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Christianity in Crisis

***“In the time of
harvest I will say
to the reapers,
Gather ye together
first the tares, and
bind them in
bundles to burn
them: but gather
the wheat into my
barn.”***

—Matthew 13:30

THIS IS A DAY OF DISINTE-gration, chaos, and confusion in human society. Former standards of righteousness are put aside, and traditional viewpoints and values are in disfavor. This is particularly true in the religious world. In an attempt to stand up against this time of change, the churches are attempting in various ways to increase their influence in the face of growing religious dissatisfaction, and even apathy, which threatens their very existence. The ecumenical spirit of goodwill and cooperation is leading to a breakdown of doctrinal teachings, and slowly reducing denominationalism to what amounts to, in many cases, a vast social club in which the vital teachings of the Bible are given almost no consideration. While this is especially true of Protestantism, the Catholic Church is also being shaken from within and without by scandal and the exposure of moral evil within its hierarchy.

In the April 9, 2012 issue of *Newsweek* magazine, in an article titled “The Forgotten Jesus,” the author addresses the reality that organized Christianity has left the simple teachings of Jesus. He states, “Christianity has been destroyed by politics, priests, and get-rich evangelists.” He then boldly admonishes, “Ignore them, and embrace Him.” The simple teachings of Jesus, the author says, include such things as: love one another, even your enemies; forgive those who sin against you; do not pursue, but sacrifice, material wealth; do not seek power over others; avoid violence with your fellow-man; love the great God who created us in his image. Such doctrines are the essence of the teaching and example Jesus gave to us to live by as a follower of him. Yet, how different from these principles is the legacy of Christendom for much of the past two thousand years, and which continues unabated today.

POLITICIZING RELIGION

The author of the above-referenced article asks these deeply probing questions about religious faith and politics: “What does it matter how strictly you proclaim your belief in various doctrines if you do not live as these doctrines demand? What is politics if not a dangerous temptation toward controlling others rather than reforming oneself?” He goes on to say that in this country today, politics and religion are mixed together to the point of saturation. Each side of the political aisle has brought religion, and the name of God, to foster and promote their respective agendas. From abortion to health care, from justifying war to taking credit for peace,

politics has embraced the mixture of religious issues into its unending and wearying rhetoric.

For many, the incessant mixing of politics and religion has turned them to a deep distrust of the political powers that be, as well as of those who wish to be in power, but who are not at present. Not surprisingly, many also have turned away from mainstream religion—some to meditation and yoga, others to self-help, still others to various methods of obtaining “spirituality,” and an ever-increasing number simply to atheism.

PROSPERITY GOSPEL

The *Newsweek* article points out that although the Catholic and traditional Protestant denominations have declined rapidly in recent decades, at least partially filling the vacuum has been Evangelical Protestantism and, in particular, Televangelism. One of the more recent themes of these movements is the embracing of, as the author says, “a gospel of prosperity.” Well-known televangelist and author Joel Osteen is quoted as saying, “God wants to increase you financially, by giving you promotions, fresh ideas, creativity. . . . Think big. Think increase. Think abundance. Think more than enough.” Other widely-followed evangelists have preached much the same thing.

While the desire for God’s blessings is well and proper, one must wonder at the fact that such a “prosperity doctrine” was never taught by Jesus and the Apostles. Neither was it the way they lived. Note these numerous statements from the Master concerning earthly treasure and riches. “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where

moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” “Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. . . . Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.” “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” (Matt. 6:19-21; 19:21,23; 16:24) Concerning himself, Jesus humbly said, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”—Matt. 8:20

The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to Timothy, warned him, and us, about the deceitfulness of riches, and beyond that, the evil of coveting such things. He says, “Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”—I Tim. 6:6-10

It is clear from the above words of Jesus and Paul, as well as many other statements of the Scriptures, that God is not the author of such a “gospel of prosperity.” Yet, it is very popular today among

many professing Christians. This is because it is what they want to hear. Man wants to hear their ministers counsel them to seek wealth. They want to hear it said that “God wants to increase you financially.” At the same time, man does not want to be taught about sacrifice, to deny themselves, or to understand the dangers of seeking earthly riches. Quite happily then, many evangelists speak of the things which their hearers desire most to hear, though they foster greed, selfishness, and pride.

SOCIAL GOSPEL

Another “gospel” of today which has gained much popularity is what might be termed the “social gospel.” In part, at least, this is as a result of the traditional church’s failures over the centuries to meet the pastoral needs of their members. The social gospel can perhaps be best described by using the current example of a Protestant “mega-church” located in a large metropolitan area. A recent visit to this church’s website noted many activities and services which, like the gospel of prosperity, are a far cry from the simple church organization and operation taught by Jesus and the Apostles. The website states that over fifteen thousand attend their Sunday services, and they incorporate a staff of over one hundred fifty people in various capacities. Their church facilities encompass over 160,000 square feet (the equivalent of more than three football fields), and when built several years ago cost \$42 million to construct. So large is their attendance that local police are required to direct traffic before and after their services. In addition to “normal” church services, a glance at their church

calendar reveals these other scheduled activities in coming weeks: an arts camp; classes on parenting; community service events; an “evening of Broadway;” and a guest motivational speaker. Finally, the website notes that services include a full band, and boasts that a restaurant is also part of the church facility.

Here again, we wonder at such numbers, size, cost, and the many activities outside the pattern given to us of the simple meetings held in the homes of the Early Church members. While the activities mentioned above are not in themselves wrong, and, in fact, are in many ways admirable, the environment created by these things has resulted in “going to church” becoming more of a social event than one of real spiritual learning and development. The Apostle Paul criticized the church at Corinth because of this very thing. Their meetings together had become a social event, of eating and drinking, and not of worshipping the Lord. He chided them, saying, “When you come together it is not for the better but for the worse Have you not houses to take your meals in? or have you no respect for the church of God? . . . What am I to say to you? am I to give you praise? certainly not.”—I Cor. 11:17,22, *Bible in Basic English*

Jesus counseled the woman at the well concerning the way in which God should be worshipped. He said, “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:23,24) Stephen, when witnessing before

the high priest, testified that big buildings made with human hands did not constitute the dwelling place of God. "Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?"—Acts 7:48,49

CRISIS IN CHRISTIANITY

The author of the *Newsweek* article concludes that Christianity is in crisis. Yet, a recent poll shows a large majority of Americans still believe in a higher power. The real crisis, the author suggests, is with the Christian institutions themselves—their ideas and priorities. Quoting his concluding thoughts: "I have no concrete idea how Christianity will wrestle free of its current crisis, of its distractions and temptations, and above all its enmeshment with the things of this world. . . . Living each day doing what we can to fulfill God's will, is more vital than ever. . . . We need radical spiritual change."

CONDITIONS FORETOLD

One of the prophecies which foretold of the conditions which would come upon churchianity is the parable of the wheat and the tares. This parable is recorded in Matthew 13:24-30, and Jesus' explanation is set forth in verses 38-43 of the same chapter. In the parable, Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field." His explanation is, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom." The "sowing" of this good seed—the children of the kingdom—by the Son of man is a reference to Jesus'

work of establishing the church, beginning with his apostles.

What a meaningful title Jesus gave to his faithful followers—"the children of the kingdom." Jesus came to earth to fulfill all the wonderful kingdom promises of the Bible. His death as the Redeemer, his resurrection, his Second Coming [Greek, Presence], and the establishing of his kingdom, are all related to the divine kingdom plan. Those called to follow Jesus during this present Gospel Age are promised that, if faithful, they will live and reign with him in his kingdom. We can think of no other title which would so aptly identify the wheat class of the parable.

TARES SOWN

The parable continues: "While men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also." Jesus explains: "The tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the Devil." The Devil is the prince of this world, and has opposed the outworking of the divine plan in every way he could. In this parable, he is seen sowing tares among the wheat in an effort to choke out and destroy "the children of the kingdom."

Tares are an imitation of wheat, and the contrast in the parable is between those who are imbued with the true hope of Christ's kingdom, and those who, throughout the age, have espoused efforts to set up a counterfeit kingdom of their own making. The church-state systems of Europe were part of the fruitage of these efforts. The social and prosperity

gospels of today are another. Noble men and women throughout the age have devoted time and energy to the various efforts which have been designed to set up Christ's kingdom without Christ. They have called their institutions "Christendom"—Christ's kingdom—but in reality these efforts have not had the divine approval. Those who have unwittingly served Satan in these various undertakings are quite properly described in the parable as "children of the wicked one," not because they are morally wicked, but because they have cooperated, and continue to cooperate, in efforts instigated by Satan.

