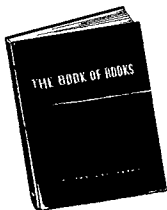


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Highlights of **Dawn**

Righteous Liberty in Christ's Kingdom

"Thus says the Lord God, 'Behold, I am laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: he who believes will not be in haste. And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet; and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter.'"—Isaiah 28:16, 17, RSV

"THERE is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10) Today we often hear people say, "Nobody is perfect." This fact has become particularly apparent in the world as we look about us and note all the evidences of unrighteousness. It is probably true, even now, however, that the majority of the people would rather do right than wrong. Despite all that we hear about crime and corruption there is a solid majority in world society that is out of harmony with much that is transpiring around them, but those who make up this majority are powerless to stem the tide of unrighteousness which increasingly is overflowing human society. This situation exists in all parts of the world. Crime, for example, is on the increase essentially everywhere—even in Israel. There are a few exceptions to this general rule, but the overall picture shows an increase in the rate of crime which is appalling.

There are, of course, different types of crime, of which murder is perhaps the worst. But there is robbery, some styled "armed robbery," in which there is always the danger of murder; and then there is the more or less petty thievery, as represented in shoplifting and in a myriad other ways, one of which is seen in fraudulent methods of business by which the general public is robbed of money and goods.

The drug habit today is creating another seemingly unsolved problem for the law enforcement agencies of the world. This evil has spread to essentially every element of human society, among both the young and the old. How tragic it is for parents to discover when it is too late that a darling child has become addicted to drugs! Certainly our hearts should go out to the plagued world of mankind in the frustrations which have been produced by the drug habit.

Even in Government

Crime and corruption in conduct have found their way into many of the governments of earth, and here again there does not seem to be much that anyone can do about it. Throughout the many weary years of the Vietnam War reporters were continually calling our attention to the corruption which existed in that government, and how unfit it was to rule a people for which American boys were dying and American dollars being expended to protect them from communism. But nobody in the American government seemed to care about this—at least little or nothing was done about it.

There are perhaps few governments on earth that could not have the finger of scorn pointed at them for one reason or another. One of the corrupting influences in the British Government is in the realm of sex. In America it is the officials of government, whether elected or appointed, who

are being found guilty of accepting bribes, and of other mishandling of government funds—not all of them, but probably about the same proportion as participate in general crime outside of government circles. In other words, the criminal element of human society is finding its way into high places, where their corrupt practices are being carried on even “at the top.”

The uncovering of what is known as “the Watergate scandal” has been a shocking thing to the American public, and, in fact, to the whole world. And the unveiling continues. All of this crime and corruption in high circles is helping to break down confidence in government, but the people are left with no solution to the problem. There is, in fact, no human solution to the ravages of human sin and debauchery; no solution, that is, except the one foretold in the Bible, which is the establishment of the kingdom of Christ.

The Bible speaks of this kingdom as a “mountain,” and in Isaiah 11:9 we read, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” In our text the Lord says, “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation.”—Isa. 28:16

It was from Zion that God ruled Israel in ancient times, so Zion is here used as a symbol of the new divine government, even the kingdom of Christ. The cornerstone of that symbolic Zion will be Christ, and we are assured that this is a tried or tested stone. Jehovah knows, and we can be assured, that this new world government will enforce his righteous laws to the eternal welfare of all the people; that nothing will be permitted to hurt nor to destroy in all that holy kingdom.

Its regulations will be righteous and exacting; no favoritism will be shown. The rich and the poor alike will be

guaranteed the blessings of that government, but will have liberty only to obey its righteous laws. There will be no liberty to deceive, to misrepresent, to overreach and to defraud others. The only liberty which will be granted in that government will be the liberty to do good, to assist, to display the spirit of love toward others, and to encourage all to obey the laws of the new kingdom.

In verse 17 of our text we read, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." Here the principle of proper construction is used in which is employed a plumbline, and a plummet. "Judgment will I lay to the line," the Lord says, "and righteousness to the plummet." In other words, all the activities of the people in that righteous government, the symbolic Zion, will be brought into line with justice and with righteousness. What an ideal government that will be!

Then the people will learn that God's plans and laws are best in the end for all concerned, and ultimately they will learn to love righteousness and to hate iniquity. All under that reign of righteousness who do not learn to love the right will be counted unworthy of lasting life and will be cut off from among the people.

With One Consent

Zephaniah 3:9 reads, "Then will I turn to the people a pure language [message], that they all may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." The marginal translation suggests "shoulder" instead of "consent." Earth's new Ruler will not expect obedience from the people until they are properly enlightened concerning his laws of righteousness, and in this prophecy we are assured that this enlightenment will be provided.

The "pure language" or message will sweep away the ignorance and superstition which have stood between God and the people. They will learn that God did not create a hell of torment in which to torture forever all who, in their ignorance, did not please him. All the blinding misconceptions of God will be shown to be untrue. Satan, the great deceiver of mankind, will be bound, that he might deceive the nations no more.—Rev. 20:1-3

In place of the God-dishonoring and contradictory teachings of the false religious systems of the earth will be the truth concerning God—that he is a God of love and justice and wisdom and power; and that his grand design has provided health and life, through Jesus, for all the willing and obedient during the messianic kingdom reign.

The people's response to this knowledge will be enthusiastic. They will serve the Lord with one "shoulder"—in other words, they will unitedly support the ways of truth and righteousness which then will be clearly made known to them. They will not serve the Lord because of fear of what he might do to them if they fail to obey; but they will serve him because they have learned to know him and to love him. What a change this will bring about in world society!

The "Book" Opened

Isaiah 29:18 is a prophecy which, in symbolic language, indicates the enlightenment of the people "in that day." We quote: "In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity." This "Book" contains a knowledge of God and of his will. This Book is mentioned earlier in the chapter. Verses 9 and 10 describe a deplorable condition in which the people, through the unfaithfulness of their teachers and rulers, are dwelling in symbolic darkness. Verses 11 and 12 read, "And the vision of all is become unto you as

the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned."

Then the Lord's prophet speaks of those who draw near to the Lord with their mouth and honor him with their lips but have removed their hearts far from him; and adds that their fear toward the Lord is taught by the precepts of men. (vs. 13) The Lord adds that "the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."—vs. 14

The next verse suggests a measure of wilfulness on the part of teachers and rulers. It reads, "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" Throughout the centuries deceit and hypocrisy have been practiced by many in high places. The struggle for power by the various factions has nearly always been carried on behind closed doors, with the proceedings "dignified" by the expression, "secret diplomacy."

But this characteristic of Satan's world must come to an end. When in the preceding chapter Isaiah informs us of the coming "Zion" kingdom of the Lord, and of the judgment and righteousness which it will establish throughout the earth, he adds that "the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies." (Isa. 28:17) The symbolic hail will be the strong truths which will reach the people, when "in that day . . . the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness."—29:18

Continuing, Isaiah writes: "The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought

to naught, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.”—Isa. 29:19-21

The “terrible one” referred to in this prophecy might well be the great Adversary, who, in addition to being a great deceiver has been, through his cohorts, an oppressor of the people. As we have noted, Satan will be bound. All of his activities which have been against God and against man shall then be brought to nought. That is the main reason “the meek . . . shall [then] increase their joy in the Lord.”

