

The Dawn

A Herald of Christ's Presence

MAY • 1969



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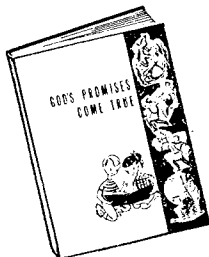
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The Dawn

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Highlights of **Dawn**

The Kingdom Near

ONE of the main themes of the Bible's prophecies is the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of his kingdom of blessing. The prophecies foretold the first advent of the Messiah, and pointed out many of the things which would occur in connection therewith. They foretold Jesus' birth, and the town in which he would be born. They foretold various aspects of his ministry, and how he would be persecuted and finally put to death. The prophecies mention in considerable detail what occurred at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. (Ps. 22:1, 18) The prophecies also foretold the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.—Ps. 16:10; 68:18; Eph. 4:8-11

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

There was high hope on the part of Jesus' disciples. They had accepted him as the foretold Messiah, and they believed that the kingdom was to be immediately established. (Luke 19:11) They did not then know that the main work to be accomplished at that time was the redemption of Adam and his children from sin and death, and that Jesus

would lay the foundation for this by his own death on Calvary's cross.

They did not know that Jesus would be going away, and that he would not return for many centuries, and that it would not be until his second visit to earth that his kingdom would be established. They rejoiced in the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead, and when he appeared to them on the Mount of Olives they made bold to ask, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" To this Jesus replied, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." —Acts 1:6, 7

We do not think that Jesus implied by this that his disciples would never know anything about God's times and seasons. He was simply emphasizing the fact that this information is controlled by God and that he divulges it to his people only as they need it for their encouragement. For Jesus to have explained to his inquiring disciples at that time that he was not about to establish his kingdom, and that he would not do so for nearly two thousand years, would have been very discouraging.

Jesus' Prophecies

During the three and one-half years of his ministry Jesus made a number of prophecies. Some of these were contained in parables; a very important one is the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares. (Matt. 13:24-32, 36-43) In this parable Jesus said that "good seed" was sown by "the Son of man," and that "tares" were sown by the Devil.

The parable reveals that the "tares"—the children of the wicked one—and the "wheat"—the children of the kingdom—would grow together until the end of the age, when there would be a harvest, a separation. Then the tares were to be destroyed, and the wheat were to "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

Here we have a prophecy concerning a corrupting influence that would enter in among the followers of the Master—the children of the kingdom—and that this would continue right down to the full end of the age, when the tares would be destroyed, and the wheat exalted to be with Jesus in his kingdom, shining forth like the sun, as a part of the prophetic “Sun of Righteousness,” which Malachi foretold would rise “with healing in his wings.”—Mal. 4:2

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

And now that we have reached the end of the age, the Lord’s spiritually enlightened people have seen the foretold harvest work in progress—indeed, they have themselves participated in this work through the publication of the “Gospel of the kingdom.” That harvest work is still going on; and what an incentive to faithfulness it is to know that when finally it is completed and they have joined their Lord in the “first resurrection” that they will become a part of that “Sun of righteousness” for the healing and blessing of the world!

End of the Age Prophecies

Toward the close of Jesus’ ministry his apostles began to sense vaguely that he might be going away for a while—although they did not seem to realize that he was to be killed by his enemies, and that the kingdom was a long way off. They went to him on the Mount of Olives, and

said, "Tell us when these things shall be, and what the sign of thy presence, and the conclusion of the age."—Matt. 24:3, Rotherham

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

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

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

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

Prior to 1914 this particular year had been pointed out by Bible students as being the end of "the times of the Gentiles," but prior to the actual events it was not possible to know clearly just what would occur. Now we have a better vantage point from which to see the events which had been foretold in the "sure word of prophecy." It was in 1914 that the first World War in history broke out. Much happened as a result of that war, and it was the war itself that led to the opening of Palestine to the Jew.

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

Church-State Systems Destroyed

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

Interpreting this dream, Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into

thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." The head of gold, then, pictured the fact that God had given dominion to Nebuchadnezzar, or Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar had been king before this, but now he had been given dominion by God.

This same fact continued through the empires represented by the brass, silver, and iron of the image. Babylon was destroyed as a world power not long after Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Medo-Persia—the "brass"—and Greece—the "silver"—also lost world dominion. Rome became divided, as represented by the feet and toes of the image, and its divisions still existed at the beginning of 1914. However, the prophecy states that when the image was smitten, "The clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, [were] broken to pieces together."

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

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

The Days Shortened

When answering his disciples concerning the signs of his second presence, Jesus said that there would be a time of great tribulation—a tribulation so great that unless those days should be shortened, no flesh would be saved. To this he added, according to a correct translation, that by the “elect” these days of tribulation would be shortened.—Matt. 24:21, 22

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

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

What a blessed assurance! Since God first began to make promises concerning the coming of a Messiah and the establishment of a righteous kingdom of blessing throughout the earth, each generation of his people looked for, hoped for, and prayed for the coming of that kingdom. Not all of them have known of the extent of the blessings of peace,

health, joy, and life it would bring to the people, but they have all sensed that it would mean a brighter and happier time for them and for all.

So the question has been repeated, "How long, O Lord, how long"; and again, "Wilt thou at this time?" etc. And now Jesus has given us the answer. "When ye see these things," and we are seeing them. In the half century since the end of "the times of the Gentiles" we have witnessed rapid progress in the major developments which Jesus foretold. We have seen the vassal-like bondage lifted from Israel; we have seen the development of that terrible potential of destruction which threatens the destruction of "all flesh." There is no mistaking the meaning of these developments. They are the very ones described by Jesus, and they have come at the very time that the prophecies foretold they would come.

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

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

The BIBLE ANSWERS

ALABAMA

Birmingham WBRC-TV Channel 6
Saturdays, 5:30 a.m.
Decatur WMSL-TV Channel 23
Saturdays, (Time to be announced.)
Florence WOWL-TV Channel 15
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

ARIZONA

Phoenix KTAR-TV Channel 12
Fridays, 6:00 a.m.

CALIFORNIA

Fresno KMJ-TV Channel 24
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.
Los Angeles KTTV Channel 11
Sundays, 6:30 a.m.
Los Angeles KWHY-TV Channel 22
Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.
Modesto KLOC-TV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)
San Jose KNTV-TV Channel 11
Sundays, 11:30 a.m.

CONNECTICUT

Hartford WHCT-TV Channel 18
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)
Waterbury WATR-TV Channel 20
Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

FLORIDA

Fort Pierce WTVX-TV Channel 34
(Day and time to be announced.)

GEORGIA

West Point CATV-TV
Wednesdays, (Time to be announced.)
Smyrna CATV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

INDIANA

Terre Haute WTHI-TV Channel 10
Alternate Sundays, 11:00 a.m.
South Bend WNDU-TV Channel 16
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

MARYLAND

Baltimore WJZ-TV Channel 13
Tuesdays, 1:45 a.m.

MASSACHUSETTS

Springfield WHYN-TV Channel 40
Sundays, 8:45 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Alexandria KCMT-TV Channel 7
Alternate Sundays, 7:30 a.m.

MISSISSIPPI

Columbus WCBI-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 7:30 a.m.

NEBRASKA

Omaha WOW-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 7:30 a.m.

NEVADA

Reno KTVN-TV Channel 2
Sundays, 12:30 p.m.
Reno CATV-TV
Wednesdays, (Time to be announced.)

NEW YORK

Binghamton WNBK-TV Channel 12
Sundays, 8:00 a.m.
Buffalo WKBW-TV Channel 7
Sundays, 8:00 a.m.

NORTH CAROLINA

Asheville WANC-TV Channel 62
Sundays, 6:30 p.m.
Raleigh WRAL-TV Channel 5
Sundays, 8:30 a.m.

OHIO

Athens CATV Channel 34
Sundays, 10:30 a.m.
Cambridge WHIZ-TV Channel 80
Sundays, 8:15 a.m.
Cincinnati WCPO-TV Channel 9
Thursdays, 1:30 a.m.

Television Schedule

Coshocton WHIZ-TV Channel 71
Sundays, 8:15 a.m.

Dayton WLWD Channel 2
Second Sunday of each month.
1:30 a.m.

Portsmouth WPAY-TV
(Day and time to be announced.)

Zanesville WHIZ-TV Channel 18
Sundays, 8:15 a.m.

PENNSYLVANIA

Wilkes Barre WBRE-TV Channel 28
Tuesdays, 6:30 a.m.

RHODE ISLAND

Providence WPRI-TV Channel 12
Tuesdays, 6:30 a.m.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Anderson WAIM-TV Channel 40
Mondays, (Time to be announced.)

Cheraw CATV-TV
(Day and time to be announced.)

TEXAS

Lubbock KKBC-TV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

San Antonio KWEX-TV
Sundays, 3:15 p.m.

UTAH

Salt Lake City KUTV Channel 2
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

VIRGINIA

Roanoke WRFT-TV
Sundays, 12:00 p.m.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston WCHS-TV Channel 8
Mon.-Fri., 6:30 a.m.

Huntington WHTN-TV Channel 13
Mondays, 7:30 a.m.

Oak Hill WOAY-TV Channel 4
Fridays, (Time to be announced.)

WISCONSIN

Eau Claire WEAU-TV Channel 13
Sundays, 7:30 a.m.

BERMUDA

Hamilton ZFB-TV
Sundays, 11:00 p.m.

SPANISH RADIO BROADCASTS

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

PANAMA

Colon HOL 1390 7:00 p.m.

PHILIPPINES

Cagayan de Oro DXCL 9:45 p.m.

PORTUGAL

Porto Miramar Radio Miramar
782 kc. Thursdays, 9:45 p.m.

SPAIN

Barcelona Radio Panades
1.106 kc. Fridays, 8:15 p.m.

TEXAS

San Antonio KUKA 1250 8:00 a.m.

URUGUAY

Montevideo Radio El Espectador
810 kc. Fridays, 2:15 p.m.

"**FRANK and ERNEST**"

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

ALABAMA

Decatur WMSL 1400 11:15 a.m.
Haleyville WJBB 1230 12:00 p.m.
Mobile WGOK 900 10:45 a.m.

ARIZONA

Phoenix KMEO 740 8:30 a.m.

ARKANSAS

Jonesboro KBTM 1230 12:05 p.m.

CALIFORNIA

El Centro KICO 1490 10:30 a.m.
Los Angeles KBIG 740 10:00 a.m.
Redding KVCV 600 7:45 a.m.
Sacramento KGMS 1380 8:30 a.m.
San Diego XERB 1090 9:45 a.m.
San Francisco KSAY 1010 10:00 a.m.

COLORADO

Fort Collins KZIX 600 10:00 a.m.

DELAWARE

Wilmington WTUX 1290 10:15 a.m.

FLORIDA

Orlando WTLN 1520 9:45 a.m.
Tampa WFLA 970 9:30 a.m.

