

The Dawn

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Italy: Aurora, Via S. Leonardo 21, Ottaviano 80044 Napoli

New Zealand: P.O. Box 1358, C.P.O. Auckland

Spain: El Alba, Via S. Leonardo 21, Ottaviano 80044 Napoli, Italy

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Highlights of Dawn

Life in Outer Space

THE old idea of millions of children that there is a "man in the moon" has been revised and made a reality by placing men on the moon—not to live there permanently but to remain at least for a few hours as explorers of its surface. Thus far all who made these excursions to the moon returned safely to earth, although some had narrow escapes.

When these journeys to the moon were being planned it was sincerely believed by many earnest students of the Bible that God would not allow them to be successful. They believed that God had created man to live on the earth, and would not permit him to travel outside of its atmosphere. This view was supported largely by a statement in Paul's sermon on Mars' hill, where he said that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts 17:26

However, a closer study of this text indicates Paul is not referring to the "bounds of their habitation" in relationship to other planets, but to the division of nations upon the earth. Paul seems to be referring to a statement made by Moses in Deuteronomy 32:8, which reads, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."

The Bible is very definite concerning the fact that man was created to live on the earth, that the earth is his eternal home. But so far as we know the Bible says nothing to indicate that it would be displeasing to God for members of the human race to make exploratory excursions into outer space. There is a vast difference between visiting the moon for a few hours, protected against certain death by space

suits and oxygen, and attempting to live permanently under lunar conditions.

The earth is the only planet within the influence of our sun to be just close enough so that its inhabitants, under the protective blanket of earth's atmosphere, do not freeze, and just far enough away to prevent them from dying almost instantly from the heat. Man was created to live under these earthly conditions which are favorable to his anatomy, but so far as is known he could not survive permanently anywhere else in the Creator's vast universe.

We know from object lessons familiar to us that it is possible for God to create beings which can live in environments in which the human species would perish. We only have to look upon the fish to be aware of this. Fish cannot live out of the water, and man cannot live in the water. Man is perfectly at home here on earth, but would die on the moon, or on Mars, or on any of the other planets of which we have any definite knowledge.

Lower than the Angels

The Bible reveals that there are higher orders of life than the human in God's great universe. Just how and where they live the Bible does not reveal. The Prophet David wrote, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor."—Ps. 8:3-5

In the Old Testament there are a number of accounts of one or more of these created angels visiting servants of God, either to warn them or instruct them. In the New Testament, when Jesus was being arrested he said that he could call upon his Heavenly Father, and he would send him twelve legions of angels to protect him. In the first chapter of Hebrews, in which the apostle reveals the high position of

the resurrected Jesus in the plan of God, he says that he was made so much better than the angels.—vs. 4

Jesus, according to the Bible, was the original creation of Jehovah, the “beginning of the creation of God,” and also “the firstborn of every creature.” (Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15) The apostle also tells us that Jesus was the active agent in all the creative work. He says, “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him.”—Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; John 1:3; Eph. 3:9

Jesus was born into this world of humans as a man, and sacrificed his human life for the sins of Adam and his race. When this sacrifice was complete he was raised from the dead, and highly exalted above “all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet.”—Eph. 1:21, 22

The expressions, ‘principality’, ‘power’, ‘might’, and ‘dominion’, suggest planes or spheres of life higher than the human, even as Jesus in his prehuman condition and the angels were and are on higher planes of existence. The Bible does not mention where these beings dwell, but even if it had given this detailed information we could not, with our limited, finite minds, have grasped the truth concerning these higher forms of existence in God’s great universe.

Shortly before his crucifixion Jesus said to his disciples, “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:2, 3) These “many mansions” are undoubtedly planes, or spheres, of life which existed in the universe from the time of God’s original creation. Jesus did not promise one of these to the disciples but said that he was going to prepare

a place for them, and that he would come again and receive them unto himself.

This particular text has been misused in an attempt to prove that it is God's purpose to transfer the world of mankind to a heavenly abode, at least all who are not incorrigible sinners. But the promise applies only to Jesus' faithful followers, those who sacrifice their lives in following in Jesus' footsteps. These are promised that if they are faithful unto death they will live and reign with Christ for the blessing of the world of mankind with human life on the earth.

Fallen Angels

The Bible speaks of angels who left their own estate. We quote, "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 6) Peter speaks of these angels and indicates that the time of their sin was just prior to the Flood. He speaks of them as "spirits in prison."—I Pet. 3:19,20

The Bible was not written to reveal details concerning the nature of angels, how they function, and whether or not they operate from some special location in the universe. The Bible was written to reveal God's plan concerning the creation of man, his fall into sin and death, and his ultimate recovery from the result of his transgression of divine law. Angels and others of God's intelligent creatures which are higher in nature than man are mentioned in the Bible only incidentally as, by divine decree or otherwise, they become involved in the affairs of men, especially in the affairs of God's human servants in working out some of the details of his plan of salvation.

Activities of Angels

Some of the activities of the angels are mentioned in the Bible. When the Prophet Daniel was cast into a den of lions to be destroyed, he announced to Darius the king, who

visited him the next morning, that an angel had closed the mouths of the lions, and that thus his life had been spared.— Dan. 6:22

In the twelfth chapter of Acts we are told of Peter's being incarcerated in a Roman prison, with the intention of later executing him. But an angel liberated him, leading him to the outer door of the prison—an iron gate which, the account says, opened of its own accord. The opening of that iron gate was no problem for the angel.

Psalm 34:7 reads that “the angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”

The Apostle Paul, speaking of the angels, says, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”—Heb. 1:14

Jesus said of the angels who serve his people that they do “always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 18:10) This would seem to indicate that, while the angels frequently serve the cause of their Creator here on earth, they are not necessarily confined to the earthly habitat. But when it comes to the location of the angels, or how they or any other of God's creatures who are superior in nature to man operate, the Bible gives us no information.

However, the fact that we cannot see angels, or comprehend how they function in carrying out their assigned work in the universe, is no argument against their existence. Horses can be taught to count, but they are quite ignorant of what they are doing, nor could they become acquainted with higher mathematics, but this does not prove the nonexistence of higher mathematics. A dog, they say, is man's best friend, but how limited is the dog in understanding the superior thoughts of his master, especially if his master is a scientist.

It took months and years of preparation, and billions of dollars, to place a man on the moon, but in all probability the holy angels, and other spirit creatures, can move about in outer space with ease without any special preparation. About

all we know of them is that, like God and all other spirit beings, they are invisible and powerful, and are ready to do the Creator's bidding at any time.

God's Home

We are accustomed to thinking of heaven as God's home, and Jesus speaks of him as "our Father, which art in heaven." But where heaven is, and what it is like there, we do not know because the Bible does not furnish this information. Jesus also taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) This indicates that the place which the Bible calls heaven is not located here on the earth; and what an earth it would be if such were the case! The Bible indicates that in heaven there is joy, and peace, and love and harmony, and life, with no sickness and death.

We can grasp these realities because the language used to reveal them is part and parcel of our own daily experiences. We may not always experience the spirit of love in our lives, or even within our families, but we know what the language means. We may not always have peace, but we know the meaning of peace; and how blessed it is to realize that in answer to Jesus' inspired prayer these holy conditions of peace and joy and life will one day prevail here on earth among God's human creation.

Just as we cannot understand the angelic nature, much more are we unable to understand the divine nature of the Creator, nor does the Bible try to explain his nature. The Prophet Isaiah wrote that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's thoughts higher than our thoughts, and his ways higher than our ways. (Isa. 55:9) The Bible does speak of God's listening to the prayers of his people, and that his eyes are ever open to our ears. But here the idea of eyes and ears is used simply to convey to our limited minds the fact that God loves his people, and cares for them, not to suggest that God has ears and eyes as do humans. If God were to explain precisely how he does care for his people, the

explanation would probably be far beyond our ability to understand.

The Earth, Man's Home

The first chapter of Genesis contains the Bible's account of the creation of the planet Earth, and the record of its preparation for human habitation. At the time the works described in verse two began, "the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." The accomplishing of the work described in this chapter is divided into six "days," or epochs, and man was created in the sixth day. It is an interesting chapter which will be a blessing to all who read it.



Beginning with Genesis 1:26 we read, "God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [Hebrew, 'fill'] the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."—vss. 26-28

Careful notice should be taken that there is nothing in this record of the creation of man to indicate that he was ever to

occupy any place in God's great universe other than on the earth. The earth was to be his eternal home, and he was to fill it with his offspring and subdue it; that is, bring it under control and productivity. The fact that man is now polluting the earth, and threatening thereby to destroy himself, does not change the original divine purpose concerning his eternal habitat.

There is nothing anywhere in the Bible to indicate that God changed his mind concerning the purpose for which he created the earth. Isaiah 45:18 reads, "Thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else."

The expression, "He created it not in vain," might imply that a similar situation had arisen which raised a question as to whether or not the earth would be inhabited by man, and this in reality was the case. We read that "the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." Concerning the trees in Eden the LORD said to Adam, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. 2:8, 16, 17

All who have a knowledge of the Bible are aware that Adam did disobey God in partaking of this forbidden tree, and that as a result he was sentenced to death. Eve shared in that sentence, and they both began to die. But that did not make vain the creation of the earth to be man's eternal home, for in his love the Creator provided a way of escape from that death sentence, and that way was through Christ, his own beloved Son whom he gave to be man's Redeemer. Through this loving arrangement of redemption man will, in God's due time, be restored to life and have the privilege of living forever in the earthly home which the Creator provided for

him, despite the temporary threat of extinction through death.

As in Adam

The Apostle Paul gives us a beautiful statement of God's plan of redemption through Christ. We quote: "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:21,22) If we can imagine what the state of human life on earth would have been, had sin not entered the scene—no sickness, no pain, no death—then we can surmise what conditions will be like here on this planet when God's great plan of redemption through Christ shall have been accomplished; for because of Jesus' death as the Redeemer and Savior of the world we can be sure that that which would have been is yet to be.

Paul confirms this. He wrote, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (I Tim. 2:3-6) The word ransom in this passage is translated from a Greek word meaning 'a price to correspond'. Jesus was born into the world as a human, and when he went into sacrificial death it was as a corresponding price for Adam, who brought death upon himself and his progeny by his transgression of divine law. This redemption from condemnation has already been provided, and in God's due time the happy result will be the restoration of the human race to health and life.

"Restitution"

The Apostle Peter gives us assurance of this restoration of man, using the word restitution. The Apostles Peter and John had performed a miracle of healing a man who had been lame from the time of his birth. To the Israelites who had witnessed this miracle Peter explained that when Jesus

returned there would be “times of restitution of all things,” and added that this glorious feature of the divine plan had been spoken by the mouth of all God’s holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21) In the beginning of the next chapter we are informed that “the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead.”