THE HARVEST

In the parable, the servants of the householder ask if they should uproot the tares from the field, to which the reply is given, "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." Jesus' explanation of this segment of the parable is, "The harvest is the end of the world [age]; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [age]. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth [great disappointment]. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

The closing lines of the parable are of special importance to us because they relate to the culmination

of the Lord's work during the period of time in his plan which we speak of as the Gospel Age. Jesus said that in the end of this age there would be a "harvest" in which the tares would be gathered into bundles and burned, and the wheat class ultimately would "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

The tares are said to be burned in a furnace of fire. Fire is one of the symbols used in the Bible to portray the great time of destructive trouble which would come upon the world at the end of this age. Every aspect of Satan's world is destroyed in this trouble, including the tares of the parable. This does not imply their destruction as individuals, but as tares. When the "fire" of this day of the Lord shall have accomplished its full purpose, there will no longer be those who, in the name of Christ, attempt to reform and rule the world through their own fallen efforts. The individuals who were part of these "tare" systems, during Christ's earthly kingdom, will have their eyes opened to a knowledge of God's true plan and purpose for mankind. They will then see that his plan and kingdom are infinitely superior to any of their former efforts to bring peace and happiness to the families of the earth.

When wheat is harvested and put in the barn, the season's work is accomplished, for the wheat is now ready to be used. The work of the Gospel Age has been to develop a class who would prove worthy to live and reign with Christ in his kingdom. In the parable, Jesus explains the culmination and objective of this work as the wheat shining forth "as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." This

will be the reward of all the wheat class, “the children of the kingdom.”

The parable shows that there are two aspects of the work of harvest—the gathering and burning of the tares, and the harvesting of the wheat. According to the parable, both these aspects of the harvest are accomplished by “the angels.” The Greek word here translated “angels” simply means “messengers.” In a number of instances in the New Testament, this word is applied to human servants of God, and it is also used to identify those on the spirit plane who are “sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” (Heb. 1:13,14) This word is properly used to describe any messenger of God, regardless of the plane of life on which he exists.

JEWISH AGE HARVEST

There was a “harvest” at the close of the Jewish Age. Jesus referred to this when he said to his disciples, “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.” (Matt. 9:37,38) The laborers, or “messengers,” in that harvest were the faithful disciples of Christ, Jesus being the Chief Reaper of that harvest. The work of that harvest was accomplished largely by the proclamation of the Gospel of the kingdom. This kingdom Gospel appealed to the devout of Israel who cherished the Messianic kingdom hope. These were the wheat of that harvest, and they were also the laborers in the harvest.

John the Baptist said of Jesus, the Chief Reaper in the Jewish Age harvest, that he would “gather his wheat into the garner; [and] . . . burn up the

chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Matt. 3:12) The Scriptures do not refer to wheat and tares in the Jewish Age harvest, but to wheat and “chaff,” and the chaff is shown to be destroyed by fire. This undoubtedly is a reference to the severe trouble brought upon the nation of Israel by Titus and his army around the year A.D. 70. In John the Baptist’s prophecy, he speaks of Jesus as being responsible for it. The pure wheat of that time became the nucleus of “the children of the kingdom,” who have been developed during the Gospel Age.

The harvesting of the wheat at the close of the Jewish Age was accomplished by the proclamation of the kingdom Gospel by Jesus’ disciples. This is also true at the close of the Gospel Age. The wheat class now are the angels, or messengers, to gather the wheat, just as it was then. We believe that this work of harvest has been going on in the earth for many years, the evidence of this being that there are many groups of believers throughout the world who are better identified by the expression, “the children of the kingdom,” than in any other way. While churchianity in general has turned to the social gospel, the prosperity gospel, community service, and other activities aimed at bettering the world, this little flock of “children of the kingdom” busy themselves in continuing to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom, rejoicing in the realization that the Messianic kingdom in all its power and great glory is near.

JESUS AGAIN THE CHIEF REAPER

Just as Jesus was present at the close of the Jewish Age, and was then the Chief Reaper, so it is now. He was then present in the flesh, but he gave his

flesh for the life of the world, and in his resurrection was exalted to the divine nature. The Scriptures indicate that his Second Presence was to be as a powerful divine being, invisible to human eyes. As the Chief Reaper in the present harvest he has directed the efforts of his people in the flesh as they have gone forth as “angels,” or messengers, to reach those whose ears of understanding have been opened to hear and appreciate the harvest message, the Gospel of the kingdom.

One of the prophecies of our Lord’s Second Presence is recorded in Revelation 14:14: “I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man [the sower of the good seed], having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.” This is highly symbolic language. Having a “crown” on his head suggests that “the Son of man” returns for the purpose of setting up his long-promised kingdom. Having a sharp sickle in his hand indicates that he is indeed the Chief Reaper in the harvest, which is the end of the age. In verse 15, he is bidden to thrust in the sickle and reap, “for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

As we noted in connection with the Jewish Age harvest, Jesus was the Chief Reaper in the case of both the wheat and the chaff. This, we think, is also true now with respect to the wheat and the tares. The “children of the kingdom” on this side of the veil during the Gospel Age harvest have had, as “reapers,” a supportive role together with the Chief Reaper in the bundling of the tares. This role has been centered in the fact that their preaching of the same Gospel message which has

caused many to come out of the “tare” systems has had the opposite effect on many others. Those who have not had hearing ears and have chosen to remain in those systems have, in a sense, bundled themselves more tightly to them. At the same time, the systems themselves have scoffed at the message of Truth and also bundled themselves closer together, against the Chief Reaper and his fellow reapers. This is all in preparation for the final destruction, or “burning,” of the tare systems to be accomplished not too long hence.

The plans and purposes of God are moving grandly forward. The Scriptures assure us that when all the wheat is gathered into the “barn,” “the children of the kingdom” will “shine forth as the sun” in that wonderful Messianic kingdom of promise, and that through that kingdom all the families of the earth will be blessed. Having this blessed assurance, we need not fear over the increasing chaos and confusion of this present world, whether in religious circles or elsewhere. By faith we rest in the knowledge that the Chief Reaper of this present harvest period will, in his work of preparation, direct all circumstances to a glorious conclusion through the establishment of his kingdom. ■

“Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Make me go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

“So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.”

—Psalm 119:33,35,42

Rules for Just Living

Key Verse: *“Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.”*
—Exodus 23:2

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 22:1-23:9

WE HAVE RECORDED IN these chapters of Exodus God's giving of the Law Covenant to Israel, his chosen people. In particular, the way to keep or to follow God's instructions in matters pertaining to daily life activities was explained in detail in these accounts. These laws contained provisions to protect the weak, the stranger, and the servant. The difficulty then and now is that the world

has been going on the downward road to destruction. This downward walk is based on selfishness, which is opposite to the teachings of the Law given to Israel, as well as to the law of love that the footstep followers of the Lord should be living in accord with. As has always been the case, some in the world live on a little higher plane, and with others the plane of character is lower. By this we mean that some are able to limit their selfishness. They make an attempt to look to the lines of justice and exercise some self-restraint. Others fall totally into injustice and dishonesty. In either case, however, the general tendency is downward. “Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.”—Matt. 7:13

“New Creatures” in Christ Jesus must follow a higher standard. They should never go below justice and honesty, and must seek as much as possible to rise above even the

highest worldly standard, toward perfect love. The true child of God should daily strive to live up to Jesus' words in the next verse, "Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (vs. 14) Few "find" the narrow way due to the fact that all of mankind are born under more or less adverse conditions and in unfavorable environments. As a result, the majority of mankind daily lose more and more of their power of resistance to wrongdoing, and continue to fall further away from knowing the true and living God. The Lord's footstep followers, however, are admonished, "Rather seek ye the kingdom of God."—Luke 12:31

It is the fault of the present system, in which people feel the constant pressure of competition against one another, and which exists under the influence of Satan, that so many of mankind become "followers" who go along with the crowd, and as a result make wrong decisions. Such is the flawed thinking of today's society. Throughout man's history it seems that people have most often tried to take the so-called "easy way out" of their problems, in turn, falling deeper into sin and moral decline. Truly, the Apostle Paul said, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."—Rom. 3:23

No power can correct, control, or alter all of the difficulties that exist in the world today except the solution which God has promised—the coming kingdom of his dear Son. The words of exhortation directed to the church class at the present time from Ephesians 5:1 will then also be true for the world: "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." This will be a reality in Christ's Millennial kingdom, in which mankind will be liberated from the bondage and curse of Adamic condemnation. "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." (Jer. 31:29) Man will be out from under the control of the great Adversary, Satan, and the law of that day, which will be taught and enforced, will be the rule of love. ■

Living as God's Just People

Key Verse: *"The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God."*
Leviticus 19:34

Selected Scripture:
Leviticus 19:9-18,
33-37

CONTINUING OUR STUDY

concerning the giving of God's Law to his people, today's lesson considers his provisions for dealing with those who were not of the children of Israel. It is also important to note that these portions of the Law took into consideration provisions for dealing with the needy, enemies, foreigners, animals, the aged, servants, and, in particular, strangers. They were the subject of special legislation, as we see from the following verses. "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates." (Deut. 24:14) "Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Exod. 23:9) Other important laws in these accounts dealt with a person's neighbors. "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: . . . but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD." (Lev. 19:13,14) All of these laws, set up under the Heavenly Father's direction to Moses, were designed to be strictly observed, and enforced according to the letter.