IDAHO

Lewiston KRLC 1350 9:35 a.m.
Sandpoint KSPT 1400 10:15 a.m.

ILLINOIS

Chicago WEAU 1330 10:00 a.m.
WEAU(fm) 105 Mondays, 12:30 a.m.
La Salle WLPO 1220 9:45 a.m.
Rockford WRRR 1330 8:30 a.m.
West Frankfort WFRX 1300 9:15 a.m.

INDIANA

Gary-Hammond WJOB 1230 8:30 a.m.
Indianapolis WIBC 1070 10:30 a.m.
Muncie WLBC 1340 8:45 a.m.

IOWA

Clinton KROS 1340 7:15 p.m.

KANSAS

Goodland KLOE 730 7:45 a.m.

KENTUCKY

Bowling Green WLBJ 1410 12:05 p.m.
Louisville WAVE 970 8:15 a.m.
Newport WNOP 740 9:10 a.m.
Winchester WWKY 1380 10:30 a.m.

MAINE

Bangor WABI 910 10:30 a.m.

MARYLAND

Ocean City WETT 1590 12:05 p.m.

MASSACHUSETTS

Orange WCAT 1390 9:15 a.m.

MICHIGAN

Detroit WLDM(fm) 95.5 9:00 a.m.
Grand Rapids WFT 1480 9:30 a.m.
Saginaw WSGW 790 10:30 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis KQRS 1440 12:30 p.m.

MISSISSIPPI

Biloxi WLOX 1490 12:00 p.m.

MISSOURI

Farmington KREI 800 9:00 a.m.
Kansas City KCMO 810 9:40 a.m.
St. Louis KWK 1380 8:00 a.m.

MONTANA

Baker KFLN 960 8:00 a.m.
Great Falls KFBB 1310 9:15 a.m.
Miles City KATL 1340 9:15 a.m.

NEBRASKA

Grand Island KRG 1430 10:05 a.m.

NEW JERSEY

Newark WJRZ 970 8:15 a.m.

NEW MEXICO

Silver city KSIL 1340 10:05 a.m.

NEW YORK

Albany WEE 1300 9:00 a.m.
Buffalo-Niagara Falls WHLD 1270 12:00 noon
Kingston WBAZ 1550 9:45 a.m.
New York WJRZ 970 8:15 a.m.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elizabeth City WGAI 560 12:05 p.m.

Radio Broadcast Schedule

Leaksville	WLOE	1490	12:05	p.m.	Salt Lake City	KSOP	1370	9:30	a.m.
OHIO					VIRGINIA				
Cincinnati	WNOP	740	9:10	a.m.	Richmond	WLEE	1480	10:45	a.m.
Cleveland	WHK	1420	9:45	a.m.	WASHINGTON				
Columbus	WBNS	1460	10:10	a.m.	Bellingham	KPUG	1170	9:30	a.m.
Piqua	WPTW	1570	11:30	a.m.	Centralia-Chehalis				
Zanesville	WHIZ	1240	6:40	a.m.		KELA	1470	10:35	a.m.
OKLAHOMA					Olympia	KGy	1240	10:35	a.m.
Oklahoma City					Quincy	KPOR	1370	10:35	a.m.
	WNAD	640	8:10	a.m.	Seattle	KAYO	1150	10:30	a.m.
OREGON					Tacoma	KMO	1360	9:45	a.m.
Eugene	KORE	1050	10:30	a.m.	Yakima	KUTI	980	7:30	a.m.
Lebanon	KGAL	920	9:00	a.m.	WISCONSIN				
Portland	KLIQ	1290	9:30	a.m.	Fond du Lac	KFIZ	1450	11:05	a.m.
The Dalles	KODL	1440	9:15	a.m.	Milwaukee	WEMP	1250	8:45	a.m.
PENNSYLVANIA					Neillsville	WCCN	1370	9:15	a.m.
Allentown	WHOL	1600	10:45	a.m.	WYOMING				
Connellsville	WCVI	1340	12:05	p.m.	Cheyenne	KVWO	1370	10:05	a.m.
Pittsburgh	WARO	540	12:00	noon	MALDIVÉ ISLANDS				
Pottstown	WPAZ	1370	12:45	p.m.	Rodio Maldives	4740	9:00	p.m.	Tue.
PUERTO RICO					VIRGIN ISLANDS				
Aguadilla (Fri)	WGRF		8:00	p.m.	St. Croix	WSTX	970	9:00	a.m.
SOUTH DAKOTA					CANADA				
Yankton	KYNT	1450	11:05	a.m.	Calgary, Alta.				
Yankton	WNAX	570	10:45	a.m.		CKXL	1140	11:00	a.m.
TENNESSEE					Corner Brook, Nfld.				
Clinton	WYSH	1380	12:45	p.m.		CFCB	570	10:30	a.m.
TEXAS					Dauphin, Man.				
Lubbock	KDAV	580	9:45	a.m.		CKDM	730	10:30	a.m.
Pampa	KPDN	1340	12:00	p.m.	Oshawa, Ont.	CKLB	1350	9:45	a.m.
Pleasanton	KBOP	1380	7:15	a.m.	Prince Albert, Sask.				
San Antonio	KMAC	630	12:00	noon		CKBI	900	10:30	a.m.
Shamrock	KBYP	1580	10:00	a.m.	St. Thomas, Ont.				
Sherman-Dennison						CHLO	680	9:00	a.m.
	KRRV	910	11:45	a.m.	Vancouver, B. C.				
Wichita Falls	KWFT	620	7:15	a.m.		CJOR	600	7:15	p.m.
UTAH					AUSTRALIA				
Ogden	KVOG	1490	10:35	a.m.	Geelong	3GL	222m.	10:00	a.m.

RADIO TOPICS FOR MAY

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 4—"The Bible Harmonious" | 18—"Divine Intervention
in the Affairs of Men" |
| 11—"Thy Kingdom Come" | 25—"Unlocking the Gates of Hell" |

Bible Study

LESSON FOR MAY 4

The Preservation of the Bible

MEMORY VERSE: "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away."—**Mark 13:31**

JEREMIAH 36:27, 28, 32

JOHN 21:24, 25; II PETER 3:15-18

THE Bible is formed of many books, written by many men, over a period of many hundreds of years. Much of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, is historical in nature. Another large portion is devotional in character; that is, it sets forth the various ramifications of what it means to be wholly devoted to God and to the doing of his will. In this category are also the many promises of God to guide and strengthen his **people in their every time of need.**

The Bible also contains many prophecies. Many of the Old Testament prophecies deal with the experiences of the nation of Israel and their surrounding neighbors. Many of these prophecies are short-range in nature, and their fulfilment occurred in some instances during the generation to which they were addressed.

And then there are long-range prophecies in both the Old and New Testaments concerning the outworking of God's great plan of the ages. "The times of restitution," for example, the period during which the human race will be restored to perfection of life on the earth, and given an opportunity to live forever in the restored paradise, was foretold by all God's holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:19-21

The doctrines, or teachings, which reveal God's divine plan of the ages are also contained in the Bible. These show God's purpose in the creation of man; the penalty for sin; why Jesus' death as man's Redeemer was necessary; the "heavenly calling" of the followers of Jesus; the first and second advents of Jesus and their purpose, and man's recovery from sin and death during the thousand-year reign of Christ, to name a few.

Throughout the ages God has preserved his written Word. Its enemies have endeavored to discredit and to destroy it, but the Bible lives on. Jeremiah (36:27, 28, 32) tells us of an effort in his day to destroy a portion of God's Word which he had been commissioned to write. By instructions of the Lord, Jeremiah had written a roll of threatening prophecies. The King of Israel was displeased and had the roll destroyed, thinking, apparently, that the calamities which it foretold could be averted simply by destroying the prophecies.

But the Lord commanded Jeremiah to write another scroll, which he did. It contained all that the original roll did, "and there were added besides unto them many like words." Thus this very early attempt to destroy a portion of the Word of God was thwarted; as have been the efforts of all the enemies of the Word of God throughout the ages.

John 21:25 (a part of the assignment for this lesson) is spurious, not being found in the oldest Greek manuscript.

The Apostle Peter reminds us (II Pet. 3:15-18) that in Paul's writings there are some things hard to be understood. The unlearned and unstable, he explains, wrest these Scriptures and therefore destroy their real

meaning. He admonishes us to "beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."

Our memory verse is an interesting one. It is an assurance that the Lord's words will never pass away—"Heaven and earth shall pass away," Jesus said, but not his words. The testimony of the prophecies is that the word "heaven" when used as here, denotes the religious aspects of a social order, and the word "earth," the civil. Jesus said further of this day that then "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken." (Mark 13:24, 25) The powers of heaven; that is, of spiritual control over the people, are even now passing away; thus the prophecy of Jesus stands true.

QUESTIONS

What is the general format of the Bible?

How did the Lord preserve a part of his Word in Jeremiah's day?

Is John 21:25 true?

What does Peter say about the writings of Paul?

Will the literal heavens and earth ever pass away?

The Bible in the Language of the People

MEMORY VERSE: "Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."—Acts 2:11

ACTS 2:1-12

THE Holy Spirit was poured out upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost in fulfilment of Jesus' promise. The Holy Spirit is the holy power of God, and to that power there is no limit. In the opening chapter of the Bible it is shown to be a creative power. It is this power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead and exalted him in due course to the right hand of the throne of God. It is this power, implementing divine wisdom in designing the human organism, that created the organs of speech; and there was no problem for the Lord to exercise that holy power to enable those first disciples to speak in tongues which ordinarily were not familiar to them.

There is a wise purpose in everything that God does. At the time of Pentecost, Jews were gathered at Jerusalem from essentially all parts of the then known world. Having been away from Palestine, some of them for generations, they no longer spoke the language of their homeland. However, it

was in the plan of God that these should receive a witness concerning Jesus—his ministry, his suffering, his death, and his resurrection. The only ones then qualified to give this witness were his disciples, yet these were limited in speech to their own native tongue.

But God's arm was not shortened by this limitation. His holy power operated and enabled his witnesses to speak in other tongues. Sixteen different nationalities are mentioned as being present, and all of these heard about Jesus and the wonderful works of God, each in his own tongue. We are not to suppose that all those who spoke with tongues on that day gave witness in all sixteen or more languages. Possibly a single disciple was given the ability to speak in only one or two tongues in addition to his own. The point is that all heard the message in their own tongue—a wonderful miracle.

Thus we see that the original speaking in tongues had a real purpose, for a wide witness for the truth concerning Jesus was

given in this way, and in a very short period of time. As the Gospel spread as a result of this first witness there would be, in time, believers in the various areas mentioned, and they could give the witness to their friends and neighbors without the necessity of miraculously speaking in other tongues.