In Their Hearts

In Jeremiah 31:31-34 the Lord gives another promise which will be fulfilled during the Millennium. It reveals the thoroughness with which the righteous laws of God will eventually control the people at that time. First the Lord speaks of the covenant that the Israelites entered into with him under Moses, and then promises a “new covenant,” “not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake . . . But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel [other scriptures reveal that all nations will have an opportunity to enter into this covenant]; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." Here is an important point in this promise. Man was created in the image of God, and the law of his Creator was then in his heart. Job 38:36 describes the work of the Creator in the hearts of his perfect creatures: "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?" Through the fall into sin and death man has lost much of the understanding which was his as a human created in the image of God.

But the Millennium will be the age of restoration, described by Peter as "times of restitution of all things." One of the things to be restored is the divine image; and once again man will possess in its fulness "wisdom in the inward parts, and understand in the heart." Thus it will be that the obedient believers of that kingdom age will obey the divine laws of righteousness because they want to; because those laws, shall we say, will have become a part of them.

And these blessed opportunities which are to reach mankind during Christ's kingdom will be available for those who have died as well as for the living generation. God has not overlooked anyone in his glorious plan of salvation, for there shall be a resurrection of the just as well as of the unjust. (Acts 24:14, 15) This glorious hope of a better day coming, a time when righteousness will be exalted in the earth, should help us to endure the Injustices of the present, and continue to tell the whole world these glad tidings. □

—oOo—

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

—Colossians 3:15, 16

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- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
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| 12—"A World Wide Religion" | 26—"Thy Kingdom Come" |

Bible Study

LESSON FOR AUGUST 5

The Peril of Greed

MEMORY VERSE: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he posseseth."—Luke 12:15

EXODUS 20:17

THE word "covet" carries a wide range of meanings, such as to delight in, to wish for, desire, or plunder. In the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," it means a craving for something that is not one's own. At its worst this would be the kind of greed that would lead a person to appropriate to himself what is rightfully and legally another's, regardless of how the rightful owner might thereby be caused to suffer.

In this Tenth Commandment specific objects are mentioned which should not be coveted, and then the comprehensive statement, "anything that is thy neighbor's." Certainly every true Christian would want to quench any inordinate desire to possess that which is another's.

LUKE 12:15-21

Here we have pointed out to us the futility of acquiring great possessions. Jesus said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he posseseth." (vs. 15) Then follows the Parable of the Rich Man, whose ground brought forth plentifully.

This man was of course pleased with his abundant crop, and after giving the matter consideration, decided that to make room for what his land had produced he would pull down his barns and build larger ones. Here the idea of plundering what belonged to another is not the point of the lesson, but the greed of the man who had suddenly received from his land a bumper crop

and could think of nothing better to do with it than to safeguard his own economic future, which he had doubtless already made secure, since he was rich.

Here the desirability of sharing instead of hoarding is not definitely stated, but it is clearly implied. The rich man, however, was well-pleased with the decision he made to hoard his enlarged crop, and said to himself, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." (vs. 19) But God said to this man, "Thou fool, this night thy soul [life] shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou has provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."—vss. 20, 21

Jesus used this parable to teach a lesson to his disciples. He said to them, "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment." (Luke 12: 22, 23) Those who live on this earth must needs give some thought to what they eat and wear, but Jesus wanted his disciples to realize that since they were consecrated to God and his cause it would be wrong for them to give such anxious thought to these material things

as did the rich man of the parable.

I TIMOTHY 6:6

"Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." (vss. 6-8) How beautifully this harmonizes with Jesus' Parable of the Rich Man—and certainly this is an important lesson for all Christians to learn.

"They that will be rich," Paul continues, "fall into temptation and a snare." (vs. 9) Then he explains why: "For the love of money is the root of all evil." (vs. 10) Those who covet money, Paul explains further, have "pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Money itself is not the root of all evil, but rather, an inordinate love for it. Money represents security, and should be given proper consideration; but it is not the Christian's first priority. Our first priority is to lay down our lives in sacrifice in the Lord's service.

QUESTIONS

What is meant by the word "covet"?

How much thought should a Christian give to the material needs of life?

The Great Commandment

MEMORY VERSE: "This commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."—I John 4:21

DEUTERONOMY 6:4, 5

THESE two verses contain a summary of those commandments of Moses that pertain to man's relationship to God. This passage indicates that one who would be pleasing to God must devote his whole being to him—his heart, his soul, his might—nothing is to be held back for devotion to other gods or to purposes other than doing the will of Jehovah, the true God. Our God, the great God and Creator, is not satisfied with half measures in our devotion to him. Our eternal happiness depends upon a full devotion to him of our whole being and everything which we control.

MARK 12:28-34

Moses' summary of the commandments which set forth our proper relationship to and service of God, was quoted by Jesus when asked by a scribe, "Which is the first commandment of all?" (vss. 28-30) Jesus continued, saying, "And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

There is none other commandment greater than these."—vs. 31

The "second" greatest commandment summarizes man's responsibility to man, as set forth in the Ten Commandments. This also is a quotation from Moses. (Lev. 19:18) This may well have been the first time that these two summarizing commandments by Moses had been quoted in one lesson. The Greek word translated "love" in these two commandments denotes the highest form of love. It is not merely an emotion, but a settled determination to render one's whole being to God, and an unselfish effort to deal with our fellows as we would with ourselves.

The scribe who asked the question which brought forth this all-comprehensive reply by Jesus was well-pleased with what the Master said: "Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with

all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."—vss. 32, 33

Jesus was pleased with this reply by the scribe, for usually, when presenting truths to the scribes and Pharisees the reception was not this favorable. But evidently here was a man with a good heart, and Jesus said to him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." (vs. 34) As Jesus saw it, here was a man, who, if he maintained his present attitude might well become a full believer, and be among those called to joint-heirship with Jesus in the kingdom, to live and reign with him. For the time being no further questions were asked.

ROMANS 13:8-10

Paul wrote, "Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." (vs. 8) Paul enlarges upon this truth by reminding us of the commandments which explain man's proper relationship to man: "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—vs. 9

What a simple truth this really is! Certainly we would not steal from, neither kill, those whom we love. How true it is that "love worketh no ill to his neighbor," and it is because of this, Paul explains, that "love is the fulfilling of the law."—vs. 10

This is indeed simple to understand, but seemingly so difficult to practice in our daily association with our brethren in Christ. Let prejudice against another enter our hearts, and oftentimes it is most difficult to keep from enlarging upon their imperfections, or upon what we think are imperfections. And when this is done we are robbing a brother of his good name, and destroying his influence among his brethren in Christ. The only remedy for this sort of thing is to keep our hearts pure, and truly filled with the spirit of love.

And according to our memory verse, this true love is first of all for God, but it should not stop there. John wrote, "This commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."—I John 4:21

QUESTIONS

Which are the two great commandments?

Explain how love is the fulfilling of the law.