These very specific commands were not given to spiritual Israel, but to natural Israel only. However, it would be impossible to think of God as not giving to his spirit-begotten children similar instructions of how to lead a life pleasing to him. If we have been begotten of God's Holy Spirit, and are being looked upon by our Heavenly Father as his children, we are required to follow the teachings of his Word. Each of us can, through these commands given to natural Israel, gain a clearer understanding of the concepts of right and wrong on any subject relating to our fellowman. Indeed, we have this shown to us in the commandment which is a sum total of so many others—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Lev. 19:18) Being begotten of God's Holy Spirit, the spirit of love toward all, we can, through a study of these commandments, learn how to exercise his loving disposition towards others more and more effectively and faithfully.

By the Lord's grace we should seek to apply these beneficial instructions from the Father, that we may be more fully conformed to his perfect standard in our hearts. Additionally, we are to make every effort to apply these things, so far as possible, in our outward conduct toward all with whom we come in contact. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (James 1:22) We have been called to bear much fruit, to walk the narrow way of self-denial, self-sacrifice, and character development. We should be seeking for the doctrines and principles of the divine Word, and build our faith structure upon that true and firm foundation. "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully." (Jer. 23:28) This scripture shows the importance of obeying the good tidings of God's Word and then faithfully speaking forth, by our words and actions, its good results to others. The outcome of this kind of obedience is shown to us in the words: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."—Gal. 6:10 ■

Celebrate Jubilee

Key Verse: *“Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.”*

—Leviticus 25:10

Selected Scripture:
Leviticus 25:8-55

these points. First, all of the laws were made public, which prevented designing men from successfully tampering with the rights of the people. These laws were revealed to the people in such a manner that even the poorest and most uneducated would not be ignorant of them. As part of this, it was the duty of the priests to read the laws to the people at their septennial festivals. “At the end of every seven years, . . . When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.”—Deut. 31:10,11

IT IS WORTHY TO NOTE, AS

we begin this lesson, the unfortunate fact that the laws of our supposed advanced civilization do not more carefully provide that the rich and poor stand on a common level of justice and accountability before civil authority and law. Absolutely no distinction or favoritism was allowed under God’s Law given through Moses to Israel. As for the protection of the people from the dangers associated with some becoming very poor and others becoming excessively wealthy and powerful, no other national law has ever been enacted which so carefully guarded

In addition to its reading by the priests every seven years, the Law of Moses provided for a restitution every fiftieth year. This is referred to as the Jubilee year. This feature of the Law was designed to prevent the loss and alienation of property from those of the poor who had been forced to sell their possessions, thereby also preventing its accumulation in the hands of only the rich few. (Lev. 25:9,13-23) Every fiftieth year was to be a Jubilee year, when all property was to be returned to its original owner. Beyond this, the Jubilee law taught that all the people were to consider themselves as brethren, and to act accordingly one to the other, regardless of status or wealth. In this restitution process, the people were to assist each other without compensation, and not to charge interest on money that had been lent to another person. "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury."—Exod. 22:25; See also Lev. 25:36

In God's plan, there is to be a larger fulfillment with respect to this Jubilee or restitution. This Law Covenant arrangement pointed forward to the "glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." (Luke 2:10) The fulfillment of these glad tidings to "all people" will be accomplished through a "restitution of all things." (Acts 3:19) This process, under the administration of Christ's earthly kingdom, will be marked by man's release from original Adamic sin. The Jubilee, points forward to the climax of God's plan, when the whole work of restitution will be completed at the end of the kingdom. Every creature in heaven and on earth will give praise to "him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. 5:13) The Christ, head and body, shall have accomplished God's work on behalf of mankind to its fullest measure, and shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father. "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, . . . and I will remember their sin no more."—Jer. 31:34 ■

The Heart of the Law

Key Verse: “Now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?”

—Deuteronomy
10:12,13

Selected Scripture:
Deuteronomy 10:1-
22;16:18-20

FOLLOWING THE GIVING

of the Law Covenant to Israel, the Heavenly Father asked his chosen people to be loyal to him, to love him, and to walk in his ways. To do this, there are requirements that are necessary for God’s people, both then and now, to keep close to their hearts. First, if we desire to “walk in his ways,” we must show an appreciation for his greatness, understanding our own insignificance and insufficiency without his guidance. We must show our love and thanksgiving for his graciousness. We then are to look away from our own thoughts and plans, and allow our minds to dwell on the grandeur of God’s character, and the wisdom of his ways. This will lead us to have a proper respect for God and for his divine arrangements.

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.” (Prov. 9:10) A proper understanding of the word “fear” in this verse reveals that we are to reverence our Heavenly Father in order to gain true wisdom. These words also imply that our reverence for God will increase as we come

to know more and more of his character. This matter is very important in our dealings with the Heavenly Father, as pointed out to us in Deuteronomy 10:20: "Thou shalt fear [reverence] the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name." This is also shown in the words, "Fear [reverence] God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of a man." (Eccles. 12:13) These scriptures, and many others, further point out to us that we must keep our hearts and motives as pure as possible. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Prov. 4:23

We call to mind these words of the Master: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matt. 22:37-40) Our covenant with God is that we love him with all of our heart, mind, and strength. We are to live up to this standard in the spirit of our minds to the greatest extent possible, and are only able to do so by divine assistance. We are to desire to live a life that is true and loyal to the merit of the precious blood which bought us, and which covers our unavoidable deficiencies. "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."—Isa. 61:10

As we strive to love the Heavenly Father with all our being, we should also be laying our lives down for the brethren. This attitude is pleasing to our Lord, as we see from his words: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." (John 15:13,14) Following Jesus in this way means that we will seek to walk in his paths, and strive, as he did, to take our instructions from God. In summary, we call to mind these words: "The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether."—Ps. 19:9 ■

Judgment of the House of God

“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? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.”
—I Peter 4:17-19

OUR FIRST PARENTS WERE

subjected to a test of obedience to God’s law. When they failed to obey, they were sentenced to death. Judgment came upon father Adam—in Paul’s words, a judgment to condemnation. (Rom. 5:16,18) That period in Eden from the creation of man until his fall and condemnation we might speak of as Adam’s judgment day. It ended in his loss of the right to live. From that time until the First Advent of Jesus, a group, or class, of God’s servants had the privilege of proving their obedience to God. They were judged upon the basis of their

faith, a faith which was demonstrated by works. Paul informs us that they received the testimony

that they pleased God. (Heb. 11:2) Then there will be the coming thousand-year judgment day for the whole world of mankind. Paul spoke of this period of judgment in his sermon on Mars' hill.—Acts 17:31

In our text, Peter speaks of still another day, or period of judgment. It is, he explains, the judgment of the house of God. The house of God is his family of sons. Jesus is the head of this house of sons (Heb. 3:6), and associated with him are his dedicated followers. Beginning with Jesus, this group become sons, or children, of God through the begetting of the Holy Spirit. Those begotten of the Spirit who prove faithful are ultimately born of the Spirit and become divine sons of God. Jesus was the first of these. When the last member of this house of sons has, through Spirit birth, been exalted to the divine nature and associated with Jesus, this “house of the Lord” will be established. Then the peoples of the earth will, through this channel, receive the long-promised blessings of the Messianic kingdom, their judgment period.—Mic. 4:1-4

The entire period of the Gospel Age, during which this house of God is being selected from the world, is one of testing and trial. A final decision, a judgment, is rendered by God with respect to each one composing this group. If the decision is favorable, they will hear, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”—Matt. 25:21,23

Although Jesus was perfect—“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners” (Heb. 7:26)—

nevertheless, it was necessary that he also be tried as to his worthiness of the highly exalted position which had been promised to him in the arrangements of God. He was tempted, or tested, in all things just as we are, “yet without sin.” (Heb. 4:15) On the Mount of Transfiguration, near the close of his ministry, God said of Jesus, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”—Matt. 17:5

There is no doubt that God was well pleased with Jesus right to the full end of his earthly course. The important question for us is whether or not he is, and will be, well pleased with us. We are now in the testing time to determine whether or not we will prove faithful to the Lord. These tests are severe. Peter states that even the righteous are scarcely saved. The meaning of the word “scarcely” as used in our text is “with difficulty.” This suggests that proving our worthiness is not an easy matter. Those who are aspiring to live and reign with Christ understand how true this is.

