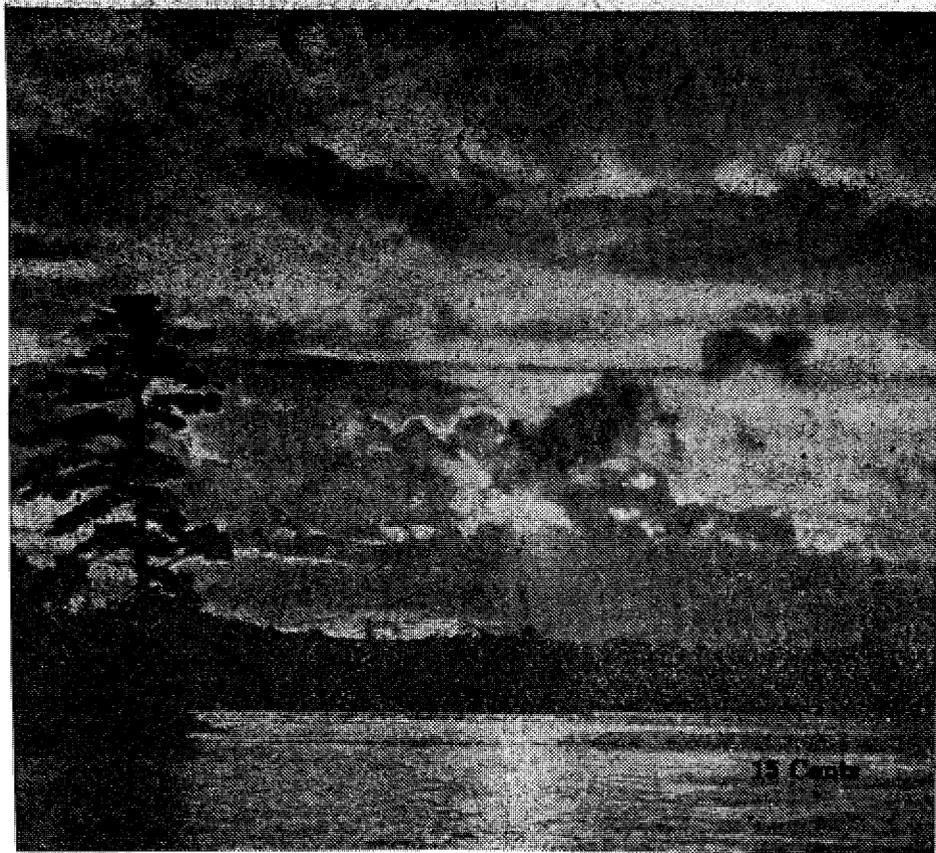


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World Destruction --

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."—

ISAIAH 9:6, 7

Then World Government

THE releasing of atomic energy with its threat of almost limitless destruction, if misused by selfish and rival nations of the earth—in self defense or aggression—has brought to the fore the need for a universal government to establish and maintain law and order among all the nations. Reduced to its simplest equation the theory is that it requires more than one to make a quarrel, hence, if there is but one government in the whole earth, there will be no other gov-

ernment with which to quarrel, thus there will be peace. And, if the world has peace by virtue of being ruled by a single government, then there will be no danger of the race being destroyed by atomic bombs. So goes the theory.

The idea of a world government is not new. It existed and has been attempted long before scientists learned how to split atoms. Millions have spilled their blood in military conquests which have had as their objective the spread of power and control over as much

of the earth as possible. History records four "universal empires"—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

The advocates of world government today are not prompted so much by ambition for empire as by fear of racial destruction. It is hoped that all nations will see the urgent need for a world government, and will work together for its establishment; even if it necessitates the surrender of some of their much cherished "sovereign rights."

While ambitious rulers in the past have sought to establish world control in their own hands, it is probably safe to say that the present agitation for world government is the first serious attempt that has been made to bring the nations of earth together on a common basis of self-interest and preservation since God scattered the people and confused their language when they attempted to build the Tower of Babel four thousand years ago. That tower, as man conceived it, was to be a symbol of unity among men to bind them together in a common cause. Its construction was attempted not long after the flood, and it seems evident that fear of further catastrophe, of whatever nature it might be, had something to do with the desire of the people at that time to keep together.

An interesting observation on God's part is recorded concerning the feeble efforts of man in the venture to build the Tower of Babel. "Let us go down" and see

what man is doing, is the way the record reads. Here was a work so small from God's standpoint that it couldn't properly be appraised from heaven. God, who can see the sparrows fall, had to "go down" to the scene of action, and when he did, that first dream of world union straightway came to an end.

We can't help wondering if God's viewpoint of human efforts has changed much since then. Man has dug and probed into the secrets of creation until he has succeeded in discovering and releasing some of the tremendous power that the Creator locked up in the atom, and now he's afraid. Confronted with a potential for destruction which defies human imagination, puny man is terrified. Men today are probably as afraid as were the antediluvians when the waters of the flood began to rise and engulf them. We must do something, they say, and the only thing they can think of which might hold back the flow of atomic bombs threatening to destroy the entire race is to form a world government. Let's get together and build a "tower," lest we all be destroyed, is now the hue and cry.

The claim being made by so many, even by important scientists such as Prof. Einstein, that a world government is the only solution for the present plight of the nations, is the climax to trends in this direction which have been gathering in strength for many years. God's Word foretold this trend, prophesying that all the efforts of men

Genesis 11:1-9

to work together in a common cause, were, on account of selfishness, foredoomed to failure.

“Why do the nations tumultuously assemble, and the people imagine a vain thing?” the prophet inquires. He reveals the nature of the “vain thing” which the nations imagine, saying, “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed.” In the second verse following, God’s viewpoint of united nations is expressed. The prophet says, “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.”

The uniting of nations in leagues of one sort or another which we have witnessed during these “last days”—whether to make war or to keep the peace—has been for the purpose of preserving the old world order, described by the apostle as “this present evil world.” It is God’s purpose expressly declared through the prophecies of his Word that this evil world shall be, yea must be, destroyed, and that its place in the earth will be taken by the long-promised kingdom of Christ. It follows, therefore, that when the nations take counsel together in order to forestall this destruction which they see coming upon them, they are actually taking counsel against the Lord, and against his plan for world peace, security, and happiness.

While fear of world destruction is the motive back of nearly all the get-together efforts of the nations, the Scriptures reveal that from an-

other standpoint God is responsible for this assembling. This viewpoint is not difficult to grasp. The prophecies reveal that in this “time of the end” there would come to mankind a great increase of knowledge. It is this increase of knowledge that is responsible for all the “scientific” discoveries of our day. Man imagines that by his own intelligence he has unlocked the secrets of nature, but this is not true. The simple fact is that because God’s time has come for the destruction of this present evil world, he has allowed man to pry into these secrets sufficiently to unloose the destructive forces which are destined to hasten the dissolution of civilization. Knowledge along all lines, used selfishly, is contributing toward this end. By making possible rapid communication and travel it has forced the nations into a closer relationship with one another, and through fear of destruction they form leagues for self-protection.

Viewed from the human standpoint, motives of selfishness, symbolically described by the Revelator as “unclean spirits like frogs,” are the reasons which cause the nations to unite. But at the same time, it is because God has released the flood gates of knowledge, which fallen man is incapable of utilizing for his good, that the nations are gathering in self-defense against the “Frankenstein” which their selfish misuse of knowledge has produced.

The Revelator declares that the nations are gathered “into a place

Psalm 2:1-4; Galatians 1:4; Daniel 12:4

called in the Hebrew tongue **Armageddon.**" The term "Armageddon" is used in the Scriptures to symbolize the great struggle of men at this end of the age which results in the destruction of the present order of things. It is a struggle in which God directs the issue to his glory through the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. This overthrowing of an order of things is described by the Revelator as "a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great."

God sets forth his purpose in gathering the nations at this time, saying, "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."

The "earth" which is devoured by the fire of God's jealousy is not the planet upon which we live. This term is frequently used in the Scriptures as a symbol of the present social order, and in this prophecy God's purpose of world destruction is clearly stated. And it is well to note that while the nations gather for self-defense, divine strategy overrules, so that their forming of leagues results, rather, in their destruction.

In view of the present dilemma of the nations, human wisdom is insisting that there must be world

government, or else world destruction. But God's Word sets forth the fact that world destruction is inevitable, and that following this there will come world government, a government presided over by the "King of kings and Lord of lords."

The Language Barrier

When God scattered the people back in the dawn of history at the time they attempted to build the Tower of Babel, he confused their language as a means of preventing a common understanding among them. This language barrier has ever since continued to be an effective one in keeping the nations separated. This separation has, it is true, resulted in selfish competition, yet evidently God saw that this would be better for the race than to allow them to pool their selfishness by remaining united.

It is not God's purpose that the nations of earth shall always be separated, but he has his own plan for world government. While no one can say with certainty the extent to which present human efforts to establish unified control over the earth will be permitted to succeed, the Scriptures do reveal clearly that the ultimate end of all such human efforts is failure.

God has decreed that the government which actually will save the people is to be established by Christ—"the government shall be upon his shoulder." Jesus highlighted this purpose of God by teaching his followers to pray,

Revelation 16:13-18; Zephaniah 3:8, 9

Revelation 17:14; 19:16

“Thy kingdom [government] come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” True, Jesus was crucified because he claimed to be a king, but this did not defeat the divine purpose centered in him, for the government which the prophets foretold he would establish is yet to become a reality; and “of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”

The Kingdom Theme

The “kingdom,” or government, theme of the Scriptures is a most interesting one. It begins in the Book of Genesis, and in a glorious crescendo reaches a climax in the closing chapters of Revelation. It is implied in promises made to Abraham. On several occasions God promised this patriarch that all the families of the earth were to be blessed through his seed.

The apostle tells us that Abraham “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” A “city” is often used in the Bible as pictorial of a government, just as we use the names of certain cities today. When we speak, for example, of official Washington, London, or Moscow, we are not referring to the buildings in these centers of population, but to the governments therein located.

So Abraham looked for a “city” that was to be built by God, a government that would be established by almighty power, and backed up by divine authority. As Abraham understood the matter, the personnel of this future gov-

ernment was to be made up of his “seed,” his descendants. This hope was passed on to his son Isaac, and to Isaac’s son, Jacob. At Jacob’s death it was inherited by his twelve sons. At that time they were sojourning in the land of Egypt, but in due course, and as a token of his care over them, God delivered his people from Egyptian bondage, and after forty years’ wandering in the wilderness, they were restored to the land which he had promised to their fathers.

Shortly before Jacob died, he uttered a prophecy which narrowed down the hope of rulership to the descendants of his son Judah—“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” The title “Shiloh” means “peacemaker,” and in Jacob’s prophecy undoubtedly it is a reference to Christ, who was born to be “The Prince of Peace.”

Gathered Unto Shiloh

“Unto Him [Shiloh] shall the gathering of the people be,” the prophecy states. When this promise was made, several hundred years had passed since the people were scattered at the Tower of Babel, and it indicates that it was not God’s purpose that they should remain scattered forever. But neither did God intend that men, by their own efforts, would be able to reassemble themselves and work together in a world government. As the prophecy indicates, God was even then developing his own plans

Isaiah 9:6, 7; Matthew 6:9-13; Genesis 12:3; 18:18

Genesis 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Hebrew 11:10

for the re-gathering of the people—"Shiloh," The Prince of Peace, was to be the central figure of the coming world union, the great Leader who was to save the world from chaos and destruction.

While Jesus was to be the foretold Prince of Peace, the great Ruler of all nations, God established a typical kingdom to govern the little nation of Israel, the natural descendants of Abraham. Saul was the first of Israel's typical kings, and Zedekiah was the last. Zedekiah was overthrown because the iniquity of Israel had come to the full. In connection with his overthrow God said, "Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same, I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him."

The "diadem" and "crown" mentioned in this prophecy refer to the God-given right to be the world Ruler which was mentioned in Judah's prophecy, the "sceptre" of divine promise concerning the kingdom of God. God's wonderful blessings upon the natural descendants of Abraham, especially during the reign of Solomon, led this little nation to believe that he would use them to establish his foretold universal rulership, but their hope was blasted when Zedekiah was taken a prisoner to Babylon and their whole nation went into captivity with him. God had other plans. He whose right it was had not come—"Shiloh" had not yet been born.

Babylonian Empire

With the overthrow of the typical kingdom of Israel, Babylon became a universal empire. This was by divine permission. It was also by divine permission that Medo-Persia succeeded Babylon as a world empire, which in turn was followed by Greece, and finally, Greece by Rome. This is revealed in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a great humanlike image. Daniel, a Hebrew captive in Babylon, and vitally interested in the affairs of his people, interpreted this dream, explaining that its glamour of gold, silver, brass, and iron depicted the four great empires just named.

The feet and toes of the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream were of iron and clay mixed. In the dream the king saw a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which smote the image on its feet, causing it to fall, and grinding it to powder. Then the wind blew the powder away, as the chaff from a summer threshing floor.

Then the stone which smote the image grew into a great mountain which filled the whole earth.

Daniel explained to Nebuchadnezzar that the head of gold represented him as the head of the Babylonian Empire. The prophet traced the course of history down through the successors of Babylon to the fourth empire, which was Rome. Then come the divisions of Rome, as shown in the feet and

toes of the image. Next the image is smitten by the stone, which afterward becomes a great mountain to fill the whole earth. Daniel explains that this stone pictures the kingdom, or government, of God, and that it would be established in the days of "these kings," represented by the feet and toes of the image.

The expression, "days of these kings," applies to modern times, for it should be remembered that the various divisions of Rome, as depicted by the feet and toes of the image, still existed in Europe, until those hereditary rulers were overthrown as a result of the first and second world wars. Today communism and various brands of democracy have supplanted practically all of those old governments. We call attention to the modernity of this part of the prophecy because it has a vital bearing upon the matter of world government, and upon the fact that the time has come when God will establish such a government. It should be especially noticed that the force which overthrows the image is the kingdom of God which ultimately fills the whole earth.

God used Daniel to record other prophecies pertaining to the development of a world government. In one of them is shown that from the time a decree would be issued to rebuild the city and walls of Jerusalem until the coming of Messiah the Prince, would be a period of "seventy weeks," and that the Messiah would be cut off in the midst of the last, or seventieth,

week of this period.

