

The
DAWN

**FAITH
THE DIVINE GUIDANCE
THE PURPOSE OF REVEALED TRUTH**

UNIVERSAL SALVATION - CONSIDERED

THE DAWN

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share with them in the precious things of the Lord. Fuller details may be obtained from the Secretary, Mr. David Stanley, 140, Knutsford Road, Grappenhall, Warrington, Lanes., England.

NEW HAVEN, CONN. Italian Convention, April 19, For full details concerning this gathering of Italian brethren, address, Vincent Di Rienzo, 385 Poplar St., New Haven, Conn.

CONVENTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

LOS ANGELES, CALIF., March 1. The friends at Los Angeles have written us that they have arranged to hold a one-day convention on the first Sunday of March. Further details may be had from the Secretary, A. W. Abrahamsen, 9432 1-2 Rimpau Boulevard, Los Angeles, Calif.

WARRINGTON, ENGLAND, General Convention, April 11-13. We are pleased to have received the following announcement which will be of interest to all, and particularly to those of our readers residing in Great Britain:

"A General Convention of Bible Students will be held in Warrington, Lanes., England, at Easter time, April 11, 12, 13, 1936. The friends extend a very warm welcome to the brethren who are able to come and

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Why This Issue Is Late: Readers are referred to the "Talking Things Over" Department in this issue, which explains the fact that **The Dawn** has just moved into its new home, 136 Fulton St., Brooklyn. Due to the turmoil of moving and getting settled in our new quarters, and the installation of some new printing machinery, it was inevitable that this issue must be late. It is hoped that by February we may be on regular schedule. Correspondents, and friends visiting Brooklyn, will kindly remember our new address.

NOTICE: Do not send money through the mails if you can avoid it—a check or money order is safer. A number of subscribers have recently suffered loss by taking this risk.

(Announcements continued on page 33)

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

BROTHER H. E. ANDERSON	Madison, Wis., 6	BROTHER J. T. JOHNSON	Beaver, Pa., Jan. 19
Baltimore, Md., Jan. 12	Rockford, Ill., 7	BROTHER J. C. JORDAN	East Liverpool, Ohio, Jan. 12
BROTHER S. J. ARNOLD	Batavia, Ill., 8	Duquesne, Pa., 19	
Madison, Ind., Jan. 11	Aurora, Ill., A. M. 9		
New Albany, Ind., 12	Chicago, Ill., P. M. 9	BROTHER OSCAR MAGNUSON	Baltimore, Md., Feb. 9
Evansville, Ind., 13	BROTHER J. A. BELL	BROTHER EDW. MAURER	Duquesne, Pa., Jan. 5
West Frankfort, Ill., 14	Hartford, Conn., Jan. 19	BROTHER C. W. McCOY	Cheney, Wash., Feb. 9
St. Louis, Mo., 15	BROTHER B. BOULTER	BROTHER M. C. MITCHELL	Passaic, N. J., Feb. 16
Kansas City, Kans., 16	New Bedford, Mass., Jan. 26	BROTHER A. L. MUIR	Penn Argyll, Pa., Jan. 12
Wichita, Kans., 17	Passaic, N. J., Feb. 9	Passaic, N. J. 19	Springfield, Mass., 26
Oklahoma City, Okla., 18, 19	BROTHER C. P. BRIDGES	BROTHER RUSSELL POLLOCK	San Bernardino, Calif., Jan. 12
Blackwell, Okla., 20	Providence, R. I., Jan. 26	BROTHER G. M. WILSON	Duquesne, Pa., Jan. 12
Halstead, Kans., 21	Boston, Mass., Feb. 9	BROTHER W. N. WOODWORTH	Easton, Pa., Feb. 9
Hutchinson, Kans., 22	BROTHER A. C. FREY	Hartford, Conn., 16	
Newton, Kans., 23	Woodbury, N. J., Feb. 15		
Topeka, Kans., 24	Philadelphia, Pa., 16		
Iola, Kans., 25	BROTHER W. F. HUDGINGS		
Neodesha, Kans., 26	Chester, Pa., Jan. 25		
Kansas City, Kansas, 27	Wilmington, Del., 26		
Lincoln, Nebr., 28	BROTHER C. F. GEORGE		
Hastings, Nebr., 29	East Liverpool, Ohio, Jan. 26		
Omaha, Nebr., 30	BROTHER C. W. JANKE		
Minneapolis, Minn., Feb. 1, 2	Lackawana, N. Y., Jan. 26		
Junction City, Wis., 3			
Green Bay, Wis., 4			
Milwaukee, Wis., 5			

The DAWN

A Herald of Christ's Presence

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Vol. 4, No. 4

JANUARY, 1936

One Dollar a Year

NEWS AND VIEWS

Greeted By Bells And Bombs



SOISILY the old year passed into oblivion and its successor was ushered in. But not everywhere was it the simple jingling of bells, the melody of chimes and the joyous laughter of youth that hailed the arrival of the new year A. D. 1936. In the oldest allegedly "Christian" nation on earth this new year of our Lord dawned to the accompaniment of bursting bombs, the rattle of machine guns, and the ominous roar of battling planes and armored tanks, manned by the legions of a modern "Christian Caesar," who directs the invasion from his palace in the eternal city, the acclaimed centre and reputed headquarters of "orthodox Christianity"—while in His heaven their acknowledged Lord and Master the Prince of Peace, looks on. Meanwhile the remainder of "Christianized" Europe frantically prepares for another slaughter of "fellow Christians", which holocaust their statesmen tremblingly assert may burst upon the horizon ere this new year of our "Christian era" is scarcely launched.

Floyd Gibbons, famous war correspondent, visited the Holy Land on his return from the Ethiopian front. On Christmas eve he went to Bethlehem and listened to the monotonous chant of church dignitaries in golden vestments and priestly robes, amidst an elaborate setting of golden lamps and a myriad of glittering candles in the Church of the Nativity, erected over the traditional spot where Christ was born on that hallowed night over nineteen centuries ago when the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" His reaction is voiced in the dispatch which he filed from there immediately after witnessing the aforementioned ritual, during which the angelic announcement of "Peace on earth" was often repeated. He said:

"Air bombs are crashing into Ethiopian villages as Mussolini's armies advance. Italian mothers and children face reduced food and fuel supplies under the threat of sanctions. Naval conferences falter to failure in London, while hundreds of thousands of tons of British battleships ride at anchor with steam up in Alexandria harbor, and Cairo now nurses the wounds of recent riot destruction. Japanese armies advance farther into China. Even here in the Holy Land Jews and Arabs stand by tensely, armed to the teeth.

All this is happening here in his world of ours which downed arms in 1918 with the prayer: 'Thank God it's over, and please God don't let it happen again.' And the words that rang in the shepherd's ears were, 'Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will toward men!' Yes, by all means, 'Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass.' It's about time."

It is indeed about time for the actual fulfilment of that angelic announcement to the Judean shepherds. To worldly men, and to all who are not familiar with the divine plan and its "times and seasons" as revealed in the Scriptures, it looks as though the angelic herald of the nativity spoke words which had little meaning. They would be meaningless if they referred only to such "peace" as has been brought about by "Christianized" effort up to this time. But this ancient prophetic shout of "Peace on earth" had no reference to the accomplishments of mankind, or civilization, or "Christian influence" during this age. It was a harbinger of that great day when Christ shall take unto Himself His great power and reign on earth. Even the present world distress, and the cry of the League of Nations for "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," are but additional evidences of the impending spasms of travail which shall bring about the birth of a new order of things. When that day fully dawns, then *all* shall exclaim, "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will among men!"

Arthur Brisbane in his syndicated "Today" column for Dec. 27th said:

"The Prince of Peace may have been surprised when he saw the President going to church on Christmas morning after 1900 years of 'Christian civilization.' First came six heavily armed policemen on motorcycles clearing the way with eyes to detect suspicious purposes. Then came members of the Presidential family in White House limousines, and behind them a phalanx of secret service men armed to the teeth, more than ready to shoot.

"The Founder of Christianity may have been surprised also, listening to the sermon by an energetic young preacher, who explained that the Christmas star and the angel chorus are mere imagery, and delivered a 'talk' that might have been written by the late Theodore Roosevelt and a Nietzsche in collabora-

tion . . . This world 'was made to give heroes a place to stand on.' Hitler's own Wotan might have helped Teddy and Nietzsche with that sermon, which was an oratorical 'pep talk' to delight any chamber of commerce."

A Time for Reflection

EACH New Year should cause us to take cognizance of the passing of time. Another year is GONE; and a year is no small fraction of the average span of human life. The fateful year 1935 saw many momentous changes—in governments, in policies, in industrial operations, in new methods of meeting crime, and in a generally stronger anti-war attitude of many nations. Then, too, invention and exploration pushed steadily ahead. Many new devices appeared on the market—things to make work easier and to increase the world's productive power. The world is wealthier than it was a year ago, but still there is unemployment and poverty, because the wealth is not distributed among the masses.

The wonders of discovery and invention are multiplying because we are in what the Bible calls "the time of the end," during which it had been foretold that "Knowledge shall be increased." (Dan. 12). That God is behind these modern inventions, Bible students have no doubt. They are intended for the general good; but the selfishness of man has misapplied most of them, and through a profiteering system has used them for unfair gains to the manipulators of the industrial machine.

In "Liberty Magazine," Mary Pickford writes these interesting observations:

"Why can't we think of God as a kind and wise Father, who has a wonderful and loving plan worked out for each of us? Even in these topsy-turvy times, when the whole world seems in such a muddle, we discover that He is good. There has never been so much of everything for our use: great catches of fish from the sea; the earth producing huge crops. So much of everything, in fact, that we, His children, are shortsightedly destroying His gifts instead of sharing them. Don't blame God because we don't know how to use what He has provided for us. Don't blame Him for our shameful lack of love and consideration for our brother's need. When we stop running round in circles and turn to Him for guidance—when we start thinking kindness instead of intolerance—He'll show us how even this economic confusion can be harmonized."

We agree with the foregoing paragraph, except the last sentence. Instead of harmonizing the conflicting elements of the present time God will *destroy* them with what His Word symbolically calls "fire." Since the world has failed, God will put an end to the old system of affairs that has been here so long, and will institute a system of His own; and His regime will be based on justice, fair-play, kindness, mercy and love. The agency that will destroy the elements of this old order is denominated "the fire of God's jealousy"—signifying the fierce strife of social forces, not literal fire.

Meanwhile the laboratory man is on the job. "The Literary Digest" quotes Robert Duncan in "Today" as saying:

"So quietly as not to disturb the professional mourners over the fate of business, one group of industries invested a hundred million dollars in new plants last year. They will invest another hundred million dollars this year. The two hundred million dollars has been laid out in,

Soap, that has no soap in it;
Gin, made from crude petroleum;
Rubber, better than rubber;
Ice that won't melt.

"The list of synthetics is constantly growing—rubber, camphor, rayon, ceramics, plastics that take the place of wood and metals, and a long list of mechanical products are among the newer products of the laboratory."

Among the rapid progress of invention today, we have speed boats with a capacity of approximately three miles a minute; safer air travel through the use of radio, which enables a pilot to locate an airport in a fog, or to effect a "blind" landing; the welding of aluminum alloys; superior light for plants, calculated to bring tropical vegetation to the temperate zone; giant bombing planes that can fly 2000 miles without refueling; unmanned airplanes directed by radio, that can cause wide-spread destruction; and numerous other remarkable things.

Speaking of the tanks used in modern warfare, Major Benson, in "Cavalry Journal," says:

"A roar from the exhaust of a 400-horse-power motor, a blast of track-driven sand, and a new war machine starts away to show what it can do across country. It bounds into the air on the edge of a stream and lands on the far bank going at 40 miles per hour. With the throttle wide open the machine heads for a steep sandy hill and skyrockets over the crest, with two feet of daylight showing beneath the hull. 'Hull' is used advisedly, for the machine can float."

Immense sums are being expended for military advancement. Britain is planning a vast increase in her armaments. France is getting ready, and indeed is ready, for the next crash of arms. Premier Laval has had to use some skillful diplomacy to maintain his position. The question is still asked, Will France and England stand together in the next conflict? It looks as though they may, but nobody is sure of it. In Europe everything is in the melting pot. There seems no such thing as counting on the good faith of nations.

In Russia all able-bodied men have to train for war. Here the Red army numbers a million men. The attitude of the Soviet state is, "We intend to look out for ourselves, and woe betide those who interfere with our schemes."

In Germany a kind of semi-military service is imposed on all able-bodied men and boys. Great factories are turning out munitions. A strong air fleet is ready for the martial fray. On the other hand many organizations are calling out for peace. "The Churchman" quotes Mabel Ver-

non, campaign director of the "Women's International League for Peace and Freedom" as saying:

"The present crisis in Europe makes pacifists more determined than ever to have their demands heeded. The people's mandate against war offers them the opportunity to press their demands all over the world. We aim to secure fifty million signatures. Our purpose is to express such overwhelming public opinion for peace that governments will not dare consider war as a way of settling disputes. I am encouraged to find that in Washington the most important national organizations of every character—women's associations, church bodies, farm and labor groups—are assisting the campaign in this country. Mandates for four million signatures in the United States are now in circulation."

Thus the world of 1936 is in a mix-up, with divers elements contending one against another. Verily "a house divided against itself cannot stand." Friction will increase until the fires of strife rage far and wide. But those who know the benevolent plan of the Lord realize that "there is a river (of truth), the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God; the dwelling place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be removed. God shall help her, and that right early."—Psa. 46.

But the prophet does not stop here. He calls our attention to the Lord's ultimate triumph, in these words; "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He hath made in the earth! He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, and burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

The past year has seen important archeological findings. Among these has been the unearthing of the long lost city of Achish, in Mesopotamia, believed to have been founded before the year 2000 B. C. There is abundant proof that its people were highly civilized, that they were skilled metal workers, and weavers of the finest and most costly fabrics, and well developed in the art of the lapidary. The finding of this historic city throws a flood of light on an important period. Thus the Bible is more and more coming to its own. Archeology is heaping up super-abundant evidence to establish the fact that the Bible is true.

During the past year many criminals have been brought to justice by the simple device of making casts of footprints, and keeping the casts till the shoe is found that perfectly fits them.

The past year has seen vast sums of money expended in dole for jobless millions. If this system is terminated it will become imperative to find work for these poor people; otherwise starving masses are apt to have much to say and much to do. There are millions of acres of ground yet to be tilled, and millions of homes to be built. No one should be idle; abundance of employment merely waits to be taken in hand. But will it be done?

What will the year 1936 bring to the world? In this "time of the end" events can multiply very rapidly. That the councils of nations will not be able to

maintain the stability of the world, we well know from Scriptural prophecy.—Isa. 8:9, 10.

Episcopalians Seek Reunion with Rome

THERE HAS BEEN considerable excitement in ecclesiastical circles within the past few weeks due to the efforts of various committees of Episcopal clergymen to create sentiment in favor of having their Church return to the arms of the mother system. "Failure of Protestantism" is one of the reasons given as to why such a reunion is now advisable. Among the charges made against Protestantism by some of these "unity" advocates is that it has become "bankrupt ethically, culturally, morally and religiously." However, not all the clergymen who favor unity with Rome are willing to be quite so harsh on the protestant churches. In Seattle, Washington, one of the battle-fronts of this new offensive for church unity, the *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, reports Rev. E. C. R. Pritchard as deprecating the "bankrupt" charge against Protestantism, yet coming out strong for the unity movement as a whole. We quote:

"But let there be no evading of the issue nor on my part any soft-pedalling of my position. The unity of Christendom is imminent. The forces arrayed against Christian civilization are such that unless we stand together our plight will be that of Russia and other parts of the world where anti-God influences are at work with devastating malice. We need the Church of Rome and the Church of Rome needs us, and both together need the best that Protestantism can offer."

But the Northwestern clergymen taking part in this movement were severely censured by their bishop, Dr. Huston, who is reported as saying:

"Christian unity is the laudable aspiration of all Christendom, but the cause is not promoted but seriously hindered rather by such a statement as that which has emanated from the Church Unity Octave Council—whatever that is. Suffice it to say, this group of gentlemen represent nobody but themselves. They certainly do not represent the position of the Protestant Episcopal Church on the subject of church unity."

From the standpoint of a liberty-loving Christian, standing free in Christ Jesus, the accusation that these unity workers do not represent anybody but themselves does not discount the importance of any good they might accomplish. Just who does the Bishop himself represent? But the really interesting part of all this unity talk is the fact that in a general way it is in fulfilment of divine prophecy. God's prophets foretold that the peoples of the earth, nationally and religiously, would "take council together," for their own protection. Note the statement, "Unless we stand together our plight will be that of Russia." Well, the Greek Catholic Church in Russia stood together pretty well, but that didn't seem to help much when the Lord's time came to overthrow that branch of Mystic Babylon. Nor will the best kind of church unity that can be devised save the other nominal church systems from the impending destruction foretold by the prophets.

OUR BIBLICAL DIALOG

WHY NOT LIVE FOREVER?

Ernest, Somewhat Amazed at a Scientist's Statement Concerning Longevity, Asks Frank What the Bible Has to Say About It



"Frank, I have here a very interesting article in which the writer says that the time may come when people will be able to live until they are hundreds of years old. The writer says that science may find a way to put a person in cold storage for long periods at a time, thus giving them a rest, and prolonging the life span. I would like to know if the Bible has anything to say about the length of human life being increased. You see, I am interested in living as long as I can, as I suppose every normal person is."