THE TEST OF SUFFERING

No one wants to suffer; we all shrink from it. There are many who are unacquainted with the plan of God who feel that as God’s people they should be protected from suffering. When they are not, they become discouraged, and many lose their faith. This should not be so with us. If we do wrong and recognize the discipline of the Lord, we should have no difficulty in accepting it. Peter, however, shows us a higher form of suffering: “It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.” (I Pet. 3:17) Jesus himself suffered and eventually was put to death.

Jesus went about doing good, yet he suffered for it. Indeed, his entire sacrifice, including its consummation on the cross, was in the nature of doing good unto all. Thus it was that, in harmony with the Father's plan, he provided redemption for the entire sin-cursed and dying world of mankind. So far as his earthly life was concerned, the reward was suffering. It is our privilege to follow in his steps, not expecting the praise of men. This is indeed a severe test. It is one of the tests we must victoriously pass in this our judgment day if we are to live and reign with Christ.

When Paul was in prison in Rome, expecting to be executed, he wrote to Timothy, "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." (II Tim. 2:11,12) In the preceding chapter of this epistle, Paul mentions many who had turned against him, perhaps because they did not wish to expose themselves to danger from the Roman authorities. On the other hand, he mentions Onesiphorus. Paul explains, "He oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me."—chap. 1:15-17

Paul was one of the Lord's little ones, and a failure to stand with him in his hour of trial was like denying the Lord himself. This was a test that came upon many in those days of the Early Church, and some of them failed. Others passed the test, such as Onesiphorus and Timothy. A similar test is upon us today. True, today none of our number is incarcerated, awaiting execution for the promulgation of the Truth. However, the Gospel of Christ, and

those who proclaim it, are still unpopular. Are we gladly taking our position with those who, because they are letting their light shine, are incurring the ill will and ridicule of the world, or do we prefer the friendship of the world, which is enmity toward God?

NOT STRANGE

Again Peter wrote, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (I Pet. 4:12,13) Note Peter's reference to "the fiery trial which is to try you." The purpose of the trial is to "try" or test us in this our judgment day.

Peter indicates that a successful passing of this trial should be manifested in our rejoicing. We do not rejoice in the trial itself, but our rejoicing is in the fact that we see in this experience evidence that we are associated with Christ in his suffering. To those who understand the plan of God this means that if they continue faithful under trial, faithful even unto death, they will have the privilege of living and reigning with Christ. Truly, this is something in which to rejoice.

If we think it "strange" that a loving God should permit us to suffer, it would reveal a lack of appreciation for his loving providence in our lives, providence which has drawn us to him and given us the desire to devote our lives to him. The remedy for this is study and prayer, to become better acquainted with the divine purpose for the present age. When we do this, we will realize afresh that we have been

called to suffer and to die with the Master. Grasping this point clearly, we will no longer think it strange that we are not shielded from trials.

FAITH ON TRIAL

From I Peter 1:7, we learn that our faith is on trial, and we know that without a steadfast faith we cannot please God. Peter uses a vivid illustration, likening the trial of our faith to the testing of gold in a fire. If our faith passes this fiery test, Peter indicates that we will “be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” In other words, we will receive the approval of our Lord and be found worthy to be exalted to “glory and honour and immortality.”—Rom. 2:7

The trial of our faith is a test, not only of our intellectual knowledge of divine truth, but also of our heart reliance upon God. In both respects, the true child of God will find himself severely tested. Let us see to it that every item of our faith is supported by a “Thus saith the Lord.” Tradition and speculation do not constitute a firm foundation for our faith. Let us study the precious doctrines of the Truth and obtain a clear understanding of every element of the divine plan. Only thus will we become rooted and grounded in the faith.

We should also continue to develop a heart reliance on the “great and precious promises” of the divine Word. A faith that has stood the tests of fiery ordeal and has come off victorious is very precious in the sight of the Heavenly Father. When we pass through a fiery trial and still retain not only our faith in the doctrines, but also our confidence in God and reliance upon his promises, then our characters

have grown more Christlike. Hence, we are more pleasing to God.

This is one of the objectives of our testing. God has foreordained that everyone who lives and reigns with Christ must be conformed to the image of his Son. Like Jesus, they must be willing and glad to lay down their lives in divine service. Like him, they must be filled with the spirit of love and manifest that love in patiently doing good to others, daily adding to their characters the fruits and graces of the Spirit.

We are not necessarily continuously exposed to fiery trials. There are days of calmness in which we can also grow strong in the Lord. A variety of experiences is needed to fit and prepare us for joint-heirship in the kingdom. The test is to recognize and to rejoice in all the experiences which the Lord permits to come into our consecrated lives as those which are the best for us as New Creatures, and to be thankful for them. Let us then rejoice in the calmer, more peaceful days, and during these periods endeavor to fortify ourselves for the trial times which sooner or later we will experience if the Lord is truly dealing with us.

When the trials come, when we find ourselves again in the furnace being tried as gold is tried in the fire, we will need to be courageous and patient. It will be then that we will need especially to call to mind the promises, and to lay hold upon them with full faith that they belong to us. We will then be able to maintain our heart reliance on the Lord and in his ability to care for us, not casting away our confidence, knowing that it "hath great recompence of reward."—Heb. 10:35

FAITH PRIMARILY TESTED, NOT WORKS

What God is seeking in us is the development and perfection of our faith. He knows, even as we do, that according to the flesh we are frail and imperfect. The flesh will often cry out against the heat of the fiery trials. An unfaltering faith and full heart reliance upon the Lord and his wisdom, justice, love, and power are the important qualities that our Heavenly Father is seeking. Do we trust him fully, and will we continue to so trust him, regardless of the experiences through which he permits us to pass? Job said of God, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Job 13:15) That should be our attitude, and must continue to be our attitude.

God primarily tests our faith rather than our works because, as members of the fallen race, it would be impossible for us to consistently perform works pleasing to him. He knows, of course, that if our faith in him and in his ways is strong, we will endeavor the best we can to bring our works into line with his standards of righteousness. For those who are sincere in their effort to do this, he has provided the robe of Christ's righteousness to cover their fleshly imperfections.

We can, however, exercise a triumphant faith. This does not mean necessarily a perfect faith, but rather a faith that will continue to trust God even though we may not always understand the meaning of his providences. Our faith may well be stronger at one time than another, but the victorious follower of the Master, who passes the test of this trial time, will never turn his back on the Lord. He will always trust the God of his

salvation and continue to believe that his ways are best.

Our faith will be in proportion to our knowledge of the divine character. The one who knows God best will trust him most. We learn to know God through his loving plan which is set forth in his Word. If we did not know why God has permitted the long reign of sin and death to blight the happiness of his human creatures we would find it difficult to have faith in him. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of God as one who delights in exercising loving-kindness in the earth. If we did not know the great divine plan of the ages, we would be unable to see much evidence of God's loving-kindness.—Jer. 9:24

SATAN'S DEVICES

Just as the Lord permitted Satan to test the faith and obedience of our first parents, so he allows Satan to test his "house" during the present Gospel Age. Satan has succeeded in deceiving the whole world of mankind, with the result that now, in the end of the age, when the kingdom of Christ is soon to be established, there is little faith left in the earth. (Luke 18:8) Almost the entire world has turned away from God, especially the true God of love who is revealed to us in the Bible.