At the time this prophecy was given, the Israelites were in Babylon, and it was not until the Medes and Persians took the reins of control away from Babylon that the people of God were permitted to return to their own land. King Cyrus then issued a decree permitting them to return and to rebuild their temple. This was in 536 B. C. But the decree of Cyrus said nothing about rebuilding the city of Jerusalem and its walls. The decree covering this point was issued eighty-two years later by Artaxerxes.

As Daniel had pointed out, it was from the issuing of this latter decree that a period of sixty-nine weeks was to elapse before the coming of Messiah the Prince. This period turned out to be one of four hundred and eighty-three years, culminating at the time Jesus was baptized as the Messiah by John the Baptist. In this we have a key to the time prophecies of the Bible. This key was suggested to the Prophet Ezekiel. It is the method of counting a day for a year. Sixty-nine weeks of seven days each would be four hundred and eighty-three days, and in time prophecy just that many years.

The Messiah Cut Off

But there was a factor in this prophecy that escaped the attention of the ancients, and particularly those who expected Jesus to establish a kingdom at the time of his first advent. It was the fact that though the end of the sixty-

ninth symbolic week would be the time for Messiah to come, yet that in the midst of the next week, the seventieth, he would be "cut off, but not for himself." Jesus was cut off in death, dying not for himself, but for the sins of the whole world. His earthly ministry lasted just three and one-half years, half of the seventieth week. So, while this prophecy revealed the time for Messiah to come, the coming to which it referred was to be for sacrificial purposes, and not as a ruler.

Previous to Daniel's time, God provided another and longer time measurement, which, in the light of the fulfilment of other prophecies can now be seen to mark the time when Christ was to establish his kingdom. This measurement is one of 2,520 years, dating from 606 B. C. to A. D. 1914—the time when the kingdoms of this world began to crumble.

The 2,520-year measurement is contained in a prophecy warning Israel concerning the result of continued disregard for divine law and the worshiping of false gods. Various corrective punishments were foretold, with the warning that if in spite of these the Israelites continued to disobey they would be punished "seven times" more. This "seven times" of punishment began with Israel's last king, Zedekiah, when he was taken captive to Babylon in 606 B. C. "Seven times" in biblical prophecy is a period of 2,520 years, and would, therefore, end in 1914.

Jesus' Prophecy of Our Times

In Jesus' prophecy of our times, he said that Jerusalem, that is, the Jewish people, would be trodden down of the Gentiles until "the times of the Gentiles" were fulfilled. It is in this same prophecy that Jesus quotes from the Book of Daniel to show that the end of the present age, and the time for his government to be established, would be marked by a "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." This "time of trouble," according to Daniel, would coincide with the "standing up" of Michael, "the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people." This indicates that the present time of great distress upon the nations portends divine intervention by the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.

It will be conceded, we believe, that beginning with 1914, the world has been passing through a "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." Certainly, with the universal wreckage threatened by atomic bombs, there will soon be no doubt of this in the minds of those who are left alive to think.

It is also well-known to all, that interlocked with the national and international distress since 1914, the problems of the Jewish people and their right to Palestine have become front-page news. Jesus and the prophets, in their previews of this "time of the end," point out

Daniel 9:24-27; Ezekiel 4:4-6

this extraordinary combination of events.

The time measurements of the prophecies, when relating to nations and peoples, usually indicate merely the turning points in their experiences, and this is the significance of the 1914 date in prophecy. It is certainly evident that the Gentile nations of earth began to be destroyed in 1914. It is also true that the Jewish people, because of the experiences through which they have passed since then, are realizing as never before their need of the Holy Land, for the time has come when God is again taking a hand in their affairs.

The Seed of Abraham

As we have seen, the personnel of God's government is to be the "seed" of Abraham. This "seed" is Christ, the "Shiloh" promised by Jacob, and "The Prince of Peace" of Isaiah's prophecy. Paul informs us that the true followers of Jesus are also to be a part of the promised "seed," not upon the basis of nationality, but because of individual loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness contained in the divine will for them. The work of God in the earth during this present age has been the selection and preparation of this class to live and reign with Jesus in his world government.

Christ's rulership will be spiritual. Neither Jesus nor his church will rule as men, but will exercise their control through human representatives. These will be the

resurrected worthy ones of past ages. There are a number of scriptures which indicate this. They show that this centralized government of Christ will first make itself manifest in Palestine—not through unbelieving Jews, but through the miracle of the returning ancient prophets who, backed by miracle-working authority and power, will begin there a rule destined quickly to spread until it embraces the whole earth.

This is not visionary, it is realism. It is a realistic acknowledgment of the fact that man has failed, and that unless the Creator of man intervenes his creation will have been in vain. It is the realism of Christianity, and to believe it is to have faith in what God has promised to do through Christ. Just as the present age was introduced by the miracle of Jesus' resurrection, so the new age now dawning is to open up in its fullness by another demonstration of the miracle-working power of the resurrection.

The power sealed up in atoms is miraculous. Man is able to release a measure of it, but he doesn't understand its secret. Should it be thought incredible that the One who made all the atoms should use sufficient of his knowledge and power to raise the dead, since this is what he has promised to do? For six thousand years God has been training the personnel for operating a world government. As they finished their training they fell asleep in death,

Leviticus 26:18, 21, 24, 28; Matthew 24:21; Daniel 12:1, 4; Joel 3:1, 2, 9-14

Galatians 3:8, 16, 27-29; Psalm 45:16; Hebrews 11:39, 40; Luke 13:28

and in God's own due time his power restores them to life, and together they will be ready to assume their positions of rulership in the world government of divine promise.

Characteristics of World Government

The characteristics of the world government to be established by Christ are reflected in the several titles which the Scriptures apply to him. The term "Christ" itself is one of them. It means anointed. The thought is taken from the ancient custom of anointing kings at the time they were inducted into office. It denotes right, or authority. Jesus is the Anointed of God. His government will function, not by the will of man, but by the authority of God, and for the purpose of establishing God's will in the earth. Jesus will be the first ever to rule so universally and by actual divine right!

Jesus is also called "Wonderful." Christ's kingdom will not come into power by popular vote, yet the people will soon recognize the sterling qualities of their new Ruler, and be ready to acclaim him as "Wonderful." He will be wonderful, not because of his military genius, not because he is able to induce the masses to die in his support, but because of his love for the people. He who is to be the Kings of kings, the greatest and most wonderful Ruler of all time, first of all died for his subjects because of his great love for them.

"Counselor" is another title which the Scriptures apply to Jesus. The thought here is that of a counselor-at-law, one who pleads the case of another. In the New Testament Jesus is spoken of as the great "Mediator between God and men." One of the purposes of his reign is to re-establish harmony between God and man. The world has been estranged from God through wicked works, but they are to be restored to his fellowship and favor. This will be brought about through the mediatorship of Christ—the great "Counselor" of the people.

Jesus will also be the "mighty God." He will be worshiped as the great Benefactor, the loving Savior of all mankind—but not as the eternal God and Creator. One of the prophets speaks of Christ's kingdom as a "mountain," and tells us that in this mountain there will be spread a "feast of fat things"—denoting an abundance of everything which contributes to human happiness. It is also promised that in this kingdom, death will be swallowed up in victory, and that all tears will be wiped away. Then follows a description of how the people will react in gratitude for these blessings. They will say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, . . . we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation!"

Truly they will be glad to glorify Jesus as the "God of their salvation." They will have tried other gods—the god of wealth, the god of power, the god of militarism, the god of communism, and the god

Isaiah 9:6, 7; 1 Tim. 2:5; Isa. 25:6-9

of capitalism, but they will all have failed utterly to bring salvation. Instead, all of these gods created by selfish man have, by warring with one another, threatened to destroy the race. But Christ intervenes to save the people from these gods. He gives the people those blessings of life which they crave, and gives them life itself. Yes, he will be a "mighty God," and the people will say, "Lo, this IS our god."

"The everlasting Father" is another title applied to Jesus, and is a further description of what his rulership will mean to mankind. Father means life-giver, hence the "everlasting Father" will give everlasting life to those who obey the laws of his world-wide government. No other ruler has ever had everlasting life on the agenda of blessings promised to his subjects. This provision of life by earth's new Ruler includes the awakening of the dead, that they too might share in the blessings of his government.

"There won't be room for all," someone may object. Such a fear is groundless. God commissioned our first parents to multiply and fill the earth, and we may rest assured that when sufficient people have been born to fulfil this commission, the propagation of the race will, by divine providence, cease. There is a trend in that direction even now, as we all know.

Actual figures reveal that in the more than six thousand years since creation, there have not been sufficient people born to come any-

where near overpopulating the earth. It is a singular fact, however, that now the living population of earth has reached the point where its natural increase would soon become a real world problem, except for the fact that Christ's new government will soon take over in the affairs of men, and this feature of the divine arrangement for man will gradually cease.

Jesus is also to be the "Prince of Peace." In the world government which he will establish, the nations will learn war no more. They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks—and they will certainly find some other use for atomic energy besides that of making bombs to destroy the race. By obedience to the laws of Christ's world government, the people will find the way to peace in their communities, peace in their homes, and peace in their hearts.

Above all, the Prince of Peace will establish peace between God and men—a peace without which every other form of peace would only be shallow and temporary. When Jesus was born, the angels proclaimed, "Peace on earth, and good will toward men." God's good will toward men was expressed in the birth of Jesus, and it will be expressed still further in the establishment of his kingdom. And because men will be blessed by the good will of God, all the other blessings which they crave will flow to them like a river even from the throne of God.

Indeed, the blessings of peace

Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-4

and joy, and health, and everlasting life, are illustrated by the Revelator as a "river of water of life." On the banks of this river are the "trees of life," and the leaves of the trees are for the healing of the nations." With the people of all nations healed and restored to life; with God's will re-established in the earth; with the dead restored to life; with the knowledge of God filling the earth as the waters cover the sea; who will not then give glory to God, their Creator?

Today we are living at the borderline of that new government which, according to the Scriptures, will be "the desire of all nations." As the prophet foretold would be the case, the nations are now being shaken and humbled in order that they might realize the need of Christ's government. This shaking of the nations must continue for a while, and undoubtedly there is much distress still ahead; but the end will be glorious, for God has promised to turn to the people a pure language of truth and righteousness. Humbled by the complete failure of their own selfish plans, they will then gladly call upon his name and serve him with one consent.

What can we do about it now? We can believe the promises of God, and, resting in these promises, endeavor to comfort others by telling them to "fear not"—neither atomic bombs, nor other tragedies produced by human selfishness—for the time is near when Christ

will assume control over the earth, to bring order out of chaos, peace out of war, and life out of death. What a glorious prospect! And this is human destiny, planned and guaranteed by the Creator—a destiny of eternal life and happiness, on an earth filled with peace, good will, and the glory of God.

Referring to the present time of distress, the prophet, addressing those who have faith in the promises of God, admonishes them to seek peace and righteousness, with the promise that they may be hidden by God in the day of his wrath. The consecrated followers of Jesus need not fear any trouble which yet may come, for God will overrule all of their experiences for their highest good. Even death is not a tragedy when viewed in the light of God's promises, for the dead are to be raised—the church in the first resurrection to reign with Christ, and all others to enjoy the rich blessings of life on the earth. Surely we do not need to fear!

True, the dark and ominous clouds of trouble are now hanging threateningly over a world that is filled with fear, but WE need not fear! The clouds will one day break to reveal the sunshine of God's favor in the establishment of that world government which he has promised. Meanwhile, as we wait and pray for that kingdom, let us rejoice in the knowledge of the blessed time to come, and, rejoicing in it ourselves, may we, whenever and wherever and by

Luke 2:14; Rev. 22:1, 2; Isaiah 11:9; Isaiah 35:4
Habakkuk 2:14, Haggai 2:7; Zeph. 3:8, 9

whatever means possible, tell the glad tidings to all the world that Christ the King is soon to reign. In our hearts we can even now sing:

“All hail the power of Jesus’ name
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.”

Let us proclaim far and wide that the time is near when in answer to

the Christian’s prayer God’s will is to be done throughout the whole earth, that all mankind will indeed crown Jesus “Lord of all.” Let us make it known that this will lead to, and make sure, the human destiny decreed by the Creator—that the man whom he created in his own image will be restored to that image, and have his lost dominion over earth restored to him.



THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES—This 350-page book, written more than fifty years ago, continues to be the outstanding textbook of knowledge relating to human destiny. Among the topics which this key to the Scriptures discusses are: the permission of evil; God’s provision for those who die in unbelief; the object of Christ’s second advent; and the judgment day. Paper bound, 25 cents; cloth bound, 50 cents.



THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL—This new publication contains sixty-four large pages of subject matter relating to the Christian sabbath; hope for the unsaved dead; the judgment day; the binding of Satan; the “mark” of the beast; and paying tithes. Paper bound 15 cents.



GOD AND REASON—A vest-pocket booklet of 128 pages is an up-to-date treatise of many outstanding doctrines of the Bible, and also of the prophecies relating to our times. Paper bound, 5 cents.



HYMNS OF DAWN—In durable paper-board covers, flexible and patterned to look like leather. This popular priced edition contains the music as well as the words, and is very suitable for ecclesia use. 50 cents each. Ecclesia discount applies.

Mr. Laski Speaks His Mind

THE complexities of the great "time of trouble" were emphasized, when, on the evening of December 3, Harold J. Laski, chairman of the British Labor party, spoke at a dinner meeting in the Hotel Astor. The meeting was attended by two thousand persons, and had as its object the discussion of the problems presented to the world by the atomic bomb. The meeting was also addressed by Dr. Herbert V. Evatt, Foreign Minister of Australia; Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt; Leon Henderson; and others. It was sponsored by **The Nation**, a magazine of liberal persuasion.

The urgency of finding a solution to the problem created by the atomic bomb has become more apparent in the light of a statement recently made by Dr. M. L. E. Oliphant, Great Britain's leading experimenter in atomic physics. He declared that scientists are now able to produce an atomic poison gas which, if used in and with an atomic bomb, would kill every living thing within a radius of 1,000 miles. Three such bombs, if dropped at the proper spots, would wipe out the entire population of the United States. No wonder world leaders are filled with fear!