The Undisciplined Person

MEMORY VERSE: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—I Corinthians 10:12

PROVERBS 23:19-21, 29-35

THIS lesson is designed to emphasize the importance of self-control. The first three verses associate the uncontrolled use of wine with "riotous eaters of flesh," or, being gluttons. This combination of vices was charged against Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees. They called him a winebibber and a glutton. (Matt. 11:19) The basis for this charge was largely that Jesus was a friend of publicans and sinners; or, as the matter is expressed today, "guilt by association." But Jesus was not concerned over this false charge, or any of the other false charges which were made against him. He came to do the Heavenly Father's will, and his only concern was that he might be pleasing to him.

Paul warned against the evil of drunkenness. He wrote, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding

what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Eph. 5:15-20

What a beautiful contrast we have here of a group of people indulging in a drunken revelry, and a company of the Lord's people seeking inspiration through the singing together of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" and "giving thanks unto God and the . . . Lord Jesus Christ." And what a wonderful way this is of redeeming the time in these evil days, whenever there is an opportunity of relaxing from everyday toil and cares of life!

Guidelines for a disciplined person are laid down by the Apostle Peter in his second epistle, chapter 1, verses 4-7.

Such a Christian character must be rooted and grounded in the promises of God. There are given unto you, Peter affirms, "exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance [Greek, self-control]; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly-kindness; and to brotherly-kindness charity [love]."

A Christian who has exercised himself in the development of these qualities will be given an abundant entrance "into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

I CORINTHIANS 10:12, 13

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (vs. 12) This statement by the Apostle Paul rejects the theory of "once in grace, always in grace." None knew better than Paul that the forces of evil are striving continually to draw aside the Christian from the pathway of faithfulness to the Lord and from his covenant of sacrifice with the Lord.

The three principal enemies of the Christian are the world,

the flesh, and the Devil. The Devil is the commander of this unholy union, and it behooves all of us to be on the alert continually lest we fall into temptation which will lead us away from our course of fidelity to the Lord.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (vs. 13) This is a wonderful promise, but it implies that the Lord's people co-operate faithfully with the Lord in the use of every means of grace which he provides to keep them from falling.

The Lord will not prevent us from turning our back upon him and walking away from his means of grace. Those who do this will surely fall; and unless they later turn in humility to the Lord to seek his help they will fail to attain that for which they were called, which is the divine nature, and joint-heirship with Jesus in his kingdom.

QUESTIONS

Should Christians be intemperate in anything?

Is it possible for a Christian to fall away from God's grace?

Redemptive Love in Action

MEMORY VERSE: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."—Galatians 6:2

MARK 2:16, 17

IN THE eyes of the scribes and Pharisees the "sinners" and "publicans" of Jesus' day were not respectable people, but virtually outcasts from the Israelites in general. One reason was that they were willing, for a price, to serve the Roman government to which Israel was subject. Probably the viewpoint of the Israelites generally would not have been so severe had it not been for their religious leaders, the scribes and Pharisees.

These religious rulers were ever on the alert to find some occasion against Jesus, and they thought that they had a good case when they discovered that he ate with the sinners and publicans whom they so bitterly despised. They went to Jesus' disciples and asked them why their Master did this, but Jesus overheard their question and answered them directly himself.

Jesus' reply was, "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are

sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (vs. 17) Jesus used the word "righteous" here in an accommodated sense. Actually there are none who are righteous. Sin and death reigns in all. Those of Israel who were sincere in their efforts to keep God's law and thus revealed their desire of heart to be pleasing to him, were indeed more pleasing to him by far than the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, but still, apart from the merit of Christ's redeeming blood, they were not worthy of life.

Perhaps there was a note of sarcasm in Jesus' reference to the "righteous" so far as his indication that it applied to the scribes and Pharisees was concerned. They claimed indeed to be righteous, but the Master did not accept that claim. He knew that actually the majority of them were outside the pale of God's favor. There were sincere ones among them, but these were not opposing Jesus as the others were.

Evidently Jesus saw that among the sinners and publicans there was more likelihood of finding those with at least honest hearts who would respond to his message. He knew also that he could not reach these by holding aloof from them, so apparently he ate and drank with them whenever the circumstances warranted. The results of this course indicate that he was doing the right thing. They were not all converted to his message, but he did find individuals who responded and who rendered faithful service in the Gospel call. Matthew was one of these, as was also Zacchaeus. These, and others, appreciated what Jesus, the Good Physician was able to do for them.

GALATIANS 5:25, 26; 6:1-3

Christians profess to live in the Spirit, and these should indeed walk in the Spirit. In other words, Christians should live up to their professions. (vs. 25) "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." (vs. 26) If a brother has made a mistake, seek to help him, doing it in the spirit of meekness, "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."—vs. 1

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man thinketh himself to be something, when

he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." (vss. 2, 3) The "burdens" here referred to are apparently the trials associated with being "overtaken in a fault." In cases like this we should use every opportunity to encourage and comfort the brethren.

"Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone." Phillips' translation reads: "Let every man learn to assess properly the value of his own work and he then can be glad when he has done something worth doing without depending on the approval of others." The next verse Phillips translates: "For every man must shoulder his own pack."

It is a Christian privilege to help others. This is indeed love in action. On the other hand, we should realize that we have to "shoulder our own pack." We cannot expect the brethren to do for us what we can do, with the Lord's help, for ourselves. We have loads which we should not expect others to carry for us.

QUESTIONS

Explain Jesus' reply as to why he ate with sinners and publicans.

Should we expect others to carry our load for us?

Christian Life and Doctrine

Filled with the Spirit

"Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."—Ephesians 5:18, 19

THE expression, "filled with the Spirit," is used a number of times in the New Testament, but not always with the same meaning. It was first spoken by an angel in a proclamation to Zacharias concerning his wife Elizabeth, assuring him that in answer to his prayer she would bear a son, and that his name should be called John. The angel further said, "Thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God." (Luke 1:14-16) Here the thought simply is that John the Baptist would be endued with God's power and blessing to enable him to accomplish a special work of reformation in Israel.

In Luke 1:41 we are told that Mary, the mother of Jesus, visited Elizabeth, and when Elizabeth heard her salutation "the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit." This denotes Elizabeth's great rejoicing over the miraculous events which were occurring in

connection with her and Mary. The Spirit or power of God was being exercised through both these women, and to their great joy.

Luke 1:67 informs us that Zacharias was "filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied." Here is a work of the Holy Spirit similar to what occurred during Old Testament times when the prophets "spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (II Pet. 1:21) Zacharias was undoubtedly happily in harmony with the truth, and enthusiastic over the prophecy which the Holy Spirit enabled him to utter, but the Spirit did not beget him to a new life, neither did it fill him with the fruits of righteousness.

In John 3:34 it is said concerning Jesus: "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." This surely implies that Jesus was "filled with the Holy Spirit." He was so filled, and so overwhelmingly controlled by it in his every thought and word and deed, that everything he said and every act of his consecrated, Spirit-filled life expressed the mind or will of his Father who sent him. Jesus' filling with the Spirit occurred at Jordan, although even before this there was a certain preparation, in that he doubtless had acquainted himself well with the Spirit-inspired testimony contained in the "volume of the book"; that is, the Old Testament Scriptures.