And how comprehensive is the statement that all God’s holy prophets had foretold the coming times of restitution. In the prophecy of Isaiah alone there are many wonderful assurances of this glorious time of future blessing for mankind. He wrote that God would “swallow up death in victory,” and that he would “wipe away tears from off all faces.” (Isa. 25:8) The Prophet Isaiah also wrote that “then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing.”—Isa. 35:5,6

Describing the resurrection as a returning from death of those who had been ransomed by the LORD, Isaiah wrote, “The ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” (Isa. 35:10) What a joyous time that will be for a world which now is sin-sick and dying, and plagued by war and a host of other evils!

New Heavens and New Earth

Turning again to Isaiah’s prophecy we quote, “Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.” (Isa. 65:17, 18) Here the new heavens and new earth of promise, and the new Jerusalem, are closely associated, indicating that they both have to do with the same great events in the plan of God.

In vision the Apostle John sees the fulfillment of this prophecy. We quote: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21:1, 2) In verses nine and ten, this holy city, new Jerusalem, is identified as "the bride, the Lamb's wife," the marriage of the Lamb having been referred to in chapter nineteen, verse seven.

The Lamb, of course, is Christ, and the bride is made up of his faithful followers who will live and reign with him in his kingdom; that kingdom which is symbolized as a new heaven and a new earth, and a holy city. This is symbolic language. It has no reference to the creating of a new universe.

Many natural things of earth, as well as the heavens, are used in the Scriptures, to illustrate one or another feature of God's plan, such as water, fire, rivers, trees, sheep, goats, and many others, including the sun, moon, and stars. The Apostle Peter informs us that a heaven and earth came to an end at the time of the Flood. He refers to it as "the world that then was." (II Pet. 3:6) He informs us also that the symbolic heavens and earth which began there are "reserved . . . against the day of judgment" (II Pet. 3:7), and that they will be destroyed in a great time of trouble which he symbolizes by fire. To this he adds that "we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—vs. 13

This is the new heaven and earth foretold by Isaiah, and seen in vision by John on the Isle of Patmos. It appears after the marriage of the Lamb takes place, and the new holy city comes down from God out of heaven. Briefly, these are symbolic of Christ's kingdom when his bride, exalted to heavenly glory, will reign with him.

How wonderful it will be in that new heavens and new earth, "wherein dwelleth righteousness!" After seeing in

vision the holy city come down from God out of heaven, John continues, "I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." In ancient times God manifested his presence with his people in connection with a Tabernacle, and here he is using this as a symbol of the fact that again he will dwell with men and be their God.

And how wonderful will be the results—"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Rev. 21:3, 4) In Isaiah's prophecy concerning the new heavens and new earth which God will create, he says that then there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days. When John sees this fulfilled in vision, this thought of longevity becomes expanded to the point where there is no more death at all, and no more sickness and pain.

Human Failure

Certainly the nations and people of earth today are showing no inclination to look to the LORD for a way out of their chaos and distress, nor is there genuine economic security throughout the earth. It is truly, as Daniel foretold, "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1) But how we should rejoice to realize that God has provided a solution, the kingdom solution, and that in his own due time the nations will accept God's ways!

Then there will be economic security; then there will be no more war; then there will be no more sickness and death, for all the former evils which have plagued a dying world shall have passed away. Paul said that Christ would reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. We rejoice in this glorious prospect of the future happiness of God's human creatures.

These blessings will not be limited to those who will be

living at that time, for as we have seen, God proposes to restore the dead to life, that they also might share in those kingdom blessings. Is this too difficult to believe? It should not be. If man in his fallen condition and with limited resources can travel to the moon, let us realize that God with his almighty power is able to accomplish anything which he has promised to do.

Besides, it will be no more difficult for God to restore the dead to life than it was for him to create life in the first place. The religion of the Bible is the only one in the world which holds out the hope of a resurrection of the dead, and there could be no true and lasting solution of the woes of the human race unless that solution provided for the resurrection of the dead.

So, let humans travel to the moon if they will, or to Mars, or anywhere else in outer space their fancy may dictate; but let us, by putting our trust in the God of all space, and of the universe, continue to rejoice in the provision he has made for the followers of Jesus to be exalted to spiritual glory to live and reign with him in his kingdom, and for humanity in general to be restored to life on the earth, the wonderful home which the Creator so lovingly prepared for them. □

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

NOVEMBER 1—Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.—Ps. 141:3 (Z. '04-23 Hymn 20)

NOVEMBER 8—Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain.—Exod. 20:7 (Z. '04-73 Hymn 236)

NOVEMBER 15—He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.—1 John 2:6 (Z. '03-345 Hymn 315)

NOVEMBER 22—The zeal of Thine house hath consumed me.—Ps. 69:9 (Z. '98-112 Hymn 41)

NOVEMBER 29—Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised.—Heb. 10:23 (Z. '01-119 Hymn 125)

Test Your Knowledge

How Many of These Bible Questions Can You Answer?

1. What is the purpose of celebrating Thanksgiving Day?

2. I Chronicles 29:13 reads, "Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name." Who uttered these words, and of whom was he a type?

3. Whom should the Christian thank for the privilege of being called into the fellowship of the Gospel?

4. Luke 18:11 and 12 state: "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers. . . . I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all I possess." He was seemingly a good man. Why did the Master commend the publican and sinner rather than this self-styled good man?

5. Under what circumstances did the Apostle Paul thank God and take courage when he was met by some of the brethren?

6. Paul in I Thessalonians 5:18 exhorts, "In everything give thanks." Why should a Christian give thanks for every experience of life, seeing that many of

them are unpleasant and hard to endure?

7. Every Christian should bear fruit. What is meant by the biblical term, "fruit of our lips"?

8. Complete this text: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and . . ."

?

9. Who should receive thanks for the ability of a Christian to be found worthy of eternal life?

10. In II Corinthians 9:15 we read, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." How can we express our gratitude for God's love in giving his only begotten Son for our salvation?

11. Psalm 6:5 reads, "For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Will those who have gone down in death ever give thanks to God again, and if so, when?

12. "We give thee thanks, O LORD God Almighty, which art, and wast, . . . because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." To what period of time does this promise refer? **(Answers on Page 60)**

International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR NOVEMBER 4

Responding to God's Authority

KEY VERSE: "Whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the LORD, and not unto men."—Colossians 3:23

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Romans 13:1-10

IN HIS letter to the church at Rome the Apostle Paul wrote, "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment."—Rom. 13:1-7, RSV

We should always, of course, obey the just laws of the authorities. But at first thought this statement might seem to say that every citizen should obey the decrees and statutes of the land without consulting his conscience. Surely, this is not the intent of the apostle, for he goes on to cite the commandments, "You shall not kill" and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." In our own land, happily, provision is made for any who have conscientious objections to serving in the

military and perhaps being required to kill. But elsewhere in other times Christians have died or endured much suffering rather than take up arms against their fellow men.

Our Lord Jesus did not teach his followers that they should obey the powers that be without question. When the Pharisees sought to trap our Lord in his own words by asking him, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" he perceived their malicious intention. Obtaining a piece of tribute money he asked them, "Whose is this image and superscription?" They answered, "Caesar's." Jesus replied, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:15-22) Evidently, the things that are 'Caesar's' and those that are God's are not always the same!

Following his crucifixion and

resurrection our Lord appeared to his disciples "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." His final instructions were that they should remain in Jerusalem where they would receive the power of the Holy Spirit, and thereafter they were to be his witnesses to "the uttermost parts of the earth." (Acts 1:1-8) When the Day of Pentecost came they were all together in one place. And suddenly "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:1-4) Peter immediately recognized that this was just what had been promised by Jesus. In faithful obedience to our Lord's final words he entered at once on his life-long, fearless witness to Jesus as the resurrected Savior of the world of mankind. "Ye men of Israel," he said, "hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death." (Acts 2:22-24) Thus began the ministry of one of Jehovah God's most faithful and courageous witnesses to the truth, in which he was joined by the other apostles.

As the inspired Peter continued to speak to the people, "the priests, and the captain of the

temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." They laid hands on them, and the next day they were ordered not to speak at all in the name of Jesus. "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." —Acts 4:1-21

Fearlessly, the apostles continued to preach the kingdom, working many miracles among the people, and multitudes of believers were added to the Lord. "Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him . . . were filled with indignation. And they laid hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison." (Acts 5:12-18) Again, they were brought before the council, and the high priest said, "Did we not . . . command you that ye should not teach in this name? . . . Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." —Acts 5:12-29

Clearly, there can be times and situations in which the present-day Christian must do the same! □

The Christian's Hope

KEY VERSE: "So shall we ever be with the LORD. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—*I Thessalonians 4:17, 18*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *I Thessalonians 1:1-3; 4:9-18*

WRITING to the church at Colossae the Apostle Paul spoke of "the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the Word of the truth of the Gospel." (Col. 1:5) Just what is this hope that so beckons to the Christian—that so motivates, encourages, fires with determination, and urges him to press on in the narrow way, in spite of trials, difficulties, suffering, and even death?