So some of them met in the Hotel Astor for the purpose of trying to find a way out of this terrible danger; but meanwhile out on the street in front of the hotel were a group of pickets—two of them Catholic priests—sent there

by the Holy Name Society and the Catholic War Veterans, to protest the presence of Mr. Laski. It seems that Mr. Laski had made a speech before leaving England in which he criticized the various governments which had actively helped to destroy the former democratic government of Spain; and he named the Vatican State as one of these. Explaining his position in the matter, Mr. Laski said:

"I made a criticism of a State, as I am entitled to criticize all states, including my own, for having assisted in the massacre of a great democracy. I recognize the right to have faith in religious principles, but I do not recognize the right of a political state, arising out of those principles, that is not built on democratic foundations."

Thus did Mr. Laski chairman of the British Labor party, which now rules the British Empire, declare that he did not believe the Vatican had a right to exist as a civil State. But neither does Mr. Laski believe in partiality. In the same speech he said that free competitive enterprise was responsible for wars, and that "our universities and foundations, even the churches, are the instruments of 'big business!'" To think of finding the way to peace through any compromise with these he implied, was a "Satanic delusion."

The problems arising from the atomic bomb were not solved.

The Bible Answers



Prayers of Gold Star Mothers

Frank, I recently read a very pathetic letter written by a mother whose boy was killed in the war. She wrote to a magazine, asking for an explanation as to why God did not answer her prayer to protect her boy and bring him back safely to her.

Was this mother a Christian woman?

Yes. She explained that her late father had been a minister of the Gospel, and that he had told her that anything she prayed for earnestly enough, she would receive. In her letter she also explained that her boy was a believer in Christ. This mother is really puzzled, even to the point of distraction, to know why God did not answer her prayer. She feels that she has been let down in some way. Frank, is there any answer to a question of this kind? Mind you, this mother is not alone in her sorrow. There are many thousands of mothers just like her, who also are wondering why a God of love would permit their boys to be killed in war.

Ernest, there is an answer to this mother's question—an answer that is more wonderful, more soul-satisfying, than she has ever dared to hope for! In order for her to

understand that answer, however, and in order for any of us to understand why God allows these bitter sorrows to come into our lives, we must look at matters from God's standpoint. By that I mean that the answer as to why God permits our individual sorrows can be found only in his plan for making an end of all sorrow.

Do you mean that God has a plan which embraces all the millions who were killed in the war, even those in the armies of the enemies?

Yes, Ernest. And even those who have died in other ways than on the battlefield—those who have died of disease, or of old age, or by accident, or as civilians in a bombing raid. God's love embraces the entire human race, and he has promised that he will wipe away tears from off all faces.

But Frank, the case of a Christian mother who loses a Christian boy in war must be different from that of unbelievers and heathen. There are some who never pray for the safety of their boys, but this mother did, and many others have. Doesn't God pay any attention to such prayers?

Of course he does! But what I am emphasizing right now is the

PRAYERS OF GOLD STAR MOTHERS

universality of death, and the necessity of discovering why anybody dies under any circumstances, in order to understand why the boy of a Christian mother is not protected from death.

I think I see your point, all right, Frank. It's the fact that the question is a bigger one than the immediate concern of any one mother. And I can see that that's true; for, after all, people have been dying for thousands of years. The question might well be broadened to ask why God allows anyone to die. We all dread death. We fight against it. Death breaks up homes, and fills hearts with sadness wherever it strikes, whether in war or in peace. It surely is a big question!

And a very important question, too. We all have sympathy for gold star mothers. And more important than that, the Bible assures us that God has sympathy for them. The difference is that we are unable to do much about our sympathy. But God, who is all-powerful, can do whatever he wishes to do. He assures us, by many promises of his Word, that

all the gold star mothers will receive their boys back home again.

But Frank, those boys are dead!

I know it, but that in no way hinders God from fulfilling his promises on their behalf. You see, Ernest, our viewpoint is entirely too limited. We judge our every experience by the circumscribed limitations of our own short lifetime. Death is the end of everything so far as our abilities are concerned, but this is not so with God. God is able to restore the dead to life, and has promised to do so, in his own "due time."—Rom. 5:6; 1 Tim. 2:6

You are referring now, of course, to the hope of resurrection?

Yes, that is God's provision for all who have died.

But Frank, the hope of a resurrection in the sweet by and by is hardly sufficient to dry the tears of a mother now!

Ernest, there is nothing that can steal away the sadness of heart and the lonesomeness caused by death. I'll grant you that. But it's one thing to be sad because of losing

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Geelong 3GL 222 Metres 10:00 a.m.
Newcastle 2HD 263 Metres 1:15 p.m.
Swan Hill 3SH 226 Metres 10:00 a.m.

South Australian Time

Adelaide 5AD 229 Metres 9:30 a.m.
Port Pirie 5PI 288 Metres 9:30 a.m.

Western Australian Time

Perth 6KY 227 Metres 7:15 p.m.

Broadcast Topics

JANUARY

**Prayers of Gold Star Mothers
One Government
Chosen People
The Jew in Prophecy**

loved ones in death, and quite another thing to question God's love or wisdom in permitting them to die.

Or even worse than that, Frank, to question the very existence of God.

That's it! When we think of God and of his interest in us and our affairs, we must think of him as the Infinite One, and the Creator of the entire universe. We should remember that all his vast creation is governed by fixed laws. God doesn't have an individual law for each planet. God has fixed laws for our earth, and he has fixed laws also for the human race. It is taking a very small view of God to suppose that he is running the affairs of the human race according to the millions of conflicting notions and plans that may be taken to him in prayer. God is not allowing individuals of the human race to tell him what he should do. It is only as we learn to understand God's plan for humanity as a whole that we can know why he allows our individual experiences of sorrow. Prayer will not change God's plan.

But Frank, didn't Jesus say that his followers could ask anything they wished, and their requests would be granted?

No, Jesus didn't state it just that way—although many have supposed that he did. Hence when their requests are not granted they wonder what is wrong. Many, on this account, have lost faith in prayer, and some have even lost faith in God.

What did Jesus say on the sub-

ject of prayer?

Jesus said that if we abide in him and his words abide in us, we may ask what we will, and our requests will be granted.

Well, Frank, isn't that a blanket promise assuring us that we may ask God for anything we wish, and expect a favorable answer? In view of that promise, why shouldn't a Christian mother expect God to protect her boy if she asked him to do so?

Ernest, I'm afraid you haven't grasped the full thought of the Master's promise. It is not unconditional. There are two very important conditions attached to it. The first is that the one praying must be abiding in him.

What does it mean to be "in" Christ?

The Apostle Paul answers that question by using the human body as an illustration. In this illustration, the head of the body is Christ, and his followers are the other members of the body.

To be "in" Christ, then, means to be a member of his body, is that the thought, Frank?

That's right. And when we are members of his body it means that he is our Head. This, in turn, means that we have no plans and preferences of our own, but instead are directed wholly by his will.

That would mean then, that our prayers would be only for those things which Christ would want us to have—is that right?

Yes, that is right, Ernest. And Jesus also said that if our prayers

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are to be answered his words must abide in us. This, too, indicates that we will pray only for those things in harmony with his words. If such be the nature of our prayers, they are certain to be favorably answered. If our prayers are not in harmony with the words of Jesus, we have no assurance that they will be given consideration in heaven.

Well, that's reasonable. Certainly the God of heaven, the Creator of the universe, must have some limitation concerning the nature of prayers which he will answer. Human parents are not under obligation to give their children everything they ask for, and why should we think that it is not just and loving if God does not answer all our prayers? But Frank, getting back to the mother's prayer for the safety of her boy in war, why would a prayer of that kind not be in harmony with the will of God? Why should not Christians ask for the safety of their children?

Well, certainly God does love our boys who die, and has made provision for them, but, as we have already seen, Jesus said that the prayers of his people would be answered on condition that his words were abiding in them. This means, Ernest, that his words would determine the nature of their prayers. So far as death is concerned, Jesus' words leave no doubt as to what the nature of our prayers should be. He said that we should pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, even as it is done in heaven."

Do you mean that instead of praying that our loved ones be kept alive, we should pray for God's kingdom to come, and for his will to be done in earth as it is done in heaven?

Yes, that's right.

Frank, what relationship does that prayer have to the death of our loved ones?

In the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, the Apostle Paul tells us that one of the objectives of Christ's kingdom for which we pray is to awaken the dead and destroy death. When the dead are awakened, and death destroyed, all mothers will rejoice that their boys are alive. This is God's plan for all mankind, hence when we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we are asking him for something which is in keeping with his plans, and we can be assured that our prayers will be answered.

Well, since we must accept the fact of death, your answer is a reasonable one. Surely God is interested in all who have died, and since he has made an arrangement to save them all from death we should not expect him to make special arrangements for our individual loved ones. But Frank, why do people die? If God purposes to destroy death, why did he allow death to blight the human race in the first place?

Ernest, death came into the world as a result of disobedience to God's law. God could have prevented man from disobeying, even as he can and does force the inanimate things of creation to obey his laws, but his wisdom saw that in the

long run it would be best for man to experience the result of sin. By this method the human race will learn to obey God willingly and intelligently.

Of what value is the experience with sin, since all must die?

God's love has made a provision for all to be restored from death. That provision is the redemptive work of Christ. God takes no pleasure in seeing people die, whether it be our boys on the battlefields, our aged parents, our babies, or whoever it may be. God loves the people—all the people. God loves them so much, the Scriptures tell us, that he gave his beloved Son to die for the whole world. Ernest, when we take this fully into consideration, it should not be difficult to see that he is not lacking in love for us simply because he does not answer our

prayers for the safety of our dear ones.

There can be no doubt, Frank, but what God's ways are better than our ways.

And how much better! Even if our prayers for the safety of our loved ones should be answered, we would benefit only temporarily, for we, and they, too, would die later on anyway. But God's love for mankind is represented in a provision, not to keep members of the condemned race alive temporarily in connection with certain emergencies such as the dangers of the battlefield, but to restore them to life; and if then they obey him, to keep them alive forever. And this provision is for all.

Certainly God has a wonderful plan for humanity! I wish people could know more about it, and have greater faith in his promises.

—o—† JANUARY READING SCHEDULE }—o—

The Divine Plan of the Ages

Date	Pages	Date	Pages	Date	Pages	Date	Pages
1	9-21	9	88-99	17	173-184	25	253-262
2	21-23	10	99-108	18	184-196	26	262-272
3	29-36	11	108-116	19	196-204	27	273-282
4	37-44	12	117-125	20	205-218	28	282-291
5	44-54	13	126-136	21	219-228	29	291-299
6	54-64	14	137-148	22	228-235	30	299-306
7	65-76	15	149-159	23	235-244	31	307-315
8	77-88	16	159-172	24	245-253		

“In order that now may be made known the much diversified wisdom of God, . . . according to a plan of the ages, which he formed for the anointed Jesus our Lord.”—Eph. 3:10, 11, Diaglott

The Christian Life

"By Faith . . . Not Knowing"

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

—HEBREWS 11:8



ABRAM'S living faith in the promises of God highlight many of the experiences of his life. The apostle cites other Old Testament saints as also being examples of faith, but dwells more upon the life of Abraham than on any of the others. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," Paul writes, and "by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death" because he "walked with God." By faith Noah built an ark, and by faith Moses was hid three months by his parents and by faith he later forsook Egypt "esteeming the reproach of Christ" greater riches than anything that could be offered to him in the court of Pharaoh.—**Heb. 11:1-27**

These outstanding experiences in the lives of the various patriarchs are indeed wonderful ex-

amples of faith and undoubtedly it was their continued strong faith that enabled them to bear up through all the trials which divine wisdom and love permitted to come into their lives. But in the apostle's citation of Abraham's faith he covers nearly the whole life of this father of the faithful in his endeavor to illustrate for us the manner in which faith is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

When God first called Abraham he offered him a "land." (Gen. 12:1) Abraham had never seen that land. He was wholly unfamiliar with its fertility and whether or not it was favorably situated. But he accepted the invitation and left his native country "not knowing whither he went."

God promised Abraham that he would have a "seed," but his

wife was barren, hence Abraham did not know how this promise would be fulfilled. His lack of knowledge, however, did not weaken his faith. Abraham believed God. He believed that God was both willing and able to fulfil his promises so he embarked upon a life of faith ever believing that the time would come when the "seed" of promise would be born.

When finally Isaac was born and had grown to manhood's estate God asked Abraham to offer this beloved son in sacrifice. Abraham did not understand why this was necessary, but he obeyed, "not knowing." Finally, like the other ancient worthies, Abraham "died in faith" not having realized in full all the implications contained in God's promises to him. Abraham did not know, and will not know until he is resurrected, the exact manner in which his "seed" is destined to participate in the blessing of all the families of the earth. To him faith was truly the "evidence of things not seen."

PARALLEL EXPERIENCES

Many of Abraham's experiences were similar to those in which the followers of Jesus during the present age have an opportunity to demonstrate their faith. From the time God first

spoke to the patriarch while he was living in Ur of the Chaldees, we can note these similarities. And, even as with Abraham, our faith takes hold of the promises of God, enabling us, by comparison, to prize most highly the things which cannot be seen by the natural eye, nor understood by the human intellect.

First, let us note the fact that God spoke to Abraham and revealed to him the great theme song of his purpose toward the children of men. David inquired, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" (Psa. 8:4) And well might Abraham have asked, "Who am I, that God should speak to me, and to me make known his purpose to bless all the families of the earth?" But this was exactly what God did, and Abraham had the necessary faith to believe what God told him—to believe it so thoroughly that he gladly staked his life upon it. Surely Abraham was honored, and he demonstrated his worthiness of that honor by believing that which he could not understand.

Evidently, Abraham believed in the existence of God even before the divine plan was made known to him. Many throughout all the ages have been blessed with a faith of this kind. But only those to whom God has spoken, and to whom he has

"BY FAITH . . . NOT KNOWING"

revealed some measure of his plan, have had an opportunity to demonstrate their faith by obedience to the knowledge received.

In this respect faith is based upon knowledge. It is not "blind" in the sense of having no assurance of the unseen blessings to come. By faith, Abraham started out for the Promised Land, "not knowing whither" he was going, but he did know that God had promised him the land; and he knew also that God had promised him a seed. What Abraham did not know was the exact manner in which God would fulfil his promises, and just what the land would be like when he reached it. These points of knowledge were not essential to Abraham's faith. All he needed to know was that God had promised. On these promises his faith rested.