Satan is ever on the alert to turn us away from God by deception, discouragement, and by whatever other means his cunning mind can devise. Those who maintain their faith in God and in the great realities of the divine plan are subjected to tests along other lines. He makes non-fundamental viewpoints seem important, and, when the Lord's

people cannot agree upon these matters, Satan seeks to drive a wedge between them. He suggests to some that they are standing for principles, when as a matter of fact they may be standing merely for a preferred interpretation of non-fundamental details, or perhaps for traditions.

Satan also endeavors to weaken the faith of the Lord's people by causing slanderous attacks to be made against some of the brethren. Sadly, he may even use fellow-members of the prospective body of Christ to spread false rumors against others. This is a disrupting influence in the house of God and is a test upon all who may be involved in it. Under these circumstances, let us remember that it is God who has called his people and provided for their justification through Christ. As long as he is dealing with them, we should love and cherish them as our people. Let us never join hands with Satan as accusers of our brethren whom God has chosen.

PRIDE BEFORE DESTRUCTION

Paul wrote, "I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Rom. 12:3) It was Lucifer's pride and ambition that caused him to fall and become Satan, the great adversary of God. There are few of the Lord's people who are not in one way or another subjected to this test. Paul presents this danger as thinking of oneself more highly than one ought to think.

The remedy for this is to "think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of

faith.” Our faith in God and in his plan will cause us to realize that he has not called us unto this holy calling because we were better or more brilliant than others. Therefore, we have no real cause for pride, or for a high estimation of ourselves or our abilities.

Pride is not an easy thing to detect in ourselves. We discover it by noting carefully our attitudes and viewpoints, particularly as they relate to our fellow members in the body of Christ. If we find ourselves habitually criticizing others—if we feel that we could do most things better than other brethren can do them—then we are very likely afflicted with the disease of pride. Likewise, if we surmise that our viewpoints on certain non-fundamental subjects of the Truth are more correct than the viewpoints of others, and if we become irritated when others disagree with us, this also may be a symptom of pride.

A “Thus saith the Lord” should be the end of all controversy, and the source for all our viewpoints of divine truth. If we are proud of heart we may well insist upon those things that the Scriptures either do not support or, in some cases, do not address plainly. When Lucifer became proud he lost his respect for the Lord’s viewpoint, and persisted in following his own desires and inclinations. If we are watchful of our own hearts we will not permit pride to gain such a firm hold as this upon us. Rather, we will purge our hearts from this evil, right from its small beginnings.

One of the tests upon us in this, our day of judgment, is that we be on the alert for the slightest manifestation in our hearts of this great enemy,

pride. Let us remember that “pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” (Prov. 16:18) Surely we do not want to fall away from the Lord’s favor.

OVERCOMING THE WORLD

Another test upon us is that we overcome the world and its spirit. Jesus said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33) The Lord surely wants us to overcome the world. Selfishness is one of the characteristics of the world, and selfishness manifests itself in many unsightly forms. Let us endeavor diligently to rid our minds and hearts of every selfish ambition, and to be filled instead with the spirit of love, which is the spirit of the Lord. Thus we will be better prepared to pass the test in this time when judgment is upon the house of God.

From whatever standpoint we view this aspect of the present work of the Lord with his people, we realize that we will need to muster all the determination we can. Paul wrote, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity [love].” (I Cor. 16:13,14) If we do this faithfully unto the end of the way, we will pass the test. Thus, by the Lord’s grace, we will qualify for that “great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.”—Heb. 2:3

THE UNGODLY

The judgment which begins with the house of God is his judgment of the church. As we have noted, Peter indicates the severity of this judgment, that the righteous “scarcely” are saved. Then he asks

the question, "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Peter does not answer this question. However, other texts of scripture do answer it (see earlier reference to Acts 17:31), and the answer is that the whole unconverted world of mankind will appear for trial and judgment in the world's future judgment day of a thousand years.

At that time, those of the house of God who successfully passed the testings of the present judgment period will be associated with Jesus in the work of judging the world of mankind. This great work will be part of their association with him as kings to rule over and bless the people. This is one of the blessed rewards which will come to all the faithful of the present age. May this, and the other joys which are set before us, enable us to be judged faithful as we are now passing through the fiery trials which the Lord in his wisdom sees to be needful for us. When we have fully proven our faith, we will hear his blessed "Well done: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." ■

*May the joy of his resurrection
Fill your heart as you journey along.
May the peace he bequeathed be your portion,
May his love in your heart be a song.*

*May the hope thus begun become brighter,
May your faith in him firmer be,
Until soon in that first resurrection
His glorious face you shall see.*

—Songs of the Nightingale

A Lesson from the Life of Daniel

“He is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth.”
—***Daniel 6:26,27***

THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF the Book of Daniel records how the prophet, because of his wisdom and prudence, was exalted to a position of great importance in the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. We read in the first few verses that King Darius set one hundred and twenty princes over the kingdom. The *Revised Version* and *Rotherham* translations call them “satraps,” which means a governor of a province. Over these one hundred and twenty provincial governors were set three presidents, or confidential ministers, of whom Daniel was first. To these ministers the provincial governors were to render an account, that the king “should have no damage” or should suffer no loss.

The king became so pleased with Daniel, “because an excellent spirit was in him,” that Daniel “was preferred above the presidents and princes; . . . and

the king thought to set him over the whole realm.” (Dan. 6:3) We are not quite sure that the king acted upon this thought, but it is worthy of note that some of these ancient kings recognized character and merit. This good judgment was shown by Nebuchadnezzar when he recognized Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as servants of the true God and gave them still higher positions in the empire.—chap. 3:30

Belshazzar also took no offense at Daniel’s interpretation of the writing on the wall, but highly honored and rewarded him for his faithful, plain, and outspoken words. (chap. 5:29) When Darius of the Medes and Persians overcame Babylon, far from destroying all the rulers, including Daniel, he apparently spared all except the king, and gave Daniel a very high position in the empire. Doubtless, as Daniel was a prophet, the providence of God was also in this, but the king manifestly appreciated his good qualities.

Holding such an exalted office as one of the three presidents of the empire, Daniel no doubt stood in the way of many who sought office. Additionally, as a man of unimpeachable character, he would be in a position to defeat many schemes for personal enrichment and advancement, for those eastern countries were noted for plundering and dishonesty. Thus, Daniel was sure to have made many secret enemies who would seek his downfall. From the narrative, it appears that these enemies, many of whom were prominent in official life, had watched in vain to find some real cause of complaint. They finally concluded that if fault would be found at all, it must be because of his religion. The testimony of his enemies was, “We shall not find any occasion

against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.”—chap. 6:5

RIGHTEOUS PERSECUTED

We are reminded here of the words of Jesus in John 3:19: “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” Later, as recorded in John 15:19, he told his disciples, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” Paul gives a similar testimony in II Timothy 3:12: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”

It has been truly said, “Whosoever does well and is faithful and true, while others are dishonest and false, must expect to be opposed and hated; every effort will be made to injure his character and drag him into the mire, and to make it appear that he is no better than those who assail him.” This was certainly true in the case of Daniel. The enemies who sought his ruin were indeed filled with the spirit of Satan, whose schemes and plans seemed to come naturally to them.

Very cunningly they counseled the king that the people should recognize his exalted position. Relying on the law of the Medes and Persians, under which no decree that the king had established could be altered or set aside, these plotters succeeded in having the king appoint thirty days in which it would be considered a crime to offer a petition to any person or god other than Darius himself.

It is highly improbable that the king had so false an idea of his own personal importance, or that the officers believed him to be infallible. It was, rather, a matter which they suggested as a piece of statecraft, a fraud upon the people. It was justified, in their perverted judgment, on the grounds of national peace and security. In other words, it would help to impose a desirable restraint upon the masses. This has its counterpart in the principle behind the teaching of certain false doctrines, such as eternal torment. Many intelligent preachers disbelieve this teaching. However, they do not discourage a belief in hell-fire on the part of their hearers, on the principle that a falsehood is justified if beneficial results are hoped to come from it.

ENEMIES HAPPY

Having obtained the king's signature to the new law, the conspirators exulted in the thought that Daniel was at last in their grasp and, in their mind, already practically destroyed. They knew his character so well as to have no doubt that he would be faithful to his religious convictions, and thus furnish them with the opportunity to bring about his downfall. In this they were quite correct, for the account says, "He went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." (Dan. 6:10) It was part of his habit of life to open the window towards Jerusalem and kneel before his God in prayer and thanksgiving.