The apostle describes it as a "heavenly calling," and "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and says it will result in a wonderful prize to all who successfully run the Christian course. (Heb. 3:1; Phil. 3:14) One element of this prize, the Apostle John informs us, is eternal life: "This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." (I John 2:25) Indeed, this was envisioned by the Creator from the very beginning, for Paul describes it as the "hope of eternal life, which

God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—*Titus 1:2*

But the eternal life that this hope holds forth as a prize to its aspirants is of a special kind; it is life on the very highest plane of existence—divine, immortal life, such as possessed only by the great Creator himself and now, since his resurrection, by our Lord Jesus. Although it has always been a part of the Creator's plans and purposes, knowledge of it has come to light only since our Savior died upon the cross. And it is offered only to the few—his faithful, footstep followers. Paul states it this way: "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling . . . according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our

Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.”—II Tim. 1:8-10

The Apostle Peter confirms this statement by Paul, saying that there “are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.” (II Pet. 1:4) Since there is no higher form of life in the entire universe than the immortal, Jesus himself describes it as the very crown of life: “Be thou faithful till death, and I will give to thee the crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10, **Diaglott**

This crown of life is the supreme prize that is awarded by Jesus to his faithful followers of this Gospel Age. Paul wrote, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”—II Tim. 4:8

A crown is a symbol of rulership; and, indeed, the Lord’s faithful followers of this age will be kings and priests in the heavenly phase of Christ’s coming kingdom. Jesus said, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my

throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. . . . They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”—Rev. 3:21; 20:6

The purpose of this rulership in the millennial kingdom is altogether beneficent. In that thousand-year day of “restitution” (Acts 3:19-21), “the Spirit and the bride [shall] say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” (Rev. 22:17) As the long-promised seed of Abraham, Jesus and his glorified church will bless all the willing and obedient of the resurrected world of mankind with perfect, everlasting, happy life on a restored planet Earth of surpassing glory, beauty, and universal joy!—Gal. 3:16, 26, 29

This is the hope that resulted in faithful Stephen’s death by stoning. It is the hope that sent the Apostle Paul on long, arduous missionary journeys, and finally imprisonment and death in Rome. It is the hope that led to Peter’s imprisonment and later his martyrdom. And today, in the end of the age, it still inspires and encourages and strengthens the footstep followers of Jesus to continue on in the narrow way! □

Getting Ready for the Lord's Return

KEY VERSE: *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*
—I Thessalonians 5:23

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *I Thessalonians 5:1-23*

LUKE, the beloved physician, records an instructive incident in the latter part of our Lord's ministry. He writes, "As they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." He then relates Jesus' parable of the pounds in which our Lord states, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading."—Luke 19:12-15

There is much in this simple

parable that was timely to his newly won disciples, and which has been no less illuminating to his faithful followers all down through the Gospel Age. For one thing, our Lord desired to correct their false impression that the kingdom was immediately to be set up. Before that could happen the nobleman of the parable must first go into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

The nobleman, of course, represents Jesus, who is here tenderly explaining that he must leave his disciples for a time, that he must receive his kingdom, and then he would return, and thereafter establish his kingdom. But while the nobleman was away preparing to receive his kingdom, his ten servants were not to be idle. There was work for them to do; and so to each he gave a pound with instructions to multiply its value. As the nobleman pictures

Jesus, so the servants represent those who would be his followers of this Gospel Age, during which time our Lord has, indeed, been away in the heavenly realms. The pounds of which they were to make fruitful use while awaiting his return symbolize the many blessings and advantages each receives when he takes up his Christian walk in the footsteps of his Lord—the Word of God, and through it a knowledge of his loving plan of salvation for all mankind; justification; the guidance and support of the Holy Spirit; the privileges of faith and prayer and communion with the Heavenly Father.

Those who faithfully occupy themselves with these ‘pounds’ will daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; they will increase in the fruit of the Spirit; they will preach the Word in season and out of season; and all this they will do till they come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Our Lord Jesus has, indeed, already returned, unperceived by all except the watchers! Since his resurrection and ascension Jesus has been a glorious, immortal being “who is the image of the invisible God,” never more to be seen by the

world! (Col. 1:15) His disciples evidently understood this, and therefore asked Jesus, “What shall be the **sign** of thy [second] coming [Greek, **parousia**, ‘presence’], and of the end of the world [age]?” In reply Jesus said that “then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”—Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1

We believe the present universal “dismay among the nations and bewilderment . . . as they realize what is threatening the world” tells us that the nations are even now experiencing the foretold time of trouble with which this present evil world will be brought to an end, and which is a sign of our Lord Jesus’ second presence. (Luke 21:25, 26, **Phillips**) It also tells us that the time to “occupy” is short, for Jesus said, “When ye see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near.”—Luke 21:31, **RSV**

Our Lord Jesus has already, invisibly, returned! The establishment of his kingdom is near. Each servant of the Lord, as he finishes his course, must shortly render up his accounts to show how much he “has gained by trading.”* □

*We invite our readers to send for the free booklet, “Our Lord’s Return.”

Holding On to the Truth

KEY VERSE: “Stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”—II Thessalonians 2:15

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: II Thessalonians 2:1-15

THE TRUTH is the most precious treasure one may possess in this life; therefore the admonition expressed in our lesson topic is an excellent one. The Wise Man placed a high value on the truth. He said, “Buy the truth, sell it not.” (Prov. 23:23) But let us be very sure it is the truth to which we are holding. It is well-known that any statement taken out of context may be misunderstood. But the context of the truth is unusually broad, for it embraces the entire Bible as it presents the many facets of Jehovah God’s character and his eternal love for humankind, his plan of salvation for their redemption from sin and death through Christ, and the ultimate blessing of all the willing and obedient with everlasting life.

In the Bible Jehovah is shown to be a supreme, self-existing God of love, justice, wisdom and power, and his plans and actions are at all times in complete harmony with these godly attri-

butes. Therefore we may be sure that any teachings that do not fully conform to these attributes of his character are not the truth. The Bible presents Jehovah as a single entity. Moses said of him, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.” (Deut. 6:4) Through the Prophet Isaiah Jehovah said, “There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me; . . . I am God, and there is none like me.” (Isa. 45:21; 46:9) The Apostle Paul wrote, “There is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” (I Cor. 8:6) Paul further elaborated, “There is one body [the church] and one spirit [the Holy Spirit, the invisible power of God], one Lord [Jesus, the Head of the body of Christ, and the only begotten Son of the Father, Jehovah], one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through

all, and in you all.” (Eph. 4:4-6) Thus, we see that the doctrine of the trinity is not taught in the Bible.

It has long been taught that to escape the eternal fires of hell one must accept Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior in this present life, and that those who do so and live reasonably commendable lives will gain a heavenly reward. This teaching, too, is false. In the first place, the Bible hell is not a place of fiery torment; it is simply the condition of death, wherein “the dead know not anything.” (Eccles. 9:5,10) Furthermore, a God of love would never consign his human creation, however sinful, to an eternity of suffering, for it would be utterly contrary to his character. It is true that the Bible does teach that those—and only those—who faithfully walk in Jesus’ steps in this present life, suffering with him that they may also reign with him, will gain a heavenly reward.

But Jesus gave himself as a ransom, not only for his footstep followers of this Gospel Age, but for all mankind. Thus, in the general resurrection, all the remainder of mankind will be brought forth from the grave and given an opportunity to gain everlasting, happy life on the restored, glorious planet Earth.—I Tim. 2:5,6; Acts 3:19-22; 24:15; Isa. 45:18; John 5:28,29

Holy men of old wrote and spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, but they understood little of the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of God’s great plan of salvation for the whole world of mankind. The glorious truths of the Bible and the measureless bounds of God’s great love for mankind were largely hidden until our Lord Jesus “brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel,” and they are revealed but to the few.—II Tim. 1:10

The truth brings untold blessings to the LORD’S dear people. But it also brings great responsibilities to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. It is the special gift of God to those who love him with all their hearts and minds and souls. It is the sanctifying power that makes them meet for service to their LORD. It enables them to endure sufferings for Christ’s sake. It inspires them to continue striving for the hope which is laid up in heaven, whereof we learned before in the Word of the truth of the Gospel. And if faithful, it will bring glory and joy and blessing unspeakable. Blessed are your eyes for they see; and your ears, for they hear!—II Tim. 2:15; James 1:18; John 17:17; Col. 1:3-6; Matt. 13:3-23



Christian Life and Doctrine

GOD AND REASON—PART 3

Has Christianity Failed?

A CORRECT answer to the question as to whether Christianity has been a success or a failure depends upon a proper understanding of what constitutes Christianity, and just what God intended it should accomplish in the earth. Christ is presented to us in the Bible as the Savior of the world; and the logical conclusion is that God had planned for the world to be converted to him, and thus to be saved from death. But nearly two thousand years have passed since Jesus came to the earth to die for mankind, and yet the world is still far from being converted. Even nominal Christianity is rapidly losing ground, and whole nations are officially setting themselves against religion of every kind. Are we to judge from this that God's plan has failed?

The disciples, in Jesus' day, based their hopes of the messianic kingdom upon the prophecies of the Old Testament, and their hopes were therefore, in the main, correct. What they failed to understand, to begin with, was that the time had not then come for the establishment of that kingdom. Just so with most professing Christians since then: their belief that God had planned the conversion of the world through Christ and the church is correct, but they have failed to see from the Scriptures that this is not the age in which God purposed that this work should be accomplished.

Now, as the immediate disciples of Jesus failed to note from the prophecies that the Messiah must suffer and die as man's Redeemer before the promised kingdom blessings could come to the world, just so have professed Christians failed to see from the Scriptures that the true church of Christ

must suffer and die with him before she will have the privilege of sharing with him in the future kingdom work of converting and blessing the world of mankind. The Apostle Paul states this matter clearly, saying, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—Rom. 8:17, 18

The glory referred to here is evidently the glory of joint-heirship with Christ in his messianic kingdom. If those who attain to this glory must first of all suffer with him, then it means that the present mission of the church is not that of conquering the world for Jesus, but of following faithfully in his footsteps, even unto death.

Christians Follow Jesus

And this is in reality what Jesus himself taught his followers. For example, on more than one occasion he said, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." That these were to follow him all the way into death is made positive by Jesus' words in Revelation 2:10, which reads, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." That this faithfulness implies fortitude in the face of suffering persecution is shown by his promise of Revelation 3:21, where he says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

When the divine commission was given to the church to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, the purpose was distinctly stated to be that of making disciples, and giving a witness. But that this witness was not intended by God to conquer the world, but to result in the preparation of Christians themselves for the future work of reigning with Jesus, is made clear in Revelation 20:4. We quote: "I saw the souls

of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God, . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Now if the mission of the true Christians in the world has been merely that of bearing witness to the truth and, by means of the experiences thereby gained, to prepare themselves for the great future work of converting the world during the thousand-year kingdom period, then we can readily understand the apparent failure of Christianity. We see, indeed, that true Christianity has not failed; that it is merely the false hope of nominal believers that has not materialized. When we see that the present mission of the church is one of sacrifice and suffering rather than one of conquering the world, many puzzling questions are at once cleared up for us.

For example, have you not often wondered why it is that faithful Christians have usually suffered more than unbelievers? Have you ever wondered why, after Jesus came as the light of the world, mankind actually was plunged into a long period of darkness which we now speak of as the Dark Ages? Have you ever wondered why there are more than twice as many heathen in the world today as a century ago? Who has not wondered about questions of this nature? Many, as a result of their wondering, have concluded that Christianity is a gigantic farce, and that this supposed foundation and bulwark of civilization has signally failed to make good its claims.

What Is a Christian?

The popular idea of Christianity has been that one becomes a Christian in about the same manner that one joins a club, and that it constitutes a sort of safeguard against divine wrath that otherwise would send the individual to a terrible place of torment at death. Hence it has been supposed that God wants everyone to become Christians so they might escape this terrible fate. But now that it is being discovered, in the fuller light of a better day, that the nightmare of

eternal torture is not taught in the Bible, the way is thus becoming clear for a better understanding of what it means to be a Christian.