GOD'S THEME SONG

A Christian who is enlightened with the truth of the divine plan knows that God has spoken to him, even as he spoke to Abraham. This is a fact of positive knowledge to those who have been blessed with the "witness" of the Spirit. (Rom. 8:16) It is not a matter of basing their faith on an uncertainty. One of the main reasons they know that God has spoken to them is that

they have heard the same joyful theme song of the divine plan that delighted the heart of Abraham—they have heard that glad message concerning the divine purpose to bless all the families of the earth.

And as it was in the case of Abraham, accompanying this message is the "call." We might well wonder why God has singled us out for such favor; why we should be honored with the privilege of hearing his voice; but it is not long until we learn that such marvelous grace is not bestowed upon us without a purpose. It is a wonderful thing indeed to hear the voice of God, but it is costly. To Abraham God said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." (Gen. 12:1) This meant the forsaking of much that he held dear, but Abraham obeyed.

And when we hear the voice of God there is in the message not only the hope of restitution blessings for the world, but we also hear God saying to us, "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." (Psa. 45:10) While this invitation does not have the same literal meaning as did the divine call to Abraham, it is no less exacting in terms of sacrifice. We are not asked, necessarily, to move

away a great distance from our relatives; but we *are* asked to forget them in the sense that God and his will should henceforth come first in all our plans. Jesus said that those who love father or mother, sister or brother, husband or wife, more than they love him, are not worthy of him.—Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26

Leaving our "father's house" is a far more drastic requirement for the Christian than it was for Abraham. In our case it is father Adam's house. When God speaks to us we are given a vision of paradise restored. We learn that it is the divine purpose to restore the human race to life upon the earth. We speak of this as the hope of restitution. We are glad to learn that all mankind will have an opportunity to live everlastingly upon an earth made perfect. Truly, we think, our father Adam's house is to be one of joy and peace and health and life; and we look forward to the time when all mankind can "return home."

But to us as Christians, the divine call is "Forget also thine own people and thy father's house." What does this mean? It means we have an opportunity to forego restitution blessings and to embark upon a long and difficult journey to a heavenly Canaan. Yes, God has promised us a "land," not on

earth, but in heaven, for we are partakers of a "heavenly calling." "Unto us," writes Peter, "are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature."—2 Peter 1:4

THINGS WE KNOW

And so, by our appreciation of the message that has come down to us from the past, we know God has spoken to us. We know that the "exceeding great and precious promises" belong to us. We know that we have passed from death unto life. We know that no good thing will be withheld from us if we walk uprightly in the narrow way of sacrifice. We know that all things will work together for our good because we love God and have been called according to his purpose. We know that we are now the "sons of God," having received the Holy Spirit of sonship. These and other precious points of knowledge are the foundation of our faith; and our faith in the promises of God relating thereto is the evidence of things unseen.

But it is also true of us, even as of Abraham, that by faith we enter the narrow way "not knowing whither" we are going. The Apostle John wrote, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when He

shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2) "We know" that He shall appear; and we know that when He appears we shall be "like Him." We know this because God has promised it, and our faith lays hold upon the promises; and, like Abraham, we heed the call, "not knowing" its full meaning for "it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

An interesting fact in connection with Abraham's faith is that it grew stronger with the passing years. When God first spoke to Abraham his faith enabled him to "obey" the call to leave his own people, although not as fully as he might have done, for he took some of them along with him. In this, too, there is somewhat of a parallel to our own experiences, we do not always obey the call as fully as we should.

When we make a consecration to the Lord, we tell him that it is our intention to leave all things earthly behind. We promise, if need be, to break every tender tie which binds us to a world like this, yet how often we fail to live up wholly to this promise. With one hand, as it were, we lay hold upon the heavenly promises, while with the other we cling to earthly things. We hear the admonition

to "set" our "affections on things above," and we try to do it, but how often our affections come tumbling down to earth and entwine themselves around the temporal joys and advantages which we promised God we would give up in order to make the more rapid progress toward the heavenly Canaan.

Of course, our consecration was sincere. It had to be, or else it would not have been acceptable to God. But our earthly minds and hearts will not bend heavenward all at once. It requires training and struggle over a period of years for the terms of our consecration to be carried out as we would like. * And it is here that our faith becomes so essential. Faith, the apostle tells us, is the victory that overcometh the world. (1 John 5:4) And we can understand how this is. If our faith in the heavenly promises of God is weak, those promises are sure to be proportionately unimportant to us, while at the same time, the temporal blessings and pleasures of the world will loom up as being of great importance. If our faith in the promises is strong—an overcoming faith—the unseen things of God will become real and vital while the "world and her pursuits" which "perish" will fade into positions of relative unimportance.

FAITH MADE STRONG BY TESTS

Abraham's faith was put to the test, and each triumph enabled it to grow stronger. We should pray, "Lord increase our faith," and when we thus pray, we should expect God to permit experiences to come into our lives which will test our faith; that is, give us an opportunity to lay hold upon the divine promises with a firmer grip because of the experience through which we are permitted to pass.

One of God's methods of testing the faith of his people is in connection with the element of time. A thousand years are but as yesterday in the sight of God, but we measure nearly everything by the short rod of our own lifetime. Ten years to us, therefore, is a long time, and if perchance God permits us to wait that long for the fulfilment of one or more of his promises, our faith is put to a severe test. It was thus with Abraham. In addition to the land of Canaan, God promised Abraham that he would have a son, and that Sarah would bear this son to him. But when years passed and no son was born to Sarah, Abraham's faith was tested.

Finally, Abraham, through lack of faith, arranged with his bondmaid, Hagar, to mother a child for him. Some time after Hagar's son was born, the Lord spoke to

Abraham again, and told him that Sarah was to give birth to a son, and that the name of the son would be Isaac. When he heard this Abraham fell on his face and laughed. (Gen. 17:15-19) Then he said to the Lord, "O that Ishmael [Hagar's son] might live before thee!" (Gen. 17:18) Here is evidenced a lack of faith. Abraham was suggesting that Ishmael could just as well be the seed of promise, and that if God would accept this arrangement, there would be no more difficulty about the promised seed.

Abraham's laughter on this occasion would seem to denote that he doubted that Sarah would ever bear a son. Sarah was barren even as a young woman and at the time God first made the promise of a seed. At that time Abraham's faith was strong enough to believe that God would overcome Sarah's barrenness. But years had passed, and this had not been done. Now she was not only still barren, but past the normal age for childbearing as well. Why should God keep talking about what seemingly was daily becoming more unlikely? His faith could not reach up to the occasion, and he laughed at the idea.

Abraham did not know how God would fulfil his promise,

and his faith was not strong enough to believe what he could not know. Had he understood the manner in which God proposed to fulfil the promise, Abraham would have been walking by sight. All that he needed to know was that God had promised. This should have been sufficient foundation for his faith. In the final analysis it was, because when God assured him that Sarah would bear a son, Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, . . . and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."—Rom. 4:20, 21

OUR FAITH SIMILARLY TESTED

God also tests our faith by permitting us to wait for the fulfilment of his promises. This principle of God's dealings with his people is referred to by the prophet where he says, "Though it [the vision] tarry [be long], wait for it." (Hab. 2:3) Jesus illustrated it by the parable of the ten virgins. And surely the Lord's people in this end of the age have had their faith severely tested by the seemingly long wait for the fruition of their hopes.

And some have lost their faith because of this. When reminded of the glorious vision of truth,

some have said, "I believed that once, but that was years ago. I thought the kingdom would be here long before this. Now I have lost faith in it." Some of these have been reassured, even as was Abraham. The signs of the times today should be a great stimulus to a dwindling faith. Surely the vision of truth is speaking eloquently and convincingly today. It is saying, "Look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28

THE BOY ISAAC

Finally Isaac was born. God had performed a miracle! The woman who was barren and old had conceived and had given birth to the promised seed. Even Sarah had laughed at the idea that she would ever have a son. This was on the occasion of the visit of the three angels to Abraham. They confirmed the promise of the seed, and also told Abraham of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.—Gen. 18:12-22

And there's an interesting thought in this connection. The main purpose of the angel's visit on this occasion was to talk with Abraham further about the promised seed. Only incidentally did they mention the destruction of those wicked cities. Even

so today, our most important consideration is the fulfilment of God's promises concerning the "seed." If faithful, we will be a part of that spiritual seed of Abraham. There is much for us to do in connection with it. We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God who is working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure, even as he did in the case of Abraham and Sarah.

And now also, as then, God is revealing to his people the fact of a great destruction, not of one or two cities merely, but of a world. He has revealed to us that we are living in the end of this present evil world. We are glad for this knowledge. It enables us to give an effective witness to the people. But the knowledge of prophecy in itself is not the main thing in connection with the vision of truth with which we have been blessed. It is important to know that the old world is being destroyed, but how blessed is the knowledge that through the "seed" a new world is to be established!

A FURTHER TEST

Yes, Isaac was born, but there were long years of waiting before he grew to manhood's estate, and when he did, Abraham's faith was further tested.

God spoke to him again and asked the patriarch to offer Isaac in sacrifice. This was truly a severe test of Abraham's faith—a test that surely he could not have endured when God first spoke to him while he lived in Ur of the Chaldees.

But through the years Abraham's faith had grown strong. He had learned to know the voice of God. He knew that it was nothing short of the power of God that enabled Sarah to give birth to Isaac. Now he heard the voice of God again. There was no question about that, but how strange was the message. It seemed contrary to all that God had wrought in and through him during all the years. God had performed a miracle in order that Isaac might be born, hence why should he now be slain?

But again Abraham obeyed, "not knowing." He obeyed because of his implicit faith in the wisdom and love and power of God. By now his faith was so strong that he believed God would raise Isaac from the dead if necessary, in order to fulfil his promises in connection with the "seed." This was "full assurance of faith" indeed! (Heb. 10:22) It is comparatively easy to have faith in God and in his promises when all the circumstances of life are favorable for the exercise of such a faith. If

all our temporal affairs are in good order—we have a comfortable home, a congenial family, a secure position, good health; and besides these temporal blessings, we enjoy privileges of fellowship with the brethren and service of the truth—we exclaim, "Surely the Lord is good!"

Yes, we have a strong faith under such circumstances, but how strong is our faith when God speaks to us out of a cloud, and his providences are dark and foreboding? Do we then have faith?

" . . . a faith that will not shrink,
Tho' press'd by ev'ry foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe."

God spoke to Abraham in terms of sacrifice, and he speaks to us in the same manner. Is our faith, like Abraham's, strong enough to obey, even though we may not know the reason for what we are asked to do? It was a great joy to Abraham when Isaac was born. There was no question about his faith then. There was too much evidence of God's providences in connection with that birth to doubt its meaning. But now it was different. This dear boy, this miracle son, this "seed" for which he had waited a lifetime was to be slain as a burnt offering—this is what the voice of God said: and Abraham obeyed.

How does our faith compare with that of Abraham's in this connection? Oh yes, when we hear Jesus say, "My peace I leave with you," we accept that with rejoicing, and the peace and joy of the Lord is accepted as a blessed portion. It should be! But how do we react when we hear those other words, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, . . . that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service"? (Rom. 12:1) Do we recognize this "call" as also being the voice of God; and recognizing it, are we obeying it?

GOD PROVIDES

The place designated by God where Isaac was to be offered in sacrifice, was three days' journey from Abraham's home. During these three days Abraham did not divulge to Isaac just what was to occur. Isaac began to wonder, and as they began to ascend the mount (probably Moriah) he asked his father about the lamb for the sacrifice. Seemingly they had everything else they would need for offering a sacrifice except the lamb, and Isaac was puzzled.

But in simple faith Abraham replied that God would provide the lamb. Surely Abraham did have faith! Even here he did

not know just what God would do, but he had faith to believe that, if necessary, he would raise Isaac from the dead. Strengthened by this faith, he took the step in the dark knowing that God would meet him there and do for him what he could not do for himself.

Abraham said that God would provide the lamb, and he did. As the knife was raised to slay the boy, an angel of the Lord intervened to prevent the killing. Turning around Abraham saw a ram in the thicket—the lamb which God provided. Abraham did not know why this test of faith was put upon him, but now we understand—we see in this sacrifice a picture of the sacrifice of Jesus, the antitypical “lamb of God” which he provided to take away the sin of the world.

Abraham passed successfully this supreme test of his faith, and God said to him, “Now I know that thou fearest me.” (Gen. 22:12) There is something very sweet about this. It indicates that God had reserved judgment concerning Abraham until he demonstrated fully that he truly believed and was willing to obey. It is even so with us! When we have finally reached the end of the way, and have been successful in demonstrating our faith by our works,

we will hear that “Well done, thou good and faithful servant, . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”—Matt. 25:21

Abraham “died in faith” not having received the complete fulfilment of the promises God had made to him. Sarah had borne a seed, but that seed had not blessed all the families of the earth. God had promised him the land of Canaan, but, while Abraham sojourned in it for a while, he never owned it—never truly possessed it. The complete fulfilment of God’s promises to him will not be until the resurrection; but Abraham’s faith did not waver—he was faithful unto death.

And so again with us. Faith will not have gained its victory for us until we have been faithful unto death. Only then will we receive the crown of life. (Rev. 2:10) So may we continue on! Our God is a promise-keeping God. We may not know, in fact will not know, the full implications of his promises, but we know that the promises belong to us, and that he is able to fulfil them. Let us then step out upon these promises, leaving behind all earthly things; and keep our sacrifice upon the altar until it is wholly consumed. Brother, hast thou a faith like this?



“As” and “So”

¶ “AS the heaven is high above the earth, SO great is his mercy toward them that fear him. AS far as the east is from the west, SO far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like AS a father pitieth his children, SO the Lord pitieth them that fear him.”

¶ “AS thy days, SO shall thy strength be.”

¶ “AS the mountains are round about Jerusalem, SO the Lord is round about his people henceforth even forever.”

¶ “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because AS he is, SO are we in this world.”

¶ “AS the earth bringeth forth her bud, and AS the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; SO the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.”

¶ “AS the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; SO he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.”

¶ “AS by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even SO by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For AS by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, SO by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

¶ “AS in Adam all die, even SO in Christ shall all be made alive.”

¶ “AS ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, SO walk ye in him.”

¶ “AS Christ forgave you, SO also do ye.”

¶ “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also SO to walk, even AS he walked.”

¶ “AS the heavens are higher than the earth, SO are my ways higher than your ways. AS the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, SO shall my Word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”



"And He said unto them, Come ye

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. . . . O satisfy us early with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days."—PSALM 90:12, 14

Another Year

Another year is dawning,
Dear Father, let it be
In working or in waiting
Another year with thee;
Another year of progress,
Another year of praise,
Another year of proving
Thy presence all the days.