The New Testament record indicates that the "gift" of speaking with tongues gradually disappeared. Even in Paul's day there were those who had lost sight of its real purpose. Paul wrote, "Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?" And again, "If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me. . . . Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret."—I Cor. 14:9-13

Paul explained further that he had the ability to speak with tongues, but to this he added, "Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."—I Cor. 14:18, 19

It is clear from Paul's instructions that speaking in an unknown tongue was an exercise in futility unless there were

those present who, through an interpreter, were thereby instructed in the things of God. It was for this reason that Paul, discerning the Lord's providences in the matter, declared that "tongues" would pass away. —I Cor. 13:8

The modern frenzy of speaking in tongues—"glossolalia"—is something quite different from what was practiced in the Early Church, and especially that which occurred at Pentecost. Now, those who speak in tongues use a gibberish which is not even understood by themselves, much less by others. And to the best of our knowledge no interpreters are used today to give the hearers an understanding of what is purported to be said. It is the result of a high state of frenzy and emotionalism which borders on insanity during the time it is in process. It has no relation to that miraculous "gift" with which the Lord blessed some in the Early Church in order quickly to give a wide witness for the truth.

QUESTIONS

What is the Holy Spirit?

Explain the purpose of the "tongues" employed at Pentecost.

What was Paul's view of speaking with tongues?

Is "glossolalia" taught in the Bible?

Keys to Understanding the Bible

MEMORY VERSE: "You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life."—John 5:39, Revised Standard Version

JOHN 16:12-15

JESUS' promise to send the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of truth, was fulfilled at Pentecost. The Apostle Peter, in his pentecostal sermon, makes this statement concerning Jesus and the Holy Spirit; "Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."—Acts 2:33

The special point to notice here is that Peter speaks of the Holy Spirit's being "shed forth." This language cannot be applied to a personality, for a person is not shed forth. The Holy Spirit is the holy power of God, and the King James translation of John 16:12-15 is therefore in error by its use of personal pronouns with respect to this holy influence which came upon the waiting church at Pentecost, and which has served ever since as a Comforter to the disciples of Jesus.

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide his followers into "all truth." So far as the apostles were concerned the Holy Spirit was a miraculous power of revelation, recalling for them the many things which Jesus had said to them, and enabling them to comprehend their meaning, and the meaning also of the Old Testament Scriptures. Thereafter, through the ministry of these inspired servants, all the faithful followers of the Master have been directed in the ways of truth in proportion to the degree of their dedication to the knowing and doing of the divine will. God's Spirit has also guided his people through his providences. However, only the apostles were given miraculous revelations of truth.

ACTS 17:10-12

Another "key" to the understanding of the Bible is an earnest searching of its pages, with a sincere desire to know its

meaning. Those at Berea are referred to as "more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

We are to prove all things, and to hold fast to that which is good. This does not mean that first of all we are to decide that what we believe, or what we have been taught, must be the truth, and then set about to prove it by the Bible. This is not a true searching of the Bible.

Had the Jewish brethren at Berea searched the Scriptures in this manner they would have rejected Paul's message, for they had been taught that Jesus was not the Messiah, but an impostor. Rather, they listened to Paul with all readiness of mind, and found through a sincere and open-minded study of the Bible, that his message to them was indeed the truth; that Jesus was indeed the Messiah of promise.

JAMES 1:22-25

James stresses the importance of being "doers of the Word, and not hearers only." A clear understanding of the plan of God for us and for all mankind is obtainable only by those who study the Bible with a desire to be guided by its precepts. To have this proper motive for

Bible study is truly one of the important keys to a proper understanding of the sacred Word.

Paul, as well as James, uses a mirror as an illustration, and Paul explains that we should behold in the "mirror"—which is God's Word—the glory of the Lord. If we are doers of the Word, this vision of divine glory will transform us "from glory to glory" through the power of the Spirit of truth.

Our memory verse reminds us of the central personality of the Bible; namely, Jesus Christ. It is through him and him alone that anyone can obtain eternal life. The scribes and Pharisees sought eternal life through their searching of the Scriptures, but they refused to accept the One whom God had sent to redeem them from death. The faithful followers of Jesus during the present age receive life by faith, and are raised to glory, honor, and immortality in the resurrection. Mankind in general will be restored to perfect human life during the millennial kingdom of Christ.

QUESTIONS

What is the Holy Spirit, and when did it begin to guide Christians?

Are there any authoritative teachings concerning God outside the Bible?

What is the proper motive for Bible study?

Backgrounds of the Bible

MEMORY VERSE: "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to lighten the Gentiles, that thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth."—Isaiah 49:6

JOHN 4:3-10, 19-26

ANCIENT Palestine, the Promised Land, is the geographical background of the Bible, while the writers of its various books, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, were descendants of Abraham, with the possible exception of Job, who by some scholars is thought to have been a Gentile. God's promises to Abraham, enlarged on by the prophets, by Jesus, and the apostles, constitute the doctrinal themes of the Bible.

Within Palestine in Jesus' day was a group of people known as Samaritans. The entire northern part of the country which was governed by the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel became known as Samaria. When the ten-tribe kingdom was destroyed, and the Israelites were taken captive to Assyria, "the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead

of the children of Israel."—II Kings 17:24

The Samaritans of Jesus' day were descendants of these mixed peoples, including some who were the result of the intermingling of unfaithful Jews with them. In Nehemiah's time a temple had been built for the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim. But this temple had been destroyed before Jesus' day, yet the Samaritans of that time revered it, claiming that it had been far superior to the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. For this and other reasons the Jews and Samaritans held much animosity toward one another, which explains why the woman of Samaria expressed surprise that Jesus should ask her for a drink of water.

Jesus took the occasion to witness to the woman concerning his messiahship, and of his ability to provide living water, concerning which he said, "Who-soever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall nev-

or thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him: a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”—John 4:13, 14

Jesus revealed to the woman that he knew about her family affairs—that she had had five husbands, and was now living with a man who was not her husband. To this she replied, “I perceive that thou art a prophet.” (vs. 19) Since she realized that she was conversing with a prophet the woman raised a question which doubtless had been a subject of controversy between Jews and Samaritans for a long time.

She said, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain [Gerizim]; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” To this Jesus replied, “Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.” He explained further that the Father desired the people to worship him in spirit and in truth, and that the place of worship was not important.

Jerusalem was the capital of the Promised Land, and the kings of Judah ruled from Mount Zion in Jerusalem. The Jewish temple was in Jerusalem. Thus Jerusalem was the center of their religious worship and of their government. In God’s arrangements this was

intended as an illustration of the kingdom of the Messiah in its total rulership over mankind, which is described in Revelation 21 as a “new Jerusalem” which comes down from heaven. This new Jerusalem will be invisible to human eyes, but it will be all-powerful, and those who obey its laws will live forever.—Rev. 21:1-4

The great servant referred to in our memory verse is Jesus, the Messiah. He is the One who gives light to Israel and also to the Gentiles. (Isa. 60:1, 3; Luke 2:32; John 1:9) It is through Jesus, the true Light of the world, that salvation will yet be made available to all the families of the earth.—Gen. 12:3

During the present Gospel Age a special salvation, involving exaltation to glory and honor and immortality, is offered upon the basis of faith to all the truly consecrated followers of Jesus. (Heb. 3:1) These will be associated with Jesus in the future work of blessing all the families of the earth. The present is their day of salvation, but the world’s day of salvation is future.

QUESTIONS

What is the geographical background of the Bible?

What is its cultural background?

Who were the Samaritans?

Who is the Light of the world?

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Cost of the Truth

THE wise man, Solomon, wrote: "Buy the truth, and sell it not." (Prov. 23:23) This language implies that the truth is of great value, and that if we desire to possess it we must be willing to pay whatever it costs. It also indicates the possibility of losing possession of the truth after we have purchased it; that it is possible to sell the truth. What is this truth which we are admonished to buy, and not sell? How do we buy it, and how can we sell it?

The "truth" referred to is God's truth. When Jesus told Pilate that he had come into the world to be a king and to bear witness to the truth, Pilate asked, "What is truth?" Jesus had answered this question the night before when, praying on behalf of his disciples, he said: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17) God's "Word" in Jesus' day consisted of the Old Testament Scriptures. Later, this Word of truth was completed by Jesus' own teachings and example, and by the writings and sermons of the apostles; and finally by John's account of the wonderful vision which the Lord gave to him on the Isle of Patmos, which we know as the Book of Revelation.

There is much in the Bible that is historical, much that is prophetic, and a great deal of what we may properly speak of as devotional truths, consisting of God's precious promises to guide his faithful people and to give them strength to do his will in their every time of need. The Bible's teachings on the subject of prayer also come within the category of devotional truth.

Much of the prophetic truth of the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament, is of the short-range variety, pertaining largely to the experiences of the nation of Israel. Many of these prophecies were fulfilled within the lifetime of a given generation, and their fulfilment recorded; thus they became a part of the Bible's history. On the other hand, there are many prophecies of the Bible whose fulfilment would occur hundreds and sometimes thousands of years in the future. These are of the greatest importance to us because they relate to the working out of the great divine plan of the ages.

Then there are the doctrinal truths of the Bible. These are the truths which outline God's great theme song of redemption and restoration for the human race. The psalmist wrote, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." (Ps. 89:15) This "joyful sound" is the great messianic theme of the Bible which can be traced from Genesis to Revelation. The individual doctrines which make up this theme, together with the devotional aspects of the Bible, are the great fundamentals of those truths by which we are sanctified, and for which we are dedicated to lay down our lives.

They begin with the creation of our first parents in the Garden of Eden—human, and in the image of God. (Gen. 1:27) In God's command to multiply and fill the earth we see his design for his human creatures; namely, that the earth was to be their home, and they were to dwell here forever. Later the Lord confirmed this when through the Prophet Isaiah he said that he had established the earth; that he had not created it in vain, but formed it to be inhabited.—Isa. 45:18

Disobedience and Death

Man's continuing to live depended upon his obedience.

We know the story of disobedience. Eve was deceived into partaking of the forbidden fruit; but Adam wilfully transgressed the divine command, and brought upon himself the penalty of death which was passed on by heredity to all his progeny. (I Cor. 15:21; Rom. 5:12) When passing sentence upon our first parents the Lord said to "that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan," (Rev. 20:2) that he (Satan) would bruise the heel of the "seed" of the woman, and that the "seed" of the woman would bruise his head.—Gen. 3:15

This foretold "Seed"—the messianic company of the Scriptures—is made up of Jesus and his loyal followers. In the statement to the "serpent" we have the first indication given us in the Scriptures of a coming deliverance from sin and death for the fallen human race. Later, this prospect became more comprehensive when God said to Abraham that through his "Seed" all families of the earth would be blessed. We speak of this as the Abrahamic Covenant.—Gen. 12:3; 22:16-18

From Abraham's time onward his descendants looked for this coming seed of blessing. When Jesus was born the angel announced, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10) Later Paul explained that Jesus, and those baptized into him, constitute the Seed promised to Abraham.—Gal. 3:16, 27-29

Meanwhile God had entered into a covenant with the natural seed of Abraham, the Jewish nation; a covenant which was based upon the Law given at the hands of Moses at Mt. Sinai. This Law Covenant offered life to those who could live up to its full requirements, but none of the fallen race was capable of doing this. (Rom. 7:10) However, the Law accomplished an important end in the outworking

of the divine plan of salvation; it proved that fallen man could not gain life by his own righteousness, and showed that the only way to attain life was through Jesus and the provision made by him through his sacrificial death.

