Patmos 2nd" Conv.	April 30-May 6	Bollwielle, France	9,10
Barnsley, Tyne & Wear	May	Lieven, France	12
R.J.Krupa		E.F. Lankford	
Cysoing, France	March 29	England	April 26-30
Lieven, France	31	"Patmos 2nd" Conv.	May 1-4
Lille —French Gen.Conv.	April 3,4	Poland	5-12
Paris, France	6	Mulhouse, France	13-16
Metz, France	7	Germany	17-20
Bollwielle, —Alsace Conv.	9-10	Bad Hersfeld Conv.	21-23
Lieven, France	12	Northern France	24-31

Conventions

These conventions are listed at the request of the individual classes who are sponsoring the gatherings.

GARY AREA CONVENTION, April 3—Hobart YMCA, 601 West 40th Place, Hobart, IN. Contact: John Ulicni, 6703 Tyler Street, Merrillville, IN 46410 \Phone: (219) 769-5647

CINCINNATI, OH, April 10—At the Harp's Home, 2609 Merrittview Lane 45231

Phone: (513) 825-4112

NEW YORK, NY, April 10—Woman's Club of Rutherford, Montross and Fairview Avenues, Rutherford, NJ. For information, contact Mrs. Ann-Truth Lange, 76 Longview Ave., White Plains, NY 10605

MINNEAPOLIS, MN, April 16,17—Eastside Neighborhood House, 1929 Second St. N.E. Minneapolis. For information, please contact Mr. Myron Berdahl, 5717 Nevada Ave. North, Crystal 55428

Phone: (612) 533-8275

LOS ANGELES, CA, April 17—Burbank Masonic Auditorium, 248 E. Olive, Ave., Burbank. Contact: Michael Nekora, Secy., 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades 90272

Phone: (213) 454-5248

BOISE, ID, April 22-24—Holiday Inn, I-84 and Vista Ave. For reservations contact: Mrs. Allan Allers, 2438 Bruins Circle 83704

Phone: (208) 375-6873

NEBRASKA BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, April 22-24—Benson Park Pavillion, 7028 Military Ave., Omaha. For reservations contact Best Western Immanuel Plaza Motel by April 1 to obtain special rates, stating you are with Nebraska Bible Students: (800) 528-1234 or (402)571-6161. For information and help contact Tom Gilbert:

Phone: (402) 592-2317.

CHICAGO, IL, April 24—Elmhurst Masonic Temple, York & Arthur Streets, Elmhurst. Contact: Tom Ruggirello, 720 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Roselle 60172.

Phone: (312) 351-5606

PITTSBURGH, PA, April 24—Parkway Center, Bldg. #7, Board Room (9th floor). Contact: Charles Martig, 730 Dunster Street, 15226

Phone: (412) 563-6110

HARTFORD, CT, May 1—Sage Park Junior H.S., Sage Park Road, Windsor. Contact: Mrs. John Coccia, 10 Light Street, Enfield 06082

AGAWAM, MA, May 14,15—Ramada Inn, 161 Bridge St. at I-91, Warehouse Point, CT. Contact: Mrs. Leslie Hindle, 39 Park Hill, Broad Brook, CT 06016

Phone: (203) 623-6591

CLEVELAND, OH, May 15—Masonic Temple, 3615 Euclid Ave., Cleveland. Contact: Alex Brzostek, 2339 Averill Dr., Akron 44313

Phone: (216) 661-8059

BUFFALO, NY, May 22—Unity Temple, 1940 Niagra St., Buffalo. Contact: Eugene Buczkowski, 85 Rogers Dr., Cheektowaga 14225

Phone: (716) 634-2163

ASILOMAR CONVENTION, May 27-30—Asilomar Conference Grounds, Pacific Grove, CA. For information, contact: Mrs. Carol Blong, 713 Sycamore Ave., San Bruno, CA. Please note: *Registration cut-off date is April 25th.*

CHICAGO, IL, May 28-30—Elk Grove High School, 500 West Elk Grove Blvd., Elk Grove. Contact: Tom Ruggirello, 720 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Roselle 60172

Phone: (312) 351-5606

WATERBURY, CT, June 5—YWCA Building, 80 Prospect St. Contact: Venice Tsimonis, P.O. Box 1494, Waterbury 06720

ALLENTOWN, PA—June 10-12—Moravian College, Bethlehem. Contact: Margaret Young, P.O. Box 1672, Allentown 18105

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN, June 10-12—Echo Grove Conference Center, Lakeville. Contact: Norm Zender, 20 Devonshire, Pleasant Ridge 48069 *by May 1st.* Phone: (313) 399-8843

PORTLAND, OR, June 24-27—Collins Retreat Center, Route #211 (between Sandy and Eagle Creek). Contact: Dawn Krupa, P.O. Box 204, Gresham 97030

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, Dalfsen, Holland, July 9-15—DeBron Conference Center. Write: International Convention of Bible Students, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272
Phone: (213) 454-5248

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, Chattanooga, Tennessee, July 23-28. Please note new location and new dates.

IMMANUEL RULETH!

Believer, rejoice! The glad day is nearing
For which all creation travaileth in pain.
Christ, our Redeemer, in glory appearing
Shall take to himself his great power and reign!
Satan—Usurper!—his power we're knelling!
To earth's farthest limits Christ's kingdom shall spread!
Peace and prosperity, sweetly are telling
That Jesus, Immanuel, ruleth instead!

Price Change Notice

BEGINNING with January 1988, due to increased production costs it was necessary to raise the price by \$1.00 on all vinyl, soft-covered books. Therefore all books which are presently listed at:

\$1.00 are now \$2.00

\$2.00 books are now \$3.00

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF

"Studies in the Scriptures." When purchased by the set, the cost will be \$12.00. When purchased individually, the prices for *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, *The Time is At Hand*, and *Thy Kingdom Come* will be \$2.00 each; *The Battle of Armageddon*, *The Atonement between God and Man*, and *The New Creation* will be \$3.00 each.

These new prices *will not* be reflected on the front or back inside covers of this magazine until a new printing of *Dawn* covers next June. *Until then, this notice is intended to supersede the prices shown.*

• NEW OFFERINGS •

The **"Daily Heavenly Manna"** is now available in a hard cover edition, with a sewn spine. Price—\$3.00 each.

"Hymns of Dawn" are now available in vinyl, soft cover, with a sewn spine. Price—\$3.00 per book; hard cover, sewn spine. Price—\$4.00 each. Spiral bound—\$4.00 each.

"Bread from Heaven," a young people's Manna, cost is \$4.00, hardbound, sewn spine. Makes a lovely gift.