Another year of mercies,
Of faithfulness and grace,
Another year of gladness
In the shining of thy face;
Another year of leaning
Upon thy loving breast,
Another year of trusting,
Of quiet, happy rest.

Another year of service,
Of witness for thy love,
Another year of training
For greater work above.
Another year is dawning,
Dear Father, let it be
On earth, or in the kingdom,
Another year for thee.

¶ The followers of Jesus still find their highest joy and their greatest spiritual strength when they also say from their heart, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Food for Thought

Solomon said, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." It is your thoughts that determine your character and destiny. People nowadays often scoff at the old-fashion mottoes that mother used to hang on the walls, such as "Love One Another," "Dare To Do Right," "God Bless Our Home," etc. Of course, if you only hang your mottoes on the wall, they are worse than useless. But if you hang them in your mind and heart and think about them; try to picture how they fit into various situations, such as "special temptations," and "besetting sins," it may happen that having the right "motto" ready at the right moment will be your salvation in moments of temptation.

Every moment you think clearly about truth, honor, gentleness, goodness, "things of good report," builds a habit of right-thinking; and "if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."

—Edward Albert Wiggam

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."—Lamentations 3:26

urselves apart and rest awhile."

One Minute Sermon

"At the threshold of each new year, it seems but natural to look about us—backward at the year just gone, and forward to the year drawing on—reviewing our conflicts and God's mercies past, and with hope as our telescope, prospecting the future.

"Looking back, I praise the way
God has led me, day by day."

Our day is peculiar in many respects. Not only is it a day of wonderful advances, "many running to and fro," and knowledge being increased, but it is also a day of sorrow and foreboding for the future for most of the world's inhabitants. But for the Christian it is possible to have absolute con-

tentment, to escape the terror and confusion prevalent on every hand. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee."

Dissatisfaction and unrest tell the story of the entire world. None but real saints of God know what full rest and peace there is in Christ. Only those who put their trust in God and his promises know for a certainty that after the conflict will come rest, and after the battle will come peace.

Happy those who can see the coming triumph of truth over error, in every land and clime."

—C. T. Russell

The Fruit of Love

There is the story of a boy who was very fond of reading novels, and whose father wished to impress a valuable lesson upon his mind. One day he said to his son, "John, empty that basket of apples in the corner; then go and fill the basket with chips."

The boy did so, and brought in the basket filled with chips. "Now," said the father, "put all the apples also into the basket." The surprised boy said "Father, I cannot put the apples into the basket while the chips are there."

"That's right," said the father, "and your mind is just like that basket. It can hold only so much; and if you fill it with 'chips,' they will crowd out other and better things."

The mind and heart filled with "chips" cannot contain the "fruits of the spirit." If we fill our baskets with the heavenly loves and joys—the spiritual treasures—we shall have that which is transcendently above any earthly love and joy.

Many Cold . . . Few Faithful

"Because iniquity shall be multiplied the love of the many shall wax cold."—MATTHEW 24:12

IT IS evident that our Lord is not here speaking of the world, for the world does not have this love. It is the church of whom Jesus is speaking; it is only the church with whom God is now dealing. As new creatures, God's children have seen a great Light, Christ Jesus. Through this Light we have ourselves become illuminated, and we seek to let our light shine before men. We are not lighted candles to shed light upon others until we have become the Lord's, until we have received of his light.

The Bible declares that all men are by nature sinners, unworthy of God's notice. But he has made a provision of everlasting life for the perfect. How, then, will any member of our sinner race ever get everlasting life? Surely none of the children of Adam are worthy of everlasting life! The Lord, however, has provided for this emergency through the death of Christ. During the Gospel age God has been delivering from death a certain class. During the incom-

ing Millennial age, he will lift up and make perfect the world of mankind. But only at the close of that age, after they have been finally tested, will God grant them, if worthy, everlasting life. If they fail to attain perfection, he will not give them everlasting life at all, but will destroy them.

UNIQUE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE PRESENT AGE

The church is an especially called-out class. "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," said the Master. "I have chosen you out of the world." Mankind in general are in a different heart attitude from those who come into the church. It is only the minority who now hunger and thirst after righteousness. God in mercy keeps back the truth from those to whom it would not in the present time be a blessing. This class that the Lord is now calling out from the world are "called to be saints."

The word saint stands for one who is holy. The word holy has

the significance of the word whole—that which is entire, lacking nothing. God, who is holy, calls his children to be holy, saying, “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” (1 Pet. 1:16) But we were by nature unholy; hence his arrangement for our justification, our being made right, whole. The world in general will be made right during the Millennium. None is made right now in the actual sense.

In what way, then, does God make the church right now? Ah, there is the beauty of God’s plan! They are made right reckonedly, by the counting to each of them of the perfect merit of Christ. This is a unique arrangement, peculiar to the present age alone. God says, “My call at this time is an invitation to a new nature. I am not inviting any now to restitution; if so it would not be necessary to issue this special call. I want a certain class for a specific purpose, to be used later in blessing the whole world. I know of some who will be glad to respond. So I am sending my message, that those able to hear may hear.”

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY
ILLUSTRATES GREAT TRUTH

We all know something of the wireless system of telegraphy. This is one of the blessings of this “day of the Lord’s prepara-

tion” for the incoming new age. It may serve as an illustration of how God has been sending out his truth during the Gospel age. If we would hear the Lord’s call, we must have coherers. If we do not have coherers, we cannot hear his message at all. We need to have responsive hearts, ready to receive with gladness the message of God’s love and mercy.

If your heart is not rightly in tune, you cannot understand; but as you get it in tune with the Lord, the message enters, and you can hear the wave tones. God speaks to us in tones of a certain character. We recognize those tones and respond if our heart is in the proper attitude. We had a wrong tone given us by the adversary—that God had damned the world, had made a place to eternally torture the majority of mankind. With that wrong tone given us, we were not in a position to get the true message. God’s true message is a glorious tune, a marvelous melody.

Finally we got the right tune from the Word of God. “I can hear better now,” we said. “Yes, yes; God is love!” “God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son.” “Like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth!” “Yes, I now understand something of the

lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God! It is too wonderful a symphony to fully comprehend, I cannot take it all in, but it is there. I am hearing it more and more clearly."

Only those who get their hearts in tune with God can hear it all, and the more fully in tune you get your heart the better you can hear. If your instrument is out of tune, if something happens to get you out of touch with the heavenly electric wave, then you cannot hear the wonderful melody. If you do not keep in close touch with the Lord you will fail to catch the harmony. You are out of tune with the Infinite One.

JUSTICE THE BASIC QUALITY OF CHARACTER

What is the character of God that we are learning more about as we study his Word? We find that the very basis of God's character is justice, absolute justice. If God were an unjust God, we could never depend upon him. He might make some term or condition today and then alter it tomorrow. But he is absolutely just; "Justice and judgment are the foundation of his throne." (Psalm 89:14) He changes not; "I am Jehovah, I change not." (Malachi 3:6) He

is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." He will never fail us, he will never deceive. Whoever desires to be in proper tune with God must practice upon that string of JUSTICE. Justice must come into our heart and into our life. The nearer we come in line with justice, the better we shall understand and enter into the spirit of God's great plan. We trust that is what we are striving to do.

But there are many ways of being unjust. We may say unjust things about our neighbors; we may make trifling faults appear to be great faults; we may color things unjustly. We may use words with a certain intonation or emphasis, with a shrug of the shoulders, giving a wrong impression which might be detrimental to the reputation of another. Although we might not really mean to wrong another, yet this course would be wrong, and might do incalculable harm. When you say, "I would not wish to be seen in that man's company," you might not mean to do wrong, and yet be guilty of slander. Your coherer is out of tune with God.

Then in the mind one might be unjust. Many people seem to become prejudiced against certain things or persons without just reason. To that extent they

are out of harmony with justice. What we need to do is to think righteously, soberly, kindly, along the lines of the Golden Rule, to let our words and deeds be in harmony with the principles of righteousness. Thus we shall be greatly assisted in the development of the sterling Christian character which is absolutely essential if we would have our Father's approval.

Justice, then, is the basis, the first thing necessary, in building character. From this basis we are to go on to the attainment of sympathy, benevolence, forgiveness, love. God has been very loving and sympathetic with us. He has provided us a Redeemer. He has covered our many blemishes from his sight. Then, as we seek to copy God, we shall wish to be kind and forbearing and helpful toward all. But we must be just first. If we have an unjust twist in our mind, it will interfere with our communion with God, and we shall be in danger of failing to make our calling and election sure.

We are continually surrounded by the spirit of the world—hatred, envy, malice, strife. So we must keep very close to the Lord to counteract this spirit. The world and the things of the fallen nature are so close to us that we can with difficulty avoid being contaminated by them.

One can hardly pass through a vile neighborhood without carrying away vile odors. But the Lord has furnished us with a most effective disinfectant in his Word. All the cleansing we need is derived from the message which God has given us, with its explicit instructions. This wireless message from him tells of his love for us, speaks peace through Jesus Christ our Lord, makes known to us our privilege of becoming heirs of God and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus.

Having been called with this heavenly calling, we can readily understand that God would not have us in this class unless we have the right spirit. The selection is not according to a whim of divine preference. On the contrary, God chooses according to character, according to natural qualifications of honesty and the desire to be just, to be right, whatever may be the fleshly weaknesses. Justice is the very basis of God's throne, the foundation of his government.

WORLDLINESS AMONG PROFESSED CHRISTIANS

In our text the Lord Jesus declares that at a certain time in the Gospel age, and apparently pointing down to our day, "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." The Revised Version given here

is stronger than our Common Version rendering. It is not only many who will grow cold, but the many, the majority of professed followers of Christ. How truly the Master's words have been fulfilled! Iniquity is inequity, injustice, unrighteousness. Our text might properly read, "Because unrighteousness shall abound, the love of the many shall grow cold." We are in the time against which the Lord sought to especially guard us. How few comparatively have heeded the warning!

The *Studies in the Scriptures* point out that in God's arrangement the Prophet Elijah was a type of The Christ in the flesh—Jesus being the Head of the antitypical Elijah and the church being his body. The three and a half years, 1260 days, of Elijah's experiences while hiding in the wilderness from Queen Jezebel were symbolic, and corresponded to the 1260 years of the true church in the wilderness condition, where she had fled from the antitypical Jezebel (Revelation 12:6, 14; Daniel 7:24, 25) Elijah's coming out of the wilderness prefigured the coming out of the true church of God from her wilderness hiding after the year A. D. 1799, when Jezebel's power was broken, and the copious rains

following represented by the wide circulation of the Bible since that date.

The church of Christ, the watching ones, are now in a particular time of waiting. The Elijah class is soon to be taken beyond the veil. The Elisha class will be left until later, to wash their soiled robes in the blood of the Lamb in the "great tribulation" just before the world. It seems that the Lord is now especially testing his people. Among many of the people of God love has waxed cold, because unrighteousness is abounding everywhere. Many today profess to believe things that they do not believe. Empty forms of godliness prevail. Love of pleasure is rampant. As a result many professed Christians are lukewarm or cold. They say, "Look at what the church systems are doing. What is right for our church leaders is right for me." Thus many are taking a very wavering course.

There is much injustice practiced everywhere. We find great neglect of the Golden Rule. Christian parents, too, are leaving the religious training of their children too frequently to the Sunday School, where the teachers are often wholly incompetent to instruct them in the Word of God. Christian parents should

be the priests of their own family. They have a great responsibility. Because iniquity prevails, the temptation is strong with many to follow the multitude. But the Lord's children should not follow a multitude to do evil. We must learn quickly now all God's will concerning us. The end of the Church's probation is drawing near. We have not much time left in the school of Christ. The saints are soon to be judges of the world. Shall we be among those judges?

PROPER ATTITUDE OF CHRISTIANS

Let each child of God bestir himself. Let him encourage the brethren to faithfulness. Let us give close attention to God's Word, that we may become more and more like our Father in heaven. Let us love the things which are true, right, noble, Godlike. Let us renounce all else for the heavenly things. We

cannot stand for our own rights in the world. We gave up our human rights when we gave ourselves to the Lord. There are times perhaps when we might offer a protest, as Jesus did when he was smitten. But he did not retaliate nor try to render evil for evil. And we are to walk as he walked. Let us not allow the iniquity of others to cause our hearts to grow cold.

The One whom we are to please, the One with whom we have to do, the One whom we love above every human tie, is our Lord. We desire to do his will. As for the brethren, let us do the best we know how for them. Let heavenly wisdom be our guide. Let us faithfully follow Jesus in the narrow way, whatever others about us may do; and soon we shall hear his sweet "Well done!"

Reprint, *February 15, 1916*



"All things are onward moving!—Let the blessed time begin!

The Old is swiftly passing, and the New is coming in!
The golden bells are ringing, and the pageant sweeps along
Like an army that is speeding to the measure of a song.

"Up with the larks of morning! Up with the rising sun!

Waiting not for noon-day, nor halting when begun!
For everything is moving; let the blessed time begin!

The Old is swiftly passing, and the New is coming in!"

Spiritual Fellowship

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ."—1 JOHN 1:3

FELLOWSHIP means partnership; friendly intercourse; heart to heart communion. To the extent that we are drawn together by the things we have in common with others, we enjoy fellowship, unity, harmony. In Israel at the first advent of Christ, there were in existence various fellowships. For instance, there existed a fellowship among the Pharisees. They professed to be an especially holy people, and their strict observance of the letter of the law produced a fellowship among them. Then there was another fellowship among the Sadducees. These were a class much more liberal in their outlook than the Pharisees. They made a boast of their freedom of thought. Accepting only as much of the Old Testament as suited them, they denied the resurrection, and believed in neither angel nor spirit. The Essenes were another sect or fellowship among the Jews. They were very strict as to how they treated the body and were

careful as to what they ate and drank. In fact, they were the food faddists of their day. They also claimed to be very holy, and continually giving attention to these things, produced a certain fellowship among them.

Similarly, throughout the whole course of human history, men have had their fellowships, their sects, coteries, and clubs. Today there is a fellowship among artists, for they can talk to one another in a language they understand. There also exists a fellowship among scientists, musicians, and those who follow other callings. Their talk to one another of the things they have in common produces fellowship. Then, again, people on the various social planes have their fellowships: those on the lower social planes usually not being admitted into fellowship with those higher up.