As we have noted in a previous article, the Spirit of God came upon Jesus as a miraculous revealing power, enabling him to understand the meaning of the Old Testament Scriptures. And besides this, the Spirit which filled Jesus' life empowered him to perform miracles—to cast out devils, open blind eyes, cleanse the lepers, heal the sick, and raise the dead. Not all the Lord's followers may expect to be filled with the Spirit in this sense.

When the promise to send the Holy Spirit was fulfilled at Pentecost, there were miraculous manifestations of this

"shedding forth" of the holy power of God. One of these is mentioned in Acts 2:4, which reads, "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Here, being "filled with the Spirit" denotes another miraculous exercise of divine power, enabling those who were "filled" to speak in foreign tongues without the necessity of previous study. This was not unlike the manner in which the Holy Spirit empowered Jesus to perform miracles. Later, in fact, the apostles performed miracles other than speaking with tongues.

In Acts 9:17 our attention is called to a similar instance involving a filling with the Spirit. In this case it is Saul of Tarsus, who, struck down by a blinding light on the way to Damascus, and hearing the question, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" had, by the Lord's direction, gone to a certain home in Damascus to await further instructions from the Lord. Those instructions were sent to him by a disciple named Ananias. Entering the room where he found the converted persecutor of the church, Ananias said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Saul, or Paul, was appointed by God to take the place of Judas, and it was essential, therefore, that he be "filled with the Spirit" even as the other apostles were at Pentecost. And he was thus filled, because he was able to perform miracles and speak with tongues, even as they.

One of the powers given Jesus and the apostles by the miraculous infilling of the Spirit was the ability to read the hearts of those with whom they came in contact. It was upon this basis that Jesus was able to call the Pharisees hypocrites. Paul was given this ability. In Acts 13:6-12 we are presented with a very interesting example of this. "Elymas the sorcerer" undertook to interfere with Paul's

work, especially Paul's effort to interest a certain "deputy" in the Gospel of Christ. We read, "Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Spirit, set his eyes on him [the sorcerer], and said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand." Paul was able to execute this punishment upon the sorcerer because he was "filled with the Holy Spirit."

A further miraculous manifestation of the infilling of the Holy Spirit is recounted by Paul in his letter to the church at Rome, chapter 15, verses 18 and 19. Paul writes, "I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." Every ambassador of Christ should preach the Gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit, but it was given to the twelve apostles alone to proclaim the message against a background of "mighty signs and wonders."

All Disciples May Be Filled

While Jesus and the apostles were the only ones of the new creation class who were "filled with the Spirit" in the sense of being endued with miracle-working power from God, all the true disciples of the Master may be "filled with the Spirit" in the sense that God's thoughts and plans as revealed in his Word, and his will for them, become the all-absorbing, all-consuming, overwhelming power in their lives. It is this that is indicated in our text.

Immediately preceding this admonition, and in contrast with it, Paul writes, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be ye filled with the Spirit." Clearly the reference here is to the intoxicating effect of strong drink. To be "drunk with wine" means to be brought fully under the control of its intoxicating power. One who is thus intoxicated is unable properly to exercise his own mind. This is wrong, Paul indicates, and instead of this, the Christian should endeavor to be "filled with the Spirit." The thought is that if we are filled with the Spirit our fleshly minds will also be rendered subservient, not to the stupifying effect of alcohol, but to the will of God. God's thoughts, revealing his will through his written Word, will take control, so that our chief concern—yes, our only concern in all things—will be to do his will.

Filling Through Fellowship

Having written this exhortation to be "filled with the Spirit," Paul then suggests one of the ways it can be accomplished. It is through "speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." In a general ways this suggests the privilege and the value of Christian fellowship in terms of being "filled with the Spirit." In this text Paul seems primarily to be describing a "praise service"—the use of "spiritual songs."

The inspirational power of music is well known. The martial strains of a military band have encouraged many young men to die for their country. So the "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" of the Christian have an inspirational value in his life. When sung together, as in an assembly, the result is salutary, helping all who participate to be more fully devoted to the Lord through the renouncing of self-will that the will of God might rule more fully in their consecrated lives.

As a rule, however, these sessions of united praise to the Lord are not a large factor in any congregation of the saints. On the other hand, the entire plan of God for his "new creation" and for the world is as a melodious, harmonious song. Indeed, it is designated the "song of Moses and the Lamb." (Rev. 15:3) In Psalm 40:3 and also in Revelation 14:3, it is described as a "new song." This marvelously harmonious unfolding of God's eternal purpose through Christ Jesus, as set forth by the Holy Spirit throughout God's written Word, when understood and appreciated, eclipses every other consideration of life. To know it, to believe it, to obey it, to have our lives consumed by it, is to be "filled with the Spirit."

Sincere, energetic Bible study is, then, one of the potent means of being "filled with the Spirit." Because of our faulty memories we cannot expect to read the promises of God once and retain them in our minds. Besides, the Bible is so written that almost every time we open its Spirit-inspired pages we see some rare gem of truth never before noticed. The poet has well said,

" 'Tis a mine, aye deeper too,
Than can mortal ever go
Search we may for many years;
Still some new rich gem appears."

And as we thus plumb deeper and deeper into the revealing thoughts of God recorded in the Word, and our minds and hearts yield in a rejoicing desire to bring our lives into harmony with each revealing ray of light that beams forth from it, we become increasingly filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus received the Spirit without measure. This was because he was perfect. We are imperfect. The "motions of sins" in our "flesh" bar the complete infilling of the Spirit for which our hearts yearn. (Rom. 7:5) Yet we can, and should, strive to be more and more emptied of

self that the Holy Spirit might fill and more fully control our thinking, our speaking, and our acting.

Filled Through Prayer

Jesus said to his disciples, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13) Here is an important promise, for it assures us that one of the means of being "filled with the Spirit" is through prayer. Through prayer, we claim the promises of God, and since we know he wants us to be filled with his Spirit, it is proper, and needful, that we earnestly petition him to this end.

But we should not expect a miraculous answer to our prayers for the Holy Spirit. The miracle-working power of God has already operated in furnishing us with his written Word, the source of his thoughts for all the "new creation" class. It is true, of course, that God still uses his unlimited power in shaping his providences for us, that we might be brought into contact with his Word. He has given his angels charge over us to see that nothing can happen which will defeat his purpose in our lives. But in asking him for his Spirit, we must not expect that God will miraculously fill our minds with his thoughts.

When we ask God for his Holy Spirit, we must co-operate with him in the zealous use of the provision he has made whereby we might be filled. We must go to his Word. If we could but fully realize, as the consecrated people of God, that when we open the pages of the Bible and read its wonderful messages, we are looking into the mind of our Heavenly Father, and there discovering his will for us, and his thoughts toward us, how much more precious would be the hours spent in the study of his Word! Actually, they are hours spent with God. David wrote that God's thoughts to "us-ward" are more than can be numbered. (Ps. 40:5)

Those thoughts are in the written Word, put there by the power of the Holy Spirit, that in studying it we may be "filled with the Spirit."

Fruits of the Spirit

The infilling of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the children of God is manifested in the fruits of righteousness. Paul wrote to the brethren at Rome, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit. And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." (Rom. 15:13, 14) Here we observe that being filled with joy and peace is a result of the indwelling Spirit of God. To be filled with the Spirit also means to be "full of goodness," and "filled with all knowledge."