"How long would you like to live, Ernest?"

"How long would I like to live? Well, as I look at it now, I don't know that I would ever get tired of living. Perhaps if I should get sick, and suffer a great deal, I might lose my interest in life. But I asked you a question concerning what the Bible has to say about this subject of long life."

"Ernest, the scientist who wrote that article you have been reading is very conservative compared with what the Bible says. Why, according to the Bible, people will just be leaving their childhood at a hundred years of age—that is, when Christ's Kingdom is established. If they are obedient to that Kingdom they will not die at all!"

"You mean of course," replied Ernest, "that they will not die of disease, or accident, but will just gradually grow old and sort of pass out of the picture at about a hundred and fifty, or thereabouts."

"Ernest, I mean exactly what I say; that, according to the Bible, when the divine Kingdom is established, the people will not even grow old—in the sense that they will become feeble—but will continue to live, and not die at all. The Prophet Job points out the fact that those who **have** grown old and become sick will be healed, and their youth will be renewed so that their flesh will become fresher than a child's. Doesn't that sound good?"

"But, Frank, you must be joking. I presume you mean that when we get to heaven we will not grow old, and that then we will become like the angels. Is that it?"

"No, Ernest, that's not what I mean. God does not intend that human beings are to be transformed into angels. True, we have been taught that if we are good we will become angels when we die. In fact, some of us have been in the habit of singing, 'I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand, a crown upon my forehead, and a harp within my hand.' But Frank, you know as well as I do that as soon as we get sick and there seems to be a good chance of dying and going to heaven to be with and like the angels, we send for the best doctor we know of, a half a dozen of them if necessary, to prevent us from becoming angels."

"You're right, Frank, I know we talk a lot about going to heaven, but in the final showdown nobody wants to go there, at least I don't, not so long as I can live here on the earth and have my health and enjoy the other blessings of life. I presume the reason is that we know what it is like here, but we don't know much about heaven. Anyway, the earth suits me. I am willing to go to heaven as a last resort, but let me stay here as long as I can—and, I believe that is about the way most folks feel about it."

"Ernest, what you have expressed as being the desire of your heart is exactly what the Lord has provided for mankind in general, and will be given to them during the reign of the Prince of Peace."

"Do you mean to say then that people are to live right here on the earth forever," exclaimed Ernest. "I would like to know where you find anything like that in the Bible."

"Well, the Bible gives much proof on that point. The whole scheme of salvation reaches a culmination in the restoration of man to conditions of perfection right here on the earth. Everlasting life on earth is the very

keynote of the gospel. For example, in Luke 2:10, where it tells about that wonderful message of the angel to the shepherds on the night that Jesus was born, it says, "Behold, we bring you glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Now you will note, Ernest, that the good news mentioned here is based on the fact that a **Savior** was born—"

"Yes, I note that all right, but what has that to do with everlasting life on earth? That doesn't say anything about life at all, anywhere."

"I know," replied Ernest, it does not use the word life, but from what are the people to be saved? It says that a **Savior** was born."

"Now Frank, what do you mean by asking me questions? I thought I was asking the questions—"

"Well, I am asking this one, and I want to know what your understanding is of how Jesus will save the people, or from what He will save them."

"How do I know that? I suppose if I were a Catholic, I would say that Jesus would save the people from Purgatory, but it will only be the Catholics that will be thus saved—the rest of the people will be saved from Hell, I suppose. Frank, I don't really know how to answer the question. It probably depends somewhat on which church one belongs to."

"You think then that the Lord will arrange a special kind of salvation for each denomination?"

"No, I don't mean that exactly. That was just my way of saying that I don't know. There are so many different views that it is hard for a person to know which is the correct one. But Frank, why not answer my question yourself? You quoted that text about the glad tidings of great joy to prove that everlasting life right here on the earth is God's provision for the people, yet it doesn't say a word about life of any kind."

"The point is well taken when we understand what man lost because of sin, and from what he is to be saved. I will let you read the answer from the Bible. It is a text that nearly everybody knows—John 3:16."

"All right, Ernest, I'll be glad to read the text. 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish but have everlasting life.'"

"Do you get the import of that statement, Ernest?"

"Well, it talks about perishing, and about everlasting life—"

"Yes, Ernest, and it also says that Everlasting life is to come through the Son of God, doesn't it?"

"Yes, Frank, that's what it says."

"And it was this Son of God that the angel spoke of as the Savior, was it not?"

"Yes, I believe it was, Frank."

"Now let me ask you one more question, Ernest, What is the opposite of life?"

"Why death, of course."

"According to that then, Jesus will save the people from death. Am I right, Ernest?"

"It looks that way, Frank, but there is not a word of any kind in either of these texts to indicate that the everlasting life referred to will be here on the earth. That is the point I want you to prove."

"Where did the people lose life in the first place, Ernest?"

"What does that have to do with the subject?"

"It has a whole lot to do with it. Jesus said that 'the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.' If man lost life up in heaven, then of course, according to this statement made by Jesus, heaven is where life will be restored to him. Ernest, do you think that man lost a heavenly home and life in heaven, because of sin?"

"Of course not! Man was created right here on the earth—in fact, Frank, he was made of the earth, he was not in heaven at all before he sinned."

"You mean by that then that it was only because of man's sin that he had an opportunity to go to heaven? Ernest, is that reasonable?"

"I suppose not, Frank, but that's about the way it works out if we accept the doctrines of the creeds. But what is the point you are trying to bring out, anyway?"

"Ernest, I am trying to emphasize the fact that man lost life right here on the earth. Man has never been in heaven, and there is nothing in the Bible to indicate that God ever intends to take him to heaven. Man was created to live on the earth, and he would have lived here everlastingly had he been obedient. But he disobeyed God's law and was sentenced to death, and the whole plan of salvation presented in the Bible shows that it is God's purpose to restore man to life here on the earth. That's why that statement of the angel regarding the birth of a Saviour is proof that man will have life on the earth."

"But Frank, doesn't the Bible say something about folks going to heaven?"

"Yes, the Bible shows that Jesus went to heaven following His resurrection, and also that a few—a 'little flock'—will share His heavenly home with Him, but these few will be the exception; they will have this special reward because of their faithfulness in following in the footsteps of Jesus. They will share with Jesus in the restoration work on behalf of mankind in general."

"Frank, I believe I now get the force of your argument concerning everlasting life on earth being God's provision for the people. If man is to have restored to him that which was lost, then of course he will come back here on the earth; there is no way of getting around that proposition. But still it is difficult for me to realize that death will be no more. People have always died; how do I know but what they always will—or how do I know that any one will remain alive right here on the earth? Why, that would mean that all the undertakers would be out of a job. I'll have to have real proof before I can believe that. Your argument is good, but show me a single Bible text that says that God will keep the people alive right here on earth."

"Everlasting life will be offered to the people during the thousand years of Christ's Kingdom. In the 21st chapter of Revelation we are given a picture of this Kingdom coming down from God out of heaven.—it comes down to earth. The passage declares that as a result, 'There shall be no more death, neither shall there be any more pain, for the FORMER things are passed away.' It's on the earth that we have experienced death, so it will be on the earth that death will cease. Isn't that right?"

"Yes, Frank, it would seem that way; but haven't you a still more definite text to show that people will

be kept alive right here on the green earth?"

"Ernest, you want a lot, but if you will take the trouble to look the matter up, you will find that there are many passages to show that God's program of blessing for the people is located right here on the earth. It's unreasonable to suppose that all the people of the earth will have to be transferred to some other planet in order to live for ever."

"All right, Frank, you say there are many texts to prove the point, suppose you tell me where I can find just one. Surely that's not too much to ask, is it?"

"Very well, Ernest, Look up Psalms 41:1, 2. You may read it if you please."

"Yes, I want to read it—'Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon the earth.' Frank, that's the kind of a text I have been looking for; however, it seems to apply only to those who consider the poor."

"Of course, no one who continues to oppose his fellowmen will be kept alive. The great oppressor, Satan, and all who follow his selfish course, will ultimately be destroyed from off the earth, but those who obey the Lord and seek to be a blessing to others will be kept alive."

"Thanks Frank. Now I have another question. In the 90th Psalm it says the days of man upon the earth are three score years and ten, in other words, 70 years. Doesn't that contradict what you have been telling me about man living for ever on the earth?"

"No, Ernest; that passage merely describes the condition of man upon the earth during the reign of Satan. Man is now under condemnation to sin and death, but God through His prophet tells us that it was His purpose to redeem man from death. That redemption price has already been provided. Jesus gave Himself a ransom for the people. He returns to earth to establish His Kingdom, and under the administration of that Kingdom the people will be released from death. In that Psalm you cited it says that God turneth man to destruction, and then sayest, 'Return ye children of men.' For 6,000 years man has been going down the 'broad road' to destruction, but soon the order will be reversed and he will return from death. Then all will have the opportunity of living forever on the earth—whosoever will may then 'partake of the water of life.'"

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

15 ¶ And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time.
16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:
17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies:
18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.
Gen. 22:15-18 Gal. 3:8

8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.
Gen. 22:18

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
Lu. 2:10

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:
21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.
Acts 3:20, 21

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.
27 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
Gal. 3:26, 27

8 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.
Heb. 11:8, 10

9 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.
4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.
5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.
Rev. 21:2-5

¶ And "all flesh shall see the salvation of God."
Lu. 3: 6.

UNIVERSAL RECONCILIATION THEORY EXAMINED

(PART 4—CONCLUSION)



A GAIN let us press the question, Is man a free agent? Did Adam sin of his own volition? If freedom of will is a delusion, as our Universalist friends seem to believe, then such words as *virtue* and *vice* lose their meaning. Indeed, moral responsibility would become a term emptied of its sense; divine approval or censure would be without any justification; and consistency would require that we abolish all codes of ethics, for by their nature they must presuppose mankind to be not automata but free agents.

Some superficially argue that in view of God's omnipotence and omniscience He could and ought to have prevented those desires and acts which are generally spoken of as "sinful", and which operate to man's detriment. They reason that if God could foresee moral evil, He ought to have put a stop to it at once; that if He could not do so He is not almighty; and that if He could, but did not, He is not all-good or all-loving. Of course, if He is responsible for man's present condition, and yet He punishes man for the evil man commits, He is not all-just. But this is not the Bible's teaching.

The Universalist view seems to conclude that if God made man, then man is no more free than any other machine; that for all human movements the Maker is solely responsible; and that man is simply the victim of an evil environment and heredity which His Creator deliberately arranged. How familiar this philosophy is to the lines of Omar Khayyam:

"We are no more than a moving row
Of magic shapes, that come and go
Round with the sun-illuminated lantern, held
In midnight by the Master of the Show.

But helpless pieces of the game he plays
Upon his checker-board of nights and days;
Hither and hither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the closet lays.

The moving finger writes; and having writ
Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."

Man is a sentient being; and *sentient* implies liability to pain as well as pleasure. Likewise, the term *freedom* implies the power to choose the wrong side as much as the right side; the power to move in either of two directions. Now if Adam acted only in the manner that he was bound to act, why should he have felt grieved or ashamed? And why, indeed, should anyone ever feel guilt? One man forges checks, or issues false balance sheets; while another wins high "honors" as an outstanding artist, or a writer of "Hamlet"—yet, according to this philosophy, there is neither blame nor praise. If this be true, whence the feeling of abject shame, degradation and self-loathing after doing wrong? These obstinate facts of experience are sufficient to cause us to reject the aforementioned doctrine of determinism.

Then another question comes to mind: If we are not free, why did God lead us to believe that we are free? And why did He actually or seemingly endow us with the power of choice, knowing the sense of shame and agony that must accompany such a gift? Was it good? Was it kind? Let us examine into this matter.

Freedom, A Relative Term

There is nothing more wonderful in the constitution of our minds than the power we have of standing aside, as it were, from the ordinary channels of our present thoughts, and of looking back upon our past mental currents as they come down from the hills of memory and association, to join their issues in our present existence. The conscious energies of the human will are always so near, so ever present with us, that they may shut out from view the various forces which lie beyond our mental processes. We may truly say that our will is free; but free from what? Freedom is not an absolute term, but relative. There is no such thing existing as *absolute* freedom among any creatures. That is, there is nothing existing in the world, and nothing possible even in the realm of thought which is absolutely alone—entirely free or unrelated to other things. The term "freedom," therefore, is intelligible only as meaning that we are free from some particular restraint or of inducement to which other beings or things may be subject.

From what, then, is it that your will is free? Is it free from the influence of your motives? No, they work together. A motive is a conclusion that moves or tends to move the mental channel in a particular direction, thereby exerting an impelling force upon it. And the aggregate of all forces which act upon the mind determine our convictions and actions. But man's will may be used to direct the mind to one motive or conviction, and to avert it from another. This is no more mysterious than when it is exerted in turning the body to the right hand or to the left. Our motives, then, may lead us along the path of love, reverence, gratitude, hunger for truth, desire for righteousness, or otherwise.

Precisely in proportion to the higher qualities of our mind—in proportion to its keen insight and appreciation of truth and righteousness—in that same proportion will be our appreciation of good and evil. Hence Adam, though possessed of a perfect mind and a complete knowledge of His Creator's will, was nevertheless *motivated* by greater love for Eve than for His Maker; and, having sympathy for his wife's transgression of God's law, he was willing to turn aside with her, fully conscious that in so doing he was violating His Creator's unwritten law. His act, therefore, was due neither to coercion on God's part nor to weakness in his own make-up, but was the result of his having ability to choose either one of two courses. Man's will, then, is free from God's dominance, when it chooses either good or evil. Jehovah cannot be held responsible for man's plunge into sin and death, nor is He duty bound to save the sinner from his plight. God loved the world and provided a means of escape, consistent with His justice and sovereignty; but man's salvation is conditioned upon his belief and cooperation with God's program. Otherwise he forfeits the gift of life.

Our Faith Structure

Now for a final question: On what are we building? The individual Christian faith is a building, and as such must have both foundation and superstructure. Every principle of truth or error adopted becomes a part of our faith building. The building of our faith God leaves largely with us. He furnishes a mine of truth, places the tools within our reach, and urges us to build well of enduring substances, adding faith to faith, virtue to virtue, knowledge to knowledge. Thus He would have us grow in grace and knowledge and love, following examples of building which He has furnished. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid—Jesus Christ." This statement of the importance of Jesus as the foundation of all faith toward God, is in full accord with the statement that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." If all Christians valued truth properly, all would buy it and never sell it, though it cost time, inconvenience and self-sacrifice to get it, and reputation and sacrifice to hold it.

To believe that Mohammed once lived and died on earth does not constitute us Mohammedans, nor give a basis for faith and hope of a future life. Neither does the simple belief that Jesus once lived and died on earth constitute us Christians, nor give a basis for

faith or hope of a future life. But the belief that Jesus died as our *Redeemer*—"died for our sins according to the Scriptures," "gave Himself a ransom for all"; and that "the Lord laid on Him the iniquities of us all, and that by His stripes we are healed"—such conviction does constitute us Christians, and gives us a firm foundation for faith that our sins are cancelled, and that in His due time all may be released from sin's penalty—death.

Some build merely on *right-doing*, as a basis of hope that God will grant them eternal life. These build not on the Rock, Christ Jesus, but upon their own works. Of this class were the Jews, who sought to justify themselves. Others build their hope of salvation on the *love* of God. They feel sure that because God is very pitiful and of tender mercy, therefore He will ultimately save, eternally, every one from death. Such are not Christians in the true sense, because they build their hope and faith on the *love* of God and not on the only foundation—faith in Christ Jesus as our Ransom. The love of God provided the Ransom, but the love of God is not the foundation of Christian faith. Others build on the *justice* of God, and boldly declare that God is *bound* by principles of justice to save all men out of Adamic death. Their argument is that God placed man in his present condition of sin and misery and death, and that in justice to His creatures He must restore them—ransom or no ransom.

None of these theories are Scriptural, hence none of them are proper foundations for faith; and any building reared thereon is doomed to destruction. The plan of God, looked at from the standpoint of the inspired Word of God, recognizes the impartially just trial of Adam, his deliberate violation of God's just and easy requirement, and the justice of enforcing the penalty which God had threatened, viz., death. God's foreknowledge of the consequences of Adam's sin cannot be urged against the justice of his trial, since the trial was the same and had the same results, as though God had not foreknown its result.

God is not responsible for the mental and physical imperfections of our race. These are traceable as the result of sin, to Adam, their progenitor. Since God creates only perfect beings, such as Adam was before he sinned, therefore all fallen, mentally and physically imperfect men and women, are not God's creation, but the offspring of the fallen Adam. These imperfections are not chargeable to God, but to Adam's sin. If, then, God was just in condemning Adam, and was in no way responsible to Adam's offspring, it must have been as the Scripture states: "By God's grace we are saved." See also 1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:12, 17, 19; 11:32-33.

Looking from the standpoint of divine revelation, instead of purely human reasoning, we see that while love is a prominent factor in all God's plans, and an essential element of the divine nature, yet His foreknowledge and omnipotence make it unnecessary for His love to come into conflict with His justice. Since God had *justly* condemned man as unworthy

(Continued on page 33)



The Christian Life

Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking forward to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your deliverance draweth nigh—

Luke 21: 25-28, 31

THE DIVINE GUIDANCE

(A New Year's Journey in Retrospect and Prospect.)