The Ransom

The Apostle Paul wrote, "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 Greek word here translated "ransom" means "a price to correspond." So the perfect man Jesus gave his humanity as a corresponding price for the perfect man Adam who had sinned and forfeited his life. This "ransom" feature of the divine plan is thus seen to be the very hub of the entire divine arrangement to rescue mankind from sin and death.

Many of the prophecies pertaining to the coming of the Messiah foretold his sacrifice for the sins of the world. (Isa. 53) It was foreshadowed by the sacrifice of the bullock on Israel's day of atonement. The resurrected Jesus, testifying to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, began with Moses, and he pointed out to them from all the prophets that the Christ must suffer and die before entering into his glory.—Luke 24:25-27

The Resurrection of Jesus

Another fundamental feature of the divine plan is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Paul, writing concerning Jesus, says that he "was delivered [to death] for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4:25) To the Athenians on Mars' hill, Paul explains that God had given assurance unto all men by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.—Acts 17:31

It is important also to realize that Jesus was not restored to life as a human, but as a glorious divine being. He gave his flesh for the life of the world. (John 6:51) The Scriptures clearly teach that while Jesus was put to death in the flesh he was made alive in the Spirit, in the exact image of the invisible God.—Col. 1:15; II Cor. 5:16; I Pet. 3:18

Jesus was present with his disciples for forty days between the time of his resurrection and his ascension; but for only a very small portion of this time were the disciples able to see him. The last of these miraculous appearances was on the Mount of Olives. It was then that he renewed his commission to them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, and promised that they would shortly receive the Holy Spirit to give them guidance and strength for this great undertaking.

Not to Convert the World

The preaching of the Gospel throughout the world during the Christian era has not been for the purpose of converting the world. At a conference of the apostles in Jerusalem, Peter explained that it was to take out a people for the Lord's name. While the Jewish nation generally rejected Jesus as their Messiah, some did receive him and became his followers. These became "sons of God," members of the Lord's family. But there were too few of these to make up the number called for in the divine plan so the message went to the Gentiles.—John 1:11, 12; Acts 15:14

This company, in all a "little flock," are called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus—to suffer and to die with him, with the promise that if faithful in this they will live and reign with him. (Luke 12:32; II Tim. 2:11, 12; Rev. 20:6) Paul speaks of them as running for "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and as being "partakers

of the heavenly calling." (Phil. 3:14; Heb. 3:1) Jesus promised that these would be with him, and John adds that they will be like him and see him as he is.—John 14:3; I John 3:1-3

Christ Returns

This work of gathering out from Jews and Gentiles "a little flock" to live and reign with Christ was to take an entire age in the plan of God—the Gospel Age. At the end of the age there was to be a harvest, when the "wheat" would be separated from the "tares." This work was to be supervised by the returned Lord, who was to be invisibly present as the Chief Reaper from the beginning of the harvest.—Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus was not to return as a human. As we have seen, he gave his human life to redeem the world from death, and in the resurrection was highly exalted to the divine nature. It is as a divine being that he returned, first to supervise the work of harvest in this end of the age, and to establish the long-promised messianic kingdom. While this is not the time and place to set forth the clear scriptural proof of these points, we believe that we are now living in the time of harvest, and that our Lord is present as the Chief Reaper in conducting this work.

One feature of the harvest work is the destruction of the tares—not as people, but as counterfeit Christians. Together, throughout much of the Gospel Age, these have claimed to be the kingdom of Christ, associating themselves with civil governments to obtain authority and power. This arrangement has been known as the union of church and state. Already this system is almost completely destroyed, and throughout the European world millions of its former adherents have become unbelievers—not even claiming to be Christians.

When the harvest work is complete, Jesus explained, those represented by the "wheat" will "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13:43) This calls for their participation in the "first resurrection," and all those who are found worthy will "live and reign with him [Christ] a thousand years."—Rev. 20:6

The Kingdom Work

Then will quickly follow the outpouring of the foretold blessings of health and life to all the families of the earth as promised to Abraham. Peter spoke of the period in the divine plan when this will be accomplished as "times of restitution of all things," and declared that it had been spoken by God through his holy prophets from the beginning of the world. What a glorious climax to the divine plan this will be, for it will mean the end of sickness and of death, and all the other evils which have afflicted mankind since the fall in Eden to the present time!—I Cor. 15:25, 26; Rev. 21:4

The "times of restitution" will be a period of enlightenment, so that the people will no longer be ignorant of God and of his laws as they are today. Because they will be enlightened they will be expected to obey, and the penalty for disobedience then will be the same as it was for Adam and his race; namely, death. Peter declared that those who do not obey will be "destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:23) Today the whole world—the righteous and the unrighteous, the believers and the unbelievers, are dying. But in the times of restitution only those who refuse to believe and who disobey the laws of the kingdom will die. This is described in the Bible as "the second death."—Rev. 20:14, 15

When our first parents transgressed divine law, they not only lost life, but they became estranged from God. During the thousand years of Christ's reign the whole world of

mankind will be reconciled to God. This is described in Jeremiah 31:31-34 as entering into a covenant with God, the foretold "New Covenant." In that covenant of reconciliation the people will have the law of God written in their hearts. They will be restored to the full divine image possessed by Adam before he sinned. Surely this is a glorious prospect for the sin-cursed and dying race!

How to "Buy" the Truth

We have presented but a brief outline of the main features of the "joyful sound" of the Gospel of Christ, the truth of the divine plan, every point of which can be clearly established by a "thus saith the Lord." How can we "buy" this precious treasure of knowledge which is stored up so abundantly in the Word of God?

We buy the truth by making it our own. It is like a jewel we may see on display. We admire the jewel, but realize that in order to own it there is a price to pay. Using this as an illustration, we might think of the Bible as a display case in which, through reading, we see and admire the many and varied facets of the truth. Many "see" the truth in this way, and up to a point admire it, but do not truly make it their own.

The truth reveals the glorious character of God, and if it is received into good and honest hearts it has a drawing power, causing us to love and want to serve God. If we receive our first knowledge of the truth in the proper spirit we will be led to make a full consecration of ourselves to do our Heavenly Father's will. The full dedication of ourselves to God and to his cause is the basic price of the truth.

As we have seen, the very center of the divine plan for the salvation of the world is Jesus and his work of redemption. Paul outlined what the result of the knowledge of

Jesus and his place in God's plan should be to those who see it displayed through the Word. We quote: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, . . . that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."—II Cor. 5:14, 15

Not Momentary

The giving of ourselves to the Lord is not a momentary act. It began, of course, with a definite surrender of ourselves to the Lord to do his will, but this original presentation, this agreement or covenant, would be of little value should we fail to follow through by obediently laying down our lives in divine service day by day, year by year, until we have been faithful even unto death. This is the cost of the truth, if we are to really make it our own, and have its mighty power continue to transform our lives to make us suitable to participate in the first resurrection to live and reign with Christ.

Not only is the glorious plan of the ages itself revealed throughout the Bible, but the will of God for his dedicated people is also to be found there; and one of the great tests of the sincerity of our consecration is maintaining our loyalty to the Lord's instructions. All of the Lord's people are imperfect according to the flesh. One evidence of this is in the fact that we often find ourselves preferring some aspects of the divine will above others; or perhaps by giving undue emphasis to one or two doctrines of the truth while ignoring others.

For example, the Lord wants his people to look to him in prayer for guidance and comfort. This is a part of the Lord's will for all his people. But this does not mean that we should permit prayer to occupy so much of our time that we ignore other aspects of the divine plan. The Lord wants us to love one another, and Paul wrote an entire

chapter on love. (I Cor. 13) But this does not mean that love should displace other fruits of the spirit and Christian activity. Jesus, quoting Moses, said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—Matt. 4:4

Without Reproach

Basically, the Christian life is one of service; the "ministry of reconciliation." (II Cor. 5:18) However, if our service is to be acceptable, it is essential that we be guided by the Word of God with respect to the message we give out to the people, and also adhere to the standards of righteousness which the Lord has set up for us—"giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."—II Cor. 6:3-10

In this quotation from the Apostle Paul we have a comprehensive summary of the Christian's life of devotion to God, and what it means to be faithful to the terms of our covenant with the Lord. This is the background of an approved ministry of the truth. It demands love, and patience, and purity, and a proper use of the Word of God. It calls for the emptying of self, that we may be filled with

(Continued on page 34)

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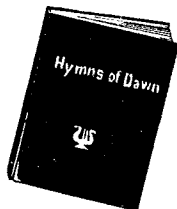
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(Continued from page 31)

the Holy Spirit. It calls for sacrifice of self, that by this means we may make others rich in the things of God. It calls for putting on the whole armor of God, that as good soldiers of Jesus Christ we may resist the onslaughts of Satan, who goes about as a roaring lion, "seeking whom he may devour."

And all of this is essential to our retaining the truth and its spirit as the inspirational power in our life of sacrifice. Thus, while recognizing the marvelous beauty of the truth, it is costly to "buy" and difficult to retain throughout all the days of our earthly pilgrimage. It might well cost us the scorn of our friends, and persecution by those who prefer darkness to light.

When the psalmist spoke of the blessedness of those who "know the joyful sound" of truth, he said that such walk in the light of the Lord's countenance. (Ps. 89:15) This makes the truth worth all and more than it costs, because those found worthy to possess it have the assurance of God's favor. And how wonderful that is, for, as Paul wrote, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31) It indicates as Paul also wrote, that since we love God and are called according to his purpose, all things are working together for our good as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

"Sell It Not"

Solomon admonished us not only to buy the truth, but to hold on to it—"sell it not." How could we sell the truth? In a word, this could be done by failure to live up to our vows of consecration. Paul wrote, "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." (Heb. 2:1) And again, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."—Heb. 4:1

Every precious promise of God to his people has conditions attached to it. Meeting these conditions faithfully and joyfully is part of the price of truth. We can sell the truth by failure to meet the conditions surrounding the promises of God. The "things which we have heard," mentioned by Paul, are the great truths of the Word of God. Taking heed to these things implies loyalty of the Word of God as the supreme authority in our lives.