The word Christ, being a Greek translation of the Hebrew word **Messiah**, is used in the New Testament to connect Jesus with that glorious array of messianic promises found throughout the Old Testament. As already noted, the first of these promises was given in the Garden of Eden when God said that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. Another, and more specific promise, was given to Abraham when he was told that through his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Jesus, the Christ, came into the world as the seed of promise to be the one who would bless all humanity, and the Scriptures show that those who become true Christians by following faithfully in his steps of self-sacrifice, even unto death, are to be a part with him of the promised seed.

The Apostle Paul, writing to Christians of his day, said, "If ye be Christ's [Christians], then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29) In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul says that Christ "is not one member, but many." A very important point for consideration is presented by the apostle in these two statements. They show that in the selection and development of Christians, God is merely carrying on a preparatory work in connection with the future messianic purpose to bless all nations. It means that God has not been trying to make Christians of all mankind, but merely selecting a few from among the nations to be associated with Jesus in his future work of blessing the entire world, both the living and the dead.

A Peculiar People

But who are these Christians today whom God is selecting to reign with the Messiah? In what church will we find them? Since our Heavenly Father is doing the calling and selecting, he is the Judge as to just who they are. Specifically, a Chris-

tian is one who, having recognized that he was a sinner, and alienated from God, has repented, and who, through faith in the shed blood of Christ, has made a full consecration of his time, talents—all that he has—to the LORD, and is faithfully endeavoring to carry out that consecration. Denominational church membership has nothing whatever to do with it. See Romans 5:1-3

In the fifteenth chapter of Acts there is a revealing account concerning the divine purpose in the selection of the faithful Christians of this age. Here they are styled a people for his name. The apostle explains that “God at the first did visit the Gentiles,” not to make all of them Christians, but “to take out of them a people for his name”—the true Christians. After this, declares the apostle, divine favor will return to Israel, and the broken-down “tabernacle of David” will be restored: and then, he says, “the residue [remainder] of men,” and the Gentiles, will have an opportunity to “seek after the LORD.” But first must be completed the work of taking out a people for his name—the bride of Christ—to be made up of all fully consecrated Christians.—Acts 15:14-18

When we thus see that God does not intend that all the world, in this age, shall become Christians, it helps us to understand many passages of the Bible that heretofore have been very difficult to understand. For example, in Revelation 5:10 we are told that the future reign of Christ and the church is to be here on the earth. How could this be true if all except the church are to be taken away from the earth and tormented forever in a burning hell? Over whom, then, would the saints reign here on the earth? But this difficulty vanishes when we realize from the Scriptures that the world is to be blessed, not cursed, following the completion of the true church.

Viewing the matter thus, we can see that God’s plan of human salvation provides an opportunity for all, both the church and the world, not that all are to be saved irrespective of their own cooperation in the divine arrangements. No, the

Scriptures distinctly point out that all who sin willfully after having come to a full knowledge of the truth are to be punished with everlasting destruction—but not everlasting preservation in misery, as the Dark Age creeds present the matter.

The True Church's Reward

Another interesting point, in connection with God's selection of the Christian church to be associated with Christ in his messianic kingdom, is that such faithful Christians are to have a higher reward than the world in general. God's provision for the world is that they shall be restored to life upon the earth—a restoration of the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, which is a dominion over the lower creation here on the earth; but to the Christian the Master gave the promise, "I go to prepare a place for you, . . . that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2,3) Yes, the church is to have a heavenly reward, but it is not God's purpose to take all mankind to heaven, as we shall see later on in this discussion.

The prospect of everlasting life through the shed blood of the Redeemer is the blessed hope set before both the church and the world in the Bible. The scriptural presentation is not that of heaven for the righteous and eternal torture for the wicked, but is rather that of life or death.

The first man, Adam, disobeyed and lost life; but eventually Jesus came as man's ransom, to meet the penalty of death by his own death on the cross. As a result of this, the world once more will be given the opportunity to live. This opportunity will in due time come to all; but during this Gospel Age, fully consecrated Christians are the only ones who actually have a full opportunity to benefit from the death of the Redeemer. These, because they follow Jesus in laying down their lives sacrificially, are rewarded, not only with life itself, but with immortal life. These are they who "seek for glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) The obedient

of the world of mankind, during the future kingdom period, will also be given an opportunity to live, but the life they receive will be merely the restored human life forfeited by Adam. The obedient will then live everlastingly, not because they will become immortal, but because God will continue to sustain their lives.

Why the World Is Not Converted

The work of true Christianity has thus far been only that of preparing the future joint-heirs with the Messiah for the great work of his long-promised kingdom. Little wonder, in view of this, that the attempted work of converting the world has made so little progress throughout the Christian era. The LORD knew that, from the human standpoint, Christianity would appear to be a failure. Jesus himself, in referring to the end of this age, said, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) Thus the fact that very few in the world today really believe in the Bible is no surprise to God. His beloved Son, the Redeemer of the world, foresaw this very condition, and foretold it. This is another good reason why we should have faith in what the Bible says.

The hundreds of divisions among the so-called Christian churches likewise were foretold in the prophetic Word. Paul said that there would come a great falling away from the true faith, and this most certainly occurred.

Now if Jesus and his apostles were a group of deceiving men, bent on putting over some selfish scheme for the purpose of favorably influencing the whole world of mankind, would they deliberately predict that it would not be long before their entire scheme would fail and they themselves become laughingstocks in the minds of millions of people? Such pessimistic predictions would not be very encouraging to the early believers, nor induce very many to join the movement. Worldly wisdom would say, Paint the future as bright as you can, or else you will never make many converts.

But Jesus and the apostles were not guided by worldly wisdom. They fully understood that the purpose of preaching the Gospel in this age was not to build up large and imposing church organizations. They knew that God did not intend that the mere preaching of the Gospel now would lead the world to the feet of Jesus. They foresaw that while a little flock of true Christians would be gathered and prepared for the future work of blessing, misguided men and women as a whole would distort the glorious truths the Master taught, and that, as a result of this, Christianity would appear to go down in defeat.

How glad we are, however, that real Christianity has not failed; that the divine plan for this age is being successfully accomplished, and that now this preparatory work for the new kingdom is about completed. Indeed, there is much scriptural evidence to show that the period set aside in the divine purpose for the call and preparation of true Christians to reign with Jesus in his messianic kingdom is about ended. It should rejoice our hearts then, to consider some of the evidences which indicate that we have almost reached the end of this age and the beginning of a new one, one in which the foretold blessings of peace and life will be dispensed to a dying world.

THE END OF THE WORLD

Biblical truths pertaining to the end of the world have been so distorted by superstition and satanic deception that in the minds of many serious people they have become almost repugnant. How many thousands of sincere people have been horrified when they thought of this traditionally-terrible calamity that had been imaginatively pictured to them by overenthusiastic evangelists! Not many years ago a noted clergyman sought to encourage humanity by announcing that the end of the world would not come for fifty million years. Doubtless many noble religionists felt greatly relieved

(Continued on Page 38)

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Jacksonville	WBX 1010	1:15 p.m.	Allentown	WHOL 1600	10:45 a.m.
Tampa	WFLA 970	10:00 p.m.	Jenkintown	WIBF (Wed.)	2:00 p.m.
GEORGIA			Pottstown	WPAZ 1370	12:45 p.m.
Albany	WALG 1590	6:15 a.m.	SOUTH CAROLINA		
Augusta	WHGI	10:45 a.m.	Charleston	WOKE 1340	7:06 p.m.
Vidalia	WVOP	1:00 p.m.	Lancaster	WAGL 1560	9:30 a.m.
HAWAII			TEXAS		
Honolulu	KNDI	5:15 p.m.	Fort Worth	KJIM 870	6:15 a.m.
ILLINOIS			Pearsall	KVWG 1280	9:15 a.m.
La Salle	WLPO 1220	4:30 p.m.	VIRGINIA		
Rockford	WXTA	6:15 a.m.	Richmond	WGGM	7:45 a.m.
West Frankfort	WFRX 1300	9:15 a.m.	WASHINGTON		
INDIANA			Clarkston	KCLK	10:00 a.m.
Hammond	WJOB 1230	8:30 a.m.	Kirkland	KGAA 1460	8:15 a.m.
La Porte	WCOE		Spokane	KUDY 1280	9:45 a.m.
KENTUCKY			Tacoma	KAMT 1360	9:45 a.m.
Bowling Green	WLBj 1410	8:00 a.m.	Yakima	KUTI 980	6:45 a.m.
London	WLPQ	9:00 a.m.	WISCONSIN		
Winchester	WWKY 1380	10:30 a.m.	Milwaukee	WLZZ-AM	7:15 a.m.
MAINE			WYOMING		
Portland	WDOS-FM	9:45 a.m.	Cheyenne	KSHY 1370	10:15 a.m.
Scarborough	WDCL-AM	9:45 a.m.	Sheridan	KWYO 1410	12:00 noon

PUERTO RICO

Aguadilla (Fri.) WABA

8:00 p.m.

**FOREIGN
RADIO BROADCASTS****BRITISH ISLES**

Isle of Man MANX Radio 7:00 p.m.

BRITISH WEST INDIES

Grand Cayman Radio Cayman 9:30 a.m.

CANADA

Edmonton, Alta. CJOI 3:00 p.m.

Lethbridge, Alta. CJOC 7:15 a.m.

Penticton, B.C. CIGV 10:15 p.m.

Vancouver, B.C. CJCJ 800 9:45 a.m.

Churchill Falls, Lab. CFLC 7:15 a.m.

Winnipeg, Man. CKJS 9:00 a.m.

Fredericton, N.B. CFNB 10:15 p.m.

Corner Brook, Nfld. CFCB 570 7:15 a.m.

Deer Lake, Nfld. CFDL-FM 7:15 a.m.

Goose Bay, Nfld. CFLN 7:15 a.m.

Pt. au Choix, Nfld. CFNW 7:15 a.m.

Pt. aux Basques, Nfld. CFGN 910 7:15 a.m.

St. Andrews, Nfld. CFCV-FM 7:15 a.m.

St. Anthony, Nfld. CFNN-FM 7:15 a.m.

Stephenville, Nfld. CFSX 7:15 a.m.

Wabush, Nfld. CFLW 7:15 a.m.

Hamilton, Ont. CKOC 7:00 a.m.

St. Thomas, Ont. CHLO 10:45 a.m.

Windsor, Ont. CKLW 9:00 a.m.

Montreal, P.Q. CFMB 5:15 p.m.

Prince Albert, Sask. CKBI 900 7:30 a.m.

CEYLON

Columbo Radio Sri Lanka (Sat.) 7:15 p.m.

ITALY (Italian)

Europa Radio Milano

FM83.300 11:30 a.m.