WHEN one comes to a point of great interest in his experience; a place to which many events seem to have been leading and which now indicates that he is nearing final victory; then if he is foiled in the culminative exploit which would have crowned his long efforts with success, the disappointment often seems tragic. That was the experience of Moses, the servant of God, when he stood upon the height of Mt. Nebo and gazed across the Jordan toward the promised land. Here at last was the place of his hopes and dreams, yet he was not to be permitted to enter it.

How God Directed Moses

Moses is generally considered to have been the most remarkable character of Old Testament times. Educated to be the future monarch of a great kingdom; endowed with keen mental powers and splendid physique; this handsome young prince at the call of God, readily laid down his royal heritage of earthly greatness to throw in his lot with a race of down-trodden slaves. Had he remained a prince in Egypt, he might have arrived at the highest pinnacle of fame as a ruler of that far-flung kingdom. But this man desired most of all to be on the side of Jehovah; consequently he set himself to do God's work just as soon as the vocation, to which the divine will had called him, was set clearly before his mind.

Before Moses was called to leave the scenes of this life—at the conclusion of his long period of service—he had a heart-to-heart talk with the people of Israel, and reminded them of the divine guidance that had been theirs during the preceding forty years of wandering. He told them that they might have entered the Land of Promise at the very beginning of their pilgrimage had they but possessed faith and resolution enough to go up and take it. He reminded them of the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai, of many victories gained over their enemies in the wilderness also of the fact that on various occasions they had disobeyed the Lord and suffered in consequence; but that now they were drawing near the end of their wilderness journey, and that Canaan was in sight.

“And Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. And he said unto them; I am an hundred and

twenty years old this day; I can no more go out and come in: also the Lord hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan. The Lord thy God, He will go over before thee, and He will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them: and Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as the Lord hath said. And the Lord shall do unto them as He did to Sihon and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and unto the land of them, whom He destroyed. And the Lord shall give them up before your face, that ye may do unto them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you. Be strong and of a good courage; fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”—Deut. 31: 1-6.

Profitable to Be Reminded of Divine Guidance

As the Israelites were reminded by Moses of the divine guidance of the past, and were assured that Jehovah was still leading them, so likewise it is profitable for Christians of today to be reminded of the way in which they have been led since they covenanted to be disciples of the Master. While every day in the year is suitable for a retrospective survey, the season of New Year always seems especially appropriate for such meditation.

Do we realize that another whole year has slipped away from us, and that life itself is slipping away just like this one year? How brief is this earthly span of existence as compared to that immeasurable expanse called eternity! Yet much experience may come to us during this short time. If in the course of our earthly pilgrimage we have lived close to God, have drunk deeply at the well-spring of His grace and truth, have nourished ourselves with the bread of life, have caught visions of heavenly things that have raised us high above the slough of grovelling earthly tendencies and desires, then life has not been lived by us in vain; and some day ere long we shall arrive at the fullest fruition of our heavenly hopes.

Perhaps our minds are wont to travel back to the time when we were in direct bondage to sin and Satan—or else to Babylon the Great, which Satan dominates. We remember how wonderfully God delivered us therefrom, even as He delivered the Is-

raelites from Egypt. They came to the Red Sea, where death apparently stared at them from all sides. Likewise is it not true that Satan raised before us a great opposition and difficulty soon after our exodus from that great city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt? The burning question then was, Shall we go forward or turn back? But a pathway through the waters was opened for us, and on we went. Even as the wind and tide operated to make a way for the Israelites, so the wind of divine favor and the tide of love cooperated on our behalf; and what had seemed at first to be an impassable barrier became the very means of our deliverance. We could not then turn back, nor did we want to do so. Faith had achieved her first conspicuous victory in our behalf, and all doubt and uncertainty were utterly drowned in the sea.

Our Daily Manna

But the wilderness of the world lay before us; and verily it *was* a wilderness. But God provided the daily heavenly manna, without which we could not have lived. While the Lord sent this to us in abundance, we were required to gather it a little at a time—just as the Hebrews did. The meaning of the word “manna” is “What is it?” And is not that the very question we pondered concerning the truth, at first? It was so strange, so wonderful! We had never seen anything like it before. Perhaps we were of those who long had wondered, What is truth? And on this question we soon received divine illumination. We found it, and recognized it to be the harvest truth; and we also found that it “satisfied our longings as nothing else could do.”

How eagerly with new and strong desire we drank the water from the Rock Christ Jesus, which had been smitten for us! We came to Elim, the place of palms, and found refreshment and rest. We came to Mount Sinai and beheld the power of God. Antypically this place became Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, where, by the eye of faith, we could see the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the first-born ones whose names are written in heaven, God the judge of all, the spirits of just men made perfect. We had come to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (Heb. 12: 22-24.) We beheld that idolatry had grown up among God’s people, and punishment must come as a result. But through these various experiences we kept going on and on. Time passed; while sorrow, trial, heartache, pain, gladness, joy, mercy and peace have attended us upon our journey.

And today we stand in sight of the Promised Land. There can be no doubt about it. By faith we can behold it, right there beyond the Jordan, ‘Tis but a short distance for us to travel now.

“Tis only a little way on to our home,
And there in the sunshine forever we’ll roam
So all the day long let’s journey with song
With God’s gracious glory-land calling us home.”

During the past year we have had our times of re-

flection when we have thought on these things. Perhaps there were seasons when some of us felt that we were not as zealous for the Lord as we had formerly been. Did we wonder why so many things engrossed our attention and left us so little time for the service of the truth? Perhaps there were days when some did not take time to gather the spiritual manna, seasons when prayer was neglected, times when going to meeting cost too much effort. Perhaps there were occasions when all of us looked at the great example of Jesus and then felt utterly dissatisfied and discouraged with ourselves. Some who had been measurably neglectful of their privileges have said to themselves that some day they would arouse themselves and do better. But the days did not wait for them, they moved steadily along.

Thoughts and Desires for the New Year

And now comes the New Year 1936. The old is gone. God may permit us to have another three hundred and sixty-five golden days here ere He calls us home. If so, we all want to do better than we have done heretofore. We fancy we can hear the reader say, “Yes, I want to do better than I have done. I want to be more loyal to God, more prayerful, more humble in His service, more kindly and lovingly disposed toward the brethren, more awake to my opportunities, more responsive to the favor of God, more worthy and more appreciative of the truth.” A noble resolve.

If one thus feels a desire to do better, let him ask God right now for assistance, that the desired end may be attained. We cannot measure the divine power. God may do things for us beyond our fondest dreams. If our contact with Him is firm and sure, all things are possible. Remember the illustration of the electric car, as it has been compared to the Christian life. In order that the car may properly function, the trolley must be in contact with the wire up above; and the wire must be deriving its electric energy from the power station. If there is a short circuit, or if anything interferes with the proper contacts, the car does not run and the passengers are not carried to their destination. This law of contact sets forth one of the greatest truths in the life of the Christian; for without God and the spirit of grace and truth derived from Him, we can do nothing and can be nothing worth while.

We recall a scene in the life of Peter and John, in connection with the healing of the lame man. This occasion afforded Peter a good opportunity to deliver a discourse, an opportunity which he readily embraced. However, when Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and others heard of these doings, they were incensed. They haled Peter and John before them, and enquired in whose name the miracle had been wrought. Then Peter spoke out boldly and plainly; and when the high ecclesiastics saw the boldness of these two men, and perceived at the same time that they were unlearned, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Ah, yes, the evident contact with Him and its results could not possibly be denied.

If we have this same contact today, we can be in the world yet not of it. We can walk through this "dark valley of the shadow of death" and not only enjoy the light of life ourselves but reflect it in such a manner that others will be blessed. And what a great thing it is to know that we do not need to go into some kind of seclusion in order to have this contact. Jesus had it in the very midst of men. So likewise did the apostle Paul. The days that Jesus spent were busy days, and there were times when sheer weariness caused Him to go out into a desert place to rest awhile, so that He might have the necessary strength for further service. It is evident that among His Bride class the Lord does not want the kind of character that is developed in monasteries and other similar places of voluntary segregation. Rather He wants the type of character that is crystallized and refined by rubbing up against a hard, selfish world, as well as by cheerfully enduring trials and afflictions for the truth's sake.

God's Will for the Future

Perhaps someone may say, "Well, I am in the world and have many obligations which keep me busily employed. And if I knew just what will come to me this year in the way of temptations and trials, I would be prepared to meet them; but when unexpected difficulties come upon me suddenly, they often carry me right off my feet. I wish I always could be forewarned, for to be forewarned is to be forearmed."

Yes; but it also is a great blessing for us not to know the future too fully; for if we did, our minds might dwell too much on the hard things ahead; and the burden of that anxiety, together with the actual trials of the present, would be too much for us to endure. To the oak tree, well rooted in the soil, it doesn't matter whether the wind is north or south, whether there comes a sudden squall or just a strong steady gale. It usually stands all squalls or gales or storms for many years. It stands there securely in all its towering strength, as if to proclaim to all, "I am prepared for whatever may come." The Christian should be just like that tree in that respect; he should be so rooted and grounded in the faith of Christ that he would be prepared for all emergencies, all contingencies, all trials as they come.

While we do not see what trials may be ahead, yet we do know what the divine will is for us this coming year.

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Probably God's will is not concerned with whether we work in a cotton mill, in a machine shop, at building houses, at taking care of a family, or at some other legitimate occupation; but He is concerned with our sanctification. What a world of meaning is suggested by this word *sanctification*. Its real meaning is defined as "the act or process of making holy." But, can we really become holy before God? Is such a thing possible? Holiness is living in harmony with the divine will. Up in the heavenly sphere there are angels who live in a state of perfect holiness, for they never have broken the law of God. Not only their actions, but their thoughts as well, are ever in perfect accord with the great principle of divine love. Can we be like that

while tabernacling in this imperfect earthen vessel?

It is only through Jesus Christ that we can have the standing of justification and sanctification before God. The apostle therefore says that Christ is made unto us both justification and sanctification. It is important that we have a proper understanding of this matter, or we may become discouraged upon finding that we cannot measure up to an impossible standard. God requires no impossible thing of man. Yes, it is only through our being *in Christ*—immersed in His composite body, and having the same spirit that actuated Him to sacrifice His earthly interests—that we can become sanctified and pleasing to God.

To illustrate the manner in which God views His children, let us recount the following story: A farmer once hired a number of boys to pick strawberries on his farm. A friend from the city visited the farm, and stood watching the boys work. After a little time he said to the farmer, "I see a boy over there who seems to be doing very little work. That boy surely doesn't earn much in a day." But the farmer replied, "Oh, that boy is my son. I didn't want him to work on the job, for he is in poor health. He met with an accident when very young and his back was injured; so, you see, he can't do the same amount of work as these other boys; but he is so good and so anxious to help me that I just let him go ahead and do what he can. And I tell you, I value his services more than those of anyone else on this farm; for what that boy does he does for sheer love of me, and love is an element that you can't buy with dollars and cents."

The Christian's Standing

Every Christian is like that boy—handicapped through the weakness of the flesh. But he loves his heavenly Father, and the great Head of the church, Christ Jesus. And he can say with the apostle, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this dead body?" He loves the truth, because it tells him what his heavenly Father is like, what He is doing for the church, and what He soon will do for all mankind; and he is striving under difficulties to adequately express this love. And his heavenly Father looks into his heart and sees the love there, sees the effort being put forth to witness for the truth, to serve the brethren, and to bring the flesh into subjection to the new mind. Hence the Father is pleased, and says to him, and to all who are like-minded, "All right, just keep on. Be not weary in well-doing; and in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not."

Shall our resolution for 1936 then be to "keep on?" Shall we not this year endeavor to do a little more to advance the great cause of our Master? Perhaps we can be a little kinder to the brethren in Christ. Perhaps we can say more earnestly, "Here am I, Lord; send me"—when some witnessing work for Him is to be done. Let us not forget that so long as we are here on this earth we are to be witnesses for God, for Christ, and for the incoming Kingdom. Those who know present truth are the only real witnesses whom God has in this world.

What an important position we thus occupy! No doubt God could have sent angels to earth to do His work; but instead of that He is using human beings

to whom He has imparted His own spirit of truth, and to whom He has given a glorious vision of Himself and of His divine love. Are we of the number whom He has thus so highly favored? If so, let us strive to show our appreciation, to sound out the gospel message, to be true and loyal, and to show forth His praises. Then we shall enjoy the blessing of the Most High, not only through this opening year, but on and on throughout eternity.

“Another year is dawning.
Dear Master, let it be,
In working or in waiting—
Another year with Thee.

Another year in leaning
Upon Thy loving breast,
Of ever-deeper trustfulness,
Of quiet, happy rest.

Another year of mercies,
Of faithfulness and grace,
Another year of gladness
In the shining of Thy face.
Another year of progress,
Another year of praise,
Another year of proving
Thy presence all the days.”

—Francis Ridley Havergal.

FAITH

(FROM ZION'S WATCH TOWER, JUNE, 1897)

“Now faith is the basis of things hoped for, a conviction of things unseen.”—Hebrews 11:1.



THE CHRISTIAN life is a life of faith. Its first step is a step of faith. All its victories are victories of faith, and its joys are joys of faith. In the above text the apostle speaks of faith as a basis of hope, as something substantial upon which hope may build. Hope is not faith; but hope is that buoyant, gladsome thing that is born of faith. A hope that is not based upon faith is a mere idle fiction which has no substantial comfort in it. Faith is the basis or substance out of which the living hope springs and grows naturally. Faith, then, must be a reasonable thing, well founded in that which is fixed, immovable, sure and steadfast even in the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever.—1 Peter. 1:23.

Such faith is not a matter of the intellect alone, although the intellect has much to do with it. It is also a matter of the heart—“With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” If the heart be not right toward God, the intellect is easily biased toward its own preferences, which, in the carnal mind, are contrary to the righteousness of God; and so, the heart being wrong, the mind gropes in darkness concerning those things which pertain to eternal life and godliness—“The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” (Rom. 8:7.) To such God does not and cannot reveal the treasures of His wisdom and grace.

Faith Must Be Demonstrated By Works

We are taught that “without faith it is impossible to please God” (Heb. 11:6); and further that “faith without (corresponding) works (which attest its genuineness) is dead.” (Jas. 2:17.) “What advantage,” inquires James, “has any one, though he say he has faith, but have not works? This faith is not able to save him.” (Jas. 2:14—*Diaglott.*) And if faith without works is no advantage, the inference is plain that without works it is equally impossible to please God. Yet, we may have both faith (or what often passes for faith) and works (corresponding with it) and not be pleasing to God. The faith not well founded, together

with the works built upon it, is likely to be swept away when the storms and floods of trial beat upon it as upon a house built of wood, hay and stubble and resting on the shifting sand. It is all-important, therefore, that we have the right kind of faith, and that our works should be the outgrowth of that faith.

Faith is Based on Knowledge

What, then, is faith? We answer, True faith is the reasonable and accepted conclusion of a logical argument based upon a reasonable premise or foundation. And more, it is the *only* reasonable conclusion to which such a logical argument could lead. Thus, reasoning on the principle of cause and effect, a principle firmly established in all operations of a natural and moral law, we see in the whole realm of nature the evidences of an intelligent Creator. We know that such effects as appear in the order of nature—as for instance the order of the spheres, the succession of the seasons, and of day and night, the growth of vegetation, etc., etc.—could not be produced without an intelligent first cause. And so undeniable is the basis of fact thus furnished in nature's testimony, and so logical the reasoning from effect to cause, that the conclusion—that there is an intelligent, wise and powerful Creator—is so palpable and irresistible that the Scriptures declare the man a fool who does not accept it.—Psa. 14:1.

From these data alone we have substantial testimony upon which to base faith in God, even if He had given us no written revelation of Himself. And no less substantial is the testimony given upon which to base our faith in His written revelation. For all that God expects us to believe beyond the realm of our senses and observation, He has given us an undeniable foundation of tangible fact, upon which He invites us to use our reasoning powers to arrive at conclusions of which we would otherwise be ignorant. Thus faith is a conviction of things unseen, based on the logical deductions from known facts—a most reasonable thing.

It is also manifest that, since the foundation upon which to base faith, and the reasoning power where-

with to draw logical conclusions from the known foundation truths, and "the spirit of a sound mind," the holy spirit, the spirit, mind or disposition of Christ, to accept in simple sincerity all truth, are all given to us of God, so also, as Paul affirms, the faith thus derived may be considered, as it thus really is, "the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8), while it is also the free exercise of our own volition in obedience to the laws of conscience and of sound judgment.

Faith, Well Founded, Is Reasonable

There is nothing more common or necessary among men than faith. We exercise faith in the laws of nature and act upon it constantly. We till the soil and sow the seed in full faith in a future to be brought forth by the continued operations of natural law, reasoning that the sun which shines today will shine again to-morrow, that the showers of yesterday will be repeated, and that vegetation will still be true to the old law of development and growth under these favorable conditions. Who thinks of questioning these things?

Surely no one will question them who has become thoroughly acquainted with these methods in the past, and faith in them for the future is reasonable; while, on the other hand, doubt and unbelief would be unreasonable and foolish. The man who would refuse to plant for fear the sun would not rise again or the rain fall, would be rightly considered a fool. Why? Because faith is the only reasonable thing where the ground of faith is so well established. Even a child would laugh at another child who could not trust his parents for tomorrow's necessities when today's and yesterday's were abundantly provided for: his lack of faith would be so unreasonable. And just so, when we have become acquainted with God, as all may who will study His works and ways in nature and revelation, to doubt is foolish; while full faith, perfect confidence in His wisdom, justice, love and power, is the only reasonable conclusion.