There is a lesson we can draw from this for ourselves. Psalm 95:6 reads, "O come, let us worship

and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.” A comment on this from *Daily Heavenly Manna* reads, “It is impossible for any Christian to maintain a proper, consistent walk in life, and to build up such a character and faith structure as are represented by the apostle as composed of ‘gold, silver and precious stones’ without prayer; more than this, without regularity in prayer—we would almost be inclined to say, without kneeling in prayer.”

A proper reverential attitude toward our Heavenly Father prompts us in our private devotions to bow down and kneel “before the Lord our maker.” In the busy turmoil of life, to kneel is not always possible, and we must learn to pray even when we cannot kneel in prayer. It has been said that prayer is thinking toward God. Ephesians 5:19 speaks of “making melody in your heart to the Lord,” and this can be done in many everyday situations. When walking along the street we can think toward God, or when waiting in traffic we can think toward God. Prayer is doing everything as for him, and if our mental prayer covers all our daily activities we can indeed “Pray without ceasing.”—I Thess. 5:17

We are not told why Daniel had adopted the habit of private worship in so public a manner as to be generally known to the people. This is a manner quite different from that which Jesus commended to his followers during this age. “Whenever you pray, go into your own room and shut the door; then pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father, he who sees in secret, will recompense you.” (Matt. 6:6, *Weymouth Translation*) Probably, the custom of Babylon was such as to make Daniel’s more open course the reasonable and proper one.

The heathen worship around him was more or less public and visible, and Daniel was not ashamed to let it be known that he turned his face toward Jerusalem, the typical city of God. It illustrated his faithfulness to the true God and his separation from idolatry. He was not satisfied just to close his eyes in prayer after he had retired to rest. He realized that he had a great God who was worthy of reverence and worship. He appreciated that it was a privilege to have communion and fellowship with his Creator.

We, too, recognize that it is a wonderful privilege to worship the God of heaven. We have additionally been granted the wonderful favor of looking to him and addressing him as our Father. We are also encouraged to come to him in time of need.—Heb. 4:15,16

Jesus gave us the formula for successful prayer when he said, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” (John 15:7) The Apostle John added, “This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.”—I John 5:14

According to a prearranged plan, the conspirators assembled at the proper time to witness Daniel’s devotion. They then went to the king to announce that the first one to disobey his decree, and therefore to come under its punishment, was the honored and trusted first minister of the empire, Daniel. They reminded the king that he had said that any man who made a petition to any god or man other than himself should be cast into a den of lions. When the king realized that he had been flattered

into making this decree for the very purpose of destroying his most valued counselor, he was “sore displeased with himself,” and he “set his heart on Daniel to deliver him.”—Dan. 6:14

The king sought every possible way to make void the decree, or to excuse Daniel from its penalty. However, the conspirators were close at hand with their arguments to prove that such a course was quite impossible. “Know, O king,” they said, “that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.” (vs. 15) Darius could find no way of escape. His decree must stand, so he commanded that Daniel be brought and cast into the den of lions. Daniel’s conduct at all times had been noticed and had such an effect on the king that he could express the hope, “Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. (vs. 16) He knew that Daniel worshipped God sincerely and trusted him implicitly, and this so impressed him that he had hope that the God whom Daniel served might somehow deliver him.

Daniel’s life testified not only to his own faithfulness and character, but also to the faithfulness and character of the God he worshipped. We are instructed, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:16) Our lives should be living epistles. Many of our friends and neighbors know God only as they are able to see and appreciate in us the Christian’s character and manner of life.

Daniel’s enemies were not content with having him cast into the den of lions. They were determined that nothing should thwart their evil designs,

so a stone was laid at the mouth of the den, sealed with the seals of the king and of his lords. These wicked men could not tolerate in their midst one whose life was above reproach, or who had, perhaps, on some occasions prevented them from carrying out other evil plans.

We are not told how Daniel passed the night, but we know in whom he trusted. We are also sure that he could pray as fervently in the lions' den as he could in his own chamber. King Darius was troubled in mind, and his sleep went from him. He passed the night in fasting, and it is evident that Daniel had a more peaceful night in the den than the king had in his bed. Very early in the morning Darius went in haste to the den, and cried, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" The reply came, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me."—Dan. 6:20,22

A "ROARING LION"

We are told in I Peter 5:8 of a peril that threatens Christians: "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Daniel had committed himself to the God whom he served, and this is exactly what we are instructed to do. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (vs. 7) The scripture assures us, "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Ps. 34:7

God's restraining power is over everything destructive and hurtful. As God's providence over Daniel permitted him to come under the power of

natural wild beasts, so he sometimes permits his faithful ones now to be exposed to hatred and misrepresentation. This was so in the case of Jesus. He warned his disciples that they would share the same experiences, saying, "They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake."—Luke 21:12

To be near Christ was to be near the fire of persecution. The Book of Acts tells us of James, Stephen, Peter, and Paul, and we know of many others at that time and since who suffered and died because of their faith. Peter, writing at a time when much bitter persecution was raging, wrote, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." (I Pet. 4:12,13) "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."—chap. 2:21

God was able to, and did, deliver Daniel. He is also able to send his "angel" to shut the mouths of "lions" who would injure his people now. Paul testified to God's great keeping power, saying, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 8:38,39

All things are subject to the one whose service we have entered through vows of consecration. In some instances, it may please the Lord to grant a

wonderful deliverance, as in the case of Daniel, while in other cases his providential dealings may result otherwise. He allowed Stephen to be killed by stoning and James to be beheaded by Herod. However, when Peter was in prison awaiting the same fate, an angel was sent to deliver him.

It is God who decides when we shall be delivered and when the enemy shall appear to triumph. We must accept by faith his providence in our lives, being assured that he will grant the necessary strength and grace for every time of need. In the midst of his persecution, Stephen had the peace of God ruling in his heart to such an extent that his face was as the face of an angel. He was calm, serene, and unperturbed, and “he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.”—Acts 7:55

We must learn that godliness, uprightness, and virtue do not exempt one from adversities and ills. Indeed, it is frequently the case that the deeper and more complete the devotion and fidelity to God, the greater the trials. All such suffering for righteousness’ sake is helpful in building up a character fitted for eternity. Those used of the Lord to instruct us have stressed that “we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”—Acts 14:22

GOD’S WILL

To what extent may we look for and expect divine interposition when we are in trouble, trial, or danger? The Scriptures plainly declare that true children of God may confidently look to him for help in time of need. “The steps of a good man are

ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand. . . . For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints.” (Ps. 37:23,24,28) “Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.” (chap. 55:22) Jesus said, “Consider the lilies of the field, . . . if God so clothe the grass of the field, . . . shall he not much more clothe you?” (Matt. 6:28,30) “Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need. . . . Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (vss. 32,33) He also said that God is even mindful of the death of a sparrow, and continued, “Ye are of more value than many sparrows.” (chap. 10:31) The Lord is overruling all the affairs of those who have truly committed themselves to him, and his promise is, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”—Heb. 13:5

GOD’S PURPOSE SERVED

Whenever miracles have been wrought in the deliverance of God’s people, there has always been a divine purpose to be accomplished. That purpose has been the furtherance of his good cause in the world. Daniel was a representative of the true God and had made known, both by his words and his life, the greatness of the God he worshiped. It seemed best to the Lord at this particular time to preserve the life of his servant. His life work was not yet finished. Visions and revelations were to be given him concerning the future. He was to be further used to encourage and stir up his own nation

to go up to the land of their fathers, rebuild their city and Temple, and resume again the worship of Jehovah in the place appointed. This miracle was God's way of witnessing to them that, even in their present captivity to other nations, he was their God and was with them.

After Daniel's deliverance, the king caused all the conspirators to be cast into the den of lions, and they were destroyed. This illustrates a principle of divine justice that those who dig pits for others shall fall into them themselves. "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."—Ps. 7:15,16

Although it is true that "now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered" (Mal. 3:15), we are assured that in the next age it will be different. Concerning the coming kingdom, the Lord said, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies."—Isa. 28:17

Daniel was so beset by his enemies that there seemed no way of escape from a violent death. However, because of his faithfulness and God's providence he was delivered. The record of Daniel has been written that we may learn valuable lessons respecting God's care and protection of those who put their trust in him alone. King Darius himself stood in awe of the God of Daniel, saying, "He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." ■

The Cave of Adullam

“David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father’s house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.”
—I Samuel 22:1,2

AFTER HIS ASTOUNDING

victory over the Philistine giant Goliath, David became a member of Saul’s household, where envious looks and heartless attempts upon his life were the only returns for the soothing notes of his harp and the valiant exploits of his sling and his sword. Saul owed his continuance on the throne, under God, to David, yet Saul’s javelin attack was David’s reward. God in his mercy kept his dear servant amid all the circumstances of his extremely difficult position. “David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him. Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved

himself very wisely, he was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.”—I Sam. 18:14-16

Thus David, while anointed as Israel’s future king, was called upon to endure the hatred and reproach of the ruling power, though loved by all who were enabled to trace his moral worth. It was impossible that Saul and David could continue to dwell together. They were men of totally opposite principles and, therefore, a separation must take place.