Euro Tele Radio Calabria

102MHz (Fri.) 5:30 p.m.

Radio Corleone Centrale

FM88-500 FM92 11:00 a.m.

MEXICO (Spanish)

Mazatlan XECQ 8:30 a.m.

NEW ZEALAND

Dunedin 4XD 11:15 a.m.

Whakatane IXX 6:45 a.m.

NIGERIA

Radio Africa (Wed.) 8:00 p.m.

PANAMA

Panama City HOQ 1250 10:30 a.m.

PHILIPPINES

Manila (Sat.) DWXX 7:15 p.m.

SOUTH AFRICA

Joubert Park (Thurs.)

SWAZI Music Radio 9:00 p.m.

SPAIN (Spanish)

Radio Gerona (Mon.) 9:45 p.m.

TONGA

Nuku' Alofa (Mon.) 5:30 p.m.

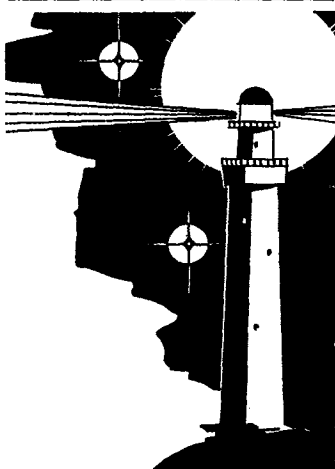
URUGUAY (Spanish)

Montevideo (Sat.)

Radio El Espectador 810 1:30 p.m.

VIRGIN ISLANDS

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



**Ye are the light of
the world. —Matthew 5:14**

**U.S. RADIO BROADCASTS
SPANISH LANGUAGE****ARIZONA**

Nogales KFBR 1340 9:00 a.m.

CALIFORNIA

El Centro KICO 1490 10:30 a.m.

Fresno KGST 1600 12:15 p.m.

FLORIDA

Miami WRHC 8:30 a.m.

The BIBLE ANSWERS

REGULAR TELEVISION BROADCASTS

We regret that we are unable to furnish the date and time of the broadcasts for the stations listed below:

CALIFORNIA		IOWA		NORTH CAROLINA	
Chico	KMPN-10	Cedar Rapids	KTS, 13	Charlotte	WHKY
Sunday, 8:30 p.m.		Mt. Vernon/ Lisbon	WMVL Cable	OHIO	
FLORIDA		Every weekday 7:00 a.m.		Dayton	WHIO
Miami	WKID	MISSISSIPPI		TEXAS	
Jacksonville	17	Jackson	WAPT	Lubbock	KCBD
GEORGIA		MISSOURI		WEST VIRGINIA	
Albany	WTSG, 31	Springfield	KOLR	Logan	12-Monday
Sunday, 9:30 a.m.		NEW MEXICO		GUAM	
Atlanta	WATL	Roswell	KSWS	KUAM, 9:00 a.m., Sun.	
ILLINOIS	Champaign-				
Decatur-					
Springfield	WBHW				

SATELLITE TRANSMISSION CABLE NETWORK SCHEDULE

This is a new schedule of stations and times of our satellite transmission broadcasts. The broadcasts are on Sundays, and the schedule is on Standard Time.

CITY	CHANNEL	CITY	CHANNEL	CITY	CHANNEL
ALABAMA-8:00 a.m.		Englewood	35	GEORGIA-9:00 a.m.	
Dothan	3	Fort Collins	28	Atlanta	27
Montgomery	6, 22	Greeley	22	Augusta	C
ARIZONA-7:00 a.m.		Longmont	29	Decatur	27
Phoenix	17, 30, 31, 38, 42	Parker	28	IDAHO-7:00 a.m.	
Tucson	37	CONNECTICUT 9:00		Boise	18
ARKANSAS-8:00 a.m.		Bridgeport	35	Caldwell	18
Joplin-Pittsburg	10	Groton	G20	Idaho Falls	10
Little Rock	7, 23	Plainville	33	ILLINOIS-8:00 a.m.	
CALIFORNIA-6:00 a.m.		West Haven	32-S	Belleville	24
Alhambra	48	DELAWARE-9:00 a.m.		Elmhurst	19
Arroyo Grande	31	Dover	14A	Joliet	21
Bakersfield	29, 31	Wilmington	2	Mount Prospect	1
Beverly Hills	29	FLORIDA-9:00 a.m.		Sunnyside	36
Laytonville	61	Coral Gables	6	Waukegan	33
Los Angeles	14, 23, 30, 44, 48, 50, 56	Florida City	18	INDIANA-9:00 a.m.	
Mountain View	34B	Fort Lauderdale	25	Hammond	22
Palm Desert	33	Fort Myers	9	Indianapolis	5
Sacramento	25	Kendall	33	Lafayette	5
San Francisco	21	Key West	5	Munster	31
Tulare	23	Madison	4	New Haven	10
Ukiah	47	North Miami Beach	12	IOWA-8:00 a.m.	
COLORADO-7:00 a.m.		Orlando	28	Dubuque	22
Cortez	2	Pompano Beach	32	Sioux City	23
Denver	20	Sarasota	4	Waterloo	R(31)

CITY	CHANNEL	CITY	CHANNEL	CITY	CHANNEL
KANSAS-8:00 a.m.		NEW JERSEY-9:00 a.m.		Providence	30
Roland Park	5A, 10A	Fort Lee-Edgewater	S	Warwick	30
Wichita	13	Suffern (NY)	10		
KENTUCKY-9:00 a.m.		Newark	24	SOUTH CAROLINA-9:00	
Bowling Green	20	Trenton	34	Charleston	P
Covington	B-16			Columbia	4, 19F
Dayton	B-16	NEW MEXICO-7:00 a.m.		TENNESSEE-8:00 a.m.	
Lexington	31	Alamogordo	26	Bristol (VA)	18
Louisville	25	Albuquerque	12	Chattanooga	18
Westwood	21	Santa Fe	22	Knoxville	H, 15, 21
LOUISIANA-8:00 a.m.		NEVADA-6:00 a.m.		TEXAS-8:00 a.m.	
Lafayette	7	Las Vegas	21	Arlington	41
St. Bernard Parish K(24)				Austin	16
MASSACHUSETTS-9:00		NEW YORK-9:00 a.m.		Brownwood	17
Arlington	32	Albany	29	Bryan	19
Beverly	43	Brookhaven	6	Dallas	71
Boston	B5	Buffalo	11	El Paso	13
Lynn	27	Manhattan	10	Fort Worth	16
Quincy	43	Niagara Falls	3	Galveston	31
		Rochester	12, 32	Harris	25
		Schenectady	8	Hitchcock	31
		Syracuse	17	Houston	22, 31
MARYLAND-9:00 a.m.		NORTH CAROLINA-9:00		Irving	B30
North Brentwood	A-22	Apex	17	Odessa	25
MICHIGAN-9:00 a.m.		Greenville	27	San Antonio	34
Birmingham	51	Rocky Mount	26	Victoria	55
Clinton	10			Waco	17
Coldwater	27	OHIO-9:00 a.m.		VIRGINIA-9:00 a.m.	
Dearborn	38	Blue Ash	38	Alexandria	30
Flint	23	Cincinnati	33	Chesterfield	28
Lincoln Park	31	Cleveland	17	Danville	A
Plymouth	39	Columbus	5, 8, 19	Newport News	13
Southfield	43	Mentor-on-Lake	12	Richmond	11
Warren	10	Poland Village	10	Staunton	8
MINNESOTA-8:00 a.m.		Youngstown	0	WASHINGTON-6:00	
Alexandria	UHF34	OKLAHOMA-8:00 a.m.		Tacoma	10
Richfield	34	Tulsa	10	Vancouver	28
N.W. Minneapolis	56			Yakima	16
St. James	48	OREGON-6:00 a.m.		WISCONSIN-8:00 a.m.	
MISSISSIPPI-8:00 a.m.		Portland	30, 44	Ashwaubenon	31
Lafayette	12	Salem	26	Green Bay	12
Meridian	7			Hustisford	26
MISSOURI-8:00 a.m.		PENNSYLVANIA-9:00		Madison	29
Chesterfield	32	Aston	3	Manitowoc	30
Columbia	11	Erie	B29	Milwaukee	31A/B
Kansas City	8	Lansdale	18	New Berlin	31
Overland	23	Norristown	29	Portage	33
St. Louis 13A, A13, 28, 33		Pittsburgh	57	Sheboygan	13
NEBRASKA-8:00 a.m.		Stroudsburg	23	WYOMING-8:00 a.m.	
Columbus	29	Uniontown	22	Douglas	7
Lincoln	36	RHODE ISLAND-9:00		PUERTO RICO	
Omaha	29	Lincoln	46	San Juan	24

(Continued from Page 31)

by this statement, and rejoiced that such a calamitous event would not befall the earth in their day.

But what a different viewpoint of this subject we obtain when we examine the biblical record apart from the influence of Dark Age creeds. In the sacred Word we find that the end of the world is held out as something to which all should joyfully look forward. Indeed, when all the Bible prophecies relating to the subject are fully understood, it will be found that when Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," he really was instructing them to pray for the end of this present evil world, and for a better one to take its place.

The Earth Abideth Forever

The many hallucinations in the minds of the people concerning the end of the world are not taught in the Bible at all. What the Scriptures say on this subject has nothing whatever to do with the burning up or destruction of the literal earth.

Concerning this physical planet on which we live, the Prophet Isaiah says, "Thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited." (Isa. 45:18) Another of the Bible prophets tells us that "the earth abideth forever." (Eccles. 1:4) Jesus, in his Sermon on the Mount, said, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." These passages all indicate that it is not God's purpose ever to destroy the earth itself, but that it is to be used as a home for man.

The word world is used in the Bible very similarly to the way we often use it today, meaning not the earth, but the associations of people upon the earth—society in general. If, for example, we should read that the world was greatly shaken by a global war, we would not understand it to mean that literal mountains are being toppled over, or that the crust of the earth is in any way affected. The Bible uses lan-

guage in this same manner when foretelling the distressing events to take place at the end of the present age; events by which the existing social order is to be destroyed to make way for the kingdom of the Messiah.

The term world is also used in the Bible to denote an age. Several worlds, or ages, are mentioned in the Bible. We are told, for example, of a world that ended at the time of the Flood—yet the earth itself was not then destroyed. The Bible also speaks of another world that began after the Flood, and which is to be destroyed during the second presence of Christ. And there is still another world which will begin with the end of the present one. This latter world will continue on indefinitely into the future. It is this third world that is to be established through the operation of the messianic kingdom.