We could "sell" the truth by giving heed to other voices than that of the Good Shepherd, whose voice of truth has reached us through the Bible. If we give heed to tradition rather than the Word of God, we are selling the truth. A simple example of this is what the Bible says concerning the penalty of sin. The Bible declares it to be death, but tradition says it is eternal torture. But this is merely an example. There are many traditions which run counter to the Word of God, and our loyalty to the Word as against the traditions and opinions of men is part of the price of truth. We could also sell the truth by letting it be crowded out or exchanged for the things of the world.

The Bible makes it clear that the Lord has provided human teachers to help us understand more clearly his inspired Word. We should appreciate these, and profit from the help we receive from them. But with many, perhaps nearly all of the Lord's people, there is a tendency at times to lean too heavily upon the helpers, to the neglect of the Word of God. The value of the helpers provided by the Lord is measured by their faithfulness in serving merely as an index finger to point to the Word of God.

Even the inspired Apostle Paul, one of the outstanding teachers in the church, complimented the Bereans of old, saying that they were more noble than those of Thessalonica in that they searched the Scriptures daily to prove

whether or not the things he taught them were true. (Acts 17:11) If one who was an inspired servant of the Lord rejoiced to note the desire of his pupils to prove all things by the Word of God, should it not be so with us? Surely any lessening of this determination would indicate a degree of unfaithfulness which could, if not corrected, lead to a selling of the truth.

And in this connection, how greatly we appreciate the ministry of "that faithful and wise servant" who served the Lord and us so faithfully in bringing forth from the Bible, storehouse of truth, the precious doctrines of the divine plan. Time and time again he admonished the brethren not to accept anything just because he said so, but rather to insist on a "thus saith the Lord" for every item of their faith. Undoubtedly this is one reason he was characterized as faithful and wise.

Are we maintaining our "first love" for the truth— that glorious truth of the divine plan, that simple Gospel of Christ which is the power of God unto salvation? (Rom. 1:16) Does the Gospel of the grace of God continue to inspire us to lay down our lives in its proclamation, and in building up our brethren in this most holy faith? Do we accept the opportunities of sacrifice in the Lord's cause with the same degree of enthusiasm as when we first dedicated ourselves to the doing of the Lord's will? If so, we are demonstrating that we are willing that the truth should continue to cost us our all.

If we maintain this attitude, it means that we are not in danger of selling the truth but are determined to be faithful to it, and to all its precepts, even unto death. Such faithfulness will, in God's due time, lead to glory, and honor, and immortality, which Paul wrote could be attained through patient continuance in well-doing. And if our zeal for the Lord, for the truth, and for the brethren be main-

tained, even unto death, we have the assurance that we shall receive the crown of life.

But let no one suppose this means that we can buy our way to glory. No, it all depends upon the grace of God through Christ. All we can do by our own faithful endeavor is to demonstrate our appreciation of divine love in permitting us to see and serve the truth. We recognize that the truth reveals the will of God for us, and if we are faithful in doing his will, even unto death, we will indeed receive the crown of life.



Letter from a Prisoner

THE prisoner referred to in our caption is none other than the great Apostle Paul. In the salutation of his letter to Philemon, Paul refers to himself "as a prisoner of Jesus Christ." Two meanings could be attached to this expression: one, that he was in the prison in Rome because of his fidelity to Jesus Christ and to the Gospel of Christ; or, that he was looking beyond the fact that he was being held prisoner by the Roman government, and was so fully of the belief that nothing could happen to him except by the permission of divine providence, that he considered himself Christ's prisoner, not a Roman prisoner.

A long time ago an ardent servant of Jesus Christ, referring to the expression, "under the circumstances," asked why it is not possible for a Christian to live above his circumstances, rather than always "under" them. This seems to be what Paul was doing in his prison experiences in Rome. He was living above the immediate circumstances

which took him to that prison, and was glad that by faith he could be a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

In addition to Philemon, the letter is addressed to "Apphia, and Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in thy house." The main topic of the letter is Onesimus, a former slave of Philemon who had escaped from his master and had gone to Rome to avoid apprehension. In the letter Paul asks Philemon to forgive Onesimus and to receive him back as a brother in Christ.

Philemon lived in Colosse at the time Paul wrote to him. Smith's Bible Dictionary says of him: "Philemon was a man of property and influence, since he is represented as the head of a numerous household, and as exercising an expensive liberality towards his friends, and the poor in general. He was indebted to the Apostle Paul as the medium of his personal participation in the Gospel. It is not certain under what circumstances they became known to each other. It is evident that, on becoming a disciple, he gave no common proof of the sincerity and power of his faith. His character, as shadowed forth in the epistle to him, is one of the noblest which the sacred record makes known to us."

Paul's letter does not indicate the circumstances which led Onesimus to him in the Roman prison. In fleeing to Rome, Onesimus probably hoped to be concealed in the midst of the vast population and thus to baffle the efforts which were so often made in such cases for retaking the fugitive. Perhaps in moving about amidst the populace of Rome he came into contact with a Christian who led him to Paul, who apparently had the privilege of receiving visitors.

On the other hand, it is quite likely, we think, that as a servant in the home of Philemon, Onesimus may well have become acquainted with Paul and, learning that he was

now in prison in Rome, sought him out. Possibly he had come to realize that he had acted unwisely in running away from his master, and looked upon Paul as one who could now help him to rectify his error. These are conjectures.

The important thing is that Onesimus did come into contact with Paul in his Roman prison, and that Paul presented the Gospel to him and he accepted it and became a dedicated Christian, thus a brother in Christ to Paul. But this presented a problem for both Onesimus and Paul. Onesimus, now a Christian, could not simply forget the past without acknowledging his wrongdoing and making amends for it; nor could Paul ignore the fact that he knowingly was fraternizing with a runaway slave, when, according to the legal procedures of that time, it was his duty to report his whereabouts to his master.

But Paul knew at the same time that Onesimus' conversion was genuine and wholehearted, and that he would cooperate in whatever was necessary to be done. So Paul addressed this letter to Philemon, and made Onesimus responsible for delivering it. It is the most personal of all Paul's letters which appear in the New Testament, but it was not a private letter, for he addressed it not only to Philemon, but also to the entire congregation which met in his home. This was a wise procedure.

In his letter Paul asked Philemon not only to take Onesimus back without imposing any special punishment upon him for what he had done, but also to accept him as a brother in Christ. This called for an extraordinary measure of forgiveness, and probably Paul felt that by letting the church know of the situation it would be an encouragement to Philemon to take the truly Christian action in the matter. Paul had confidence that the church and Philemon would do the right thing.

Let us note some of the details of this remarkable letter. Paul wrote, "For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee." (vs. 7) Here we learn of the abundant manner in which Philemon had ministered to the brethren; and Paul is building up to the point of indicating that a love thus manifested would surely want to go a step further and grant forgiveness and reconciliation to his runaway slave.

Then Paul continues: "Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient [or proper], yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ." (vss. 8, 9) Being an apostle, Paul could have commanded Philemon to take Onesimus back without punishment, but he preferred that Philemon be moved by love to do this and not by the constraint of an apostolic command.

Then Paul comes directly to the point: "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me. Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels: whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel. But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly." —vss. 10-14

It would appear that Onesimus had become an efficient servant to Paul, tending to the needs which were not attended to by the prison guards. He had learned to love this former slave, who now was a spiritual son, and would like it very much if he could remain in Rome and continue to fellowship with him and serve him. But Paul realized that this would not be the right thing to do unless Philemon

consented to it. Onesimus had run away from his master, and now, as a Christian, the first thing he must do was to return to his master. No service to Paul, or the Lord, could be acceptable until this had been done. Paul realized this, and so did Onesimus.

Paul then endeavored to help Philemon see that some divine purpose was being served by what had happened. If Philemon could have faith to believe this it would help him in manifesting the proper attitude toward his former slave. Paul wrote, "For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?"—vss. 15, 16

Philemon's household was evidently a large one, and an ordinary slave in a situation of that kind would not be likely to be brought into a direct confrontation with the Gospel. Evidently Onesimus' heart condition was right, and in the Lord's overruling providence—although by his own determination—he was freed from the surroundings which kept him from hearing the truth, and was led to Paul, and when he heard the message he responded to it. Thus, as Paul suggested, Onesimus merely "departed for a season" that Philemon might receive him back forever as a brother in Christ.

Then Paul brings his own personal relationship and friendship to bear upon Philemon: "If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account." (vss. 17, 18) The reference to the possibility that Onesimus owed something to Philemon has been taken by some commentators to mean that in addition to running away as a slave he had stolen money from his master. But in any case, Paul was willing to have the full reconcilia-

tion between Philemon and Onesimus cost him something, and offered to pay any outstanding liabilities in order that nothing should hinder Philemon from receiving Onesimus as a brother in Christ, dealing with and loving him accordingly.

Paul stresses the fact of his willingness to make up for any financial loss which Onesimus might have caused Philemon. He continues: "I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides. Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord; refresh my bowels in the Lord. Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say."—vss. 19-21

Here Paul gently reminds Philemon of how much he had done for him. It is probably a reference to the fact that he had introduced the Gospel to him, and had ministered to his spiritual need. The apostle is not thus putting Philemon under obligation to take Onesimus into his household as a brother in Christ, for to do this under duress would not exemplify a genuine spirit of forgiveness, mercy and love. But since Paul had offered to make up for any material loss resulting from the running away of Onesimus, it was proper to consider the spiritual issues involved. Philemon knew how much the Lord and the truth had meant to him, and he would realize what a privilege it would be to assist his former slave along the same spiritual lines as much as he could.

Paul expressed confidence that Philemon would do as he requested, and even more. His confidence is emphasized by his request that lodging be prepared for him; "for," he adds, "I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you." (vs. 22) Philemon could hardly anticipate with joy a visit from Paul in the event he failed to receive Onesimus as a brother.

There is no record as to what attitude Philemon took toward this letter from Paul. It can only be assumed that he agreed with Paul's viewpoint and that Onesimus was accepted into Christian fellowship in his home. Paul had requested that Onesimus return to Rome to serve him. Nothing is said as to whether or not this request was granted. Nor do we know whether or not Paul actually was released from prison.

But these unanswered questions do not detract from the force of the lesson in Christian forgiveness, mercy, and love that is brought to our attention by this remarkable letter. It emphasizes the fact that genuine repentance and surrender to the Lord, through the miracle-working power of the Gospel, is something which is very genuine and far-reaching. May we be so surrendered to God's will that the "Gospel of Christ" which is "the power of God unto salvation" may similarly guide and strengthen us in our relationship with the Lord, the brethren, and with our fellow men.