Therefore it is that "without faith it is impossible to please God." Thus faith, being a reasonable conviction of things unseen, becomes a basis of hope for the things which God has promised. As Paul expresses it, "Faith is a basis of things hoped for, a conviction of things unseen." (Heb. 11:1.) With the same confidence, therefore, with which we look for an autumnal harvest from our spring time seed-sowing, before we see any sign of the harvest, we should also look for the fulfilment of all God's promises in due season, even before we see indication of their fulfilment.

There is no difficulty in exercising faith in God and in any and all of His promises, if we acquaint ourselves with His character and in simple sincerity apply our hearts unto the instructions of His Word. Our faith in all God's promises should be as unwavering as our confidence that to-morrow's sun will rise. Thus it was in the cases of some commendable examples to which the Apostle Paul refers (Heb. 11)—of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David and Samuel, and the prophets, who, by faith in the promises and directions of God, subdued kingdoms, shut lions' mouths, quenched the power of fire, raised dead ones

to life, and, in hope of a better resurrection submitted to privations, persecutions and ignominious deaths, having faith in the promise of God, in due time to reward their loyalty to Him and to the principles of truth and righteousness. When God declared that a flood was coming and commanded the building of an ark, the reasonable course was to build the ark and to warn men, although the flood and every indication of it, tarried for many years.

Similarly, when God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son, it was reasonable for Abraham to obey the command and to leave to God the fulfilment of the promises which centered in that son. When He commanded Lot to flee out of Sodom it was the only reasonable thing for Lot to do, to make haste and depart, though the morning was gloriously fair.

These were commendable acts of simple, implicit and reasonable faith. But observe that in every instance of faith commended in the Bible there was good ground for faith; there was a clear command of God, a well defined principle of truth and righteousness; and no foolish imaginations or vague impressions were blindly followed. How foolish Noah would have been to spend energy and valuable time in building an ark and warning the people, if he had only *imagined* that a flood was coming. How culpable Abraham would have been in laying his son on the altar of sacrifice, had he only *imagined* that God desired him to do so. And how insane Lot would have appeared in hastening out of Sodom that bright morning declaring that the city would be destroyed, had he been given no reliable divine assurance of it.

His Truth Our Firm Foundation

Notice that in each instance of unusual requirement God gave clear evidence of His will according to the methods of that dispensation, either by an angel, a vision, or some remarkable circumstance—ways, however, which are not now necessary, since the completed Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments form a perfect guide to faith (2 Tim. 3:15-17), and which, therefore, are not now resorted to. And in the instances of suffering and martyrdom cited, God's will was clearly expressed in the principles of truth and righteousness which He ordained, and which were properly recognized as more valuable than even life. These illustrations of faith should be specially marked by very many who claim to have *wonderful faith* in God, when the chief wonder in it is the ability to believe so much on so slight a foundation.

In many enterprises, too, undertaken under the name of works of faith, and successfully carried on financially, faith has more foundation in the sympathies of philanthropic people, than in the plan, methods and promises of God. If Christian people make public statements that they are starting a benevolent enterprise for the amelioration of the present woes of suffering humanity, they may do it with a large degree of faith in the support of benevolent people; even the worldly are often fully as active in these directions as Christians. For instance, mark the responses to calls for help in great calamities and disasters.

Successes in the direction of popular benevolences

are not always proofs of faith in God, though those so engaged are doing good works, and public appeals for assistance are often right and proper; but a clearer manifestation of faith in God is that humble confidence which espouses His unpopular cause, which perseveres in pursuing it in the face of all opposition and without human encouragement, and which patiently endures whatever of reproach, discouragement, privation and even persecution it may bring, assured of ultimate triumph according to His promise, and finding in His blessed truth and in His approval all the present reward and incentive desired.

Faith With Humility

One expression of the Apostle Paul should not be forgotten. It reads, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God." (Rom. 14:22.) If we advertise our faith and our needs and thus make capital out of them by eliciting the sympathies and assistance of men, we are in great danger of seeking to be pleasers of men. Almost imperceptibly this motive will creep into the heart and become a governing power in our actions, often causing deflections from the strait and narrow path of divine appointment. Beware when all men speak well of you, and when multitudes are ready to line up with your work and your methods; and look well to it that no element of worldly policy be in it to ensnare your feet and to allure you from the narrow way.—Luke 6:26. See also Luke 4:6-8.

There is much in the way of profession of great faith and in the relating of really improper proceedings and their results as wonderful feats of faith, which often does great harm to both speakers and hearers.

While a true faith is pleasing to God, what often passes for faith among Christians must be correspondingly displeasing to Him. Some without careful observation and study of God's ways, jump to hasty conclusions, often greatly out of harmony with the spirit of divine truth; and, acting and teaching accordingly, dishonor the Lord and bring reproach upon His cause. Among such, too, are often found the loudest boasters of faith. Their faith is so strong, so rooted and grounded and established in what God did *not* say, that they have no inclination to hear or heed what He did say. In such instances God would be honored far more by the sealing of the lips. Rather let our faith be expressed to God, and let our confidence be manifest to Him; and to our brethren let it be manifested more by our deeds of faith than by our words. Thus was the faith of the ancient worthies attested. Where is boasting then? It is excluded by the law of faith. (Rom. 3:27.) The very nature of pure, true faith is opposed to boastfulness. It is sincere and too humbly mindful of personal weakness and necessary dependence on God to be boastful. In fact, a humble, faithful walk with God excludes every mean disposition, and elevates the character far beyond them.

However, the faith of which we speak is something which belongs only to the children of God. Their hearts being in harmony with God and His righteousness, His Word is unto them the end of all controversy; and their faith in that Word is the basis of their joyful hopes, the inspiration of their activities,

and the anchor to their souls through all the storms of the present life.

While faith depends for its earliest existence upon a right attitude of heart toward God and His righteousness it continues to grow and thrive by a more close acquaintance and intimate communion with God and a continual striving to attain to His righteousness. Faith, in its beginning, is always comparatively weak; but God does not despise the day of small things. "A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory." (Isa. 42:3; Matt. 12:20) So also the Lord's people who are strong in the faith are taught to bear with the weaker ones.—Rom. 14:1; 15:1; 1 Thes. 5:14; Acts 20:35.

Since faith must necessarily be at the very basis of Christian character and is such an important element in its construction, even to the grand and glorious finish; and since "without faith it is impossible to please God," the effort of every Christian should be toward a continual growth in faith. To do this we must maintain a close walk and fellowship with God in all circumstances and under all conditions. Does the sunshine of prosperity make glad our hearts? Let us see that we are glad in the Lord; that our hearts are lifted to Him in grateful adoration and praise for all His benefits, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. Or, do the clouds gather and the storms of adversity beat upon the soul? Then call to mind the goodness of the Lord in times past, and take courage, assured that the sun will shine again when the lessons of this discipline have been learned.—Psa. 77:10-12.

"He is Faithful That Promised"

Nothing is more encouraging to faith than to consider the Lord's past faithfulness to us, and His promises that thus it shall be to the end. All our interests, temporal and spiritual, are in His hands, if we are His; and "no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to His purpose." How often, as the years go by, the children of God can see this! As they realize what the discipline of life, patiently and lovingly submitted to, has already wrought in them, they see, as perhaps they could not see while passing through much of it, how necessary it has been to the developing of character in them; and so they are thankful for the rough and thorny places, as well as the smooth, because of the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which they have learned to prize above all else.

Christians may often encourage one another's faith by mingling their prayers and praises together, and by speaking to each other of their Christian experiences, of how God has led them and borne them up under trials which otherwise would have overcome them. Such indeed is the will of God, that we should so stimulate each other by loving communion and fellowship one with another in spiritual things, and by unitedly drawing near to God in prayer and praise. This is a means of grace that no Christian who has the opportunity to enjoy can afford to forego. Yet even this must not supersede that still more potent

means of grace; *viz.*, secret communion with God, when, alone with Him, we can open our hearts as to none else, assured that, even though language be lame, He is able to read the very thoughts and purposes of our hearts. From such seasons of prayer and communion come the answers of peace which strengthen faith into a firm and steady confidence; and thus we are enabled the more fully to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ, and of the fulness of God's loving benevolence toward us.—Eph. 3:16-19.

Let us endeavor to have more of that pure, true faith

“Which bears unmoved the world's dark frown,
Nor heeds its scornful smile;
Which seas of trouble cannot drown,
Nor Satan's arts beguile”—

the faith which overcomes the spirit of the world in us and about us, and which will remove mountains of difficulty, and secure all that our hearts desire, since it is written, “Ye shall ask what ye will (our wills being in harmony with the will of God), and it shall be done unto you.”—John 15:7.

When we see, thus, how reasonable a thing faith is, how God through His natural and written revelation of Himself appeals to the highest faculty of our nature (our reason) and bids us follow its logical deductions of faith in God, and to rest in and act upon its proper conclusions in studying His works and ways, we realize truly that this faith is a firm basis of hope in the things unseen, “which hope we have as an anchor, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth (by faith) into that within the veil”—into the glory of the spiritual condition.—Heb. 6:19.

CHRISTIAN'S PROGRESS



CHRISTIAN had not been satisfied with the world for a long time. Having had something to do with the world's business, he had not been favorably impressed with its methods. He had perceived that the worldly spirit displayed hardness and relentlessness; that it was the policy of the big business man to keep the little fellow down, so that the big man might stay up; that those who possessed power hugged it as tightly as Midas his gold; and that for the most part they were unscrupulous in their endeavors to retain it.

Christian also saw that the world could produce plenty for all its inhabitants, yet millions were swamped in poverty, while a few possessed a super-abundance of the earth's good things. In other words, he beheld that men were avaricious and selfish, and that there was no fear of the Lord before their eyes. Being aware of these facts, Christian decided to withdraw from the world; that is, he determined that henceforth he would not be found showing sympathy or cooperation with anything that is not of God.

The Logos Made Flesh

One important fact that engaged Christian's attention was the great contrast between this lost world and the One who came to save it. Although he could not naturally envision a being of any higher nature than man, yet his study of the Bible and of the works of creation positively convinced him that spirit beings exist. He had faith that there were hosts of sinless angels inhabiting the celestial realms. He learned from the Scriptures that Jesus, before coming to earth, was the great Logos of the heavens, a prince among the angels, and he realized that it would not be possible for the glory of the person of the Logos to be comprehended by mankind. He learned also that, next to the great “I AM,” the Logos had presided over a spirit domain that was perfect in its administration and fully obedient to divine law. Then he tried to grasp the fact of the transformation that the Logos must have undergone when He became “the man Christ Jesus” in order to die for human salvation.

But even this seemed too wonderful for finite minds to conceive.

Bethlehem, and the amazing event that occurred in that little hamlet over nineteen centuries ago passed vividly before his enraptured vision. This was followed by a reminder of the marvelous earthly life and ministry of Jesus, the Son of God. Then came Calvary, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and Pentecost with its tongues of fire and other mighty manifestations of miraculous power divine. Christian meditated on all these things until he became assured of their reality. To him they constituted dependable knowledge and a certain basis for faith. Here was a foundation upon which he could stand, and from which he could reach outward and upward toward a fuller comprehension of the wondrous entities of divine truth.

Christian Crosses the Line of Consecration

Then all at once Christian found himself singing:

“Oh, tender and sweet was the Master's voice
As it lovingly called to me:
'Come over the line, it is only a step,
I am waiting, my child, for thee.'
Over the line, hear the sweet refrain;
God's Word is chanting the heavenly strain.
Over the line, why should I remain?
I'll cross it and come to Jesus.”

And he did cross that line. He looked behind him, and saw clearly that he had stepped over it. Then he found himself possessed of a heart-hunger for heavenly things. Now he could appreciate the statement of the Master, “Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” The Word of truth had a new meaning for him, and he studied it diligently in order that he might know the divine will. That will must henceforth be the law of his life. Hitherto he had boasted that he could manage his own affairs, but now he was glad to be in partnership with a higher power and to know that the course of his earthly sojourn would be directed by heavenly wisdom. He saw that the Scrip-

tures constitute a gold mine of wealth, and he resolved to apply his mind to this so that he might become "filled with all the fulness of God."

While Christian had previously imagined he had some sort of standing with his Maker, he now came to appreciate definitely what one's standing in Christ really means. He saw that the Son of God has satisfied the claims of divine justice in behalf of those who have laid hold on the great salvation which He offers them; and that one's having been born imperfect no longer stands against any Christian in God's sight. He came to realize that the record of his own past demerits is now put away; that he now had been given a fresh start; that life has been opened up to him anew.

The more Christian pondered on this, the more he rejoiced in such an arrangement. Having been given a standing as though he were perfect, and divine assurance of this fact, he knew that now he could approach God with utmost confidence in the divine goodness. He saw that the love of God was the great drawing power to which all must respond who would have life. He knew for a certainty also that there is no cruelty in God, but only the desire to benefit all the creatures that He has made. The more Christian thought about this the more he felt that divine love was now calling him, holding out to him the arms of heavenly blessing; and pointing out the good that would come to him through a full consecration of all his powers to God. There was no mistaking the vision; it was flawlessly clear and wondrously grand. It offered to him the opening of a new world, new associations, and a new law of life.

Christian Encounters Opposition

Christian soon found that there were those around him who could not approve of the course which he had chosen. To them his life now manifested too much aloofness from the world. At first his neighbors applied themselves to the task of pointing out this fact to him, assuring him that a compromising policy is much better, more practical, and the one that would gain most for him in the long run. But Christian turned himself away from these false lures. He came to think in terms of the apostle: "This one thing I do; forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press on according to a mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." To him that "mark" meant the standard of perfect love, as it was manifested in the life of the great Founder of Christianity. Christian realized that he was set on a journey that has a grand goal at its end, and he wanted to do the things that would make sure his chances of attaining it.

Soon all the unseen powers of darkness manifested a sinister interest in Christian—because his way was not their way; because he was set in the most positive opposition to unrighteousness. At the head of these invisible forces against Christian was the great arch-enemy of righteousness, called Satan the Devil. As heretofore he had experienced considerable success in intimidating mankind by roaring like a lion, he now decided to try this means of breaking down Christian's resolve to follow Christ. So he put it in the

minds of some of Christian's acquaintances to "roar" a false proclamation against him—alleging that Christian is of unsound mind and not fit to dwell in liberty in the community. Thus a big noise was stirred up, with a view to Christian's intimidation and conquest.

But the more furiously these forces raged against him, the more earnestly did Christian apply himself to his resolute purpose of serving truth and righteousness. He met rebuttals with resolution. He devoted himself more assiduously to prayer and study of the Scriptures. He looked to make sure that he had put on the whole armor of God. He met hard looks with smiles, and did this so effectively that some of his erstwhile friends swung around again and admitted that after all he was a fine fellow except for his religious "fanaticism." Thus matters continued until most of the people who knew Christian came to accept him for what he is, even though he did not measure up to their worldly ideals.

And Christian was not really a fanatic. He did not dress differently from other men around him. He did not attempt to violate the proper social conventions of his time. Although he knew there is no divine ruling that Sunday must be regarded as a holy day; yet, instead of parading his liberty and outraging his neighbors by working in his garden or painting his house on Sunday, he made it a day for relaxation from toil and for divine worship. True, he did not go to any of the great church edifices; but finding a little company of friends who loved the truth as he loved it, he invited them to his home each week; and here he explained to them the great things of the divine plan in all their glorious details. And when any of Christian's worldly neighbors chanced to drop in at his home on this day of rest, he always invited them to stay to this little service, for study, prayer and sacred song. In this way a number of persons in the community received a witness concerning the various Bible truths that Christian believed.

Christian knew that the name of the Easter holiday had its origin in an ancient heathen festival held annually in honor of the goddess Estera; but he did not go about boasting of his knowledge of this fact, and speaking disrespectfully of all Easter services; he did not think that such a course would be consistent with the spirit of a sound mind. He knew that at about this same time of the year Jesus was raised from the dead; and so, when Easter came around, he simply arranged a special meeting in his home, and invited his friends and neighbors in to hear a discourse on the glorious fact of the Resurrection. Thus, because he did not deliberately arouse opposition by doing absurd or utterly foolish things, the little class which met at his home began to increase in numbers, and its influence for good finally began to be felt in the community.

Satan Tries Other Devices

But the Devil was not satisfied to leave Christian alone. Since his method of "roaring" had not proved successful against him, Satan now determined to employ another device—he would masquerade as an angel of light; that is, pretend to be a messenger of

truth. Soon thereafter one who claimed to be a special servant of God came to Christian and talked to him in a seemingly sincere manner. He said there was no doubt in his mind but that Christian is a very good man; and that his reason for making this call was to assist Christian to more practically and effectively apply his talents for God and Christ. Christian could sing and he was told that his services were needed in a certain church choir. Christian had a pleasing personality, and that too was needed in a certain religious organization. Christian had teaching ability, and it was needed in a certain Sunday school. The visitor was making no demands and laying down no hard and fast law with regard to Christian's religious belief. He said that so long as Christian believed the Bible, that is sufficient; that he could put his own interpretation on the teachings of that Book, though it would be best if he did not too openly proclaim his private views.

But in what the visitor said, Christian believed that he detected a snare of Satan. So he opened his heart and told his visitor his decision. He said that he must preach the truth as he saw it—and he proceeded to set forth what he believed the truth to be. But his visitor soon wearied of the discourse and decided that after all he was not quite sure that they could really use Christian in their church at the present time; and suggested that he had better wait, and that probably someone else would call upon him later.