These worlds, all of which are thus seen to function on the literal planet, Earth, are subdivided by the Apostle Peter into their spiritual and material aspects, under the symbols of "heaven" and "earth." See II Peter 3. It is plainly evident that the apostle's language as used in this chapter is pictorial rather than literal; for we would be forced to the absurd conclusion that the Creator intends to destroy his entire universe if we insisted upon a literal meaning, because the Apostle Peter makes it plain that the heavens as well as the earth will pass away with a great noise.

In this same prophecy, the apostle uses the symbol of fire to describe the destructive influences which will bring to an end the present evil order of things and purge and prepare the way for the establishment of God's kingdom—the "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Peter also tells us that the elements will melt with fervent heat. That this does not have reference to the elements of the literal earth is evident from the fact that Paul uses this same word when he admonishes the Christian not to be entangled again with the "weak and beggarly elements" of this world. —Gal. 4:9

National Symbolisms

An interesting example of the fact that the word earth, when used in the Bible, does not always mean the literal planet upon which we live, is found in Daniel 7:23. Here the prophet tells about a great and terrible beast that devours the whole earth. This would be a tall story indeed, if it were intended to be understood literally; for where would this gigantic beast stand while devouring this planetary morsel? As a symbol, however, it conveys a very meaningful lesson—the beast, as well as the earth, is symbolic.

All are familiar with the fact that many nations of the past and present are symbolized on their coat of arms by beasts of various kinds. The reigning pharaohs of Old Egypt used a lion to indicate their authority of rulership, and England today uses the lion on her standard for the same purpose. Then there are the Chinese dragon, the Russian bear, and the American eagle. These are illustrations to show the figurative application of the characteristics of living creatures to nations.

The Bible employs a similar symbolic method to designate various great world powers of history. Hence, in the passage cited above, the symbolic earth—organized society—is pictured as being devoured by a beast. It is an apt portrayal of a selfish ruling-class organization appropriating the resources of society for its own selfish use. Many people of the world recognize these conditions, and see that the illustrations aptly fit the nations represented. Why, then, should we experience any special difficulty when we find similar symbolisms in the Bible? It is the way God teaches us.

The term mountain also is often used in a symbolic sense in the Bible, and when so used it denotes a kingdom—either one or more of the kingdoms of this world, or else the messianic kingdom of the next age.

The sea, when used pictorially in the Scriptures, represents the masses; and the roaring of the sea, the restless,

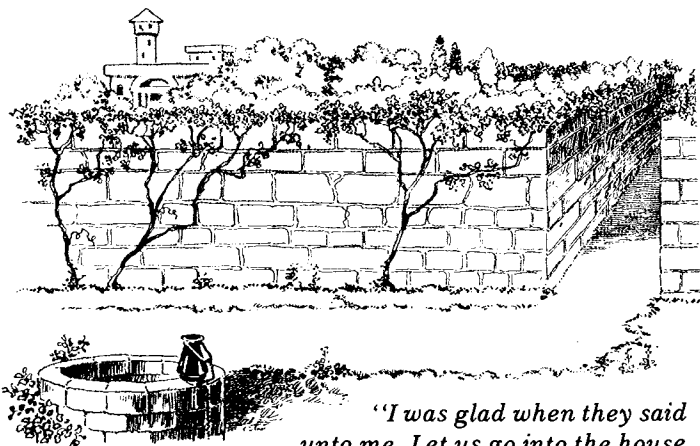
discontented condition of these masses. See Isaiah 17:12, 13. One of the Bible prophecies relative to the progress of events now taking place on the earth tells of the mountains being carried into the midst of the sea. This, indeed, is a fitting illustration of the fact that many of the strongest kingdoms of the earth already have fallen into the hands of the clamoring masses, and that other mighty mountains of civilization will likewise be engulfed as the rising tide of discontent surges more and more persistently against their bulwarks.

An example of the scriptural use of these striking symbolisms, portraying the disintegrating processes by which the present world is being destroyed, is that of Psalm 46:2-6. Here the LORD'S prophet says, "We will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Manifestly, this could not be understood literally, because if the literal earth were actually removed or destroyed there would be no mountains left to be carried into the sea, and no sea into which the mountains could be carried. Later in the chapter, the prophet interprets in part his own symbolic statements when he says, "The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved." And then, reverting to symbolic phraseology again, he continues, "He [the LORD] uttered his voice, the earth melted."

That this melting of the earth does not mean the destruction of this literal planet on which we live is further evidenced in the closing verses of the chapter, where the prophet shows that the moving and melting have reference to the destruction of the war-thirsty governments prior to the establishment of God's kingdom. That the literal earth is not destroyed is shown in verse ten of the psalm, where we read, "Be still, and know that I am God: . . . I will be exalted in the earth."

In this prophecy of the forty-sixth psalm, there is a most unusual example of the varied way in which the term earth is employed in the Scriptures. In verse two, the earth is said to be removed; in the sixth verse, it is described as being melted; yet in the tenth verse, as we have seen, it still exists,

and God's name is exalted in it. In this new order, God's name will be exalted throughout the whole earth. Surely, then, we should rejoice in the many evidences around us today which denote the near approach of the time when Christ shall be King, and the reign of sin and death shall end! Many of these signs will be examined in the next chapter. □



"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good."

—Psalm 122

Christian Life and Doctrine

Giving Thanks to God

THE forefathers of our nation were religious people, and many came to this land seeking freedom of worship. Hence, it is not surprising that a national holiday was established based on the giving of thanks to God. This holiday had its beginning when the pilgrims reaped an abundant harvest of food that helped them survive the hardships of that first cold New England winter. Their gratitude was expressed in a feast of thanksgiving that continued to be celebrated annually, and many years later was adopted as a national holiday in the United States.

Thanksgiving and gratitude are noble qualities which Christians are admonished to develop and practice in their lives. In Colossians 3:12-17 the fruits of the Spirit are described, and among them a thankful disposition is included: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering. . . . And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and **be ye thankful**. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace [gratitude, **Diaglott**] in your hearts to the LORD. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." We would all do well to carefully heed the instructions given by the Apostle Paul in this letter to the Colossians. There should be a constant awareness that everything we say or do, our words or deeds, should be in the name of the Lord Jesus. We are called to represent him, and so as his footstep followers we should try to emulate those fine qualities we see so beautifully exemplified in our Master's life.

When the Apostle Paul speaks of putting on mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patient endurance, forgiveness, love and peace, we recognize that these qualities must be developed. He concludes with the statement, "Be ye thankful." Thus we see that thankfulness, as another fruit of the Spirit, also requires cultivation. One principal obstacle encountered in the developing of thankfulness is a poor memory. Since we all suffer somewhat from this malady, it is relatively easy to forget to be thankful. Sometimes the excitement associated with an event where we are beneficiaries of God's grace and goodness preoccupies us so thoroughly that we forget to give thanks to our Heavenly Father. However, when we consider the circumstance later on, we should react quickly to correct our previous neglect. This habit of always giving thanks, no matter how long after the experience, eventually should cause us to grow more conscious of the need to do so at the very moment we receive God's blessings. Thus, we may grow in this grace and develop a more ready spirit of thankfulness.

Thankfulness is a trait which we all enjoy seeing displayed. How pleasing must it be to the Heavenly Father when we express our thanks to him for his many benefits, and say with the psalmist, "Blessed be the LORD, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation." —Ps. 68:19

An incident occurring in the life of Jesus demonstrates the attitude of gratitude as one of the characteristics sought by the Heavenly Father in calling the members of his church. An account of this experience is recorded in Luke 17:11-19. "It came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed,

turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole."

Leprosy has been used in the Scriptures to represent the condition of sin. Those who were healed of leprosy pictured sinners who are cleansed from sin through the ransom sacrifice of Jesus. The ten lepers in this case might well represent all those desiring to be cleansed from sin during this Gospel Age. All the lepers expressed faith by asking Jesus to have mercy on them and to remove their sickness. When he told them to go and show themselves to the priests, all of them went, no doubt expecting a miracle to occur on their behalf, along the way.

Under the Mosaic Law, if a leper was healed of his disease, the priests had to approve and verify his cure before he could be reinstated into the society of Israel. Under the observation and supervision of the priests, specific rituals had to be performed, as defined in the fourteenth chapter of Leviticus. Aware of these requirements of the Law, the ten lepers hastened off to find the priests. "It came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back" and fell down at Jesus' feet and gave thanks. Jesus told him it was his faith that had made him whole. The other nine also had faith that made them whole, but they lacked the gratitude that would induce them to return and give thanks. The excitement of realizing they were cleansed spurred them on to show themselves to the priests as Jesus had commanded, the uppermost thought in their minds no doubt being their reinstatement into the society of Israel. Now they could resume their normal way of life, no longer banished to the outskirts of the village separate from other people of Israel. This preoccupation tended to blot out thoughts of thankfulness to their

benefactor. To their shame as Israelites, the one that did return was a Samaritan. Jesus said to him, "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?"

There is an important lesson here for all those who desire to be cleansed during the Gospel Age. Like the Samaritan, each member of the church must have gratitude in his heart for the great power of God through Christ which has cleansed him from his sins. The church, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, is aptly pictured by the Samaritan leper, since the Samaritans as a people were a mixture of Israelites and Babylonians through intermarriage. How well the gratitude of the church for their redemption through Jesus is expressed these words of the Apostle Paul: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable [inexpressible, **Diaglott**] gift." (II Cor. 9:15) This gift of God was so appreciated by the apostle he could not find words to express his feelings of gratitude. What makes this gift even more precious is the knowledge that it is for the entire world of mankind as well as for his church, as Jesus said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in [into, **Diaglott**] him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) The church during this age and the world of mankind in the Millennial Age to come have this promise of eternal life as a gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6:2,3), and for this all should be eternally grateful.

Thankfulness is like a song in our hearts, an expression of joy and happiness! How glad our Heavenly Father must be when he sees our happiness and gratitude of heart expressed in psalms, hymns, and songs. It is a manifestation of the "Word of Christ" dwelling richly in us. Desiring to inspire appreciation and thankfulness for the Word of truth, James wrote, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (James 1:17,18) As his

children, the Word of truth dwelling in us is instrumental in accomplishing the task of conforming our lives to the character image of our Heavenly Father, whom we admire and love.

Above all, our thankfulness should be inspired by God's goodness. We sing to the LORD from our hearts along with the psalmist, "Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever. Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? Who can show forth all his praise? Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times. Remember me, O LORD, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." (Ps. 106:1-5) What a beautiful expression of appreciation for God's goodness, and our desire in some small measure to be worthy of his favor.