In Ephesians 3:19 Paul describes being "filled with the Spirit" as being "filled with all the fulness of God." Obviously, God does not personally enter into his people, but his Spirit does, his holy thoughts, which he has caused to be mirrored through his Word. Paul also speaks of Christ dwelling in our hearts. We will quote this whole revealing passage. Paul prays "that he [God] would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth [human] knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."—Eph. 3:16-19

In Philippians 1:9-11 Paul, without using the words Holy Spirit, nevertheless reveals some of the qualities of a Spirit-filled life. We quote: "This I pray, that your love

may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." No one could be filled with the "fruits of righteousness" without being "filled with the Spirit," for the fruits of righteousness are the fruits of the Holy Spirit of God, the result of the Holy Spirit of truth working in the heart and life.

Again, in Colossians 1:8-11 we read, "Who [Epaphras] also declared unto us your love in the Spirit. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power [Spirit], unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."

This is a remarkable summary of many of the things which result from being "filled with the Spirit." It means to be "filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." If we are thus filled, we will "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." Also, we will be "fruitful in every good work," the "fruit of the Spirit" being abundantly manifested in our daily lives. Being "filled with the Spirit" also results in an increasing knowledge of the Lord, through the Word of truth, which, in turn, will lead to our being "strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power." This power, this strength of the Lord which is the daily portion of the Spirit-filled life, enables the Christian to be patient in trial, and long-suffering in the face of every difficulty—not merely in the sense of enduring what cannot be changed, but with "joyfulness."

The Holy Spirit of truth with which every Gospel Age saint of God may, and will, be filled if he is living up to his privileges, is a gift from God. Paul mentions some of its characteristics in his second letter to Timothy. He speaks of stirring up the "gift of God" which was in Timothy. Then Paul adds, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

As we have seen, the Spirit of God is a Spirit of power. His Spirit-inspired Word is a mighty power in the lives of those who yield to its directives, and are strengthened by its promises. Besides, the Spirit of God, operating through whatever agencies he may choose to shape his providences in our lives, is "Almighty." He alone, through the instructions of his Word, and in whatever other ways his wisdom may choose, is able to cause "all things to work together" for the good of his people. (Rom. 8:28) His record of achievement always has been, is now, and ever shall be, perfect. Can we doubt his mercy, his ability, who through life has been our Guide?

The Spirit of God with which his people are filled is also one of love. It displaces selfishness, and all of its characteristics of envy, malice, hatred, and strife. It leads to self-sacrifice on behalf of others and kindness in association with them. Christians who lack these qualities may question the extent to which they are "filled with the Spirit."

Paul says that God has also given us the "spirit of a sound mind." This is because he has given us his own thoughts, his own mind, by which, in our consecration, we have agreed to be governed. The Holy Spirit of God does not change the contour of the brain to give us soundness of mind. It is simply that we have renounced our own will and ways, and are endeavoring to be guided in our thoughts, words, and actions by the holy thoughts of God

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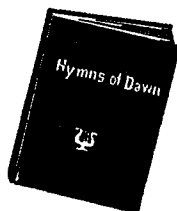
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as he has miraculously caused them to be recorded in his written Word.

The mind or will of God which guides the Christian may not seem "sound" in the judgment of the world. In fact, the reverse is true. When the Apostle Paul reasoned on the truth before King Agrippa and Festus, this latter Roman ruler of Judea replied, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." (Acts 26:24) The Greek word here translated "learning" is the same one used by Paul in II Timothy 3:15 and translated "Scriptures."

In this latter text Paul notes that from a child Timothy had known the "Holy Scriptures"—the "Scriptures" which in the next verse he says were given "by inspiration of God," and therefore profitable for "doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Evidently Festus recognized that Paul's reasoning was based upon the sacred writings of the Old Testament, and his claim was that these had made Paul "mad." Surely Festus did not consider that the study of the Scriptures had given Paul the "spirit of a sound mind." Paul's reply was, "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." (Acts 26:25) Yes, all the Spirit-inspired words in the "volume of the book" are "words of truth and soberness." To the extent the Lord's people set aside their own reasoning and their own preferences and ways, and are governed by the inspired "words of truth and soberness," they will have the "spirit of a sound mind."

But, as we have noted, the Christian's mind is not sound according to human standards. Peter, before he had received the Holy Spirit, did not think Jesus was being guided by a "sound mind" in voluntarily surrendering himself to his enemies to be put to death. Paul's friends did not think he was acting wisely by insisting on going to

Jerusalem where he knew that bonds and imprisonment awaited him. It is true, nevertheless, that the Holy Spirit of truth does direct those who are controlled by it to lay down their lives in sacrifice. Paul admonished that we present our bodies a living sacrifice, explaining that this is our "reasonable" service—a service, that is, which by God's standards are based on reason, reflecting the exercise of a "sound mind."—Rom. 12:1

Paul sums up beautifully what it means to have the spirit of a sound mind and to be "filled with the Spirit." He says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—I Cor. 2:9-14 □

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The Conversion of Peter

**"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death."—
Luke 22:31-33**

THE working of divine providence in the life of the Apostle Peter from the time he was called by Jesus to be a fisher of men is both enlightening and encouraging. Peter was convinced that Jesus was the foretold Messiah; that he had come to break the Roman yoke of bondage over Israel and to set up his kingdom of promise which would begin its work of blessing at Jerusalem, and finally extend its sphere of influence throughout the whole earth. None of the apostles prior to Pentecost understood that there were to be two phases to the kingdom of God. They knew only of the earthly phase of that kingdom.

Throughout his ministry Jesus had indicated to his disciples in one way or another that if they were faithful to him they would be given a share in the rulership phase of this kingdom; but even this was, in the beginning, merely an earthly hope, because they believed that the messianic kingdom was to be earthly. While they doubtless knew of the manner in which the miracle-working power of God had frequently operated in Old Testament times, they seemed bound by their limited vision of truth to the idea that the Messiah would establish his powerful government by a kingly display of power which would cause the Roman soldiers to capitulate before him as he marched to glory heading his little band of faithful followers who would share his kingdom glory with him.

True, Jesus had indicated to his disciples that he expected to die—that he would give his flesh for the life of the world—but this was among the things which they did not understand until they were reminded of them by Jesus after his resurrection, and by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. He gave them a parable concerning “a certain nobleman” who went into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return. He gave this parable because his disciples believed that his kingdom was to “immediately appear.”—Luk^e 19:11

But the full meaning of this parable seems also to have escaped the disciples. To them the kingdom was at hand, and they did not want to believe anything else. So, as the ministry of Jesus drew nearer to a close he announced to his disciples that he was going to Jerusalem, where he expected to be arrested and put to death. (Matt. 16:21) This was beyond Peter’s ability to understand. If Jesus were truly the Messiah, and had come to establish the powerful and world-wide kingdom of promise, why would he surrender himself to his enemies in Jerusalem and allow them to put him to death?

So Peter said to Jesus, “Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.” Then Jesus said to Peter, “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.” (Matt. 16:22, 23) Jesus’ covenant of sacrifice with his Heavenly Father required his death, and any influence—even the earnest advice of his good friend Peter—which was contrary to this was not of the Lord, but the expression of a human point of view, suggested, as Jesus indicated, by the great adversary, Satan.