WAITED PATIENTLY

David knew that he was anointed king. However, inasmuch as Saul occupied the throne, he was quite content to wait for God’s time, when all that was true of him in principle should be fully realized. Till then, the Spirit of the Lord led him to take his place outside. The path of an exile—of a pilgrim and stranger—of a homeless wanderer, lay before the anointed king of Israel. His way to the throne lay through multiplied sorrows and difficulties. He, as a type of the blessed Master, was called to suffer first, and to attain glory afterwards.

Twice Saul was in his power, yet David waited upon God. In God was his strength, his elevation, his entire dependence. He could say, “My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.” (Ps. 62:5) Hence, we see that David was carried through all the snares and dangers of his path as a servant in the household and army of Saul. The Lord delivered him “from every evil work,” and preserved him unto that kingdom which he had prepared for him, and to which it was his purpose

to raise him, “after that he had suffered a while.”—II Tim. 4:18; I Pet. 5:10

The Lord’s lessons are often painful and difficult because of the waywardness of our hearts inherited as part of our fallen nature. However, every fresh lesson learned, every new principle taken to heart, only fits us the more for all that is yet before us. It is truly blessed to be the disciples of Christ and to yield ourselves to his gracious discipline and training. We should be most happy to be subject, in all things, to the Master. “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”—Matt. 11:28-30

David could say, “My times are in thy hand,” and without doubt he wished them there. (Ps. 31:15) This submission is truly desirable. It saves one from much anxiety of heart and restlessness. When one walks in the habitual conviction that “all things work together for good,” the spirit is most wonderfully at peace. (Rom. 8:28) Being developed as disciples of the Master, such are called upon now to let the will of God rule them in all things.

REFUGE FOUND

It was this subjection of spirit that led David to take his place for a time in the lonely cave of Adullam. He left Saul, the kingdom, and his own destiny, in the hands of God, assured that all would be well. How happy he was to find himself outside the unhealthy atmosphere of Saul’s house, and from under the jealous glances of his eye. He could live

more freely in the cave than in the household of Saul, however it might seem to others.

A place of separation from evil is the freest and the happiest. The Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and this warranted separation from his person. At the same time, there was, on David's part, continued subjection to Saul's power as the king of Israel. The spirit of a sound mind enables us readily to distinguish between these two things. Separation from evil and the evil one and subjection to the will of God should both be complete. The New Testament teaches the Christian to be subject to the powers that be.

David entered into the place of separation. Thus, as one rejected of man, and anointed of God, we see in him a type of Christ. David was now experiencing man's hostility, being driven into exile to avoid death. The cave of Adullam became the great gathering point for those who loved David and were wearied of the unrighteous rule of Saul. So long as David remained in Saul's house, there was no call upon anyone to separate. However, the moment the rejected David took his place outside, no one could remain neutral. "Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became captain over them."

The thoughts and sympathies of God were with David and those with him. Though the company assembled must have presented a strange appearance to the carnal and the worldly, yet it was a group gathered around the anointed one of God, and linked with his destiny. It was composed of those who, in their original condition, had sunk to

the very lowest ebb, but who were now deriving character and distinction from their nearness and devotedness to the chosen one of God.

ANTITYPICAL LESSON

In David and his despised and disreputable company, we see a foregleam of the antitypical David and those who prefer companionship with him to all the joys, the honors, and attractions of earth. To these, it mattered not what they had previously been. They were now the servants of David, and he was their captain. Their discontent, their distress, their debt, was all forgotten in their new circumstances. The grace of David was their present portion, and the glory of David their future prospect.

It is the same with the followers of Christ now. Through grace and the gentle leadings of the Father, we have all found our way to Jesus. He was the Anointed of God, but rejected by men. No doubt we all had our respective features of fallen character before coming to the Master, and were all in heavy debt to God. He led us to the feet of his dear Son, where we found pardon and peace through his precious blood, “our hearts having been sprinkled from a consciousness of evil.”—Heb. 10:22, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*

We should be living as those who are looking forward to the time when our David shall begin his Messianic rule over earth. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall

appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”—Col. 3:1-4

Referring to his disciples, Jesus said, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” (John 17:16) The measure of our separation from the world is nothing less than Christ’s. It is not so much a goal after which we must strive, but rather a point from which we must start. We do not work up to a heavenly position by shaking off the things of the earth. This is to begin at the wrong end. At the time of our consecration we vow to be separate from the world from that moment forward, and to immediately claim our citizenship as being in heaven.

SEPARATION AND REJECTION

The heavenly calling enables us to see our entire separation from, and elevation above, the world, by virtue of what Christ has accomplished on our behalf, and his position at the right hand of the Father. In Hebrews 2:3, we read, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.” The opportunity for this “great salvation” was not developed in all its power and fullness until our Lord took his seat on high, and the Holy Spirit came down to anoint the followers of the Master as members of his body.

The cave of Adullam illustrates the present place of rejection into which Christ entered, and which all must enter who enjoy fellowship with him. David’s followers, by virtue of their association with him, were withdrawn from all connection

with Saul's system. All those now who are led by the Spirit to know their oneness with Jesus, must feel themselves disassociated from present earthly things, by reason of that blessed oneness. A spiritually-minded person does not mix in with the plans and pursuits of this world because they are identified with Christ, who separated himself from these things.

We are in the last days of the old social order, or *kosmos*, and the last days of the development of the body members of Christ. All who love the Lord Jesus Christ must seek a decided identification with him in this time of rejection. This is pictured in the parable of the pound by the nobleman's citizens who hated him and sent a message after him, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us." (Luke 19:14) Shall we go and associate ourselves with the counterpart of these today? We trust not. Rather, may our hearts be with Jesus where he is. May we know the hallowed fellowship of the "Cave of Adullam," where he is who loved us, and washed us from our sins with his blood.

We cannot walk with "Saul" and "David" at the same time. We cannot hold Christ and the world; we must make our choice. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." (Josh. 24:15) "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." (II Tim. 2:11,12) This is the time of suffering, the time for enduring afflictions and hardness. David's men were called, by reason of their association with him, to undergo much toil and fatigue. However, their love for David made all seem light and easy

for them to endure. Those who were faithful to him were all remembered when David, at God's appointed time, was finally at rest in his kingdom. None were forgotten.

LOVING ACTS OF SERVICE

The record of these experiences points forward to the time when Christ shall reward his faithful servants, those who, from love for him, and by the energy of his Spirit, have performed acts of service for him in the time of his rejection. These acts may not be seen, known, or thought of by men, but Jesus knows them, and will eventually reward them openly. Who would ever have known the acts of David's supporters if they had not been recorded in holy writ? Who would have known of the three who drew water from the well of Bethlehem? Who would have known of the slaying of a lion in a pit in the time of snow?—II Sam. 23:8-39

Just so now, the hearts of Christ's followers are filled with love for the Savior, but unknown to the world. Their hands are stretched forth in service to him, unobserved by any human eye. Love never pauses to calculate. It was quite sufficient for David's followers to know that he longed for a drink from the well of Bethlehem. The drink must be procured at all cost: "The three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD."—II Sam. 23:16

There is something peculiarly touching and beautiful in this scene, whether we contemplate

the act of the three mighty men in procuring the water for David, or David's act in pouring it out to the Lord. It is evident that David discerned in an act of such uncommon devotedness a sacrifice which none but the Lord himself could fully appreciate. The odor of such a sacrifice was far too fragrant for him to interrupt it in its ascent to the throne of the God of Israel. Thus he very properly and gracefully allowed it to pass him by in order that it might go up to the One who alone was worthy to receive it and to appreciate it.