When Satan saw that he had been foiled in his two attempts to turn Christian from the strait and narrow way, he conceived a further design. He knew that when a man has good health and congenial employment, he can endure many things. Hence he decided to weaken Christian by doing him grievous bodily harm. He then afflicted him with a virulent malady. It was difficult for the doctors to diagnose the trouble or to locate its cause; but it was attended with much pain and was a long, slow, tedious illness. In fact, Christian was given up as an incurable. His job was lost, his usefulness was gone, yet he might continue to live for many years. This was a crucial test. There came the days when Christian actually wondered why he had been born, and why God had permitted his trials to be so severe.

Christian Thinks of Past Blessings

Some among those who came to see him said they believed he had carried his religion too far; that if he had not been such an extremist perhaps God would not have afflicted him in this way. Others vaguely hinted that his life could not have been so virtuous as he had led them to believe. One man voiced the ancient fallacy that "God is good to his own and always gives them an abundance of the good things of this life." Did not His Word say that they shall not want for any good thing? Thus each had some comments to make on the state that Christian was in and the cause for it. Yet there were a few who attended Christian's little meetings; and these stood by him, prayed with him, and did all in their power to encourage him.

Happily there were days when Christian had little or no pain; and at such times he was wont to take inventory of his spiritual goods and effects. He felt

that though his patience had been sorely tried, he had not denied the truth. He recalled his consecration to God, and how he had entered into His sanctuary and had partaken of the shew-bread of truth from the golden table, had offered the incense of his devotion on the golden altar, and had rejoiced in the beautiful light of the candlestick which lit up the Holy Embroidered on the Veil he had beheld the red, the white, the purple and the gold intertwined, and he knew the truths that these were speaking to his heart. Moreover, he had gazed longingly toward the Most Holy, for he knew that in there was the hidden manna of immortality, the budded rod representing the church of Christ, and the law of love that was to reach its consummation in heaven itself.

Over and over Christian cogitated on such matters as these as he lay there on his sick bed. He wondered if in his life of consecration he had properly kept the divine law, if he had availed himself of the full measure of light that had been intended for him, if the incense he had offered had been pleasing to God, and if he could keep on trusting the Lord to the end of his life. He wondered if his guardian angel was near him, giving him courage to hold on; and there were times when he had fullest assurance that this was so.

Some days were dark and some were easier for Christian. When his bodily frame was weaker, he fondly thought that God might soon take him away from the world and to his heavenly home. And so he lived in this hope. Finally there came a change, a peculiar and sudden change, one that even the doctors could not quite understand—a change for the better. Christian now felt better, and could talk more freely. The improvement steadily continued. Nature had put up a great fight and was gradually winning out. And back of nature was the One who holdeth the world in the hollow of His hand, and who, whenever He wills it, can utilize the very forces around us to put strength into the weakened bodies of men.

Christian Rejoices in the Truth

Christian once more became well and strong. He found it necessary to go out again and face the world. Through all his sufferings he had held onto God and to His eternal purpose and plan. He felt greatly humbled by his experiences. He realized that apart from God there is nothing in man. He was filled with gratitude to his Maker, because he had been sustained by the power of divine truth. He had heard "songs in the night" of his sorrow and pain which had gladdened him. He felt that his faith might have been swept away during that time, had it not been maintained by divine power. He had gained many lessons, and he had much to further rejoice his heart.

Today Christian feels that he has put the truth to a very thorough test. While there are those who would draw his interest into some new channel, into some sort of so-called "new light", yet he has sure confidence in the things that have sustained him hitherto. He intelligently reads the signs of the times in the light of divine prophecy, and he knows that the world's great morning time is soon to shed its glory throughout the earth. He sees that the Harvest, still ripe for the sickle, goes on apace; and that "when the servants

of our God are sealed in their foreheads", the winds of strife will be allowed to blow as a whirlwind. Christian sees his privilege of suffering with Christ in this present time so that in the age to come he may be accounted worthy to reign with Him. He knows that sacrifice is one of the great ways to prove one's love, and he endeavors to act on his knowledge of that fact.

Christian feels that because of what he has been through he has acquired greater sympathy for all men, and especially for those of "like precious faith." He knows that all are weak because of inherited imperfections. Realizing his own demerits, he tries to be gentle and lenient in his dealings with others. His faith in the power of love continues to grow, and he believes that this love should be practically applied in the service of God and the brethren. In his heart he echoes the prayer of the Master, "I will pray not for the world, but for them that Thou hast given Me out of the world, that they may be one; I in them, and Thou in Me; that they may become perfect in one."

Christian stands uncompromisingly for the truth; but he realizes that the truth is a means to an end, and that the end desired is the manifestation of faith and love. And so he studies to "rightly divide the Word of truth," in order that he may be a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed"; and that when the faith and the love of his heart have been proved, he

may come forth as gold and stand approved before his Master and Lord.

Thus does Christian continue to live in heart cooperation with the eternal purpose of God. Life has become a larger thing to him, because he better comprehends its meaning. All good things of God have come to mean more to him than ever. Love itself is a bigger and richer thing, more practical, more radiant, a mightier power in his life. He is glad for this. He is rejoiced to know that he and other fellow-travellers can share this love together, and he hopes that this will ever continue to be the case. He hopes that nothing will ever sully or mar this love, or cause it to fail in time of need. He hopes that it will keep on enlarging and taking to itself the elements of the very sum of love, and shine forth until it causes all those who possess it to be as lights in this darksome world.

Christian knows that he is here to witness for the truth and to lay down his very life in its service, and he fervently prays that he may have grace to keep on in this way to the end of his days on earth, so that he may enter into the heavenly inheritance to take up that larger service that shall be assigned to that celestial company which shall be known as "kings and priests unto God," and who shall reign with Him in the age to come.

THE PURPOSE OF REVEALED TRUTH

"God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light; bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar."—Psalms 118: 27.

UCCESS along any line of endeavor ordinarily depends (1st) upon a clear vision of the objective sought, and (2nd) upon an understanding of the proper means to be employed in attaining it. This is specially true with respect to Christian success. The great objective of the Christian life is to know and do the will of God; and He reveals His will through the doctrines of His Word. It is for this reason that we are admonished in the Bible to be established in the *faith*, so that we may not be blown about by "every wind of doctrine." "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways," says the apostle. There is no condition of mind more pitiable than that of an erstwhile enlightened follower of the Master who has lost his sense of discernment between truth and error, and who thereby becomes unstable and uncertain as to what the Lord requires of him as a Christian, or just what constitutes the Christian hope for the future.

The word "light," in our text, is used to designate Jehovah's revealed will for His people; and, coupled directly with the revealment of this light, is the *purpose* for which it is given; namely, to aid us in binding our sacrifice to the altar—laying down life itself in the service of God. This is but one of the many statements of God's Word that point out the fact that God has a definite purpose in revealing His truth to His people. He does not give His truth to anyone merely to satisfy their curiosity. Rather, when His truth is revealed it constitutes an invitation to cooperate with Him in the things that He is doing in the

earth—the light itself being the outline or plan of procedure.

The Light Revealed To Noah and Others

When God made known to Noah that a flood was coming upon the earth, He revealed light then due. But this light was not given merely that Noah might have the satisfaction of knowing in advance something that was not yet revealed to others. No, there was something that God wanted Noah to do about that message. Through the revealed light concerning the coming flood came the invitation to Noah to cooperate with his Maker. The cooperation that God then required involved a number of things on Noah's part—he was to become a prophet, a preacher of righteousness, he was to bear witness to the truth that had been revealed to him. Also, he was to build an ark, in which he and his family were to be saved from the flood, so that beyond the flood they might become the nucleus of a new order of things—"the world that now is." Yes, God shewed Noah the light; and Noah, in his whole-hearted faithfulness, bound his sacrifice to the altar, devoting all that he had and was to the divine service.

Later, in the progress of the divine plan, God appeared to Abraham. To him also He "shewed the light." God revealed to Abraham that He intended to "bless all the families of the earth." Undoubtedly this was good news to Abraham. Surely he must have rejoiced when he thus learned how divine love was to operate for the blessing of the entire human

family. But was it merely to make Abraham feel good that God revealed this great truth to him? By no means! Here again came an invitation from God to His servant, to cooperate with Him in the outworking of His plan. But to accept this invitation Abraham must make a sacrifice. He must leave his own people and his father's house, and become a stranger in a strange land. Later he was called upon to make other sacrifices. He was asked to offer up Isaac—his own son in whom all his hopes were centered. But Abraham was faithful to his light. As the light was revealed to him he consistently and without hesitation bound his sacrifice to the altar. He went along faithfully with the light that was then due.

Moses Also Was Faithful

The Israelites, descendants of Abraham, were in bondage to the Egyptians. Doubtless many of them, clinging to the promises of God, believed that sometime, somehow, they would be delivered; but when and how they did not know. Young Moses attempted to do something for his people, but failed; and he was forced to flee into exile in order to save his own life. But forty years later God's due time came to deliver His people, and He chose Moses to be the human instrument to accomplish this great feat. Accordingly, at the burning bush God appeared to Moses to "shew him the light."

With the coming of this light to Moses, there came also the inevitable responsibility that God's truth always imposes upon those to whom it is revealed. Again there came the invitation to a faithful servant of God to be a coworker with Him; and again this privilege of collaborating with God involved sacrifice. At first Moses held back—not so much because the cost was great but because he feared he was not competent to do what the Lord had asked, and that because of this the project might fail. But the Lord reassured Moses, as He does all of His people, that his lack would be made up; and Moses then went ahead with his commission. Here again is a remarkable illustration of the principle set forth in our text—*vision* resulting in *action*.

In the various progressive steps of the divine plan we find this principle always operative. It was so in God's dealings with all of His ancient prophets. He revealed to Jonah His intention to destroy Nineveh, not to satisfy the prophet's possible desire for advance "news" but because He wanted him to go there and warn the people of their impending doom. He likewise revealed certain impending events to Jeremiah, not for the prophet's personal benefit but because He wanted Jeremiah to tell that message to others. At first Jeremiah, in his mistaken modesty, decided that he would keep still about the "light" that had been specially revealed to him; but, being sincere at heart, he found that he could not be happy in following such a policy of silence concerning the Message of God. The words of the Lord were like "fire in his bones," and he was impelled to speak forth the truth then due. Thus he too bound his sacrifice upon the altar in obedience to the light received.

Saul of Tarsus Sees The Light

In the New Testament as well as in the Old we have various inspiring illustrations of faithfulness activated by revelations of truth. Saul of Tarsus, who so vehemently persecuted the church of Christ, was miraculously halted on his way to Damascus and the "light" was revealed to him. Immediately he prostrated himself before the Lord, in the spirit of full consecration, asking, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" Instinctively Saul realized that such a revelation to him of the divine truth that the crucified Jesus was in fact the promised Messiah placed on him a sacred responsibility. In his zeal for God, already manifested in his misguided activities against the church, Saul was willing and ready to meet that responsibility. His subsequent faithfulness bears convincing testimony to the fact that he kept his sacrifice bound to the altar. His own words are, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

All of the apostles likewise were brought face to face with the fact that every revelation of divine truth involves responsibility and sacrifice on the part of the recipient. They also realized that it is necessary to keep their spiritual vision *clear* in order to successfully serve the Lord. This principle has held true with respect to God's dealings with His faithful people in all ages. True faithfulness, full obedience to God, has always implied close attention to every gleam of "light" that He has revealed. To the degree that any of God's people have deviated from that light, to that degree they have failed to enjoy the Lord's full favor and blessing.

Jesus, Our Great Exemplar

In the life of Jesus we have the most outstanding of all examples, of the operation of divine truth and its relationship to individual experience and faithfulness. Jesus came into the world to accomplish a specific purpose. According to the divine law He was not to enter upon His Messianic mission until He was thirty years of age. When the due time arrived He presented Himself to John at Jordan for baptism. As He came up out of the water the "heavens were opened unto Him." Here was the revelation of heavenly light, the "vision" of divine truth, that was to be His guide as a coworker with God in carrying out the divine plan. In the wilderness for forty days He meditated on that vision, familiarizing Himself with all its details. Then, for three and a half years—right up to the cross when He cried, "It is finished"—He kept His sacrifice bound firmly to the altar. Nothing could turn Him aside from His course of faithfulness to the heavenly vision as it had come to Him.

The responsibility that the great revelation of divine truth imposed upon Jesus was tremendous, but He did not shrink back from meeting it in all its details. The cost of meeting that responsibility was great; but Jesus was willing to pay, and did pay, with His very life. This responsibility was not merely that of doing something in the divine service—of keeping busy or active—although no Christian since Jesus' day has ever kept more active than He did.

In addition to being active, Jesus was also particular about the way in which He served. Gracious words proceeded out of His mouth. But these words were not simply His own; they were words inspired by the heavenly vision of truth. He Himself said, "The words that I speak... are the words of My Father that sent Me."

Yes, Jesus kept His sacrifice bound to the altar, both by faithfulness in the divine service and also by His carefulness in cherishing the importance of every detail of the divine message as it had come to Him. Jesus was not one to say, "It doesn't make any difference what you believe, so long as you live right." Jesus knew that in order to live right—to live in harmony with God—one must believe and cherish the truth that God reveals to His people; for it is through the truth that God reveals His will. If this were not true there would seem to be no good reason why God reveals His truth to anyone, except to satisfy curiosity.

Jesus Did Not Know All

Jesus was wholly faithful to all the truth that God revealed to Him during His ministry; but He did not know every detail of the divine plan until after His death and resurrection. This fact is shown by His words to the disciples relative to the time of His second advent and of the end of the age. We quote: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." (Mark 13: 32.) This statement emphasizes the fact that the revelation of divine truth is progressive—particularly dispensational truth.

Yes, God reveals to each individual or group of individuals, whom He invites to colabor with Him, just so much truth as they need to know in order to serve Him intelligently during the period in which they live. For example, God told Abraham of His ultimate purpose to bless all nations. This information inspired Abraham with the desire to serve God faithfully; and he did serve faithfully in every detail of the plan, so far as it was possible and so far as it was revealed to him at that time. But Abraham did not know just who would constitute the promised "seed," nor how the promised blessing would come through that seed.

In order for Jesus to carry out His earthly mission successfully it was necessary that He know a great deal about the divine plan. This knowledge not only guided Him personally in His service to the Heavenly Father, but also formed the background to the many wonderful lessons contained in His parables and other teachings which have helped to guide the church all down through the centuries. While the vision of truth that came to Jesus at Jordan was miraculously imparted, yet it was information that previously had been recorded in the prophecies and types of the Old Testament. Consequently He was able always to give a "thus saith the Lord" as authority for everything that He said and did.

It has been through the written Word that God has guided the followers of Jesus—Jesus Himself being the one used as the Father's chief interpreter of the prophecies. The Apostle Paul says, "God, who at

sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." (Heb. 1:1, 2) Yes, it was Jesus who "brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel." The hope of immortality was a part of the gospel arrangement; but it was not revealed to Abraham, because it was not for him. Immortality is for Jesus and His church, hence Jesus, in the divine order of things, brought it to light.

While the vision of truth that came to the early church was a glorious one, inspiring and enriching the life of every faithful follower of the Master, yet there were some features of the divine plan which were not then due to be understood. Then, following the death of the apostles, the light enjoyed by the early church became supplanted by error. There came the foretold "falling away," and gross darkness took the place of the precious light. There probably were a few individuals here and there who held faithfully to the truth; but because the vast majority preferred darkness rather than light, there was ushered in that long and dismal period of time which is now spoken of as the Dark Ages.

The Vision of Present Truth

But the truth was not to be thus obscured for ever. Jesus and the prophets and apostles bear testimony to the fact that in the end of the age God would again speak to His people, and invite them to cooperate with Him in the closing work of the Gospel age; and that He then would give them sufficient information to enable them to understand something about the "strange act" that He is now performing in the earth. This glorious vision, in which many of the saints have been rejoicing during the past sixty years, is known to them as "Present Truth." It is *present* truth because it is truth that is due at the present time, and also because it is truth which has to do with the period of Christ's second presence.

Even as God spoke to the early church through His Son, so in this end of the age Jesus, in fulfillment of His promise, has "girded" Himself and has come forth and served His people. (Luke 12: 37.) The precious truths thus brought to the attention of the church today are both old and new. Old and fundamental truths, long hidden in the trash pile of human tradition, have been restored; and new truths, having to do particularly with what the Lord is now doing in the earth, have also been made known to the faithful watchers. And what an inspiring vision this whole array of light has proved to be! No wonder the Prophet Daniel spoke of the "blessedness" that would be the portion of those whom the Lord would take into His confidence at the time when the vision would be made plain.—Dan. 12: 12.

Through the Prophet Habakkuk the Lord also tells of the vision of truth which He would give to His people in this end of the age. We quote: "And the Lord answered me and said, Write the vision and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will

not (actually) tarry." (Hab. 2:2, 3.) Note the expression in this remarkable prophecy: "That he may run who readeth it." Not that he may be glad, merely, to hear the truth, but "*that he may run.*" Thus again we are shown the fact that with the vision of divine truth comes the responsibility to be *active* under its influence.

Has The Vision Lied?

The majority of those who read this article undoubtedly have in mind the glorious vision of present truth, which indeed has been made plain upon tables or charts during the closing days of this Gospel age. Among the more important items of truth included in the vision are: The fact and philosophy of the ransom; the restitution hope for the world; the high calling of the church, and the fact of her participation with Christ in the work of reconciling the lost world to God as "ministers of reconciliation"; the truth concerning the holy spirit and how it operates; the distinction of natures among God's intelligent creatures; and a glorious insight into the prophecies which have to do with the ending of this "present evil world" and the inauguration of the Kingdom of God, including a knowledge of Christ's second and invisible presence.