A NEW FELLOWSHIP

At our Lord's first advent, a new fellowship began—a Christian fellowship more real, satis-

fyng, exclusive, and at the same time more holy, than any the world has to offer. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

One of the conditions upon which this fellowship can be enjoyed is that we give up the fellowship of the world. Through justification and the begetting of the Holy Spirit, old things have passed away, and all things have become new; and we find that we cannot fellowship with the world as we formerly did. We have so little in common. As we come in contact with those whose affections are set on business, the home, or some personal ambition, we realize that true fellowship is lacking. Indeed, one of the conditions of the Christian calling is that we become crucified to the world.—Gal. 6:14

Then again, when a man of the world comes into an assembly of the Lord's people, and finds that nothing but the Scriptures are studied, and that only spiritual things are discussed, he usually says, "I can't get on with those people," and quickly drops out. Thus the Lord's people, if faithful, lose the fellowship of the world; for those of the world wish to have little to do with us. As our Lord foretold, "They shall separate you from their company," and "shall put you

out of the synagogues." (Luke 6:22; John 16:2) Therefore, as the apostle suggests, by coming into Christ we are not only crucified unto the world, but the world is crucified unto us. (Gal. 6:14) As an offset to these somewhat trying experiences, we can say with the beloved apostle, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

CONDITIONS OF FELLOWSHIP

If we desired to have fellowship with a king or with one of the other great ones of this world, we would find the way barred. Before one can be admitted to the fellowship of an earthly monarch, certain formalities have to be observed; credentials must be examined; and an express invitation given, with instructions as to time and place of meeting. So our entrance into fellowship with the great King and his dear Son, our Lord Jesus, is conditional.

We must turn away from sin, and accept Jesus as our Redeemer and Advocate. Realizing that our Lord atoned for sin by the sacrifice of himself, that it cost him all he had to secure for us forgiveness and justification, we must be willing to give up the world and its fellowship and all earthly interests, surrendering ourselves fully to do the will of

God. Our acceptance, manifested by the begetting of the Holy Spirit, gives us access to the Father and fellowship with him. When we are "cold-shouldered" by the world, and cut off from worldly fellowship, how comforting to realize that "our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

In the first part of this verse (1 John 1:3), John says, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." As we have previously said, fellowship depends upon having certain things in common. The Lord's people are called from various walks of life, and frequently, along natural lines we have very little in common with one another. But in Christ, old things have passed away, and all things have become new, for we have received into good and honest hearts the precious truths that have been declared unto us, and now, having these in common, and setting our affections upon them and conforming our lives to them, we have a very real basis for fellowship. (2 Cor. 5:16, 17) Let us notice some of these things of the Spirit that God's people have in common. We believe:

1. That man was created per-

fect—that he was not evolved.

2. That the perfect man fell into sin and came under the sentence of death—not eternal torment.

3. That death is an absolute unconscious condition. This separates us in belief from all those who accept the devil's lie, "Ye shall not surely die."—Gen. 3:4

4. That all mankind have been allowed to suffer on account of one man's disobedience (Rom. 5:12, 19), making it possible for all to be redeemed by one sacrifice for sin.

5. That the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all, and that when Jesus came to earth to provide this ransom, he "was made flesh"; that up to the age of thirty he was nothing more nor less than a perfect human being.—John 1:14; 1 John 4:2; Heb. 2:14, Diaglott, R. V.

6. That our Lord's ransom sacrifice releases us from Adamic condemnation, and provides a covering for our sins and imperfections. In other words, justification by faith is something all Christians have in common.

7. That in order to experience the begetting to the new nature, we must lay down in sacrifice our justified human nature with all its hopes, receiving Jesus not

only as our Redeemer, but also as our pattern and example. Indeed, justification to life is only given in this age on condition that we are willing to do this. (John 1:12, 13) By consecrating our lives to the divine service we become joint-sacrificers with Jesus, participating in the "better sacrifices" of this age.—Heb. 9:23

8. That we have a glorious hope of immortality. This is another blessing all Christians have in common. The things of the present time do not seem nearly so important if we firmly grasp the great promise of life eternal, and this helps to bring us into fellowship and enables us continually to think and speak of things from the standpoint of the eternal future.

9. That we are now living in "the days of the Son of man," and are rejoicing in this great truth, while some are described as "ashamed before him" during these days of his presence.—1 John 2:28

10. That the day of vengeance has come, and the dissolution of the present order of things is in progress. Some Christians are so deceived that they think we are living in a day of great reform, and that the nominal church is about to Christianize the world. Surely we can have no fellowship with these, for

what "communion [fellowship] hath light with darkness?"—2 Cor. 6:14

11. That the consummation of the divine plan will be the resurrection and restitution of all mankind, brought about by Messiah's kingdom soon to be established in all the earth.

At this end of the age, these precious truths have been made plain to the church, that we might have a basis for fellowship one with another.

PURPOSE OF OUR FELLOWSHIP

The fellowship of kindred minds is not merely intended as a social benefit, but as a vital means to a very important end—our edification and building up as new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is for sharpening our spiritual perceptions, helping us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, and for provoking one another unto love and good works, allowing us to have the help and assistance of that which every joint and part of the mystical body of Christ is able to supply.—Rom. 12:2; Heb. 10:24; Prov. 27:17

FELLOWSHIP CONDITIONAL

Finally, after coming into Christ, and in order for our fellowship with the Father, his Son, and with one another, to continue and become more real, we

must "walk in the light, as he is in the light." "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John 1:17

The Variorum Bible suggests that the meaning here is that by walking in the light, the child of God has fellowship with his

Heavenly Father, "the one with the other." This is indeed true. However, it is also true that by living up to the light of the truth which the Lord has given us, we have "fellowship one with another"—with the fellow members of the body of Christ—and can share with them all the blessed possibilities that such a fellowship is able to bring.

*"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."*

—Contributed

STRIVING LAWFULLY ☞ ☞ ☞

IN HIS second letter to Timothy Paul wrote: "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned unless he strive lawfully." The terms "strive" and "fight" suggest a rugged, determined opposition to enemies—and we are to be antagonistic toward our great adversary, toward the the selfish spirit of the world, and toward our own flesh. But the rules of the Christian warfare against self call for a loving concern toward others. Here are some of them:

*Love is kind; Love envieth not; Love is not puffed up;
Love seeketh not her own; Love is not easily provoked;
Love thinketh no evil; Love beareth all things; Love believeth all things; Love endureth all things.*

To "strive lawfully" means to wage the Christian warfare within these limitations. Are we obeying these rules?

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

HOW MANY OF THESE BIBLE QUESTIONS CAN YOU ANSWER?

1—What Old Testament character dreamed of a ladder reaching to heaven? What promise did God make in the dream?

2—What does the ladder in Jacob's dream represent, and what is pictured by the angels ascending and descending thereon?

3—Matthew 13:45, 46 reads: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." What is meant by the pearl? Who purchases it?

4—What is the first essential of a Christian in his endeavor to please God?

5—Daniel 9:27 reads as follows: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." What is the significance of the statement, "and in the midst of the

week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease"?

6—Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, became a Christian in A. D. 36. Why was it not possible for him to become a Christian earlier than this date?

7—Complete this text: "Blessed are the peacemakers: . . ."

8—Are peacemakers in the majority among those who call themselves Christians?

9—Who are "saints"? What is the scriptural requirement in order for one to be a saint?

10—What scriptural reason did James give for one's failure to obtain an answer to his prayer? Does God answer selfish prayers?

11—Complete Paul's question, "If God be for us, . . ." Give the Scriptural citation.

12—What book in the Bible records the following prophecy? "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."



(Answers on page 64)

WISDOM FROM ABOVE—THE NOBLEST SCIENCE, THE BEST INSTRUCTION

Sunday School Lessons

A PEOPLE OPPRESSED

JANUARY 6—Exodus 1:8-14; 2:23-25

GOLDEN TEXT: "And He said, Certainly I will be with thee."—Exodus 3:12

THE wonderful story of the manner in which God's hand has been over the natural descendants of Abraham to bless and preserve them as a people and as a nation is always one of inspiration to spiritual Israelites. It is especially so now, when, as at the time they were in bondage to the Egyptians, they are in a hopeless plight except for God's purpose and ability to deliver them. Our Golden Text is a promise of God to Moses, assuring this great leader of the divine presence to guide and help him in the gigantic task of delivering the Israelites. God made good this promise and the Israelites were delivered.

Today's lesson picks up the narrative of Israel's experiences at a point following the death of Joseph. Exclusive of Joseph there were only seventy Israelitish "souls" who migrated to Egypt from Canaan. In the Lord's providence this number rapidly increased, and by sheer numerical superiority, posed a threat to the Egyptian population of the land—at least, so Pharaoh thought.

There was now a new king in

Egypt, one who, according to the account, "knew not Joseph." The Pharaoh who knew Joseph appreciated too highly what an Israelite had done for him and for the country to deal other than kindly and generously with this people as a whole. Had his successors been of the same mind the Israelites would not have desired to return to the land of their fathers. The Scriptures explain that God raised up the Pharaoh of the Exodus. This was evidently in order that the Israelites might be oppressed and thus made to realize that Egypt was not their home, and working for the Egyptians not their destiny.

We are not to suppose that God directly supervised the birth, environment and training of this Pharaoh in order to make him a bad character. The thought is, rather, that this man was already of a stubborn, cruel nature, and that God, seeing this, overruled matters to bring him to the throne of Egypt at a time when he would unwittingly serve the divine purpose. The Scriptures say that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, but the

A PEOPLE OPPRESSED

narrative indicates clearly that this was done by showing mercy to him each time he stated his willingness to permit the Hebrews to leave the country.

Taskmasters were appointed to oppress the Israelites. This was done in the belief that it would reduce the birth rate among them. The method not only failed, but actually resulted in the very opposite of that which had been hoped. The Israelites increased in number more rapidly than before. It was then decided that all the male children of the Israelites should be killed at birth. The midwives were instructed to carry out this ruthless edict.

Satan has attempted many times, through persecution, to destroy the church of this Gospel age, but has failed. When a group of the Lord's people are persecuted it seems to produce such a determination to carry on and survive, that their increased zeal in promoting the truth often results in an actual increase of numbers. In such cases the circumstances are of course, different from those of the Israelites in Egypt, but the principle is similar.

The burdens imposed upon the Israelites had their desired effect from God's standpoint, for they were forced to call upon him for deliverance. "And God heard their groaning," the account reads, and "remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob."

In considering God's dealings with natural Israel it should al-

ways be remembered that they were a covenant people. God had a responsibility toward them. He had made wonderful promises, not only to give them the land of Canaan, but through the seed of Abraham to bless all the families of the earth. While this promised blessing will come primarily through the spiritual seed of Abraham, it was essential that the natural seed be preserved, and the faithful among them prepared to be channels of his blessings also.

On account of this, God has never hesitated to punish Israel for her sins. When they recognize and acknowledge their sins, and cry to him for mercy and help, he is always ready to hear their petitions. He heard them in Egypt and responded to their cry by sending Moses to deliver them from bondage. And he will do the same today. In their present experiences the Israelites have not yet recognized their national sin in crucifying Christ. But in the climax of "Jacob's trouble" their eyes will be opened to this great truth. The prophecies show that they will then repent, ask forgiveness, and that God will deliver them. And a mighty deliverance that will be!

QUESTIONS:

In what sense did God raise up the Pharaoh of the Exodus?

Why does God manifest so much interest in the Israelites?

Is God now ready to hear the prayers of the Israelites if they recognize and acknowledge their sins?



A PEOPLE DELIVERED

JANUARY 13—Exodus 6:6-8; 13:17-22

GOLDEN TEXT: "I will trust, and will not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength."—Isaiah 12:2

THE message Moses was commissioned to deliver to the Israelites was comprehensive and reassuring. In it God assumed full responsibility for the task of delivering his people from bondage—"I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments."

There is no escaping the meaning of these words. Great as Moses became as the leader and lawgiver of Israel, God wanted his people to know he was their real deliverer and savior. Such a lavish use of "I" in declarations made by fallen men would be quite unbecoming, for it would betoken the spirit of boasting, of pride and arrogance. And how very seldom have the great and proud of this world been able to make good their boasting!

But when the great Jehovah speaks and says "I" will do so and so, it is neither boasting nor an overstatement of his ability to perform. It is not boasting for anyone to declare his intention of doing that which comes within the scope of his ability. To one as meek as Moses, the task of delivering the Israelites would seem to be a formidable one; but for the

Creator of the universe it was simple and easy, and his emphatic statement of intention to do so must have been most reassuring to Moses.

How little did the Hebrews appreciate the blessedness and sweetness implied in God's statement, "I will take you to me as a people, and I will be to you a God." Later the prophet wrote, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." (Psa. 33:12) But the Israelites did not have sufficient faith to realize how blessed their lot really was. This is evidenced by the fact of their readiness to complain when conditions were not exactly to their liking.

Even when Moses delivered this proclamation to Israel they failed to give heed to it, for they were too much concerned with their immediate problems. It was necessary for some of the plagues to come upon them, as well as upon the Egyptians, before they were ready co-operate. Their hardness of heart was manifested throughout practically the entire period of their national existence. God promised to make of them a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a peculiar treasure if they obeyed his laws; but they did not obey, hence lost this special position in

the divine plan.—Ex. 19:5, 6

It is a blessed thing to be the people of God, but those who attain and maintain this position do so at great cost—although great as the cost appears to be from the human standpoint, it is infinitesimally small in comparison to the rich blessing enjoyed by those whose God is Jehovah. God's ways are contrary to those of the world, and those who would be his people must be separate from the world. This was one of the tests in which the Israelites failed. Even after they were brought out of Egypt by the outstretched arm of Jehovah, they wanted to go back to enjoy its fleshpots.

In order for God to make good his promise to deliver Israel, it was necessary to inflict ten plagues upon Egypt. The first three of these came upon the Israelites as well. The tenth was the death of Egypt's firstborn—the firstborn of Israel being spared under the protection of the blood of the pass-over lamb. This plague brought Pharaoh to his knees, and he insisted that the Israelites leave the country, which they speedily did.