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

MAY 1—"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."—Matthew 20:28 (Z. '03-407 Hymn 241)

MAY 8—"And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life."—I John 2:25 (Z. '03-175 Hymn 281)

MAY 15—"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will re-

joice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."—Habakkuk 3:17, 18 (Z. '03-94 Hymn 123)

MAY 22—"God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power and of love, and of a sound mind."—II Timothy 1:7 (Z. '97-170 Hymn 205)

MAY 29—"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."—John 14:27 (Z. '97-306 Hymn 233)

The British Section

Messages from God

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."—Hebrews 1:1, 2

THE Bible abounds with messages from God, commencing quite early in the history of the world. Acts 3:21 tells us that God has spoken about the marvellous times of restitution of all things "by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." It is worth remembering that one of God's early messages is referred to as "the Gospel." In Galatians 3:8 Paul tells us that God preached the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed."

To know more fully this particular promise to Abraham, reference should be made to Genesis 22:15-18. The main feature is shown in verse

18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The question arises, Who would be the promised "seed"? In Galatians 3:16, 27, 29 we find the scriptural answer to be very illuminating: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." (verse 16) Primarily, Christ is the seed; but the apostle continues, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ [involving full consecration to do the divine will] have put on Christ. And if ye [thus] be Christ's, then are ye [together with Christ] Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Other Messages

There are other messages, many and varied. It is interesting to note that God spake, indeed called, various individuals to obey his expressed will for them. For example, God called to Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy

father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." (Gen. 12:1; Heb. 11:8) And God said to Isaac, "Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of." (Gen. 26:1, 2) And to Jacob, God called, saying: "Arise and go up to Bethel, and dwell there." (Gen. 35:1) On one occasion God said to Moses, "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt."—Exodus 3:10

God also called a nation—the nation of Israel—and the reason God did thus choose to deal with them is given in Deuteronomy 4:37; 7:6-8: "Because he loved thy fathers [those faith heroes of old], therefore he chose their seed after them. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn un-

to your fathers." The oath here referred to is the oath-bound promise that God made to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 22:15-18

Heavenly Calling

A very precious, heavenly calling is brought to our attention in the Scriptures, and is referred to by the Apostle Paul in these words: "I press along the line, towards the prize of the high calling of God by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14, Diaglott) Many other references are made to this high calling: "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." (Heb. 3:1) "Called to be saints." (Rom. 1:7) "Called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 1:9) "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."—II Pet. 1:10

This particular calling is referred to in Hebrews 2:3 as a "so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord." And it is, indeed, a great salvation! Note the words of Jesus, through the Revelator: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." And

they shall reign with Christ a thousand years.—Rev. 3:21; 20:6

It was Jesus who “brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel” (II Tim. 1:10); therefore the terms of this heavenly calling belong to the Christian era. Indeed, it “opened up” as a result of our Lord’s first advent, and, in accordance with the divine “plan of the ages.” (Eph. 3:11 Diaglott) It needed the precious ministry of Jesus, his sacrificial death, his resurrection to the spiritual plane and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which began at Pentecost, to bring this “high calling of God” into effect.

This glorious calling was first announced to the Jews. As a nation, they rejected Jesus and his wonderful kingdom message; only a remnant of that people received him. Later, beginning with Cornelius, this special message was extended to the Gentiles, as indicated in Acts 15:14: “God . . . did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.” To all such faithful called ones are given “exceeding great and precious promises [heavenly, not earth-

ly], that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”—II Pet. 1:4

Called to Faithfulness

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (immortality beyond the veil). For “they that are with him [the Lord of lords, and King of kings], are called, and chosen, and faithful.”—Rev. 2:10; 17:14

Contrary to the false doctrine of “universal reconciliation,” the Scriptures clearly teach that the exceedingly rich promises concerning our forming part of that glorious spiritual seed, Christ and his glorified church, are conditional upon our faith and obedience. For example: “IF we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” (Rom. 6:5) “IF we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.” (II Tim. 2:11). And verse 12, Diaglott: “IF we endure patiently, we shall also reign with him.” “We are made partakers of Christ IF we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.” (Heb. 3:14) On the other hand, “IF any man have not the

Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Rom. 8:9

The Apostle Paul earnestly appealed to the Galatians in these words: "O my little children! whom I am bearing again, till Christ be formed in you." (Gal. 4:19, Diaglott) It is imperative that we be "conformed to the image" of God's dear Son (Rom. 8:29), fully submitting ourselves to the transforming influence of the Spirit of the Lord, so that we are changed, day by day, and more and more fully, into his glorious likeness.

Beware

A special warning message to the Lord's true people that is particularly applicable to the days in which we now live, is recorded in II Peter 3:17: "Beloved, . . . beware, lest ye . . . being led away with the error of the wicked [the unsettled, lawless, per Young], fall from your own steadfastness." The warning here is not that we are to beware of those who are openly known to be wicked, for such are less apt to delude us with subtle and deceptive human imaginations and God-dishonouring doctrines; but rather we are specially to see to it that we

be not deceived and led away by the error of the "unsettled." This brings the lesson much closer home to us, because we have to beware of any who may be unsettled, unstable, in the truth, or in the spirit of the truth.

It is essential that we continue to walk in the light of God's holy Word. A slight yielding by us; a slight departing from the truth and its Spirit, may divert us from our steadfastness. Therefore, we must beware, lest our whole experience of full consecration and complete sanctification be treated lightly, and with a lesser feeling of responsibility on our part than that which existed when we joyfully entered the narrow way that leads to the eternal heavenly inheritance to which we have been called.

Severe testings and siftings are now upon us, and these will doubtless continue until all are tried and proved as being worthy or unworthy. Our Father is permitting these tests for a very wise purpose, and we are to be prepared. Ephesians 6:10, 11, Diaglott, exhorts, "Strengthen yourselves in the Lord, and in his

mighty power. Put on the complete armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the crafty ways of the enemy." Details of this well-known armor are referred to in verses 14 to 18;

Gird thy armor on;

Wear it ever, night and day.
Ambushed lies the evil one;

Watch and pray.

Harvest Period Call

For about nineteen and a half centuries from the time the high and heavenly calling was first announced, the Lord's fully consecrated "children of light" have been shining forth in the world, witnessing to the truth and removing the darkness.

Now we are approaching the end of the long reign of sin and death. The prince of darkness, however, is marshalling his forces for a crucial conflict. The waves of human passion are lashing world-wide against the present order. And this "time of trouble" is causing, as Jesus foretold, "distress of nations, with perplexity [with no way out]." (Luke 21:25) But the true light-bearers take courage. They are aware that we are now living in a time of preparation for

one of the greatest dispensational changes in the world's history.

The faithful, consecrated children of God had long been scattered throughout the various denominations of Christendom, but in the present harvest period the Lord has been and still is calling to the members of the true church, that they shall no longer remain in Christendom (Babylon); for the time will come when the doom of this Babylon will be fulfilled, and she will fall. This is a very special call; it is recorded in Revelation 18:4: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her plagues." This call signifies that the Lord's people are to separate from all things which are in conflict with the divine Word and will; to come out of the errors, and the systems of error, which are contrary to the inspired Word of God.

The faithful ones have been, with the Lord's special help, delivering themselves out of Babylon during this harvest period. The separating work is seemingly drawing to a completion; and ere long the "sea" of anarchy will

swallow up the false systems, as depicted in Revelation 18:21: "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying: Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."

Continued Faithfulness

Even though we have come out of Babylon and taken our stand wholly on the Lord's side, the great Adversary's tactics are to entrap, ensnare, and hinder us. It is not only essential that we "come out," it is also vital that we remain out, that we receive not of her plagues. This fallen condition of Babylon signifies her complete rejection from God's favour. Revelation 18:23, R.V., reads: "And the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the Bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee."

Many are the faithful consecrated ones today who have been greatly privileged, under the Lord's guidance, to recognise and accept present truth. They have rejoiced in the realisation that there is a

harvest work to be done; that the separation of "wheat" from "tares" is in progress; that the great Reaper, the Lord Jesus, is present, conducting this work of separation; that under his control of the work they themselves were gathered out; and as a result they continue to receive many rich spiritual blessings as "new creatures" in Christ Jesus.

How strange, unreasonable, and tragic it would be for them, should their love for the truth so diminish that they give way to the energetic deceptions of Satan, and go back into Babylon from whence they came! This would surely be disloyalty to the Lord and to the principles of his teachings—a step leading from light to darkness. The faithful ones, however, are encouraged and stimulated by these words of the Apostle Paul: "We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you a first-fruit for salvation, in sanctification of spirit and belief of truth, to which he called you by . . . Jesus Christ. So then, brethren, stand firm and retain the instructions you were taught

... by our word or letter."—
II Thess. 2:13-15, Diaglott

"Behold the Bridegroom"

During the Gospel Age God has been calling out and selecting a "bride" for his beloved Son, and the harvest period of this Gospel Age is now drawing to a close. Throughout this harvesting, or "end of the age" period, the appropriate work is done, symbolically described in the Scriptures as "the gathering of the wheat," as distinct from the "tares" (Matt. 13:30); gathering and separating the "good" fish from the bad. (Matt. 13:47, 48) The Lord is making up his "jewels." (Malachi 3:17) It is the midnight cry to the virgins, separating the wise from the foolish. Matthew 25:6, A. V., reads, "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." But this word "cometh" is a supplied word, and should be omitted, as in the Revised Version and the Diaglott. The correct rendering, therefore, is, "Behold the Bridegroom," conveying the thought that he has come; he is here. We are now living in the time of his second presence.

Matthew's record (verses 7 and 8, R. V.) continues, "Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out." The parable here indicates that with the unwise virgins there was a shortage of oil, and the lesson here for us is to make certain that we are filled with this symbolic oil—the Holy Spirit.—Ephesians 5:18

It was not until we made a full consecration to God that we were begotten and quickened by his Holy Spirit. And being "in Christ" as members of his body we have received the anointing by this Holy Spirit, and are thus enabled, by divine grace, to keep our lamps trimmed—always ready for our use—and burning, and our robes unspotted from the world. (Rev. 6:11; James 1:27) Our beloved, prospective Bridegroom has made, in advance, abundant provision by which all those who are called may be properly equipped, not only with robes and lamps but also with the oil; but if any are careless in the procurement of the oil, they thus indicate their unfitness and unfaithfulness.

Full consecration, complete sanctification, on our part, will mean that our glad and grateful heart sentiments will be:

Our lamps are trimmed and burning,
Our robes are white and clean.
We've tarried for the Bridegroom,
And now we'll enter in.

We know we've nothing worthy
That we can call our own—
The light, the oil, the robes we wear,
Are all from Him alone.

Behold, behold, the Bridegroom,
And all may enter in,
Whose lamps are trimmed and burning,
Whose robes are white and clean.



BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

A. BOYCE		Latchford	May 18	Latchford	31, June 1
		Liverpool		Liverpool	2
J. H. MURRAY		Dewsbury		Dewsbury	3
		Hull		Hull	4
		Ipswich		Ipswich	6
E. T. NADAL		Aldersbrook		Aldersbrook	7, 8
		West Wickham		West Wickham	10
		Welling	May 18	W. F. READER	
		Portrush	24-26		
		Latchford	(Sat.) June 28		
E. K. PENROSE, U.S.A.				Dewsbury	
				(Sat.) June 28	
		Portrush	May 23-26	E. ROBERTS	
		Dundee	28	Portrush	
				May 24-26	

PORTRUSH CONVENTION, May 24-26—For further particulars and accommodations please write to Mr. T. Lang, 31 Hawthorne Terrace, Londonderry, North Ireland.

LITERATURE AND SUBSCRIPTIONS—70, Station Road, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex. RM2 6DA.

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Vineyard Echoes

Conventions, 1969

ONE of the important activities among Bible Students the world over is the attending of conventions, and this is again true in 1969. Already a number of important gatherings of the Lord's people have been held, although the summer season is the busiest one for this activity. The largest of the conventions in the United States is the one which, for a number of years, has been held on the campus of the Indiana University, in Bloomington, which this year will begin on Saturday, August 9, and end Thursday evening, August 14. This General Convention is a self-sponsoring convention in the sense that it elects its own program committee, and is responsible for the various business matters which are necessary.

The program for the General Convention has been drawn up, and it reveals that the theme text for this six-day gathering will be Psalm 27:14, which reads, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say on the Lord." This appeals to us as being a very timely theme text for the General Convention, especially in view of the chaotic conditions which exist throughout the earth in this fifty-fifth year since the close of "the times of the Gentiles" in 1914. There are still quite a number of brethren with us who witnessed the beginning of the great "time of trouble" in 1914, and they have waited patiently for the full establishment of the kingdom ever since that time; and all of us are still waiting.

The expression, "the time is short," has been a favorite one among the brethren throughout all these years of waiting for their glorification and for the kingdom; and it is a true expression. We keep saying that the full establishment of the kingdom is "just around the corner," and that also is true, but we do not yet know just how long it will take to get around that "corner," so we have need of patience while we wait on the Lord.

David has assured us that those who do wait on the Lord will have their hearts strengthened, and we are confident that every dedicated follower of the Master has had this assurance confirmed over and over again in his own experiences. The Lord gives strength to all his people as day by day they lay down their lives in his service. We know that our "times" are in the Lord's hands, and that is just the way we want it. None of us want to run ahead of the Lord, and we all want to continue serving him and rejoicing in present truth for whatever length of time his will might be.

Other Conventions

As we have noted, a number of conventions have already been held in 1969. Aside from the General Convention the other gatherings of the brethren are sponsored and arranged for by local ecclesias. A number of these are what we might refer to as district conventions. The brethren sponsoring them naturally are delighted when brethren attend from distant areas, but the main attendance at these district gatherings is made up of those who live within a few hundred miles.

These district conventions are usually from two to four days in length, and are generally scheduled to coincide with national holidays. Some are scheduled to take advantage of Memorial Day. This year there are two of these which we have learned about—Asilomar, California; and

Chicago, Illinois. Judging from the past, we are confident that these gatherings will prove to be a blessing to many of the Lord's people. Two-day conventions will also be held in May in Grand Rapids, Michigan; Rochester, New York; and Kansas City, Mo. Two day conventions will also be held in Phoenix, Ariz., St. Louis, Mo., and Cincinnati, Ohio.

Over the Fourth of July week-end there will be the usual conventions in Los Angeles, California; Detroit, Michigan, and New Brunswick, New Jersey. The Labor Day week-end will as usual see a number of district gatherings. One of these will be in New York, and will be held in one of the beautiful auditoriums located in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. So far as we know there will also be Labor Day week-end conventions in Seattle, Washington; San Diego, California; Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Jackson, Michigan.

Then there is the large number of one-day local conventions which are held throughout the year. A mere glance at page 64 of *The Dawn* each month gives an idea of how many of these local gatherings are held. And these also have in the past proved to be a source of rich spiritual blessing to the Lord's people.

By keeping watch of our convention announcement page the brethren can keep informed of all the various conventions, the dates, and the addresses at which they are held. We are glad to be able to render this service.

This year a new convention has been added to the list. We could almost speak of it as a Canadian General Convention. This convention will be held July 16 through 20—five days—in Yorkton, Saskatchewan. Details will be listed on our convention announcement page. A goodly number of speakers from both the United States and Canada will serve on the program. While it has been arranged especially for the benefit of the friends in the middle western and far western provinces of Canada, the brethren everywhere

are invited, and it is expected that quite a number from the United States will attend.

The Common Tie

What is the common tie that draws all the friends together for these various conventions? First of all it is their united love for the Lord and for one another. Their hope is established in God's gift of his beloved Son to be their Redeemer; they see in this a supreme example of divine love, and by this vision of truth they are motivated to get together with others of "like precious faith" for mutual fellowship and service.

These students of the Word, by "rightly dividing the word of truth," have found that Jesus, as the Redeemer, is the center of a great plan for human salvation from sin and death. They have found from the Word that God created man to live on the earth forever, and has assured us that it shall never be destroyed. They realize that man's original sin led to death, and consequently to his losing the privilege of living in the wonderful home which the Creator provided for him.

On the other hand, according to the plan of God the redemption which is in Christ Jesus guarantees that fallen man is to be given another opportunity to obey his Creator, and that upon the basis of faith in the ransom, and obedience to the laws of the kingdom which in the time of restoration will be functioning in the earth, will be given an opportunity of regaining life in what will then be the restored paradise. How this wonderful arrangement increases our appreciation of the love of God!

The Heavenly Calling

By rightly dividing the Word of truth the brethren have learned not only of God's gracious provision for the restoration of the human race to life on the earth, but they

have also learned that in carrying out this plan he is inviting a few out of earth's millions to participate in that glorious future work of restoring the dead and dying world to life. They have been assured by the Word, and through the "witness of the Spirit," that they are among these favored few, this "little flock" to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom.—Luke 12:32

These favored ones have learned that they have been invited to a heavenly home—"Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," they hear the Scriptures say. They have learned that the condition upon which this "high calling of God in Christ Jesus" is extended is that they lay down their lives following in the footsteps of Jesus; that they lay down their lives sacrificially, even as he did. It is upon the basis of faithfulness in doing this, they have learned, that they have the glorious hope of being exalted with Jesus in the "first resurrection," and living and reigning with him as priests and as kings for a thousand years. A blessed prospect!

Two Advents

Another important point of information found by those who study to show themselves approved unto God by rightly dividing the Word of truth, is the fact that in the plan of God there are two comings of the Messiah. His first coming was to suffer and die for the condemned world of mankind, and to establish his church as his witnesses in the world. This he did, and faithfully. Jesus' ministry at that time was very short—three and one-half years; and his entire stay on earth only thirty-three and one-half years.

The primary purpose of Christ's second visit to earth is to restore to life those for whom he died at his first advent. The Apostle Peter refers to this work as being accomplished during what he describes as "the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the

mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”
—Acts 3:19-23

The vast majority of those who will attend one or another of the various conventions which we have mentioned are firmly convinced, as are we at The Dawn, that Christ's second visit to earth is now in progress. And what a thrilling thought this is, and how it should inspire us to faithfulness in our every effort to serve the Lord. And what a blessed bond this knowledge will be as the brethren seek out others with whom to fellowship, whether at conventions or under other circumstances.

Students of the Word also recognize that at the end of the age, and with the return of the Lord, there would be a serving of “meat in due season.” (Luke 12:37, 42-44) We rejoice in this spiritual food, and are happy to acknowledge the arrangement by which it has reached the Lord's servants during these first years of the Lord's second presence. We are happy to realize that at all the various conventions we announce in The Dawn from month to month, this “meat in due season” will be the basis of fellowship among the brethren.

We know, of course, that all the things which were expected in the outworking of the divine plan have not taken place in the time they were expected. It was expected that the kingdom would be fully established in 1914; yet now, fifty-five years later it is still not fully established, and many of the Lord's people are still in the flesh, laying down their lives sacrificially proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom. Doubtless at some, or many of the conventions, these matters will be discussed, with the desire to arrive at a more definite understanding of just where we stand on the stream of time.

It is our hope and belief that any discussions along this line will be conducted with a genuine atmosphere of good will, and with a desire to be helpful to one another. This

is the way it should be, and this is the way it will be when the brethren remember how limited all of us are in our ability to grasp the glorious realities of the plan of God. The Lord has been very good in giving us such a comprehensive understanding of the great fundamentals of his plan of salvation, and this knowledge should keep us humble with respect to the details which are not yet clearly revealed.

The Harvest

As the brethren know, the Scriptures reveal that at the end of the age there would be a world-wide harvest work conducted, a work of gathering the "wheat" into the Lord's "barn," which Jesus interpreted as "the children of the kingdom" shining forth "as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." We believe that this harvest has been in progress for many years, and that it is still going on. We believe that we are participating in this harvest by our proclamation of the Gospel of the kingdom. We do not know how much longer it will continue, but we do know that the Lord wants us to continue faithful in doing whatever part of it his providences indicate to be his will.

We believe that at the conventions this year the brethren will be more interested in how best they can participate in the harvest work, rather than how much longer it will continue. We trust, at least, that this will be the case. We are sure that the Lord is not pleased with those who, symbolically, are watching the clock to see how much longer they have to serve. The only time limit for the Lord's service which is given to us in his Word is that we be faithful "unto death." The only ones who will live and reign with Christ are those who are "beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God." And this does not mean partially beheaded. It implies the complete laying down of our lives.

Spiritual Feasts

Let us think of our conventions this year, as in every year—and our local class meetings as well—as spiritual feasts where we partake of nourishment that will enable us to continue going forward in the service of the Lord. Just as in the natural realm we cannot be eating all the time, so we cannot be “feeding Christians” only. The meat in due season is provided to strengthen the Lord’s people as new creatures in Christ Jesus; and that strength is to be used in giving “battle” to the world, the flesh, and the Devil; and in proclaiming the glad tidings of the kingdom.

So we commend the conventions to the brethren everywhere. We have mentioned only those which will be held in the United States and Canada, but there will also be conventions held in other countries, especially the British Isles and Continental Europe, and Australia. There will be the regular annual convention of Bible Students in India. These are spiritual feasts for our brethren overseas, and we rejoice with them.

It comes to mind, as we think of the Lord’s blessing upon his people, how thankful we should be that through the years from the time of our consecration he has kept us from falling. For some this may have thus far been only for a short time. For others it has been for fifty or sixty years. But regardless of the time, it is only by the Lord’s grace that we are still rejoicing in his precious truth, present truth, the truth of the Gospel of the kingdom. It is to this glorious truth, revealing to us as it does, the boundless love of God, that we are all dedicated. Let us continue to help one another to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord, so that our hold upon the truth may become even more resolute. By the Lord’s grace, your brethren at The Dawn will continue to do just this, as we work together for the best spiritual interests of the Lord’s people everywhere. Happy, and blessed conventions!