This inspiring vision has stimulated many in the past to actually lay down their lives on the altar of sacrifice. As more and more of the people of God caught a glimpse of it, they accordingly bound their sacrifice to the altar. Time, money and talent were placed in the divine service so freely and so abundantly that one of the most outstanding witnessing works of all time was carried on—a vivid example of what results when the vision of truth, clear and unmistakable, is received into good and honest hearts.

Now was this vision of Present Truth then true? And is it still true? Did that vision come from God, or was it one of Satan's "cunningly devised fables"? If it was true twenty, thirty or forty years ago, is there any reason to doubt that it is true today? These are questions that frequently and persistently are being forced upon the minds of many Bible Students today. They are questions that must be settled in the heart and mind of each individual Christian, and settled in the right way, if he is to keep his sacrifice bound to the altar.

Have We Reached the End of the Age?

First, let us enquire as to whether we are now actually living in the end of the age and in the dawn of the Millennium. Are the prophecies that describe the dissolution of the old order of things now being fulfilled? Is there any evidence, for example, that the nations are now gathering themselves together to be broken? (Isa. 8:9, 10; Zeph. 3:8.) This is not the place to enter into a detailed discussion of the prophecies that relate to the end of the age; but it seems obvious that every Bible Student who has ever had a clear knowledge of Present Truth must agree that present world conditions are in marked fulfilment of these and other prophecies. And when was the definite turning-point in world affairs that gradually has led up to the present crisis? Was it not in the

year 1914, the very year that the "vision" pointed out as being the end of Gentile Times? Can there be any doubt but that since 1914 the Gentile governments of the earth have been gradually losing their control over the people?

Because Abraham did not know all the details of how God would fulfil His promise to bless all the families of the earth, he naturally entertained some hopes that were not immediately realized. So it has been with us. When the vision of Present Truth was first given, and 1914 appeared on the "table" as marking the end of Gentile Times, we formed certain hasty conclusions as to just what would take place at that time. But these hasty conclusions did not destroy the general vision, nor did they mean that the vision had lied. God does not deal with His people that way.

Christ's Presence Denied

Enemies of the truth, particularly those who once claimed to see the vision, have made futile attempts to discount its authenticity. One of the fundamental features of the light, as it is now shining for the blessing of God's people, is the fact of Christ's second presence. Some Bible Students now attempt to deny that Christ is present. They freely admit that the prophecies relating to the end of the age are being wonderfully fulfilled, but claim that this merely indicates that Christ will come soon; and the claim is that when He does come there will be some spectacular demonstration in the sky, making it possible for every physical eye to gaze literally upon the person of the Redeemer.

Some, not yet fully established in the truth, are inclined to be discouraged by these theories. Other say, "Well, does it make any real difference whether we say that Christ is now invisibly present, or that he will come soon?" On the face of it it doesn't seem to make any great difference. But let us examine the suggestion a little more carefully. In order to "disprove" the fact of Christ's presence it is necessary to place a *literal* interpretation upon most of the prophecies that relate thereto. If we do this, and wish to be consistent in our study of the prophecies, we must also place a literal interpretation upon those texts which have to do with the end of the age; because Christ's second presence and the end of the age are subjects that are inseparably interlinked with each other.

But if we consistently follow such a method of literal interpretation we will encounter many difficulties, and eventually will have the literal earth destroyed with literal fire. This in turn does away with the possibility of human restitution. If the hope of human restitution is destroyed, the ransom work of Christ is made void. The "vision" shows that Christ and the church are to reign on the earth to accomplish the work of restitution; but if the earth is destroyed there can be no Kingdom, and the church cannot reign here with Christ. In brief, nearly the whole plan of God is destroyed by tampering with this one glorious doctrine of Christ's presence. Yet some still ask, "What great difference does it make?"

We believe that it is an undisputed fact of Biblical prophecy that the "end of the world" follows the second coming of Christ—that the old order is destroyed as a result of His coming and presence. 2nd Peter, chapter 3, makes this point plain, as does also Thessalonians 5: 2, 3. Today the old world order is falling down all around us. The nations, in a desperate effort to save themselves from complete destruction, are now gathering for the final conflict. In prophecy God assumes the responsibility for having brought about this condition of things, and the work is shown to be accomplished through the presence of Christ. No, brethren, the vision has not lied. It may have seemed to "tarry," but has not actually done so.

The Truth is Ours

In connection with every important change of dispensation in the outworking of the divine plan, God has had His witnesses upon the earth and has revealed to them the facts concerning the impending changes; and this end of the age has been no exception to the rule. He promised to dispense "meat in due season" to the household of faith, and He has done so; and blessed have been all those who have been cheered by the rays of light that He has revealed. To no other people has God ever given such a vision of His truth—so satisfying, so all-comprehensive, so simple, and yet so like the God we have always wanted to worship.

Others have a smattering knowledge of prophecy; but their vision is marred, either by the torment theory, or by belief in the literal burning up of the earth, or by the trinity monstrosity, or by some other Babylonish or human tradition. But Present Truth is free from all of these. It stands the test of reason and of the Bible. It satisfies! It presents a glorious hope for the church, and rich earthly blessings for the world. It explains why God has permitted evil for the past six thousand years, and what is the meaning of present world distress. It gives us hope, courage, strength, joy and peace in the Lord.

Yes, the Lord has "shewed us the light"; and the responsibility of that light is just as binding upon us today as it ever was; yea, more so, because we are nearing the consummation of our sacrifice. Dearly beloved, has the vision lost its inspiring effect in your life? If so, take another look at it, reexamine the truth, let its precious message again thrill your soul. Let your faith reach out and grasp the immensity of the fact that the God of the universe is now actually working in the earth, and that through the truth He has invited you to be a coworker with Him. Can you—can anyone—really grasp the full importance of what this means? Let us try to grasp it as fully as possible. Let us endeavor to grasp it so fully that the joys and the cares of this life will seem of trifling importance compared with the stupendous fact that we are Christians, and that as such God has given us the vision of truth—Present Truth—in order that we may intelligently lay down our lives in His service.

And what is that service? First, it is that of being conformed to the will of God. As we become conformed to His will we will become like Him in character, and like His beloved Son. To the extent that

we are like God we will do as God does—we will seek to bless others. To the extent that we become like Christ, we will also do as Christ did; which was to bless others—in God's way, by bearing witness to the truth. It is God's will that we should be "ambassadors for Christ." If we are faithful ambassadors we will tell what we know about Christ and about His Heavenly Father, and ours—and about the divine Kingdom soon to be established. If we are truly thrilled with the hope of future participation with Christ in blessing the people, we will want to do everything we can now to scatter words of cheer and comfort to the distressed world, and especially to aid God's own people—many of whom now suffer confusion and are "mourners in Zion."

Many substitutes are now being offered to take the place of Present Truth, but none of them will stand the test of sincere investigation. Nearly all of them, by their very nature, offer a tacit excuse for the Lord's people to remove their sacrifice from the altar. Nearly all of them lead back into ways and teachings of Babylon—hence into darkness. In connection with every outstanding revelation of divine truth, there has always been the deceptive efforts of Satan to discount that truth, to cast doubts in the minds of those who have accepted it, to offer additional "new light," etc. It was an effort of this kind on the part of Satan that brought about the Dark Ages.

Instead of being discouraged because some are now doubting the vision of Present Truth, let us rather rejoice that we ourselves are still standing firm. Let us continue to revel in the truth—yet not alone for ourselves, but rejoice in whatever opportunities we may have or can make to tell it to others. Thus let us bind our sacrifice to the altar, and keep it there until it is wholly consumed.

THE OPENING YEAR

Standing at the portal of the opening year,
Words of comfort meet us, hushing every fear;
Spoken through the silence by our Father's voice,
Tender, strong and faithful, making us rejoice.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

"I, the Lord, am with thee, be thou not afraid;
I will help and strengthen, be thou not dismayed.
Yea, I will uphold thee with Mine own right hand;
Thou art called and chosen in My sight to stand."
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

For the year before us, oh, what rich supplies!
For the poor and needy, living streams shall rise!
For the sad and mournful, shall His grace abound;
For the faint and feeble, perfect strength be found.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

He will never fail us, He will not forsake;
His eternal covenant He will never break;
Resting on His promise, what have we to fear!
God is all sufficient for the coming year.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.

CHILDREN'S HOUR



UNCLE EB DISCUSSES THE GOSPEL AGE

JESUS had told His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until the holy spirit should come upon them. Thus Uncle Eb began his story. One of the original twelve apostles, he said, was not with them when Jesus ascended on high. This absent one was Judas Iscariot. The Lord had called Judas to follow Him just as He had called the others. But this apostle gradually allowed greed of money to take possession of him. He even went to the priests and rabbis of the Jews and offered to betray the Master to them for thirty pieces of silver. They accepted his base offer, and thus Jesus was betrayed to the enemy. When Judas realized what he had done, he went out and hanged himself.

The other apostles and disciples remained in Jerusalem for about eight days; and when a certain feast day came (called the day of Pentecost) they were all gathered at one place, praising God and wondering what would happen next in connection with His plan.

Suddenly there came a sound that filled all the house where they were. It was like a rushing, mighty wind. And then there came fiery tongues which sat upon each of them. And then they were filled with a power—the power of the holy spirit of God. Now they were able to speak foreign languages that they had not known before. And strangers from other parts of the world, who were present, heard, each one, his own language spoken; and these were all greatly surprised, for they realized that these strange things were taking place through the power of God.

Then the Apostle Peter stood up and preached a great sermon to the people. He told them that the prophecy of Joel was being fulfilled before their eyes. (Joel 2: 28-32). Then he explained that Jesus was the mighty One whose coming had been foretold by all the prophets of Israel, but that the rulers of the people had taken Him and crucified Him. But, said Peter, the blessed Messiah had not been left to perish in the grave, but God had raised Him up to life again, and now had made Him both Lord and Christ. When the Jews assembled heard these words of the apostle, they felt very repentant. Peter then told them what they should do to come into harmony with God; and as a result, three thousand persons were added to the church that day.

One day Peter and John went up to the Temple, where they beheld a man who was lame and could not walk. In fact this man had been born lame. Peter came to him and commanded him in the name of Jesus to be healed; and suddenly his weakness left him, and he

was able to walk and even to run. All the people who stood by were amazed. Then Peter explained that the man had been healed by the power of Jesus, whom they had wickedly killed. He called upon them to repent so that their sins might be blotted out when the times of refreshing should come from the presence of the Lord; for that Jesus had gone to heaven, there to remain till the times of the restitution of all things, which God had spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3: 21.

All Things to Be Restored

The word “restitution” means restoration. It signifies that the things which men have lost through their fall into sin will eventually be restored to them. Jesus Himself had said, “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” And what was lost? Just think for a moment. The Garden of Eden was lost, wasn't it? And the tree of life was lost. Man's pleasant occupation, and his perfect happiness were lost. Dominion over the earth and the lower animals was lost. Perfect health was lost. The glory of God in man was largely lost. Life, itself was lost.

And are all these precious things to be restored? Yes, indeed. Jesus gave His own life in order that they might be restored. Because He died, life will be given back to man. Then the curse will be taken off the earth. Health, happiness, peace, dominion over earth, will all be restored. God took these things away for a time and did so in order to teach the world a great lesson. Men have had a chance to learn that God's laws must be obeyed. Sorrow, sickness and death have been stern teachers, and they have been on earth for a long time; but, thank God, ere long they will all be overthrown and will pass away for evermore.

The apostles and all the early Christians soon began to realize the nature of God's great eternal plan and purpose. While Jesus was alive, before His crucifixion, they had thought that He would at that time restore the lost power and dominion to Israel, and make it a kingdom as it once had been. In fact, they looked for an earthly Israelitish kingdom to come in their day. But now they saw that the divine plan was very different from what they had been supposed it to be; and that before blessing the world God was to gather His church. The members of this church would be required to follow Jesus, to stand up for the truth, and be faithful unto death. If they did these things,

they would be the spiritual seed of Abraham who eventually would bless the world. In the time of the "first resurrection" they would go to heaven and be united with Jesus; and then with Him they would reign over the earth for a thousand years.—Rev. 20: 6.

Jesus had told His followers to preach the gospel for a "witness" in all the world, beginning at Jerusalem. This did not mean that He expected all the world to be "converted" during this age. The principal thing the gospel message was to do was to take out from among men the members of Christ's church. It also was to witness to the power of the coming Kingdom of Christ. To be faithful in doing what Jesus had commanded meant that the disciples would be misunderstood and persecuted by the world. And indeed they were. As Jesus told them, they were not of the world. The first Christian martyr was Stephen. Because he was faithful in preaching the gospel, he was stoned to death.

The apostles were given power to perform miracles. They healed sick people and even raised the dead. The Apostle Paul was one of the greatest of the apostles. He formerly had persecuted the Christians, but God had given him a mighty vision and had converted him. He then travelled long distances and endured many hardships, but was faithful to the very end of life. Historians say he was finally beheaded, in a prison in Rome.

The Apostle Paul was a great writer. Some of the greatest words he wrote are found in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians (on the Resurrection), in the 13th chapter of the same book (on love), the 8th chapter of Romans, and in the epistle to the Philippians.

John was a disciple and an apostle, whom Jesus specially loved. He too wrote beautiful letters on the subject of love. At one time he was made a prisoner on the Island of Patmos, because of his faith. While there he had a wonderful vision of God's coming Kingdom, and also of things that were to take place during the gospel age before the Kingdom is set up. He tells of these matters in what we may call "word pictures." The book of Revelation was written by him. The last three chapters of this book are specially wonderful.

In the 20th chapter of Revelation John tells us that a mighty angel is to come down from heaven and bind Satan and cast him into a great abyss and leave him there for a thousand years. Then he says that the dead will come forth from the grave and stand before God on the earth, and the book of life will be opened and the Judgment day of a thousand years will begin. He then speaks of the great white throne of God, and of how the Lord will rule the world in that glorious time of the future.

The City of Life

In Revelation 21 John compares God's Kingdom to a city. And what a wonderful city it will be! All around it there will be the great wall of divine law. Its twelve gates will be the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Its twelve foundation stones will be the twelve apostles of Christ. Its golden street will be the street of truth. There will be nothing wicked

in this city, for no evil person will finally be allowed in the Kingdom of God. Here will be the tree of life, which is the great secret of life, and here will be the water of life in a mighty river clear as crystal, which will flow out from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

This great river of the water of life we believe represents the truth. Concerning it John wrote: "The spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will let him come and take of the water of life freely."

The Water of Life

Water is something that man cannot live without. When Jesus was on earth He said, "I am the water of life"; and what He meant was, "I have something that is like water to a thirsty man, and that something is truth." When the Master stood at the well of Samaria and asked a certain woman for water to drink, He said, "He that drinks of the water that I shall give Him it shall be in him a well of water-springing up unto everlasting life."

So we see by the Scriptures that Jesus compared the truth to *wells* of water during this present Gospel age, and then we find that it is compared to a great *river* of water during the Millennial age. No doubt many of us have seen a great river, such as the Mississippi, which drains thousands of square miles of territory. We think of a river as having its source far off somewhere in the mountains, where the cold snows melt and where icy springs gush forth, and from smaller streams and rivulets, till, by the confluence of these the mighty river comes rolling along on its journey to the sea.

Even so the Millennial age river of truth is said to issue from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Or it may be said to proceed from God's mountain, by which we mean God's Kingdom—for the expression "the throne of God" indicates that the divine Kingdom will then be established over all the affairs of the earth. He will be causing the truth to go forth to every land, so that all will know about it; and that will be the time when the spirit and the bride will say, Come, etc.

The "spirit" referred to by John signifies the power of God—for the word *spirit* means *power*. And the "bride" here mentioned means the Church of Christ, the followers of Jesus, who will have been found faithful unto death and will be reigning with Him in His throne. In the Millennial age these will be calling the people of the world to come and drink of the refreshing waters of truth so that they may regain the life that was lost through father Adam's sin. Whosoever then hears the message will tell it to others, so that, as the prophet wrote long ago, the whole earth will become filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.—Isa. 11:9.

The Prophet Isaiah had also written something like what we have quoted from the book of Revelation, for he said: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend

money for that which satisfieth not? Harken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. . . . For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree, and it shall not be cut off."—Isa. 55:1-3, 12, 13.

And all this is simply a fine picture in words of the great things that God will do for all men in the future age of divine peace and blessing, which age is called the "times of restitution," it being the time when perfect life, earthly dominion, health and happiness will be restored to the human race.

God's Tabernacle With Men

While John in his Revelation vision was seeing the wonderful things that are to take place on the earth, a great voice out of heaven said to him, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new."

Now can you imagine what this earth will be like when there will be no more death? Think of the funeral processions you have seen, and the cemeteries you have visited. Perhaps you have lost some dear friend or relative by the hand of death. He or she was taken to the graveyard and did not return to you. Now think what it will be like when all these friends and relatives come back to life again, as God says they will surely come back. Will there not be a great rejoicing in the world? Then not only will the dead come again to life, but sickness and suffering will gradually be done away. People will not have headaches, backaches, toothaches, colds, fevers, rheumatism, lumbago, erysipelas, chicken pox, mumps, whooping cough, indigestion, and a thousand and one other diseases, like they have today. Do you know what will cure all these things? It will be the power of life, or vitality, that will come from God. In the 22nd chapter of Revelation it is pictured as the tree of life, whose leaves are said to be for the healing of the nations.