In the one hundred and seventh psalm, there is an exhortation to those whom God has redeemed: "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." (Ps. 107:2-7) This is followed by an exclamatory verse that bemoans the lack of appreciation on the part of many: "Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"—vs. 8

In these passages of Scripture, the church, spoken of as the redeemed, is shown to be seeking for a city—God's kingdom—even as Abraham looked for a city: "He [Abraham] looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:10) They have been

redeemed from the enemy of death, as the Apostle John has said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (I John 3:14) They have been gathered from every land and people. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28) They were found wandering in the wilderness of this present evil world, but now have been rescued. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." (Eph. 2:1-5) Their hunger and thirst have been satisfied: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6) But above all, they have found the city they were seeking: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." —Heb. 12:22

How thankful we should be that God has so richly favored us. To him be praise forever and ever! □



THE things to be restored by and through Christ are those things which were lost through Adam's transgression. (Rom. 5:18, 19) Man did not lose a heavenly, but an earthly paradise. Under the death penalty he did not lose a spiritual, but a human existence; and all that was lost was purchased back by his Redeemer, who declared that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. —Luke 19:10

Christian Life and Doctrine

“Think It Not Strange”

“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 Peter 4:12, 13

SUFFERING of any kind is foreign to the natural desires of all God’s intelligent creatures, and the human creation is no exception. One of the most blessed assurances given us concerning God’s plan for the human race is that eventually “there shall be no pain.” That will be at the close of the Millennium, when sickness, and even death itself, will have been destroyed, and when all things shall have been “made new.” —Rev. 21:4,5

But we are still in a suffering and dying world, and the followers of the Master share in the experiences which are common to all mankind. The divine arrangement for them does not call for a release from suffering simply because they are servants of God.

Pain itself is difficult enough to endure, but when there is added to physical suffering an uncertainty as to why it is necessary, or what the cause might be, then it becomes more difficult to bear. This frequently is the case with the people of God; when visited by afflictions of one sort or another, they begin to wonder what they have done to displease the LORD. In searching their hearts and lives for the answer, while knowing they are imperfect, usually they can find no special reason for suffering more than do their brethren. So with anxiety, and sometimes even fear, their burden is increased.

However, when we understand clearly the viewpoint which is presented to us in the Word of God, we will have no cause

to wonder and worry about our troubles, whether they be sickness or other afflictions. It is this that the Apostle Peter is explaining to us in our text. "Think it not strange," he says, "concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."

The King James translation does not give us the full depth of thought expressed by Peter. Basically, the Greek word here translated 'strange' is one that suggests the relationship between a host and a guest; that is, those who are not members of the same family. It is a similar word used by Paul in his reference to the experience of Abraham when visited by three angels. Paul wrote, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."—Heb. 13:1

Abraham knew that the angels were foreign to him, but he welcomed them as guests, and entertained them. But, as Peter explains, we are not to think of our trials as being foreign to us. We are to take them in, so to speak, as a part of our family of experiences and learn to live with them. To take this viewpoint of our afflictions will help a great deal in becoming reconciled to them, and learning the necessary lessons which they are designed to teach us.

Confirming this viewpoint of our trials is the Greek word used in this text, and translated 'happened', in the expression, "as though some strange thing happened unto you." Its literal meaning is 'to walk together'. The thought is that when trials visit us, and even walk together with us, we are not to think of them as strangers, or aliens, but to accept such experiences as though they were our friends, or even members of our family.

Peter explains that the reason we should not think of our trials as being strange, or alien to us, is that in experiencing them we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, or, as the Greek text indicates, we are "partners" in Christ's sufferings. In other words, in our trials we are sharing the common experiences of all whom the Heavenly Father is preparing to share

in the glory of the kingdom, and to partake of the glory of the divine nature.

Since trials are thus so closely related to our hope of glory, we should not consider them as strange, but should welcome them into our lives, get acquainted with them, and learn well the lessons which they alone are able to teach us. Just think of the blessing Abraham derived from being host to the three strangers who visited him! Instead of resenting the fact that they had called, he treated them as members of his family, and from them learned wonderful lessons.

It was from these strangers that Abraham received the final assurance that Sarah should bear him a seed, and it was from these also that the patriarch learned about the impending destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Yes, Abraham “entertained angels unawares.” We, too, will discover that if we become reconciled to our trials and consider them as a necessary part of our family of experiences, they will be as angels to impart much valuable information which we need in order to make our calling and election sure.

Not an Evidence of God's Disfavor

Trials, to the Christian, are not an evidence of God's disfavor, but the reverse. Paul wrote, “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”—II Tim. 3:12

And we read again that it is through “much tribulation” that we enter the kingdom. (Acts 14:22) Even if some of our trials may be in the nature of disciplinary stripes they are still an evidence of God's love. “For whom the LORD loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son he receiveth.”—Heb. 12:6

Yes, every son whom the Father receives and loves will be subject to training and discipline. Therefore, when trials are permitted for this purpose we should think of them as evidences of God's grace, not as being alien, or foreign, to our needs as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Of the wicked, David wrote, "Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish." (Ps. 73:7) This, of course, is not necessarily true of all who are not running for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. There are many in the world who have severe trials, either through poverty, or in other ways. At times, it is a temptation to a Christian to compare his lot with a worldly friend or neighbor who is doing well along material lines, and perhaps wonder why, as a child of God, he himself is having such a 'hard time'.

It is often along this line that the devil tries to discourage us. He endeavors to catch us off guard, and inject the thought into our minds that if we were truly the LORD'S he would take better care of us. This reasoning might well appeal to our fleshly minds, and we would begin to wonder why we should not have things at least as favorable as our neighbors.

Should you be tempted along this line, simply recall the words of Peter, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial" that is trying you. True, your neighbor may be carefree and prosperous, and you should be glad that he is. But he does not possess the glorious hope of joint-heirship with Christ Jesus that stirs your heart and enriches your life. He may be getting much out of the present life, but you are made rich by the joys of faith. He is without God, having no hope in the world; you have the presence and favor of God, and you have a hope that fadeth not away, eternal in the heavens.—1 Pet. 1:4

Trials Common to All

Paul informs us that Christians do not have any temptations, or trials, but what are common to man. (1 Cor. 10:13) This is quite true. The entire human race is suffering and dying. Because of this, all experience mental and physical suffering; all sooner or later sicken and die. There is a common heritage of trial which is experienced in every family, and by every member of the dying race.

Individually, nearly all of us experience, intermittently, periods of carefree and happy existence; and it is fortunate that this is so. But no one knows when disaster will strike. When we give ourselves to the LORD to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we are not translated out of this general situation of the world. Instead, the LORD uses these common experiences of man for the testing of our faith and patience, and for our disciplinary training.

It is true, of course, that this general ministry of evil is being utilized by the LORD for the good of all mankind, but with the world in general there is as yet no compensating grace of God to offset the trials. The value of these experiences will not be realized by the world until their day of judgment during the thousand years of Christ's reign.

But with us it is different. Our trials as members of the fallen race are no more severe, on the average, than those of the world, but we have a wonderful burden-bearer who is ever present to console and give us strength. The LORD said to Moses, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." (Exod. 33:14) This is no less true of the LORD'S consecrated people today. And in addition, as Paul reminds us, we have a sympathetic High Priest under whom we serve, who was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities."—Heb. 4:15

Paul also explains that Jesus was tempted in all points "like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 4:15) Jesus was not himself a sinner, nor did he yield to the temptations which were presented to him by Satan and by the sinful world. Nevertheless, he was in this world. He was surrounded by suffering, and he experienced all the hardships which are common to man, so he knows what we are going through, and is able to succor us in our trials.

For the Truth's Sake

The sufferings of Christ, in which we are invited to share, were in part the bitter persecutions which came upon him,

and which resulted in his death. He was persecuted because of his faithfulness in proclaiming unpopular truths, and in exposing popular error. We are to follow his example in this, and while today the persecuting spirit manifests itself along more refined lines, such as ostracism and cold indifference, we will surely feel the opposition of those who sit in darkness if we faithfully let our light shine.

Jesus also suffered weariness of the flesh because of his faithfulness to his vows of consecration. We have the same opportunity. How encouraging it is to realize that today there are still many of the LORD'S consecrated people who, in addition to spending necessary time and strength meeting the temporal responsibilities of life, are happy to work 'overtime', as it were, in the service of the LORD.

When the unconsecrated are through with their necessary daily toil, they are free to seek enjoyment or relaxation where it suits them the best. Actually, of course, the LORD'S people do the same, but the greatest pleasure of the consecrated heart is to seek out ways and means of devoting time and strength directly in the service of the LORD.

There is a Bible class or testimony meeting to attend. There is study of the LORD'S Word to be done in order to be equipped to give an answer for the hope which we have within us. There is truth literature to be distributed. For some there is the privilege of addressing envelopes in which literature can be mailed.

Yes, there are many avenues of service, and the consecrated today are finding these and utilizing their strength as faithfully as possible, and in the spirit of rejoicing, just as Jesus did. Oftentimes probably Jesus would have appreciated the privilege of a little more rest, and it is the same with the LORD'S people today. But he was laying down his life, and we are laying down our lives with him so we rejoice in our weariness because it is a part of his suffering.

Jesus also suffered sympathetically because of being in the world—although he was not of the world. Being himself

perfect, the sinful and imperfect things of the world would be even a greater trial to him than otherwise. The sickness and death with which he was surrounded bore down heavily upon his sympathetic shoulders. When Jesus stood by the tomb of Lazarus he wept in sympathy for the family, and for the whole dying world.

We also participate in these sufferings of Christ. True, our minds are more or less dulled by inherent imperfection, so we cannot enter into the sufferings of mankind with the same degree of sympathetic understanding that Jesus did. However, it was our revolt against sin which led us to the LORD, and having consecrated ourselves to his service, and received of his Holy Spirit, we are to some extent in the same relative position in the world as Jesus occupied, and thus share in his sufferings along this line.

Jesus spoke of this when he said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matt. 5:4) This could be true only of the consecrated, who mourn sympathetically for the sorrows of others, as Jesus did. Of Jesus it is written that he was a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." — Isa. 53:3

Jesus was not grief-stricken because of illness, or poverty, or failure in business, or for any of the reasons that ordinarily destroy human happiness. Rather, he was mournful because of the sadness with which he was surrounded. His weeping at the tomb of Lazarus was an evidence of this, an indication of the burden which continually bore upon his sympathetic heart.

Are we, from this standpoint, suffering with Jesus? Does a part of our daily trial consist of the fact that we are pained by the sorrow of others? If this be true, we have one of the most outstanding witnesses of the Spirit that we are the children of God. Surely we should not think such trials strange, but should rejoice indeed if we have this evidence of Christ-likeness.