God’s Way

Jesus continued and said to his disciples, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall

lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it." (vss. 24, 25) But this was a great truth which was quite beyond the ability of the disciples at that time to understand, and seemingly Peter resisted it.

It was only a short time after this that Jesus passed through his ordeal in the Garden of Gethsemane; and when the mob from Jerusalem appeared to arrest him Peter drew his sword in an effort to protect his Master. He had advised him against going to Jerusalem in the first place, and now he was determined to prevent his arrest and death if he possibly could. Jesus commanded Peter to put away his sword, for, if he wished, he could ask his Heavenly Father, who would send him twelve legions of angels, to protect him. Jesus did not need Peter's help, nor did he ask his Father to send the guardian angels to protect him, for he knew that it was the Father's will for him to die—"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"—John 18:11

But all the while Peter continued to believe that Jesus was making a mistake. Certainly a dead Messiah could not establish a messianic kingdom at Jerusalem and assure the whole world of peace, health, security, and life. He went to the judgment hall where the Master was hailed before the high priest, possibly hoping he might still have an opportunity to help him. But this also ended in near disaster for Peter, and he fled from the trial chamber weeping because he had denied the Master.

The Third Day

Early in the morning on the third day after his crucifixion Jesus was raised from the dead. Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had gone to the tomb of the Master to anoint his body with spices. Suddenly an angel appeared to them, explaining that Jesus was no longer in the tomb; that he had been raised from the dead. Then the angel directed these devout women to go their

way, and "tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you."—Mark 16:1-7

It would seem that there is real meaning attached to the fact that in addition to directing the women to tell the disciples about the resurrection, Peter should be singled out specially to receive this message. It was Peter who had advised Jesus not to surrender himself to his enemies and allow them to put him to death. It was Peter who, with his sword, attempted to prevent the Master's arrest. It was to Peter that Jesus had said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." And Peter heard the explanation that those who lose their lives in sacrifice, as Jesus did, would save their lives.

So when Peter had this message specially delivered to him that his Master had been raised from the dead, what a flood of reflections must have swept over him! Now he would know one thing for a surety; namely, that Jesus had not lost his life, even though he allowed himself to be put to death. But no doubt Peter was still firm in his belief that one should not be punished for doing good; that only evildoers should be punished. To him any other viewpoint would be contrary to sound reasoning.

On the Shore of Galilee

Jesus appeared to his disciples a number of times before he returned to the heavenly courts, and one of these appearances was on the shore of Galilee, or Tiberias. Here Jesus took occasion to question Peter concerning his love: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" On the eve of the crucifixion Peter avowed that even though all men, or the disciples, forsook Jesus, he would not; that he would die for him. Now Jesus was asking him, in view of his denial, if he still loved him more than did the other disciples.

Peter replied, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Jesus replied, "Feed my lambs." Jesus asked the

same question again, and Peter's answer was affirmative. And then the third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" Then "Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."—John 21:15-17

This was a remarkable reply! Peter had been rebuked and thwarted by Jesus, and it seems likely that the Master was eliciting from him this confession before the others so they might know that Peter was holding nothing in his heart against his Lord. Peter's expression, "Thou knowest all things," might well be predicated on the fact that Jesus predicted that he would deny him, even though Peter had said that he would die for his Master. In any case, the atmosphere was now cleared, and Peter received the commission to feed the Lord's sheep, which would help to establish in his mind the fact that Jesus still held him in high esteem and confidence.

"Tarry at Jerusalem"

For a period of forty days after his resurrection Jesus made intermittent appearances to his disciples. The record states that "he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." —Acts 1:3

His last appearance was a notable one. At this time the apostles asked Jesus, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" They still clung to the hope of the kingdom—that earthly kingdom which would first of all restore Israel to her freedom and then extend its blessings to all nations. They had learned much through the death and the resurrection of Jesus, but they had not yet discerned that there were two phases to the kingdom of God—the heavenly and the earthly—and that the gathering of those who would qualify for the heavenly phase

was just beginning.

Jesus' reply to the disciples' question was straightforward. He said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." (Acts 1:7) He had just told them to tarry at Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit, and that then, beginning at Jerusalem, they were to be his witnesses to all nations. Thus a further long wait for the kingdom was indicated.

Pentecost

Shortly Pentecost came, and with it the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Through the power of the Spirit many things which Jesus had said to them were brought to their memory, and they were enlightened with respect to the deeper meaning of the death of Jesus. Peter preached a sermon that day, and in it he quoted Psalm 16:10, to show that Jesus' death and resurrection had been foretold in the Old Testament. Here was the man who only a short time before had tried to prevent the death of Jesus, believing it would thwart the plan of God concerning his messiahship!

But now, as a result of the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, he had experienced the "conversion" which Jesus referred to when, on the night before the crucifixion he said to him, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." This was not a conversion from sin to righteousness, but a conversion from one viewpoint to another. Peter held to the common human viewpoint that only evil-doers should suffer, and he knew that Jesus was not an evil-doer, so he tried to save his life. Now he knew that the plan of human redemption called for the suffering and death of innocent ones, and that it was the divine will that the holy One Jesus should voluntarily submit to being put to death by his enemies. What a conversion this was!

To a Lively Hope

How disconsolate all the disciples must have been when their Messiah was taken from them and crucified! Not

realizing that they were talking to the risen Lord, two of them later said, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed [restored] Israel," the implication being that now they no longer so trusted, that their hopes in him as the Messiah had been dashed.—Luke 24:21

And how wonderful was their hope which centered in Jesus! They saw Israel restored to freedom and the descendant of David enthroned in Jerusalem. They saw themselves sharing in his glory, for had he not promised that those who had left all to follow him would, when he sat upon the throne of his glory, also sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel? (Matt. 19:28) True, the hope they entertained was an earthly one, but it was glorious. Temporarily that hope was lost when Jesus was crucified.

But not for long. Later Peter wrote, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively [living] hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."—I Pet. 1:3-5

How meaningful was the fact that they had been "begotten again" to a living hope, and not only that, but to a hope of life which was far grander than they had known anything about when they walked with Jesus in the flesh. Now they were begotten "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto [the great] salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Prior to the death of Jesus, when they had labored so faithfully with him throughout Israel, they knew nothing about a heavenly inheritance. Now they did! They had thought then that their reward was at hand, and that they

would soon be reigning with Christ. Now they knew that their reward would not be realized until "revealed in the last time," even though they doubtless felt that "the last time" was close at hand.

Strengthening the Brethren

Jesus told Peter that when he was "converted" he was to strengthen the brethren, and in his first epistle we find him so doing. He begins by pointing out the fact that the sufferings of Christ had been foretold by the prophets through the power of the Holy Spirit. Peter says that, "it [the Holy Spirit] testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."—I Pet. 1:11

Later in the epistle Peter explains that the footstep followers of Jesus share in these foretold sufferings. He writes, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (I Pet. 4:12, 13) When one suffers it is a great source of strength to know the reason for it, and here Peter is reminding us that there is the best possible reason for our suffering as Christians; that reason being that it is the divine will, having been foretold by God's holy prophets.