Another wonderful description of the blessings of life that are coming to the world in the Millennial age is given us in the 25th chapter of Isaiah's prophecy, where the Kingdom of Christ is symbolized as a mountain. It reads:

"And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things. . . . And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces;

and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—Isa. 25:6-8.

The Gospel age is nearly ended. During this period God has been taking His Church out from the world. Soon the Church will be completed. Then its members will share Christ's glory in the heavenly Kingdom, and for a thousand years they, with Jesus as their Head, will reign over the earth, and during that time all those right at heart will come to know God, to love Him and to obey Him. Oh what a time of rejoicing that will be! It is the one great glorious hope of the world.

QUESTIONS

What had Jesus promised to send to the disciples?—John 14:16, 17, 26.

Who had betrayed Jesus? What became of this man?—Matt. 26:47-49; Acts 1:16-18.

Where were the disciples on the day of Pentecost? (Acts 2:1, 5.) What took place on this occasion?—Acts 2:1-12.

Who stood up at Pentecost and preached to the people? What did he say?—Acts 2:14; 14-40.

What is restitution? Who wrote about it? What will it mean for the world?—Acts 3:21; Matt. 17:11; Matt. 18:11; Luke 3:5, 6.

What had the disciples expected Jesus to do? (Acts 1:6.) Why did He not do what they expected?—Matthew 2:54, 56.

What is the gospel? (Luke 2:10, 11.) To whom was it to be preached?—Matt. 24:14.

Who was the first Christian martyr? How did he die?—Acts 6:8; 7:54-60.

What miracles did the apostles perform?—Acts 3:1-10; Mark 6:7; Acts 14:8-11; 19:11, 12.

Who was Paul? What were some of the great things he wrote?—Acts 7:58; 8:1; 1 Cor. 13; 1 Cor. 15; Romans 8.

Who was John? What great vision did he have? What great city did he see? What river did he see?—John 19:26 Rev. chs. 1-22.

Who or what will invite the world's people to take of the waters of truth in the Millennial age of Christ?—Rev. 22:17; Isa. 55:1.

What is represented by the water of life? Why is it pictured as coming from underneath the "throne of God and of the Lamb"?

What has the Lord been doing during the Gospel age?—Acts 15:14.

By what names is the church called in the Bible?—1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 21:9.

What are the last members of the church called?—Isaiah 52:7.

When will these last members be taken away from the earth?—1 Cor. 15:22; 1 Thes. 4:17.



International Sunday School Lessons



A PROPHETIC VISION

Jan. 12—Luke 2: 25-35, 40

And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the holy spirit was upon him.

And it was revealed unto Him by the holy spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

And he came by the spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

Then took he Him in his arms and blessed God, and said:

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word:

For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,

Which Thou has prepared before the face of all people;

A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people, Israel.

And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him.

And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary, His mother, Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against:

(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed . . .

And the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him.

GOLDEN TEXT: Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples.—Luke 2; 30, 31.



SIMEON was a just and devout man, one who was quietly and humbly waiting for the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Rome and its exaltation to all the glory that God had promised it through the word of His holy prophets. Probably he knew from Old Testament chronology that the time had come

for Christ to be born. At any rate, he was of that class of humble persons to whom God reveals His truth. Cornelius was another such person, and in due time the gospel message was sent specially to him at the hands of the Apostle Peter.

Enlightened by God, and being under divine inspiration, Simeon now testified of Jesus, saying that He would be "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." And these words are well in accord with a subsequent statement by James, who said, "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name, as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, that is fallen down; and I will build the ruins of it, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord."—Acts 15: 14-17.

Yes, Jesus will be the great enlightener, not only of the Gentiles but of the Jews as well. John pointed to Him as "the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." And Paul says, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved (from ignorance, blindness and Adamic death) and to come to a knowledge of the truth."

As this has not yet taken place, manifestly it is a matter of future fulfilment. It is in the near future that "the Sun of righteousness is to arise with healing in His beams," and then He will enlighten the entire human race with the knowledge of God and His glorious plan of salvation.

Simeon's prophecy of "the fall and rising again of many in Israel" has been partially fulfilled. Jesus pronounced the casting off of Israel from divine favor because they rejected Him. But after their long period of disfavor and of sorrow, the time for their rising has come again. Today the Jews are going

back to their homeland, large sums of money are being raised for the improvement of Palestine; and all this is but preparatory for what God will do for Israel when He turns away their blindness and gives to them the glorious light of His revealed plan.

"A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also," said Simeon to Mary, "that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." This has reference to the death of Christ on Calvary; and truly Mary's heart was pierced at that time. The death of Jesus brought a test of faith to His disciples, revealing the thoughts of many hearts—proving who are the loyal, true and faithful ones.

To believe in a crucified Redeemer—one who had been put to death as a malefactor—was a test to all the early Christians. But the convincing character of the evidence that He was the Christ overwhelmed any doubts that might have arisen in their minds, and so they stood boldly forth in the ranks of soldiers of the cross. Today likewise the sacrifice of Jesus, the great Ransom sacrifice, is causing the thoughts of many hearts to be revealed. Some who formerly were well versed in present truth, and who fully understood the fact and philosophy of the ransom as a "corresponding price," now have lost sight of its importance, and seek to place the scheme of redemption on some other basis. But it is still true that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid—Christ Jesus."

QUESTIONS:

To what class of people does God reveal truth?

In what way is Christ a light? Whom has He enlightened?

When and how is the prophecy, "the glory of thy people Israel" to be fulfilled?

Explain, "The fall and rising again of many in Israel."

How have the thoughts of many hearts been revealed? And how will they be revealed in the Millennial Age?

JESUS PREPARES FOR HIS WORK

Jan. 19—Luke 3:21, 22;
4: 1-13

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus, also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

And the holy spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him; and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased . . .

And Jesus being full of the holy ghost, was led by the spirit into the wilderness,

Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days He did eat nothing: and when they were ended, He afterward hungered.

And the devil said unto Him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

And Jesus answered him saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

And the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, shewed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be Thine.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind Me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.

And he brought Him to Jerusalem, and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down from hence:

For it is written, He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee:

And in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.

And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from Him for a season.

GOLDEN TEXT: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.—Luke 4: 8.



WHEN Jesus underwent baptism in Jordan He symbolized the fact that He was fully consecrated to do the will of His heavenly Father. Under the influence of the divine spirit He then went out into the wilderness for study, prayer and careful consideration of the important work He was now to undertake. Here, isolated from the world, Jesus had a good chance to study the Old Testament types which refer to Him and His mission on earth. He realized that the passover lamb must have some antitype, as must also the bullock of the Day of Atonement; for these typical sacrifices had never actually cancelled sin, so that therefore they must point to some greater sacrifice to come. Cogitation on these great verities occupied our Lord's attention for the period of forty days.

Having eaten nothing during this time, Jesus was weak. It was then that Satan, the great tempter, came to Him. He first appeared to show sympathy for Jesus in His weak state. He then suggested a doubt as to our Lord's identity, and a desire for proof. Then he appealed to the craving of hunger, which is one of the strongest cravings to which one may be subjected.

Had Jesus not possessed the power actually to turn stones into bread, there would have been no temptation from such a suggestion. Although He had this power, He refused to use the holy spirit of God in any such way. All the later miracles that the Master performed were on behalf of others,—not for Himself. He was under the law of sacrifice and the divine spirit had been bestowed upon Him so that His sacrifice might be carried out in every detail. When Jesus healed people, it was at a loss of vitality to Himself; for we are informed that "virtue went out of Him and healed them."

Satan tempts the members of the church in ways similar to his temptations of Jesus. From him comes the suggestion that we employ the privileges and opportunities of our own new mind in ways that would make it the servant of the flesh. He may propose that we use heavenly gifts to earthly advantage, so as to bring in the "loaves and

fishes." One might be tempted to compromise the truth for temporal gain, or to so mix it with error that he could still hold onto his position in some religious organization. In all these matters we can profit by the temptation of Jesus, and give a prompt "No" to the adversary.

The second temptation to Jesus was that He do something sensational—leap from a pinnacle of the temple. This the Master promptly refused to do. He knew that Satan had misapplied the Scriptures, and He met him with Scripture—"It is written." He knew that it would be wrong to tempt God in such a way. He was not authorized to make the pathway easy for Himself. He immediately detected the snare and spurned it.

Likewise, the Lord's people should not tempt God by expecting Him needlessly to perform miracles for them. If we deliberately subject ourselves to danger, perhaps for some temporal gain, we should not expect the Lord to send some special angel to protect us. Neither should we expect the Lord to miraculously fill us with the divine spirit and build us up in the elements of faith and love, if we neglect to study His Word, which is the means He employs for our instruction in truth and righteousness. In all these matters we should use the spirit of a sound mind, and cooperate with God in working out our own salvation.

The last temptation to Jesus amounted to this: "Cooperate with me, and I will place you upon the throne of the world." Jesus again refused, just as God's people now refuse any and all cooperation and alliance with the evil one.

QUESTIONS:

What benefit would Jesus likely derive from being in the wilderness alone for nearly six weeks?

Explain the subtle nature of the first temptation, and apply its lesson to the church.

Give the proper application of the Scripture that Satan misapplied in the second temptation. How can we tempt God?

What was the strength of the third temptation?

In what ways might we be induced to cooperate with Satan and the forces of evil? What is our safeguard?

JESUS DECLARES HIS PURPOSE

Jan. 26—Luke 4: 16-30

And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.

And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Isaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written,

The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised,

To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon Him.

And He began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.

And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

And He said unto them, Ye will surely say unto Me this proverb, Physician, heal Thyself. Whatsoever Ye have heard done in Capernaum, Ye do here in this country.

And He said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

But I will tell you of a truth, Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

And many lepers were in Israel in the days of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed saving Naaman the Syrian.

And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

And rose up and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong.

But He passing through the midst of them, went His way.

GOLDEN TEXT: The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor.—Luke 4: 18.



IT WAS the custom of Jesus to attend the synagogue meetings on the Sabbath day, and also to be the reader of the sacred Scriptures for the congregation. The services in the synagogue in those days were somewhat of the character of the Bible studies of the present time. Those in attendance participated in the exercises according to their desire and ability, and the Scriptures were both read and discussed. Thus the service afforded the people an advantage over merely passively listening to a discourse delivered by one person.

According to the order of the lesson for the day, the book of Isaiah was the one given to Jesus for the occasion. As the Master looked around Him, He no doubt saw a good-sized audience. This was His home town of Nazareth; and though, as He Himself said, "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country," yet His townspeople had heard of His wonderful doings in Capernaum and other places; and no doubt they were curious to hear what He might have to say to them, or what miracles He might attempt in their midst. It was to persons well known to Jesus, therefore, that He now read and expounded the Word of God.

Our Lord turned to the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, and read the first verse and part of the second. He did not read the part about "the day of vengeance," because that day was not yet due, and would not come for nearly two thousand years. If mankind would receive His message, then indeed there need be no day of vengeance; but if they should fail to heed His teachings, then the day of vengeance would surely come.

The portion of the Scripture that Jesus chose for this occasion was timely; hence He could say, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Thus His very first sentence was one of the utmost interest for those who could receive it. Jesus made no long preamble to His discourse, but in simple lan-

guage drove the truth straight home to His hearers.

The Jews often had heard this sixty-first chapter of Isaiah read, but had never understood its import. Now the time had come for its fulfilment. Jesus, only a year before had been anointed by the holy power of God. He was now in a position to expound things that hitherto had not been revealed. What a privilege those Jews of Nazareth had in hearing the audible words of such a teacher! Surely they should want to learn all that He had to tell them.

But Jesus knew that the hearts of His townsmen were not right before God, hence not in a receptive attitude for the truth. Therefore He did not tell them things merely to please their ears; He did not remind them of what a wonderful people they were; but He told them about some of God's past dealings with His prophets; and the things He said were a disappointment and an annoyance to them.

There are those today who don't like the truth. It is like a thorn in their side. It gets in the way of their policies, their schemes, and the exercise of their selfish propensities. They want to build up the kingdoms of this world; but they don't want the divine kingdom, because it will mean social equality and an end to profiteering and selfishness. But it behooves God's servants today to preach not only "good tidings to the meek" but also "the day of vengeance of our God." This will not be a popular message; but it will accomplish the divine purpose and complete the work of the Gospel age, and be the means of preparing the disciples of Jesus for their heavenly inheritance.

QUESTIONS:

What was the character of the services in the synagogue of Nazareth?

In preaching the gospel has the church today a similar commission to that of Jesus? If so, explain how.

Why has the truth been unpopular throughout the Gospel age?

How can we find the meek ones, the "poor in spirit," that we may tell them the good news?

Should we now preach "the day of vengeance of our God"?

JESUS ENLISTS HELPERS**Feb. 2—Luke 5: 1-11, 27, 28.**

And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God, He stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were casting their nets.

And He entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

And when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net.

And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes and the net brake.

And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

For he was astonished, and all that were with him at the draught of the fishes which they had taken.

And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all and followed Him . . .

And after these things He went forth, and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto Him, Follow Me.

GOLDEN TEXT: They left all and followed Him.—Luke 5: 11.



HE great draught of fishes must be regarded as a miracle, no matter how we endeavor to explain it. As to the kind of fishing the lake of Galilee affords, a prominent writer on the subject says:

"The sea of Galilee was always famed for the number and variety of its fish. There are more than fif-

ty kinds. The thickness of the shoals of fish in the Lake of Gennesaret is almost incredible to anyone who has not witnessed them. They often cover an area of more than an acre; and when the fish move slowly forward in a mass, and are rising out of the water, they are packed so close together that it appears as though a heavy rain were beating down upon the surface of the water."

Even if Jesus knew the location of one of these shoals of fish, by the time the disciples arrived on the spot the fish might be far away. That the miraculous character of the net-breaking haul of shiny spoil was seen, is indicated by the words of Peter: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," and also by the statements, "He was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which had been taken . . . And when they had brought their nets to land, they forsook all and followed Him."

The disciples of the Master were to engage in a higher business than that of fishing in the sea of Galilee; henceforth they were to catch men. Concerning this matter we take the following from the Watch Tower of Jan. 1904:

"Perhaps there was something peculiarly helpful in the fishing business—something peculiarly like the great work in which the apostles were to engage the remainder of their lives. Our Lord intimates this in His call. Fishing requires energy, tact, proper bait, and that the fisherman keep himself out of sight. And these four things are requisites in the spiritual fishing in which the Lord privileges us to engage. Thus He admonished, 'Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.'

"The Apostle Paul, speaking along this same line of the wisdom he used in presenting the Gospel tactfully, says, 'Being crafty (wise), I took you with guile'—with bait. The apostle took advantage of the natural tendencies and inclinations of his hearers, to present the Gospel in the most practical form—without, however, at all shunning to declare one single feature of it. In this his course is a model for us. We are to remember that as fish are easily alarmed when they find that anyone wishes to take them, so humanity is shy of being captured by any-

thing—especially if they have the least suspicion that they may lose their liberties: and thus consecration appears to the world."

The fishing for men during this Gospel age has been for the purpose of taking out of the world the members of that class known as the Church of Christ. These have not been many; for, as has already been said, people are fearful of losing their liberties. The pathway of sacrifice does not appeal to worldly minded persons. To stand for the truth of God calls for courage, faith, loyalty, love, endurance, patient and constant submission to the divine will.

Of the true followers of Jesus the book of Revelation says, "These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They are not defiled with women (false church systems), for they are virgins (pure ones)." And these are they who will have the highest reward, and who will be used in giving the blessings of truth to the world in the future age.

The spirit of consecration and of devotion to the Lord was manifested by these fishermen mentioned in today's lesson. The Scriptures show that as soon as they heard the Master and saw His work, they were so fully convinced that He was from God that when they had drawn to land, "they forsook all and followed Him." They did not hesitate to make the necessary sacrifice, that would enable them to join with the Master in the work of His ministry. They had seen the light and that compelled them to activity. So does the truth actuate all who receive it clearly, and who retain it within a good and honest heart.

QUESTIONS:

What indications are there that Jesus performed a miracle in causing the great draught of fishes?

How has the Lord conducted the Gospel fishing business during the present age?

What qualities are required in those who would successfully fish for men?

What suggestions for successful fishing have we from the Word of God?

Is there any fishing being done today? If so, what kind?

JESUS INSISTS ON RIGHTEOUSNESS

Feb. 9—Luke 6: 39-49

And He spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

The disciple is not above his Master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his Master.

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Either, how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

A good man out of the treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of his heart his mouth speaketh.

And why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Whosoever cometh to Me, and heareth My sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like.

He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

But he that heareth and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

GOLDEN TEXT: Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?—Luke 6: 46.



WHEN our Lord was on earth there were religious teachers who were blind leaders of the blind. They did not know the truth themselves, nor did they want to know it, but they gloried in tradition and in error. Jesus told them that they themselves would not enter into true knowledge, and moreover were a hindrance to those who did desire such knowledge. He said, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see (claim to see) might be made blind."—John 9: 39.

The Pharisees did not like this statement of the Master, and they asked Him, "Are we blind also?" And His reply was, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." Thus He condemned hypocrisy and false claims. The first thing necessary for us is to see the truth ourselves, before we attempt to lead anyone; otherwise there is likely to be a falling into the ditch of doubt and unbelief.