Love for the Brethren

It was because Jesus loved the world that he suffered sympathetically with the people. This will be the basis of our sympathy toward the poor groaning creation. And this feeling will be even more keenly felt toward our brethren in Christ. Concerning this Paul wrote: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."—Phil. 2:1, 2

Just as Jesus passed through experiences similar to those which try us, and is now able to understand and succor us, this should also be true among ourselves. We are all running in the same narrow way of sacrifice. We are all living in the same unfriendly world. We are all subject to the same trials and temptations. Should not our hearts go out to one another in sympathetic understanding, and in the spirit of true comfort and helpfulness?

This, indeed, has been the attitude of the truly consecrated. If we do not find such a spirit surging up in our own hearts, we may know that we are lacking in true Christian growth. Concerning the brethren in Galatia, Paul wrote, "Ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and would have given them to me." (Gal. 4:15) As we know, Paul's eyesight was seriously impaired. This was a great trial to him. Evidently the Galatian brethren realized this, and in their spirit of sympathy made Paul feel that if it had been possible they would have given him their eyes.

To realize that our brethren in Christ are considering us in terms of genuine sympathy and in the spirit of helpfulness, assists in providing strength to face the difficulties of the narrow way. John said that we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren, and this surely involves the outpouring of our love and sympathy in words and acts of kindness to one another in times of need.—I John 3:16

Besides, the very fact that we are laying down our lives as

Jesus did should remind us not to think it strange when surrounded with hardships and trials, for such experiences are the flames necessary to consume our sacrifice. We do not need to face a firing squad, or be burned at the stake, or thrown to the lions, in order to suffer with Christ, and be planted together in the likeness of his death.

The Scriptures admonish that whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, all is to be done as unto the LORD. (I Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17) We can also consider all our hardships as indirectly related to our partnership in Christ's suffering. To view our common tasks and our trivial cares from this standpoint will transform them into hallowed experiences in which we will see the hand of the LORD directing our destiny, and causing all things to work together for our good.

We are told that Jesus was made perfect by the things which he suffered. He was trained, that is, for the position he now occupies as our sympathetic High Priest, and the Head of the royal priesthood, which later will succor the whole world of mankind. He was tested in all points as a new creature similar to the manner in which we are tested as new creatures; but only by observation did he become acquainted with the weaknesses of the dying race.

So, during the Gospel Age the church is being made perfect, or trained to be associated with Jesus in dealing with the sin-cursed world. Because we are by nature sinners, it means that the world's priesthood will, by actual experience as well as by observation, be able to deal sympathetically with the people during the future mediatorial reign.

Since Jesus died in order to provide life, it might be expected that those who accept the provision of his blood would immediately be released from suffering and death. But they are not. Instead, they are invited to suffer and die with him. So, when you suffer, think it not strange. The LORD could deliver you from it, but he wants you to learn from this experience the great need of all the human race who are undergoing similar pain. It is your training, the way you are

being “made perfect” as a part of the world’s sympathetic priesthood.

The hardships of the world are many and varied—disease, pain, death, financial worries, humiliations, disappointments, misunderstandings, and many others. Being in the world, we share in all these. But think it not strange, for in the great economy of God he is using these distresses to enrich your spiritual life, and to prepare you for glory.

To the unconsecrated a bitter experience may be tragic, but to you it can be an instrument in the LORD’S hand to teach you sympathy for the millions who are similarly suffering, and thus make you a little better prepared for your future work as a co-mediator of the New Covenant.

Those who understand the divine plan of salvation know why the LORD permitted evil; that it was because he wanted his human creation to learn valuable lessons from the experience. But do we always stop to think when we are passing through severe trials which result to us from the permission of evil, that in our case the LORD is using these experiences in a special way, that by them he is training us to be the teachers of the world of mankind to help them to understand the full meaning of the reign of sin and death?

This, beloved, is the divine purpose of your calling, and of permitting you to suffer even as the world suffers. Think it not strange, therefore, that you should find yourself in a furnace of affliction. Rejoice, rather, that you are a partner in the sufferings of Christ, and that your trials are being used for the same purpose as were his.

To keep this proper thought in mind will help us greatly to bear our trials. But merely to bear them is not enough. The LORD wants us to bear them patiently, and in spite of them to be rejoicing Christians. This is also possible through faith—faith that is in the promises of God to strengthen us in our weakness, and to guide our otherwise uncertain steps.

The LORD said concerning his typical people that when they were afflicted he also suffered. (Isa. 63:9) Surely this is

Answers to Test Your Knowledge Questions

(See Page 15 for Questions)

1. It is a day set apart to render thanks for divine goodness.

2. David, who is a type of the Christ, the anointed of God—Jesus and the church in the flesh. So also should we praise and magnify his name.

3. "God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but . . . ye became the servants of righteousness."—Rom. 6:17, 18

4. Because the Pharisee had the spirit of pride and self-exaltation. He was 'telling God' what a good man he was. Jesus said, "Everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—Luke 18:14

5. While being taken prisoner to Rome, Paul was comforted by meeting those of "like precious faith."—Acts 28:15; II Pet. 1:1

6. "... for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." If we know that every experience God permits has some bearing on our spiritual development, we can give thanks for everything.

7. Confessing to his name, and giving thanks and praise to the LORD, is spoken of as "the fruit of our lips" in Hebrews 13:15

8. "... be ye thankful."—Col. 3:15

9. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—II Cor. 15:57

10. By consecrating ourselves to God, to have his will done in our mortal bodies. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

11. At the resurrection of the dead, all the willing and obedient of earth will bow their knees and every tongue will confess praise and thanksgiving to the LORD.—Phil. 2:10, 11; Rev. 5:13; 15:4

12. Revelation 11:17 refers to the time of our Lord's second advent which, when its work is complete will see the kingdoms of this world under the authority of our Lord, who will reign "from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." (Ps. 72:8) There shall be nothing to "hurt nor destroy" in his kingdom, with God's will being "done in earth as in heaven." (Isa. 11:9; 65:25; Matt. 6:10) No wonder when Revelation 5:13 is fulfilled that all creatures will be thankful to "him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Encouraging Letters

WONDERFUL MAGAZINE

Dear Friends: Please renew my subscription to The Dawn. It is the most wonderful magazine in the world! I am so glad I learned the truth about God, and his love for everyone. I'm sending a little extra, as you can help people better than I can. Thank you so much!—OH

A NEW FRIEND

Dear Sirs: I am just becoming acquainted with the Dawn publications, and what a tremendous blessing! Please send the following four subscriptions to The Dawn magazine, and also please send me the following booklets: "The Truth about Hell," and "Hope Beyond the Grave," as well as a copy of "Hymns of Dawn." Thank you!—MO

SEARCHING

Dear Sirs: Recently a friend of mine showed me a book that he had bought at a sale. The name of it is "The Divine Plan of the Ages," and it is the first of six volumes.

Guided by the address contained in it, I am forwarding this letter in the hope of obtaining this book, and the current availability of any similar published works. Any help you can provide will be greatly appreciated. Sincerely.—PA

REJOICING IN THE TRUTH

Gentlemen: Please send me three copies of "The Creator's Grand Design," and others of your publications.—CA

VERY INFORMATIVE

Gentlemen: Please send me the "God's Plan" booklet. I listen to your very informative discussions each week, and I am truly desirous of learning more about God's plan. One of the questions that has been puzzling me for years was answered on your program. If it is possible, I would like to have a copy of your question and answer portion of the program that was aired today. Yours very truly.—MI

BOOKLET HELPED

Gentlemen: My wife recently died, and I received from you the booklet, "Hope." I appreciate getting this, and thank you so much for it. I am still grieved, and very lonely. This booklet has helped me. Thank you! Yours sincerely. —KS

"FASCINATED"

Dear Sirs: Please send two copies, one for me and one for my neighbor, of the booklet, "The Future of Israel and the World." We both saw the program on Sunday, and were fascinated. We appreciate your offer. Thank you. Cordially. —AL ☐



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These speakers are associated with the Pilgrim Department of the Dawn. Their services are furnished free upon request. Address your request to Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged when possible.

• • • • •

E. HERRSCHER		Allentown, PA	7
Louisville, AL	November 1	Washington, D.C.	13
Cincinnati, OH	3, 4	Virginia Beach, VA	14
Greenfield, OH	5	West Newton, PA	18
Columbus, OH	6		
West Newton, PA	7		
R.J. KRUPA		L. POST	
New Haven, CT	November 11	Philadelphia, PA	November 4
		Pottstown, PA	4
G. PASSIOS		New Haven, CT	11
Allentown, PA	November 4		
E.K. PENROSE		J. TATE	
West Newton, PA	November 5	Middletown, NY	November 4

Obituaries

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

Sister Effie Stevens, Portland, OR—February 24. Age, 104.
 Sister Mathilda Conrad, Milwaukee, WI—August 10. Age, 88.
 Sister Nellie Dietrich, St. Louis, MO—August 28. Age, 102.
 Sister Julia Ceropski, Brookfield, IL—August 28. Age, 95.
 Sister Edith I. Wharton, Columbia, MO—September 3. Age, 97.
 Sister Michalina Kuchar, Phoenix, AZ—September 7. Age, 73.
 Brother Leslie Reekie, Covina, CA—September 14. Age, 88.
 Sister Anna Magda, Windsor, Ont.—September 20. Age, 79.
 Sister Janet Akers, Palm Desert, CA—September 25. Age, 81.

We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.

Conventions

THESE CONVENTIONS ARE LISTED AT THE REQUEST OF THE INDIVIDUAL CLASSES WHO ARE SPONSORING THE GATHERINGS.

NEW HAVEN, CT, November 11—Italian-American Club, 85 Chase Lane, West Haven. Mrs. Richard Suraci, 171 Johnson Rd., Hamden 06518

DETROIT, MI, November 18—Redford YWCA, 25940 Grand River, Detroit. Frank Nemesh, 2183 Babcock Dr., Troy 48084

JERSEY CITY, NJ, November 17, 18—Masonic Temple, 1912 Morris

Ave., Union. Secretary: Mrs. C. Teklinski, 84 Arthur St., Ridgefield 07860

CHICAGO, IL, November 25—Elmhurst Masonic Temple, York Rd. & Arthur St., Elmhurst. Secretary: Ted Marten, 2033 Busse Hwy., Des Plaines, IL 60016
Phone: (312) 824-8916

PHOENIX, AZ, December 29-31—Quality Inn, 2420 W. Thomas Rd.

1984 CONVENTION TAPES

The General Convention tapes for 1984 are now available, and will be supplied in the order requests are received. Write to the Dawn Recorded Lecture Service, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. Cassettes on loan will be sent to you **two** at a time. Upon return of these to us, we will send you **two** more, etc. **This is a free service of the Dawn.** The talks are furnished on cassettes only.

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