In this we have a beautiful illustration of God's proposed deliverance of the entire human race from the bondage of sin and death. Man was sold into this slavery by sin, and Satan is the cruel "Pharaoh" who continues to impose the

yoke of bondage upon him. But God has promised deliverance from death, and he tells us that just as in the case of the Egyptians, he will "plague" death until its captives are set free—"O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."—Hosea 13:14

Before Joseph died he assured his brethren that the time would come when they would be restored to the land which God had given to their fathers; and he left instructions that when this time came, they were to carry his bones back to the Promised Land. Moses respected this request. It was an evidence of Joseph's faith in the promises of God. He knew that the great "I am" was able and willing to fulfil all his good promises.

The Golden Text is associated in prophecy with the final deliverance of the "remnant" of Israel in this end of the age. It is also a quotation from Moses' song of deliverance which was sung after the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea. It therefore serves to indicate that there is a certain similarity between these two great deliverances.

QUESTIONS:

Was God boasting when he said, "I will deliver Israel?"

Why did Joseph want his bones carried to Canaan?

What great future deliverance will be wrought by means of "plagues"?

"Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, . . . I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: . . . The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him a habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him."—Exodus 15:1, 2

THE LAWS OF A PEOPLE

JANUARY 20—Exodus 20:1-17

GOLDEN TEXT: "I will delight myself in Thy commandments, which I have loved."—Psalm 119:47

NO HIGHER or more practical code of moral and religious ethics has ever been outlined for the guidance of man than that contained in the Ten Commandments given to Israel at Sinai. It calls for the worship of one, and only one, God. James declares that a double minded man is unstable in all his ways, and certainly this would be true of one who endeavored to divide his worship among two or more gods. (James 1:8) The religious life of such a one would inevitably be one of uncertainty and confusion.

And how wise is the command not to make graven images of the Deity! Any conception of the great Creator of the universe which the mind of man might conceive would of necessity come far short of the glory of God. To look upon and worship such a distorted conception of God could have no other effect than to dwarf him in our minds. Only the great plan of God, revealed to us through his Word, can give us any adequate conception of his wisdom, justice, love and power—his glory.

To take God's name in vain means to make false pretenses of being his servants, his people. Israel entered into a covenant with God and he took them for his

people, and they took him for their God. To be unfaithful to this covenant would mean that they had taken his name in vain, that their professions of loyalty to him were not wholly sincere, or that they lacked courage and determination to fulfil their part of the covenant. The use of God's name irreverently, as in profanity, may not be what is specifically referred to in this commandment; although such an unholy use of God's name is certainly unbecoming to anyone, and especially to those who profess to be his people.

The setting aside of one day in seven as one of rest is now considered a necessity if one is to maintain normal health and vigor. When, in times of emergency, this arrangement is set aside and workmen are asked to remain on duty seven days a week over an extended period, excessive fatigue, mental and physical, is the result. Under the taskmasters of Egypt the Israelites were probably kept working almost continuously, so the keeping of this commandment would be a refreshing experience for them; and it would certainly remind them of God's goodness in bringing them out of the "house of bondage."—Exod. 13:3

Proper respect for parents is

recognized to be one of the foundation stones of true civilization. Paul foretold that one of the signs of the times in these "last days" would be disobedience of children to parents. (2 Tim. 3:1, 2) This is one of the factors today which is helping to plunge the world into complete disorder. When all respect for proper authority is gone little will remain but chaos and anarchy.

To take the life of another, as in the case of murder, is recognized by the whole civilized world as being wrong. It was wrong in Moses' day, and it is wrong now. But selfishness knows no bounds and the Israelites needed this commandment to help teach them their responsibility toward one another. In the divine providence the influence of this command has been a great deterrent of manslaughter in Gentile nations.

The sin of adultery is also recognized by civilized man, as is also that of theft. It is difficult to visualize the evils which would result from failure to discern that bearing false witness is wrong. Truthfulness in dealing with one another is the true basis of confidence which makes possible an orderly arrangement of affairs among the people of earth. There is a growing lack of truthfulness in the world today, which is making for the disintegration of what is generally termed civilization.

Covetousness is one of the worst forms of selfishness. When it takes possession of the heart it leads into all sorts of unholiness and injustice. "Godliness with content-

ment is great gain," declares the apostle, and certainly no truer words were ever spoken.—1 Tim. 6:6

Moses' summary of the Law—quoted by Jesus—reveals its true meaning. First, it means that we should love God with all the powers of mind and body we possess; and then, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. To live up to these two fundamental requirements would mean the fulfilling of all the details stated in the Ten Commandments; for "Love is the fulfilling of the Law."—Rom. 13:10

And this brings us to that which is even more fundamental than the keeping of any law; namely, becoming patterns of God, the great Lawgiver. "God is love"—in him is no selfishness—and he wanted the Israelites to be unselfish. He gave them his law to train them in this direction. The Ten Commandments have not been imposed upon Christians, but we have been given the privilege of laying down our lives in the divine service, and in so doing to demonstrate our supreme love for God, for the brethren, and for our fellowmen. If we are faithful to this privilege, we will automatically adhere to the requirements of the Ten Commandments.

QUESTIONS:

Has man been able to devise a better moral code than the Ten Commandments?

How did Moses sum up the meaning of all the commandments?

Are Christians under the law of the Ten Commandments?



A PEOPLE AT WORSHIP

JANUARY 27—Exodus 28:1; 35:4-9; 20-29

GOLDEN TEXT: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."—Matthew 4:10

THE choice of Aaron and his sons to serve as priests, or blessers, of Israel, constitutes, one of the important typical lessons in connection with God's dealings with this nation. The Aaronic family was of the tribe of Levi, and this entire tribe was set apart by God to serve the other eleven tribes in all matters pertaining to their relationship with God under the terms of the Law Covenant.

In this lesson, Israel as a whole, apart from the tribe of Levi, was typical of all those who will ultimately become God's people under the terms of the New Covenant during the "times of restitution." (Acts 3:21) It will be then that the "tabernacle of God" will be "with men," and he will dwell with them, and be their God, and they will become his people.—Rev. 21:3

But the Levitical tribe of Israel, and especially the priestly family of that tribe, were chosen from the others to serve in connection with the arrangements of the tabernacle. Thus these were typical of those who, during the Gospel age, are chosen from the remainder of mankind, Jews and Gentiles, to be the channel through which the promised blessings of life will flow to the people during the thousand years of Christ's reign. Aaron was

a type of Christ, and his sons were typical of the church of Christ, his body members who share with him in the privilege of sacrifice, and are his joint-heirs in the glory of the kingdom.

All the Israelites were invited to contribute something toward the building of the typical tabernacle. In this we see exemplified the principle of giving, as a part of true worship. The invitation stipulated that each individual was to bring of that which he had. This gracious provision of the Lord holds true in his dealings with all of his people. He never expects us to give that which we do not possess. His requirements are always reasonable, and within the ability of his people to meet when they are filled with his spirit.

But God is pleased for his people to make real sacrifices as evidences of their devotion to him. On one occasion David was offered a gift of that which he could, in turn, give to the Lord as an offering, but he declined the gift, saying that he would not sacrifice to God that which had cost him nothing. (2 Sam. 24:24) Would that more of the Lord's people might keep this viewpoint in mind!

Jesus commended the widow who cast her two mites into the

A PEOPLE AT WORSHIP

treasury of the temple, explaining that the offering was more valuable in God's sight than the much larger amounts which were given out of the abundance of those who gave. To give a million dollars would not be a sacrifice to one who could afford to give several millions; and it would not be as pleasing to God as a small amount given by one who may have deprived himself of a great need in order to give it. So the "cost" of what we give to the Lord depends upon the extent to which we deprive ourselves in order to make the gift.

The Israelites responded most heartily to the invitation to bring of their possessions those things which could be used to build the tabernacle and furnish it. A liberal spirit of co-operation was manifested on their part in this connection which has seldom, if ever, been apparent in such full measure at any subsequent time. They contributed more than was needed or could be used, and it became necessary for Moses to issue a command that no further contributions be made.

"Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary," Moses ordered. (Ex. 36:6) This was the first time in recorded history, and so far as we know, the last, that it ever became necessary to restrain God's people from bringing offerings to him. The people certainly must have been thoroughly convinced that they were co-operating in the work of the Lord. And

the fact that Moses called a halt to the offerings reveals that he was not seeking to take advantage of them in any way. It is difficult to imagine the nominal church leaders of today telling their people to cease giving.

Moses' invitation to give was addressed to those who were of a "willing heart." Sacrifices which are not made willingly and wholeheartedly, are not acceptable to the Lord. It was God's will for Jesus to lay down his life in sacrifice, and he is prophetically recorded to have said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." No other attitude is pleasing to God.—Psa. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:5-7

Doubtless there were many in the camp of Israel at the time the tabernacle was built who took no part in the project. They may not have opposed what the others did, but not being willing-hearted they did not recognize their privilege of contributing something toward that which was to become a symbol of God's presence in their midst. In any and all groups of the Lord's people, there are usually to be found those of willing hearts, and others who seem satisfied to enjoy the lesser blessings of those who are measurably inactive.

QUESTIONS:

Of whom were Aaron and his sons a type?

When will the tabernacle of God be with men?

Why does God appreciate the sacrifices of the willing-hearted?

◆

*"O come, let us worship and bow
down: let us kneel before the
Lord our maker."—PSALM 95:6*



“Peace Be Unto You”

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.”—1 CORINTHIANS 1:3



WHAT could be more appropriate as a message of greeting at the beginning of a new year than this oft-repeated salutation of the beloved Apostle Paul. What more could any of the Lord's people ask or wish than to enjoy the grace and peace of God! To be blessed with God's favor is to possess that which is more valuable than health or wealth or fame. To know that God is for us is in itself an assurance which gives a peace of heart and mind beyond the ability of the world to understand.

And what a blessing it is in these dark days of uncertainty to know that “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble”! (Psalm 46:1) It is more than ever true that we are now living “in a grand and awful time.” It is a “grand” time because each passing day reveals with increasing clearness the fact that the kingdom is near, and that our deliverance draweth nigh. But it is also an “awful” time. Look where we will, we find multiplying evidences that the plans and efforts of men to establish genuine peace and security are failing. There is increasing chaos and suffering everywhere. The Lord's people share in these hardships to some extent, but the grace and peace of God lifts our hearts and minds above the turmoil and the strife to heights from which

we can see the glorious new day that is dawning. What a blessed lot indeed is ours!

"Therefore will not we fear," says the Psalmist, "though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." (Psalm 46:2) We do not fear the things coming upon the earth because the voice of truth has filled our hearts with the peace of God. Just as God knows the glorious outcome of this great "time of trouble," so, through the truth he has given to us, we also know. Thus we share *his* assurance and peace. What wondrous "grace" the Father has thus bestowed upon us!

The peace of God which blesses his people through a knowledge of the truth is not disturbed by circumstances or surroundings. It is not dependent upon material prosperity or physical health. It is not begotten of earthly friendships. Its sure foundation is our faith in the promises of God. If our faith remains steadfast, no changes of season or place can rob us of this abiding peace.

Our prayer is that this peace may be yours through 1946, and through all the coming years. We do not know all the circumstances under which God's peace will be your blessed portion, but we do know that whatever your lot may be the grace of God can crown all your years with peace which the world can neither give nor take away. His blessing maketh rich, and may he bless you with the riches of his grace and peace by Christ Jesus our Lord.—Proverbs 10:22

May God bless those of you who enjoy the privilege of being associated with the larger ecclesias of the consecrated. You are indeed favored, in that week after week you have the opportunity of fellowship with so many others of like precious faith. But you will have trials. The outward circumstances of your life, even when enjoying the fellowship of the brethren, may at times tend to disturb your peace, so you will need to lay hold firmly upon God's promises. But, trusting in him, endeavor to forget self and to be lost in the service of others. Carry your share and more of the responsibilities of the ecclesia with which you are associated in order that the peace which fills your heart may be extended to others.

Those of you who are in the smaller ecclesias—may the peace of God also be your portion! Even if there are only two or three of you who can meet together, you have the promise that Christ

will meet with you. (Matt. 18:20) Claim this promise and rejoice in the rich blessings which are sure to accrue from mingling your hearts and voices together in discussing the many wonderful features of God's plan.

May the peace of God be the rich portion of all you who are isolated and who seldom have an opportunity to fellowship with other truth people. Voluntary isolation is dangerous to the life of the new creature, for we are exhorted to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together. (Heb. 10:25) God makes up to those who cannot meet with their brethren the blessings of which they otherwise would be deprived. So keep close to him in prayer and through the study of his Word. Many will be reading a portion of *Studies in the Scriptures* each day during the year. Join with these and be blessed in the realization that your brethren in many parts of the world have their minds on the same precious truths each day that you are studying. You may be isolated, but you are not alone. God's presence is with you, and his peace will bless you.

May the peace of God also be the portion of you who are confined to your beds by reason of physical infirmities. You may not understand just why God is permitting you to have such an experience, but he knows; and you know that he is too wise to err, and too loving to be unkind. (2 Tim. 2:19) God is preparing you to share with Christ in uplifting and blessing the world during the age to come, millions of whom like yourself, have suffered long sieges of illness. Their bodies, too, have been racked with pain. Few of them had God's promises, and to them his peace was unknown. Perhaps God is equipping you to deal with these in a very special and sympathetic manner during the "times of restitution." (Acts 3:21) Perhaps at times you may be tempted to think that there is nothing for you to do in the plan of God, but he is fitting you for a glorious service. So keep a strong faith, and may the peace of God sustain you!

And you who are active in God's service will also need the peace of God. Judging from your own limited knowledge you may wonder at times if your service is accomplishing anything. You may think the brethren do not appreciate what you are doing. Your own failures may discourage you; but cling to the promises, for through them your faith is renewed and strengthened unto eternal salvation and life. (2 Pet. 1:4) Many have erroneously

decided that God's work in the earth has been a failure simply because they have not been able to see the results. But God knows that his Word shall not return unto him void, that it will accomplish that which he has designed, so his peace abides. (Isa. 55:11) And you may have that peace, and need it in order to carry on. Whether as an elder or deacon, or other servant of an ecclesia; a colporteur; a distributor of tracts; a visitor of the sick; or one having the privilege of serving in several of these or other capacities; continue to lean upon the Lord for strength. Look to him for wisdom, and may his peace be your daily portion!