Again Peter writes, "What glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." (I Pet. 2:20, 21) Peter was grieved when he saw Jesus suffer for well-doing, but through his conversion he came to understand that this was the divine will for his Master, and that it is now God's will for Jesus' disciples.

We quote Peter again on the subject of Christian suffer-

ing: "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." (I Pet. 3:13, 14) We have a good example in Jesus of the principle involved in this exhortation—"Who . . . will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" True, they brought cruel suffering upon Jesus. They placed a crown of thorns on his head, and they hung him on a cross until he died, but they did not harm him! They only completed the sacrifice of his humanity—the sacrifice which he had covenanted with his Father to make.

As a new creature Jesus was not harmed. All that happened to him was that through death and the resurrection he exchanged his cross for a crown. And it will be the same way with us if we continue faithfully to lay down our lives following in the Master's footsteps. This is what is involved in what Jesus said to Peter prior to his crucifixion; that one saves his life by voluntarily losing it through sacrifice.

God's Care

How welcome should be Peter's admonition, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (I Pet. 5:7) God's care of his people is exercised in many ways—through the Holy Spirit; by the guardian angels; through his Word of truth, and by our association with the brethren. We need all these helps, especially when we are suffering with Christ. When everything is going well we might be inclined to overlook the need of God's care. But we need him all the time, in fair weather and in storms; and may we never fail to seek the throne of heavenly grace in our every time of need.

Peter adds that we are to "be sober," and to "be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist sted-

fast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." (I Pet. 5:8, 9) Satan attacks the Lord's people along many lines, but here the apostle seems to be reminding us that his attacks will come through efforts to discourage us because of our afflictions; and indeed this is one of Satan's methods of attacks.

But we are to resist these attacks through steadfastness in the faith—the "most holy faith," of course. It is through the most holy faith that we understand the reason for Christian suffering. If we do not know why we are suffering we are very vulnerable indeed to Satan's endeavors to discourage us. But how different it is when we know that we have been called to suffer with Christ—to enter into a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice; to take up our cross and follow Him.

The enlightened Christian who is faithfully laying down his life will not ask why he is suffering, but will rejoice in the fact that he is a partaker of the sufferings of Christ, and will in God's due time partake of his glory. The enlightened Christian, rejoicing in the most holy faith, will realize that Christ suffered and died as man's Redeemer, and that he has been invited to die with him, to be planted together in the likeness of his death that he might also be in the likeness of his resurrection.

He will know that it will be in that "first resurrection" that he will enter into his heavenly inheritance, and have the privilege and honor to be associated with Jesus in the promised blessing of all the families of the earth. He knows that eventually all suffering and death will be destroyed, and the whole earth will be filled with the Lord's glory. For these reasons he will not allow Satan's roars to frighten him, and will continue to cast all his cares upon the Lord.

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The British Section

Prayer and Work

"Let my prayer be set before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

—Psalm 141:2

PRAYER is one of the greatest blessings enjoyed by the Christian. It is the privilege of holding communion and fellowship with the great Creator of the universe, who, through justification and begetting of the Spirit, has become our Heavenly Father, having brought us out of the condemned and dying family of Adam into the spiritual family of God. Just as a father is pleased to have his children come to him with proper, suitable requests, so our Heavenly Father is pleased that we should come to him with suitable and scriptural requests, asking him for things according to his will.

And this it would seem is what the psalmist specially had in mind in the statement,

"Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense." This scripture intimates that prayer was pictured by the sweet incense offered by the high priest when, on the day of atonement, he came into the most holy with the blood of the bullock, and again with the blood of the goat.—Lev. 16:12-15

Incense was again offered when the seven lamps in the holy were trimmed and replenished with oil every morning and evening. (Exod. 30:7, 8) As this incense, specially compounded for the priest's offering, produced a very sweet perfume, so true prayer to our Father is very acceptable in his sight. Hence the psalmist says in substance, Let my prayer rise to him acceptably, as the incense offered by the typical priests gave off a sweet odour as it ascended from the golden altar.

And that prayer from a consecrated heart which ascends more frequently than any other, is a prayer for the Holy

Spirit. When we pray for this gift we pray for something that is all-inclusive, more so than anything else. It is the prayer our Lord tells us we should particularly offer, and one our Heavenly Father is specially pleased to answer. (Luke 11:13) For instance, if we pray for more light upon the Word of God it is tantamount to praying for more of the Holy Spirit to guide us into, and enable us to grasp, the truth. If we pray for grace to help us in time of need, we are praying for more of the Lord's Spirit that we might be strengthened thereby to overcome. If we pray for more opportunities of service and courage to use them wisely, we are again praying for the same gracious Spirit; for the Father knows that a greater measure of his Spirit would be necessary if our scope of service be enlarged, and such opportunities used faithfully will at the same time enable us to develop more of this same gracious spirit of holiness.

The sweet incense which arose from the golden altar and preceded the high priest as he entered into the most

holy with the blood of the bullock showed the acceptableness of the offering thus brought. The incense which ascended to God when the lamps were trimmed and replenished with oil foreshadowed the same lesson. So we, called to be members of the antitypical priesthood — the royal priesthood — realise the acceptableness with God of the sacrifice of Jesus, the antitypical bullock, that his sacrifice was a propitiation, an atonement, for our sins, that we are accepted in the Beloved, and thus only, and that our prayers ascend as sweet incense only when offered in his name, and in accord with his will.

We remember too, that as the continual replenishing of the lamps with oil and the trimming of the wicks pictures the renewal of the Holy Spirit, and the chastening and discipline needed by all the members (the true Christian church pictured by the golden lampstand), the incense offered at such times shows the earnest prayers that must be offered as such experiences come to us; prayers for grace to help and ability to be right-

ly exercised when the trimming and discipline become our portion. The acceptableness of such prayers is shown by the incense in the type going beyond the veil into the most holy, which apartment Paul tells us represents in the antitype, "heaven itself."—Heb. 9:24

"All for Jesus"

The psalmist continues: "The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." The lifting up of the hands would appropriately represent the lifting up of our powers in the Lord's service: every effort to know and do his will, to put off the old man and put on the new, being an effort in this direction.

The psalmist, speaking for the Lord's people of spiritual Israel, prays that this service might be "as the evening sacrifice." Every morning Israel's priests offered a lamb for a burnt offering. This lamb was placed upon the brazen or copper altar and burned gradually until the evening and then another was placed there which burned until the following morning. (Exod. 29:38-43) These morning and evening

sacrifices appropriately picture the sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God, and especially the fact that his sacrifice is continuously efficacious and acceptable to God for our sins, and "not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

So the thought seems to be that we, as the Lord's followers, desire our sacrifices and service for the Lord, presented in his name and merit, to be equally acceptable, that they may be as the evening sacrifice. This the apostle assures us is the case with all those in Christ. He tells us that the presentation of our bodies as a living sacrifice is holy and acceptable, and is our reasonable service.—Rom. 12:1

Thus we "glorify God in our body." (I Cor. 6:20, R. V.) And the psalmist's reference seems clearly to teach that because we are in Christ our service may be as acceptable to our Heavenly Father as the offering of his well-beloved Son, typified by the lamb of the evening sacrifice. Thank God for such wonderful provisions of his grace! ☐

Vineyard Echoes

The Portrush Convention

ONCE again in the Lord's providence we were able to hold the Portrush Convention—26th-28th, May 1973. For eighteen years the Lord's people have met in this haven of peace amidst the beauties of God's natural creation, to feast at the table provided by our returned Master and to enjoy the fellowship of kindred minds. This year, as for the past two years, a question mark hung over such a venture. The conditions created by the turmoil and upheaval in the land of Ulster cause some to be hesitant in crossing the Irish Sea. Yet without the co-operation of brethren from other parts there might not be a Portrush gathering, for the Lord's people in this land are merely a handful, and widely scattered.