Our Lord's illustration of the beam and the mote is a very apt one. There are those who have big faults themselves, and yet they unmercifully condemn the little faults and failings of others. The spirit of true humility would prohibit this, for when we realize that we are all very imperfect and would have absolutely no standing before the Lord without the divine provision made for our justification, it should make us very kind and lenient in dealing with others. Some writer has expressed a good thought in the words:

"There is so much good in the worst of us,

And so much bad in the best of us,
That it ill becomes any of us
To talk about the rest of us."

And this especially applies to the Christian, who above all things must become well developed in the spirit of love; for, as John rightly reasons on the matter, "If any man loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

"Every tree is known by its fruits," said the Master. And so

it is with those who claim to follow Jesus. Here there are the genuine and the false; the "wheat" and the "tares"; the true disciples and the spurious disciples; those who have "good treasures" of truth, faith, hope and love stored away in the heart, and those to whom Christ-likeness is a mere veneer, all on the outside, and easily peeled off. The latter possess no real treasure of any kind, therefore they cannot produce good fruit.

Have we not sometimes seen an apple tree which appeared to be very fine, but whose apples proved to be hard, sour, and practically worthless? So, in the judgment of God, our fruit must stand the test; it must be the kind of fruit that God requires in those who are called to be the kings and priests of the earth in the great Millennial age, to train mankind in the ways of righteousness.

Jesus used the practical illustration of building a house in describing our faith structure. When the floods arise and beat upon the faith of those who profess to be Christ's, both the house and the foundation will be tested. Those who are fully established on the rock of truth will stand against all the fury of the elements. Already the storm is raging, the denominations of Christendom are trembling. Their foundations on creeds and traditions are about to fall under the shaking of the mighty winds and waters. Error must and will go down, but the truth of the living God and the upholders and exponents of that truth have nothing to fear, for they are of those things that cannot possibly be shaken or moved.

QUESTIONS:

Who are the blind leaders of the blind today? Prove your statement.

Explain the illustration of the mote and the beam.

What is the "good treasure" of the heart? How is good fruit produced?

Tell something about true and false foundations, as applied to God's professed people.

How do we build a faith structure acceptable to God?

Talking Things Over



"Lift Up Your Heads"

DARK and foreboding are the signals all about us, which bear testimony to the fact that the "world that now is" will soon "pass away with a great noise." As Christians, enlightened by Present Truth, we can see these things, and can "lift up our heads" with assurance and thanksgiving, knowing that our full deliverance into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God" draweth nigh.

And why should we not lift up our heads at this time? Surely this is not a time to be hanging our heads in despondency and doubt! It is no time to be wondering whether we have the truth or do not have it. Rather, it is time to renew our enthusiasm for God and for His truth; a time to "bend every nerve" in completing our "sacrifice of praise" to Him and for Him. Let us then not be "weary in well doing, for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not." Those who are in a weary, fainting condition, are not lifting up their heads; hence, are not properly meeting the sacred responsibilities that the light of Present Truth has imposed upon them; nor are they experiencing the blessedness and joys of those who are faithfully fulfilling their covenant of sacrifice by giving themselves wholly over to the divine will and service. Yes, certainly this is a time for lifting up our heads, even as the poet has so happily declared:

"Lift up your heads, desponding pilgrims
Give to the winds your needless fears:
He who hath died on Calvary's mountain,
Soon is to reign a thousand years.

"What if the clouds do for a moment,
Hide the blue sky where morn appears?
Soon the glad Sun of promise given,
Rises to shine a thousand years.

"Tell the whole world these blessed tidings,
Speak of the time of rest that nears,
Tell the oppressed of every nation,
Jubilee lasts a thousand years.

"Haste ye along, ages of glory,
Haste the glad time when Christ appears,
Oh that I may be one found worthy
To reign with Him a thousand years!"

And so, beloved, as we look out upon the new year 1936, may it be with the happy thought that this year, more than any other year hitherto, shall be one in which we shall lift up our heads. We do not rejoice in the world's present troubles; but we do rejoice in the fact that this "great time of trouble" which daily is

becoming more widespread and distressing, presages the approach of God's Kingdom of universal blessing. And why should we not rejoice in the fact that the glad day of the world's blessing is now near at hand? And why should we not rejoice in whatever opportunities we may have or can make, to comfort those who have hearing ears, by telling them of the glad new day that is about to fully dawn upon a suffering and perplexed world? Visionary indeed—if not hypocritical—would it be to claim enthusiasm over the prospect of sharing in the future work of blessing the world, if it does not impel a present consuming desire, yea, a serious self-sacrificing effort, to do what one can NOW to spread abroad the cheer and comfort of this glorious gospel message.

"Oh that I may be found worthy"—through the precious blood of Jesus! Yes, may each of us prove worthy, because we have been faithful in prayer, in the study of His Word, and in practicing the things that the Word teaches; worthy because we have made daily sacrifices on behalf of the brethren; worthy because we have not kept our light—or rather HIS light—"under a bushel," but have let it shine out for the enlightenment of others. Oh, what blessedness will come to those who are finally "found worthy"! May every hour and every day in this new year, 1936, find us striving faithfully to be "found worthy". And thus may it be a year of lifting up our heads toward heaven.

New Year and New Home for The Dawn

Our readers will be interested to learn that the new year finds *The Dawn* office and printing plant established in its new home—136 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.—about four blocks from our former location. This change was deemed advisable for various reasons. Our lease on the old Washington Street building expired in July of last year; from that time until the end of the year we merely held over from month to month without a lease and it was deemed inadvisable to renew it.

In the three or more years since we began publishing *The Dawn* at the Washington Street plant we have learned many valuable lessons about the printing business. Long before our lease expired we had determined that we could operate much more efficiently with the use of less but more modern equipment, and which would require correspondingly less space. Hence, when we were informed by the owners of the property that they desired an increased rental for a new lease, we accepted this as an indication of providence—confirming the decision we had already reached—that we should now move to different and more suitable quarters.

But we are equally convinced that the Lord overruled when we leased the old Washington Street property in 1932; which then was being operated as a commercial printing plant and whose owner kindly consented to leave his equipment there for our use, as he was about to retire. This was a genuine boon to us in getting *The Dawn* magazine launched. Indeed, as we look back now we doubt if we would have had the courage even to start, had it not been for this arrangement. With our inexperience and lack of resources, it would have been well nigh impossible for us to have set up a printing plant; and the commercial printing rates for having others produce a 32-page magazine such as *The Dawn* would have been prohibitive.

But we now feel that after gaining three years of experience in printing, we can improve in efficiency by these new arrangements, which will be better adapted to our particular use at this time. The Washington Street plant contained much obsolete equipment that we did not need, being much in the way and hindering efficient management and production of the work. There also was some much-needed equipment which the Washington Street plant lacked, and which we found necessary to purchase later. This, of course, is being taken with us to our new location. In addition to this the Lord recently has opened the way for us to secure other modern equipment which was also needed. Thus we are able to start in at our new home with a more economical, more compact, yet fully equipped plant, especially adapted to our present needs. With waste space and inefficiency measurably eliminated, other avenues of service may now be extended, as the Lord may indicate to be His will.

We mention these details because we believe that readers will be interested to know something about the plans and struggles involved in carrying on this work, which we have every evidence the Lord approves. We are glad that *The Dawn* involves "hard work and loads to lift"—if it were otherwise we would begin to wonder. The Lord has never made it easy to serve Him at any time. It wasn't easy for Jesus during His earthly ministry—it cost Him His life—and it won't be easy now for any of those who are now following faithfully in His footsteps.

Can Now Serve More Freely

We do not anticipate that our change of location will put *The Dawn* on "easy street." But we do expect that it will enable us to serve the friends a little more efficiently with the things they may need in their ministry of the truth and the brethren. Tracts, circulars to advertise public meetings, convention programs, song slips, etc., we will be glad to furnish free. And we trust that all friends will feel free to order whatever they need. On tract orders of a thousand or less we also will be able to pay the shipping charges. Later we may be able to pay the freight on larger orders as well, thus making possible a still wider witness with free literature.

Some of the tracts formerly supplied are being discontinued, and new ones added to our assortment to take their place. As fast as we can get to it we are reducing the size of all our tracts to four small pages,

equivalent to two pages of *The Dawn*. The tracts "Earth's Coming Glory," and "The Divine Plan," are already in this size, and we will continue publishing these two. The article, "Coming Back From Hell Soon," which appeared in the December, 1935 issue of *The Dawn*, also will be available in small size tract form, as also will the dialog appearing in this issue, entitled, "Why Not Live Forever?"

The February issue of *The Dawn* will carry an article entitled "What Is the Soul?" which will be converted into a tract. The article on "The Resurrection Hope," published last June, also will be available in tract form soon. Then we have the tract "The Day of Jehovah," which is an extract from THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES; and we have in tract form a slightly condensed edition of Brother Russell's "Where Are The Dead?" sermon. These latter are in the larger size—equal to four pages of *The Dawn*. A little later we expect, D. V., to prepare one or two more of the smaller size tracts which will have to do more particularly with present world conditions and their outcome. Other tracts will be added from time to time as needed; but we feel that the list already mentioned will make quite an ample assortment for distribution during 1936, and we commend them to the use of the friends. May God bless His people in the work of scattering these "golden gems."

National Advertising

This work still goes on in a limited way, and it is our hope to be able to carry on a more extensive witness along this line during 1936. As many of our readers know, in the spring of 1935 we inserted an advertisement in *The Christian Herald* of the booklet, "Evolutionists at the Crossroads." This advertisement did not immediately prove as effective as we had hoped; but in November the *Christian Herald* publishers issued a catalog of the various books they had advertised in their magazine during the year, including "Evolutionists at the Crossroads." This catalog was mailed out to their 240,000 subscribers. As a result of this, additional orders have been received, and at the time of this writing they are still coming in. This listing in the *Christian Herald* catalog of our booklet "Evolutionists at the Crossroads" was without cost to us, hence we feel now that the Lord overruled our use of the *Christian Herald* as an advertising medium, even though the immediate result was not as encouraging as we had anticipated.

Funds are on hand to insert another advertisement in a national magazine of our booklet "God and Reason," and this will be done immediately following the delays incident to the moving of our plant and office. An advertisement of this kind brings a marked increase in our daily mail, hence we thought it best to wait until our new office is fully in order. A definite announcement concerning this proposed advertisement will be made in the February issue of *The Dawn*.

Other Forms of Service

The Lord never has restricted the ministry of His truth to any one method, and His people will un-

doubtedly find rich blessings in His service by using any and every method of proclaiming the glad tidings that may come within the scope of their abilities and opportunities. House-to-house canvassing with truth books and booklets has been one method which the Lord has richly blessed from the very beginning of the harvest work. Why not today? Whether the literature is loaned, or sold at a minimum cost, the Lord has manifested His approval upon such efforts in the past; and undoubtedly He will do so now.

We realize that there has been a great deal of prejudice created against the colporteur work, by reason of organized attempts to debase and convert it into a commercialized or controlled book-selling campaign. But no matter what others have done, this should not deter any of the consecrated from engaging in the same sincere house-to-house ministry for the truth as they did in former days, if they have the time and strength to do so. But they must voluntarily desire to do it or else it will not be acceptable service to the Lord. It is not our province nor purpose to "organize" a work of this kind. But we are glad to inform the friends that we have suitable literature—and in sufficient variety—to enable any of the friends who individually desire to receive the blessing of such service, to immediately engage in it. Those interested may write us for particulars. Why should the errors of others dampen our zeal for joyfully bearing witness to the truth?

The pilgrim work will be carried on throughout the year to whatever extent qualified brethren and funds are available for such service. No attempt is made to "force" this or any other kind of service upon the classes. We deem it best, even where we have standing requests for pilgrim visits, to give the friends an opportunity to express their wish with respect to each individual appointment. The Dawn Publishers stand firm for the liberty and sovereign rights of each individual ecclesia, and we believe that the aforesaid method of conducting pilgrim work is an effective safeguard against possible encroachments upon that liberty.

But it is not necessary to have a duly organized ecclesia in order to enjoy the visits of these travelling brethren. We will be glad to serve the twos and threes, and even isolated individuals, whenever possible. Such visits afford an opportunity to invite friends and neighbors to the home to hear a message on the divine plan. Furthermore, it is often possible, with little or no expense, to secure a small hall, school or church, in which a real public service can be held. We are prepared to furnish free, as many circulars as can be used for advertising such meetings. Individuals or classes not already served by the travelling brethren, and who desire such service, may write us and request such visits.

The Dawn Suitable for Witnessing

For a few months, as an experiment, we published *The Dawn* without a colored cover. We received so many expressions of disappointment that we decided to use the colored cover again. It is our hope, also, that the general appearance of *The Dawn* from now

on may be greatly improved, and because of this we trust that the friends will be encouraged to give it a wider circulation than heretofore among their neighbors and acquaintances. In order to encourage the dissemination of the truth in this way, beginning with 1936, we will send extra copies of *The Dawn* to regular subscribers at greatly reduced rates.

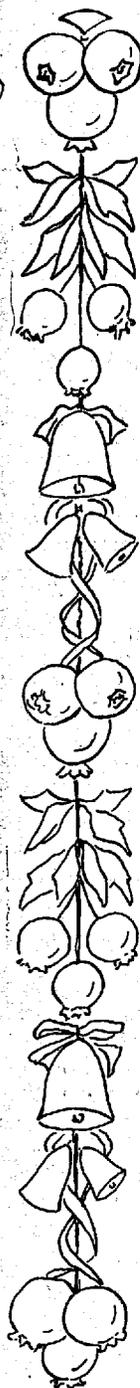
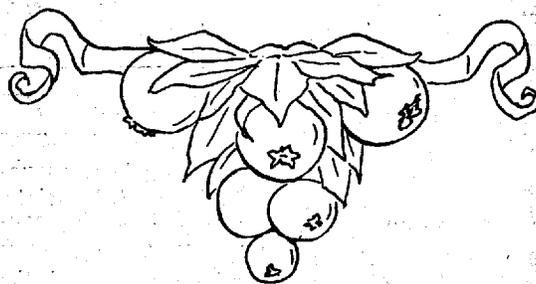
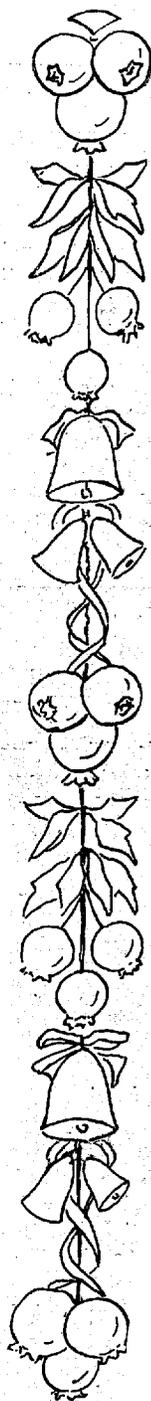
You may have hesitated to lend your own copy of *The Dawn*, lest you would not get it back; but by receiving one or more extra copies you will have them to use for this very purpose. The subscription price for extra copies to the same address is now as follows: 1 extra copy of each issue for one year, 50c.; 2 extra copies, 75c., 3 extra copies, \$1. These prices apply in the United States only. Subscribers in the United States who already are receiving extra copies will please note this reduction when they renew their subscriptions. Regular subscribers wishing extra copies at the above rates may order them now, without waiting for the renewal time of their subscriptions.

We believe you will find *The Dawn* to be a very effective piece of literature to put into the hands of those who may have a hearing ear for the truth, or who may be looking for spiritual comfort. Without cutting down on the amount of material designed especially for the building up and encouragement of the consecrated, we shall endeavor to have special articles, dialogs, etc., in each issue which will be calculated to interest those who have had no previous knowledge of the truth, as well as others who are partially interested. Remember, those who become interested in reading *The Dawn* are automatically put in touch with *The Divine Plan of the Ages* and other volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures*. *The Dawn*, in other words, is an up-to-the-minute messenger of Present Truth. We trust that the friends may use it freely in their evangelistic efforts.

Light Shining in a Dark Place

These, dearly beloved, are dark days for the world; but gloriously bright days for the people of God. It is a time in which almost every dawning day brings increased evidence that we are indeed living in "the days of the presence of the Son of man." Nineteen centuries ago John the Baptist announced the first presence of the Messiah. Later, when languishing in prison he began to doubt. Then Jesus sent to him a reminder of the fact that prophecies were being fulfilled. Likewise today, through the marvelous progress of events in the world, our present Lord is now reassuring us of the fact that "Our King is Marching On," and that soon, if faithful, we will be with Him in the Kingdom. If, like John the Baptist, any of us have temporarily wondered whether or not the "vision" of Present Truth has "lied," let them now "lift up their heads," take renewed courage, and press on faithfully to victory.

Why should not we all, by God's grace, make the year 1936 a crowning one in our Christian experience? May our communion with our Heavenly Father and His beloved Son be sweeter this year than ever before. May our fellowship with the brethren



THE BENEDICTION OF PEACE

*The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
The Lord make His face shine upon
thee, and be gracious unto thee:
The Lord lift up His countenance
upon thee, and give thee peace.*

THE CHRISTIAN'S RESOLVE

*What shall I render unto the Lord
for all His benefits toward me?
I will take the cup of salvation, and
call upon the name of the Lord.
I will pay my vows unto the Lord
now in the presence of all His people.*