God's people are one people, wherever they live and whatever may be the circumstances of their lives. It will be a blessing to us all if we can think outside of our own little world. Take North America for example—the Lord's people who live in Canada or Newfoundland will have experiences quite different from those who live in the southern part of the United States. The environment of the brethren on the West coast is unlike that of the friends on the East coast, hence their experiences, too, will be dissimilar.

And then there are our brethren in the British Isles. May the peace of God also be your portion! We of America know a little of the afflictions which the war imposed upon you, although we cannot fully understand. But God understands, and be assured, dear ones, that you are remembered in our prayers. And know this, that if there is anything we can do to help you in your service of one another and in the proclamation of the kingdom message in your country, we are ready. Be assured that your brethren from north to south and from east to west in this vast country of America, join in the prayer that God's peace may also be your strength during the time of your great need.

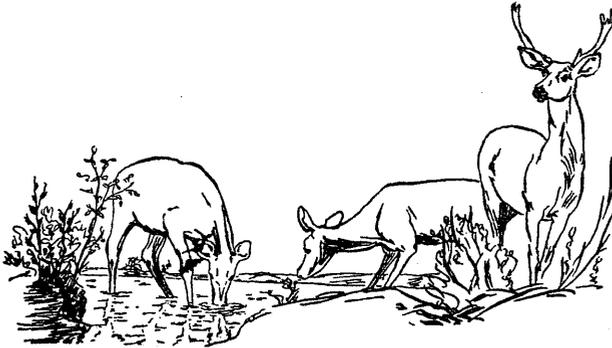
And we think also of you dear ones in Australia and New Zealand. We know little of your individual problems, but we know that God has blessed you with his truth, and we wish for you his peace. What a blest tie it is that binds us together in the Lord—the tie of truth and the Holy Spirit! When we pray for the Lord's people “everywhere,” you brethren come into our minds. If there is anything more we can do from this great distance, let us know. We want to enter into a fuller fellowship and co-operation with the Lord's people wherever they are as he indicates it to be his will.

We know, too, that we have brethren in various parts of continental Europe, in Africa, Asia, and South America. We are not in

communication with very many of these, but we think of them in our prayers. We wish for them all the peace of God. We know that our loving Heavenly Father is abundantly able to care for his children wherever they may be, and however difficult their lot.

And now we take the opportunity to request once more that the brethren everywhere remember us in their prayers. "WE," that is, all the brethren who colabor to publish *The Dawn* each month, and to provide other literature for disseminating the truth, need your prayers; for we need divine help and wisdom and courage that we may "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," in love and for the blessing of God's people and to his glory.—Jude 3

We know not just what experiences await us during the year, nor in detail what increasing scenes of turmoil and strife may afflict the world. But we do know that we may be blessed with the peace of God if we continue to hold firmly to his promises. As the elements of "this present evil world" continue to disintegrate and to dissolve and crumble, our faith should become stronger and our peace sweeter and deeper. (2 Pet. 3:10-13) May it be so with all of us! This is our wish, and this is our prayer, for all the Lord's consecrated people the world over.



"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."—PSALM 42:1



Encouraging Letters



Messengers of Comfort

Dear Brethren: Greetings! (Isaiah 54:17) Sincere good wishes to all! We give God thanks for every high design. Surely the tracts will lift humanity towards higher things. So let the good work go on. I have sent most of the one thousand tracts to hospitals in England, from south to the north. Doubtless the patients will be blessed. If at any time you send some more, they will be sent to other hospitals, mental homes and infirmaries. Remember Isaiah 61—"Comfort all that mourn." Sincere love to all. (Psalm 133) H. B. N., S. Wales, England.

A Family Blessed

Dear Frank and Ernest: I am enclosing one dollar for a year's subscription to your magazine, *The Dawn*. My husband and I listen to your programs with great interest. Your explanations make what appeared complicated really simple and understandable and very satisfying. Never before have I heard any teaching or explanation of the Bible so clear and full of great promise. We appreciate this even more because we have four small children and we feel that in this changing world the best gift we can provide for them is faith and understanding in God's promises, and we must establish ourselves in this first in order to teach them. Your explanations have proved our greatest help.

We, too, look forward to Christ's coming Kingdom and the blessings it will bring the human race. We appreciate your inspiration, and will send what we can from time to time to help you in your work. Sincerely, D. and C. K., Ind.

Indians Hear

Gentlemen: I have enjoyed reading your little magazine entitled *The Dawn* during the past year. I am enclosing my check for renewal. I do not want to miss any of the numbers, for I depend entirely upon it for the Sunday School Lessons. I teach in a government Indian School, on the H— Indian Reservation. . . . I am as ever your brother in Christ, L. A., Ariz.

"Come Quickly"

Dear Frank and Ernest: I am a constant listener to your most helpful and inspiring broadcast each Sunday morning on a very clear explanation of the Bible. I really enjoy it very much. And one thing that brought a smile in your beautiful Sunday morning discussion, as you both were speaking concerning the wonderful inheritance of Christ's presence, was Ernest's reply: 'Frank, I don't care how soon it will come, do you?' God bless him. So I am sending for a copy of your most helpful talks on Bible explanations. They are wonderful. Yours in Christ, I. H., Ill.

From Across the Sea

My dear "The Dawn" Friends: Well, the war is ended. And we can again send a word to each other. I have missed the new numbers of The Dawn very many years. But all the old numbers of The Dawn have I read many times—every time with much happiness. Our Father is very good to us all. He has held his strong arm over us in Denmark, and over his people in all the parts of the world. Our prayer is daily sent up for all the friends in the U. S. A. and the whole world. His will be done. What he has planned nobody can mis-plan. Jesus Christ will be with us all the time. He will help us and bring us every day what we need. And he will bring us home when it pleases him best—when he sees that we are ready. Yes, our Father is working. So pray! It is now many years I went back from . . . , Illinois, as a child thirteen years old. It was in 1918. And I must study hard not to forget the English. I am so glad for The Dawn and I hope you will send it to me again. Please do it! God bless you! May God bless all the friends everywhere. May he bless all the work you do with The Dawn. With Christian love. I remain, Your brother in the Lord, C. N., Copenhagen, Denmark.

A Letter from Guam

Dear Sirs: I have received a number of editions of your fine magazine and I would like to notify you of a change in address. Am enclosing the address from the October issue which I recently received, which address till recently

has been correct. Would like further to say that I have greatly enjoyed each issue and find the articles challenging and thought-provoking, both of which are worthwhile. I am not aware of who entered the subscription for me and desire this information if it might be obtainable. Would surely like to write, or personally thank the individual. Thanking you for these courtesies, I am, sincerely yours, R. R. S., Guam, M. I.,

The Blind Hear

Dear radio friends, Frank and Ernest: I am one of your most attentive listeners and one of the most grateful. I have the great privilege of obtaining records of the Bible from the Braille Library, and I, too, find it hard to understand so very much of it, and so I am more than grateful for your very clear explanations. I would appreciate one of your booklets. I am sure some friend will gladly read it to me. Thanking you for your help, I am, most sincerely yours, L. M. G.

Nearly Turned Infidel

Dear Brethren in Christ: I used to be a Lutheran but could not believe in their teachings, so I nearly turned an infidel. But, thank God for The Dawn. I have read your booklets "Hope Beyond the Grave" and "God and Reason" over and over again. I also listen to the radio program by "Frank and Ernest." It is wonderful indeed. If you have any five-cent booklets, please send me some. Thank you, Your brother in Christ, M. L., Pa.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Information as to time and place of meetings in the various places served by speakers listed below, will be gladly furnished by the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey.

H. E. ANDERSON

Paterson, N. J. Jan. 13

W. T. BAKER

Paterson, N. J. Jan. 20

F. A. BRIGHT

York, Pa. (Evening) Jan. 26
 York, Pa. (Morning) 27
 Lancaster, Pa. 27

S. C. DE GROOT

Chicago, Ill. Dec. 29-Jan. 1
 Binghamton, N. Y. 20

P. KOLLIMAN

Chicago, Ill. Dec. 29-Jan. 1
 New Haven, Conn. (Morning) 27
 Waterbury, Conn. (Afternoon) 27

R. A. KREBS

Chicago, Ill. Dec. 29-Jan. 1

J. Y. MAC AULAY

Brooklyn, N. Y. Jan. 6
 New Brunswick, N. J. 11
 Albany, N. Y. 13
 Springfield, Mass. 14
 N. Brookfield, Mass. 15
 Boston, Mass. 16
 Worcester, Mass. 17
 Lynn, Mass. 18
 New Bedford, Mass. 20
 Providence, R. I. 21

HARRY PASSIOS

East Liverpool, Ohio Jan. 13

M. A. STAMULAS

Washington, D. C. (Evening) Jan. 12
 Washington, D. C. (Morning) 13
 Baltimore, Md. (Afternoon) 13
 Groton, Conn. (Evening) 19
 Groton, Conn. (Morning) 20
 New London, Conn. (Afternoon) 20

J. I. VAN HORNE

Duquesne, Pa. Jan. 6
 Washington, Pa. 20

F. S. WASSMANN

Hartford, Conn. Jan. 20

G. M. WILSON

Chicago, Ill. Dec. 29-Jan. 1
 Brooklyn, N. Y. 20
 Monessen, Pa. 27

W. N. WOODWORTH

Chicago, Ill. Dec. 29-Jan. 1
 Brooklyn, N. Y. 6, 13
 Philadelphia, Pa. 20
 Paterson, N. J. 27

H. L. YOUNG

Reading, Pa. Jan. 6

IF DELAYED

Should replies to your correspondence, orders, etc., be slightly delayed during the early part of January it will be due to a partial closing of the Dawn office during the Christmas-New Year period. The delay will not be long.



Convention Announcements

CHICAGO, ILL., Dec. 29-January 1—Convention opens at 2 o'clock Saturday afternoon, December 29. It will be held at 910 North LaSalle Street, in a beautiful and spacious auditorium with ample seating capacity and public address system. Large parlors and rest rooms will add to the comfort and convenience of the brethren. A Watch Night Service will be held; and besides the usual helpful discourses, there will also be a Fellowship Hour and a Question Meeting. Half-hour intermissions have been arranged in order to give more than the usual time for fellowship. It is hoped that this will serve more closely to unite the brethren in the bonds of Christian love. It is expected that the following brethren will serve on the program:

S. C. DeGroot, Peter Kolliman, Robert A. Krebs, Chester A. Sundbom, George M. Wilson, Leo Poskonka, Joseph L. Butler, L. H. Norby, and W. N. Woodworth.

For further information address the class secretary, Mr. Adam Miskawitz, 1916 S. Christiana Avenue, Chicago 23, Illinois. Fourth Sunday convention in Chicago canceled for December.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Jan. 6—Convention opens at 9:30 a. m. in the Lecture Room, 104 Clark Street. The public lecture will be given in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave., at three o'clock. The evening session of the Convention will be held in the Lecture Room, 104 Clark Street. Fellowship with the noon and evening meals.

SHAMOKIN, PA., Jan. 6—Red Men's Hall, 21 North Market Street. Opens at 2 p. m.

ALBANY, N. Y., Jan. 13—Y. W. C. A., 5 Lodge Street.

SAGINAW, MICH., Jan. 13—Woman's Club, 311 N. Jefferson Street.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Jan. 20—For details, write the secretary, Mr. Roy L. Carpentier, 2316 Howard Street, N. E., Minneapolis, Minn.

CHICAGO, ILL., Jan. 27—All day gathering. Central Masonic Temple, 910 N. LaSalle Street.

DETROIT, MICH., Jan. 27—Maccabees Bldg., Woodward Avenue at Putnam.

Gift Suggestions

CROSS AND CROWN EMBLEMS: Pins and buttons, \$2.85; Pendants, \$3.60.

WEYMOUTH'S TRANSLATION (New Testament); Pocket, \$2.00; Regular cloth, \$3.00; Leather, \$5.50

MOFFATT'S TRANSLATION (Old and New Testaments): cloth, \$3.50.

ROTHERHAM'S TRANSLATION (Old Testament only): 3 volumes. Set, \$6.75; separate, \$2.25.

PELOUBET'S BIBLE DICTIONARY: 799 pages, \$3.00.

SMITH'S BIBLE DICTIONARY: 818 pages, \$2.00.

WESTMINSTER DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE (Davis Revised Edition): 658 pages, \$3.50.

GREETING CARDS. Birthday and Friendship cards: Box of ten 50 cents. Birthday cards: Box of ten, 50 cents; box of twenty-one, \$1.00. Swiss colored prints: Assorted Scripture text, 60 cents a dozen. Biblical picture cards and birthday assortment: 20 cents a dozen. Bradlee folders with envelopes: Scripture text, five and ten cents each.

NOTE: Greeting cards are not available for Canada.

ANSWERS

To Your Test Your Knowledge Questions (See Page 45)

1—Jacob. Genesis 28:10-14 records his dream, in which God repeated the promise made to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

2—The ladder represents Christ. "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (John 1:51) The Lord Jesus is the connecting link between heaven and earth. Through his angels or messengers he will establish the kingdom which will bless all the obedient of earth.

3—The pearl of great price is the kingdom of God—our high calling. To purchase a place in the kingdom one must give all that he has in complete consecration.

4—Faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him."—Hebrews 11:6

5—This is another link in the chain of evidence that "Jesus is the Christ." He was baptized in Jordan at the end of the 69th prophetic week. (Daniel 9:24, 25) Three and one-half years later, or in the midst of the 70th week he was cut off by crucifixion. Thus when the true sacrifice had been made, the typical ones were no longer recognized; and the desolate Hebrews received their baptism of fire and trouble.

6—Because seventy weeks of divine favor had been promised to Israel. These were symbolic weeks of seven years each, or 490 years. The beginning of the 70th week saw Jesus baptized; in the midst of the week, or 3½ years later, he was crucified; and at the end of the week, still 3½ years later, the exclusive favor of becoming sons of God was taken from the Jewish nation.

7—"for they shall be called the children of God."—Matthew 5:9

8—No, the great majority of those who have named the name of Christ, even in the ministry, pursue a reverse course to that of peacemakers. They glorify the God of war, instead of exalting the "Prince of Peace."

9—"Saint" means a "holy, godly, or sanctified person." "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5) All fully consecrated Christians are saints.

10—James wrote: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." (James 4:3) Selfish prayers go unanswered.

11—"who can be against us?"—Romans 8:31

12—Psalm 37:3-5. This great promise of the Word should be cherished by all who delight to have God's will done in them as it was in the Master.

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; 2 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 wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35