This serves to remind us of the beautiful statement of Christian devotedness set forth in Philip-
pians 2:17,18, *Marginal Translation*: "Yea, and if I be poured forth upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me." Paul seemingly alludes here to the typical arrangement whereby wine and oil was poured on the meat offerings to make them acceptable to God. Paul was most willing to pour out the costly libation of his own blood on the offering of the faith of the Gentiles to render it more pleasing to God. (Rom. 15:16) The apostle represents the Philippian brethren as priests, presenting a sacrifice and performing a priestly ministration to God. Such was the intensity of his devotion that he could rejoice in being poured out as a drink offering upon their sacrifices, so that all might ascend as a fragrant odor to God.

It mattered not who put the sacrifice on the altar, or who was poured out thereon, provided that God received it as acceptable to him. This truly is a divine model for Christian devotedness. It should

be our joy whenever we see one or another laying a sacrifice on the altar of God, to allow ourselves to be poured out as a drink offering thereon, to the glory of God and the joy of his saints.

During this short period of trial and testing, the New Creature abides in the “Cave of Adullam.” The Holy Spirit should kindle within us a flame of ardent love for the one who died for our sins. It should unfold to our hearts and minds more of the divine excellencies of his character. Thus, may we be able to say, “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung [refuse], that I may win Christ.”—Phil. 3:8 ■

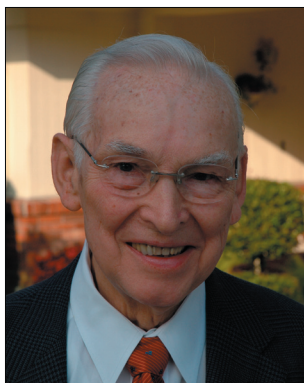
WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JUNE 7—“The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”—I Peter 5:10 (Z. ’95-202 Hymn 266)

JUNE 14—“God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”—I Peter 5:5 (Z. ’96-19 Hymn 312A)

JUNE 21—“Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart.”—Matthew 11:29 (Z. ’96-79 Hymn 110)

JUNE 28—“Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.”—Proverbs 3:7 (Z. ’96-263 Hymn 198)



In Memoriam

Brother
Walter
Blicharz

July 24, 1922 – March 11, 2012

IT IS WITH a measure of earthly sadness, but much joy in the Spirit, that we remember our dear Brother Walter Blicharz, who recently finished his consecrated walk at the age of 89. He was well known and much loved among the Bible Student community.

Brother Walter grew up in northeastern Pennsylvania on a farm at Hunlock Creek. He received an understanding of the Truth from his parents, Brother Walter and Sister Stefania Blicharz, who had meetings in their home, and Polish Bible Students conventions on their farm. The Blicharz' family also met regularly with the Wilkes-Barre Bible Students Ecclesia. After graduating from high school, Walter moved to New Jersey. He was immersed at a Labor Day convention in New York in the early 1940s, having given his heart to the Lord in consecration. During World War II, he spent

four years serving as a Conscientious Objector in Mancos, Colorado.

In 1947, Brother Walter married Sister Vera Kvetco. They served as each other's helpmate for over sixty-four years, until his death. After marrying, they settled in Detroit, Michigan, Brother Walter having obtained a job with General Motors. Although they had no children of their own, they showed great love toward the many children and young people of the Bible Student fellowship over the course of several generations.

Brother Walter became an elder in the Detroit ecclesia beginning about 1954, laboring faithfully for fifty-eight years. He was also an active member of the Dawn Bible Students Association. He became a Trustee of the Dawn in 1968, serving in this capacity for nearly forty-four years. Prior to his death, he was the longest serving of any of the current Dawn Trustees. Another wonderful portion of Brother Walter's life of service to the Lord was his nearly two decades of dedicated work on the General Convention Committee, acting as Chairman of the committee for most of those years.

In addition to his wife Vera, Walter is survived by his sister, Lillian Kasperowicz, and brothers Mitchell and Edmund. Another brother, Eugene, predeceased him. He is also survived by several nieces and nephews. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family, especially Sister Vera. We pray that she will receive the needed strength and peace from the Lord to bear up under this experience.

We rejoice and trust in the promised hope that Brother Walter had of being with the Lord beyond the veil. Although we will miss his labor and

ministry in the Lord's vineyard, it is our hope that his faithfulness will spur each of us onward to be faithful to our covenant of sacrifice and to be good stewards in the Lord's service. Our desire is expressed in the words of one of Brother Walter's favorite hymns:

“Tho’ a pilgrim I must wander,
Still absent from the One I love,
He soon will have me with him yonder,
In his own glory-realms above,
Triumphantly I therefore own,
My goal is Christ and Christ alone.” ■

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Mickey Binda, Chicago, IL—March 18. Age, 93

Sister Stella Miskawitz Gowryluk, Chicago, IL—April 20. Age, 99

Sister Irene Everest, Prince Albert, SK, Canada—April 22. Age, 67

Brother Ben Dunajski, Chicago, IL—April 24. Age, 87

Sister Jen Phillips, Fort Langley, BC, Canada—April 27. Age, 91

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The speakers listed below are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

K. Fernets

Prince Albert, SK June 30

The speakers listed below are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

G. Balko

Buffalo, NY June 2,3

E. Blicharz

St. Petersburg, FL June 10

R. Charlton

Prince Albert, SK June 30

D. Christiansen

Delware Valley, PA June 10

M. Davis

Portland, OR June 15-17

O. B. Elbert

Prince Albert, SK June 30

R. Goodman

Louisville, AL June 3

Portland, OR 15-17

New Brunswick, NJ 30

T. Krupa

Vancouver, BC June 9,10

Prince Albert, SK 30

P. Mora

Vancouver, BC June 9,10

Prince Albert, SK 30

M. Nemesh

Buffalo, NY June 2,3

T. Ruggirello

New Brunswick, NJ June 30

G. Tabac

Portland, OR June 15-17

C. Willis

Buffalo, NY June 2,3

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CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

BUFFALO CONVENTION, June 2,3—Holiday Inn Buffalo International Airport, 4600 Genesee Street, Buffalo, NY 14225. Contact R. Morin for reservations by May 5, 2012. Phone: (585) 322-3430

VANCOUVER CONVENTION, June 9,10—British Columbia Christian Academy, 1019 Fernwood Avenue, Port Coquitlam, BC Canada V3B 5A8. Contact B. A. Smith. Phone: (604) 576-6070 or E-mail: bas@telus.net

DELAWARE VALLEY CONVENTION, June 10—Sheraton Bucks County Hotel, 400 Oxford Valley Road, Langhorne, PA 19047. Contact R. Eldridge. Phone: (215) 949-0652

PORTLAND CONVENTION, June 15-17—Ramada Inn Portland, 6221 NE 82nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97220. Phone: (503) 255-6511. Mention ABSP for group rate. Deadline for reservations is May 20. Contact S. Bicke'l Evans, 5545 E. Evergreen Blvd., #6606, Vancouver, WA 98661. Phone: (360) 750-7366 or E-mail: shirley@bickelstudio.com

ONITSHA, NIGERIA, CONVENTION, June 23—Contact L. Ukpai, #17 Ikewuilo Street, Lemca Road, Onitsha, Anambra State, Nigeria. E-mail: ladukpai@yahoo.com

MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, June 30-July 1—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact D. Farchione. Phone: (262) 895-4583 or E-mail: DebFarchione@aol.com

PRINCE ALBERT & SASKATOON CONVENTION, June 30-July 2—Siwak Farm. Contact A. Siwak, RR1 Stn Mpp Prince Albert, SK, Canada S6V 5P8

OKANAGAN CONVENTION, July 6-8—Schubert Center, 3505 30th Avenue, Vernon, BC, Canada. Contact: T. Fernets. Phone: (250) 558-3055 or E-mail: afernets@shaw.ca

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 21-26—University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Johnstown, PA. Contact E. Kuenzli, 330 Jasmine Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 670-4189 or E-mail: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 5-10—North University, Baia Mare, Romania. Contact L. Griehs. Phone: (480) 837-4286 or (267) 688-8617. E-mail: griehs@comcast.net

OHOBANIGERIA, CONVENTION, August 25—Contact M. C. Uzor. E-mail: kelechiuzor4u@yahoo.com

SEATTLE CONVENTION, September 1-3—Seabeck Conference Center, 15395 Seabeck Hwy NW, Seabeck, WA 98380. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (253) 838-3822 or E-mail: laurie@flinn.us

Christian Fellowship

Blest be the tie that binds

Our hearts in Christian love;

The fellowship of kindred minds

Is like to that above.

Our glorious hope revives

Our courage every day,

While each in expectation strives

To run the heavenly way.

—*Hymns of Dawn*