Service Overseas

THE brethren will be interested to learn that during 1969 several brethren will be serving the friends in overseas countries. In May Brother E. K. Penrose will attend and serve the Portrush, Ireland, Convention, and following the convention will serve in a number of places in the British Isles. Also during May, upon request from our brethren in Germany, Brother Arthur Newell will serve in that country.

In August and September Brother Paul Davis will serve the brethren in the British Isles, and also in Germany. Sister Davis will accompany him.

In October, Brother and Sister G. R. Pollock will visit the brethren in New Zealand and Australia. Our prayer is that the Lord will bless the ministry of these brethren as they endeavor to encourage those overseas who are running in the same narrow way, and to build them up in our most holy faith.

Divine Intervention in the Affairs of Men

To be discussed by

'FRANK and ERNEST'

WFLA—970 kc.—9:30 A. M.

Sunday, May 18

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JUNE SPECIAL TOPIC: On Sunday, June 15, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss the topic, "Evolution Only a Theory." As always, special and attractive folders will be available for advertising this broadcast, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. They are free. Send your request to, The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey 07073.

GENERAL CONVENTION BULLETIN

Six Testimony Meetings

IN LESS than four months the brethren will again be assembling at Bloomington, Indiana, for the General Convention, to enjoy the spiritual feast which will be available for all who attend. A part of this feast will be the six testimony meetings which have been arranged by the program committee.

It is generally recognized that testimony meetings are among the most helpful forms of spiritual fellowship enjoyed by the Lord's consecrated people. These are meetings at which the brethren have an opportunity to pour out their hearts to one another and to the Lord in praise and thanksgiving for all the blessings which they enjoy from day by day—and how good it is to hear these expressions of thanksgiving!

The brethren also find these meetings to be excellent opportunities to tell one another of their trials, and when they do this they are comforted because they realize that they are not alone in the difficult experiences of the narrow way. This knowledge gives strength and courage, especially because, having requested it, they are assured that the brethren will remember them in their prayers.

All the brethren have interesting experiences in bearing witness to the truth. To share these experiences with others of like precious faith is a real joy to all. So go to Bloomington this year prepared to share one or more of your experiences as ambassadors for Christ. The convention dates again—August 9-14.

Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

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, N. J. A visit will be arranged when possible.

G. HOMER HAMLIN		Fort Collins, Colo.	6
York, Pa.	May 11	Laramie, Wyo.	7
G. M. JEUCK		Bosler, Wyo.	8
Sayville, N. Y.	May 4	Boise, Idaho	11
G. O. JEUCK		Clorkston, Wash.	12
Charlotte, N. C.	May 4	Sagle, Idaho	13
Greensboro, N. C.	5	Spokane, Wash.	14
Norfolk, Va.	6	Wenatchee, Wash.	15
Richmond, Va.	7	Vancouver, B. C.	17-19
Flushing, N. Y.	9	Nanaimo, B. C.	20
Hartford, Conn.	11	Duncan, B. C.	21
Agawam, Mass.	12	Victoria, B. C.	22
New London, Conn.	13	Langley, B. C.	23
New Haven, Conn.	14	Seattle, Wash.	25
Waterbury, Conn.	15	Portland, Oreg.	26
New York, N. Y.	18	San Francisco, Calif.	29-31
Paterson, N. J.	20	(Asilamar)	
Baltimore, Md.	21	E. K. PENROSE	
Washington, D. C.	22	Grand Rapids, Mich.	May 3, 4
Jacksonville, Fla.	25	Dayton, Ohio	6
A. H. KRUMPOLT		Cincinnati, Ohio	7
New Haven, Conn.	May 25	LaSalle, Ill.	8
Waterbury, Conn.	25	Batavio, Ill.	9
R. J. KRUPA		Milwaukee, Wis.	11
Kansas City, Mo.	May 3, 4	Beloit, Wis.	12
San Francisco, Calif.	29-31	Clinton, Iowa	13
(Asilamar)		St. Louis, Mo.	14
J. Y. MAC AULAY		Zeigler, Ill.	15
Baltimore, Md.	May 25	Portrush, Ireland	24-26
Philadelphia, Pa.	25	Dundee, Scotland	28
M. C. MITCHELL		Lathford, England	31
Paterson, N. J.	May 18	LEO POST	
HARRY PASSIOS		Grand Rapids, Mich.	May 3, 4
Pueblo, Colo.	May 2	Rochester, N. Y.	17, 18
Denver, Colo.	4, 5		

H. W. PRICE		H. J. TIEMEYER	
Antioch, Calif.	May 1	Allentown, Pa.	May 11
San Francisco, Calif.	2-4	F. S. WASSMANN	
Fresno, Calif.	5, 6	West Newton, Pa.	Apr. 29
San Luis Obispo, Calif.	7, 8	Indianapolis, Ind.	30
Los Angeles Area	9-13	St. Louis, Mo.	May 1
Ontario, Calif.	14	Kansas City, Mo.	3, 4
Riverside, Calif.	15	Zeigler, Ill.	6
San Diego, Calif.	16	Columbus, Ohio	7
Phoenix, Ariz.	18, 19	Pottstown, Pa.	25
Puebla, Colo.	22	W. N. WOODWORTH	
Denver, Colo.	23, 24	Grand Rapids, Mich.	May 3, 4
Fort Collins, Colo.	25	Rochester, N. Y.	17, 18
Laramie, Wyo.	26	C. R. WEIDA	
Bosler, Wyo.	27	New London, Conn.	May 18
Grand Island, Nebr.	29	Catawissa, Pa.	May 18
RICHARD SURACI			



The listings in this schedule have been arranged by local ecclesias co-operating with the Dawn.

H. E. ANDERSON		L. P. DAVIS, JR.	
St. Petersburg, Fla.	May 18	Riverside, Calif.	May 18
MIKE BALKO		Ontario, Calif.	18
Pittsburgh, Pa.	May 4	TUNIS GERY	
WALTER Blicharz		San Diego, Calif.	May 11
Adrian, Mich.	May 18	JOHN G. HULL, JR.	
WM. G. BLONG		Bakersfield, Calif.	May 11
Stockton, Calif.	May 18	HENRY KWOLEK	
J. BURTON BROWN		London, Ont.	May 11
Hawthorne, Calif.	May 4	N. MOLENAAR	
C. M. CHUPA		Covina, Calif.	May 25
Saginaw, Mich.	May 4	FRANK NIEMCZAK	
Chatham, Ont.	18	Pontiac, Mich.	May 11
FRED J. DARROW		G. R. POLLOCK	
Santa Ana, Calif.	May 11	Hawthorne, Calif.	May 18
SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS		GILBERT L. RICE	
		Fullerton, Calif.	May 25

nventions

An asterisk (*) indicates an immersion service is being planned.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH., May 3, 4—Associated Bible Students of Western Michigan. Kenowa Hills High School, 3950 Hendershot, N. W. Mrs. Earl Vander Boegh, 821 Rogers, N. W.

KANSAS CITY, MO., May 3, 4—The Athenaeum, 900 E. Linwood Blvd. Mrs. John Bacher, Greenwood, Mo.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., May 4—2601 Fillmore St., N. E. Mrs. C. R. Newham, 678 40th Ave., N. E.

NEW ALBANY, IND. - LOUISVILLE, KY., May 10, 11—Amalgamated Bldg., 1614 E. Spring St., New Albany, Ind. Miss Mary B. Longest, 202 Alcott Rd., Louisville, Ky.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, May 11—6504 Reiton Road, Reynoldsburg, Ohio. Mrs. C. E. Harp, 2635 Elliott Ave.

HARTFORD, CONN., May 11—Odd Fellows Hall, 510 Wethersfield Ave. Mrs. Anthony Latina, 270 Hills St., East Hartford, Conn.

CHEYENNE, WYO., May 17, 18—Little America Inn. Mrs. K. Ryan, 100 S. 30 St., Apt. 21, Laramie, Wyo.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., May 17, 18—Todd Hall, YMCA Bldg., 100 Gibbs St. Mrs. Mary Harold, 39 Bleile Terrace.

VANCOUVER, B. C., May 17-19—IOOF Hall, 396 Kamloops St. (at Hastings). Mrs. W. A. Mc Nee, 6569 Argyle St.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, May 18—Brotherhood of Railway Clerks Bldg., Court and Vine Sts. Mrs. Margaret Ellis, R. 1, Box 71, Melbourne, Ky.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., May 18—IOGT Hall, 2922 Cedar Ave. Mrs. D. Borowiec, 10410 Fifth Ave. Circle S.

PONTIAC, MICH., May 18—YWCA, 269 W. Huron St. Mrs. Ora C. Lock-

wood, 3774 S. Rochester Rd., Rochester, Mich.

WEST NEWTON, PA., May 18—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, 3 miles E. of West Newton. Mr. Mike Balko, 501 Pittsburgh St.

DETROIT, MICH., May 25—Mc Gregor Memorial Bldg., Second Blvd. and W. Ferry. Mr. Frank Niemczak, 18937 Murray Hill.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., (Asilomar), May 29-June 1—Asilomar Convention Grounds, Pacific Grove, Calif. Mrs. Edward E. Foy, 4732 Stacy St. Oakland, Calif.

SAYVILLE, N. Y., May 30—Memorial Day. Parkway Community Church, Stewart Ave., Hicksville, L. I. Mr. Edward Worfler, 252 Harbor Lane East, Massapequa Park, N. Y.

***CHICAGO, ILL.,** May 30-June 1—George Williams College, 555 31st St., Downers Grove, Ill. Mr. George Tobac, 7244 W. Lill, Niles, Ill.

JACKSON, MICH., June 7, 8—IOOF Hall, 789 Woodworth Rd. Mrs. Ralph Gaunt, 510 Golf Ave.

LONDON, ONT., June 8—Mr. Clayton A. Campbell, 1218 Hamilton Rd.

WATERBURY, CONN., June 8—Waterbury Girls' Club, 35 Park Place. Miss Anna Tsimonis, 277 Willow St.

ALLENTOWN, PA., June 15

PUEBLO, COLO., June 15

CHARLOTTE, N. C., June 21, 22

SILVER CREEK - GRAND ISLAND, NEBR., June 21, 22

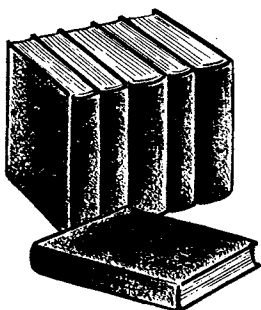
GARY, IND., June 22

DAYTON, OHIO, June 28, 29

BUFFALO, N. Y., June 29

YORKTON, SASK., July 16-20—Canadian Mid-West Bible Students Convention.

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To us the SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH...

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

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

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

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be a "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 11 Pet. 1:4

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

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35