Those in the more populated places live under a constant strain, with adverse effect upon nerves and health generally. Many of the population suffer from throat defects believed to be caused by the pollution created by explosions and the gas sometimes used to disperse rioting mobs, besides the strain of living in such conditions day after day. Brother Lang suffered for some weeks with a throat infection which felt as though he had a hair continually irritating his throat, but we are glad that the rest at Portrush helped our brother, and we all rejoiced when on the day after the convention he greeted us with the news that the pain had gone, and a fortnight later it had not returned.

Distress and Perplexity

Sounds of gunshot and exploding bombs are a regular feature of their everyday life. Our brethren who live and work in Londonderry are forced to submit to Army searches of their clothing and personal belongings every time they embark on a shopping expedition in the city centre, as the constant vigilance continues for weapons of destruction. As I pen these notes an Army helicopter has just flown over Sister Stinson's hotel, continuing what has become a constant search throughout the land for terrorist activity. Nevertheless, here we can stay in a little oasis of peace in this land of terror. We can walk in comparative quiet and safety, for Portrush has become, not only a trip to the seaside, but a means to get away from the fear which fills the hearts of the people.

As students of God's prophetic Word we know these things must take place, for we are witnessing some of the events referred to by our Lord, who said there would be "upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity [no way out]." (Luke 21:25) With the sales people in the shops often asking what is to be the outcome of it all, there is frequent opportunity to point to the near-establishment of the kingdom, explaining that it will not be so very long before man's extremity will prove God's opportunity to bring peace, life, and happiness, as foretold in our Father's Word of truth.

This year it was a small gathering compared with previous occasions, but those present had come from Australia, France, the U. S. A., as well as Scotland and England, having once again responded to the plea to come and help their brethren in Ireland. Although the convention lasts three days, the first visitors begin to arrive two days early, and some linger for quite a while after the majority have returned home. This year three of our visitors stopped over at Portrush on their way to Nigeria;

one of them even attended a convention in Los Angeles on 25th May, another at Ilford, England on 27th, and reaching Portrush that same day—emphasising how small the world has become in this age of jet travel.

As is usual on these occasions, each evening before and after the convention is spent in fellowship around the Word of God. Friday evening found us studying Psalm 46, which abounds in exhortation and prophecy concerning the days in which we live. We have the blessed assurance that while we take note of the troublous times through which mankind must pass, God is our refuge and strength. The time has come when everything that can be shaken will be shaken, so that the enduring things may remain.

This convention begins with a meal to satisfy our natural appetites. Here we can talk personally together of the goodness of the Lord and of his precious truth which means so much to each of us. Brother Lang then gave us a warm welcome on behalf of the Irish Brethren. He commenced with a word of thankfulness that he had been spared and given health and strength to be amongst us. He echoed the words of the psalmist that he was glad the Lord had called us to go up to his house in order that he might speak to us, and so help us along our journey and to render unto him more acceptable service.

Dead in the Lord

The speaker that followed reminded us of the blessing which comes to those of the Lord's followers who die in the Lord. The Scriptures tell of literal death, and that the condition of mankind in general is "dead in trespasses and sins." We also have reference to those who are dead in Christ. Although not actually dead, these ones are reckoned so in God's sight. Paul wrote to the Colossians, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Believers in Christ who have voluntarily renounced all human hopes follow their Leader in every experience of life.

God created humanity with cravings for the good things of the earth, but when we consecrate ourselves to God's service we give up all earthly enjoyments which interfere with our service for God. Thus we become dead to earthly things, and instead covenant to have our minds transformed into the will of God. From the moment of consecration there is a continual battle against old habits. It is a mental battle which is won when we, like Jesus, say from the heart, "Not my will, but thine be done." Our text in Revelation 14:13 means that a Christian who maintains his dead condition until actual death has the blessing that comes to the final overcomer.

The words "from henceforth" suggest there is a special blessing beginning at a certain time, and the context indicates it refers to the members of the body of Christ. The time is the period of the Master's second presence, during the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when the "mystery of God will be finished." Those who die in the Lord now will not sleep in death, but will be invested "in the twinkling of an eye" with their heavenly, spiritual being. If we endure to the end we shall be of those who will have died in the Lord from henceforth, changed into his likeness, to be forever with the Lord.

An unexpected addition to the programme following this talk was a public witness meeting in the Portrush Town Hall, featuring the Bible Answers film, "The Beginning and End of Death." There were fifteen of the public in attendance.

The True Knowledge

Sunday began with a "manna service," which was followed with greetings from far and near, and as we listened we realised the blest tie that binds us all together. Then we listened to an address entitled, "The True Knowledge of God." While knowledge on every subject is more wide-

spread than ever before, the brother emphasized the importance of spiritual knowledge as far as the child of God is concerned. Theological tracts and writings are generally full of doubts, and spiritual knowledge becomes obscure. The Bible is no longer recognised as the inspired Word of God, yet it supplies us with knowledge we could not obtain elsewhere. When men turn aside from the Bible they start to reason among themselves, but human reasoning cannot solve world problems nor satisfy our spiritual needs.

In Matthew 16:7-10 is the incident when our Lord's disciples failed to understand his reference to the "leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." They thought he was speaking of literal bread instead of the doctrine of the leaders of the people. Our minds operate by the Word of God through the Holy Spirit. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us . . . it is the power of God."—I Cor. 1:18

We were reminded of Noah—who lived in a time of corruption. The world then was full of violence, similar to conditions today. Noah was told that there would be a lot of rain, and that he was to build a large boat. It must have seemed strange to build a ship in the midst of a land mass—but Noah believed God. He told the people that the vengeance of God was coming upon the world. He must have sounded foolish, but he had implicit faith in God.

As soon as the Israelites encountered difficulties and obstructions after their release from Egyptian bondage they murmured against Moses their leader. On the other hand, when the Egyptians perceived the plight of the Israelites, they thought only of dead Israelites, and overlooked the power of God.

The Jews, at the first advent, looked for a Messiah who would come in power and great glory, instead of as a lowly man. The Greeks sought after worldly wisdom, but the

Bible reveals the nature of God, how much man needs God, and the way of salvation. None of us could have reasoned out the plan of God on our own, for God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts, and his ways higher than our ways. As we study his Word, so we imbibe his knowledge.

A House of Prayer

The convention was blessed with visiting speakers who had not known they would be present when the programme was compiled. Some rearranging was therefore needed, so that all might benefit. The Sunday afternoon study was withdrawn in favour of two talks, the first of which was entitled, "My Father's House Is a House of Prayer." The Israelites were a nation of tent dwellers. God's presence in their midst abode in a tent. The tabernacle was in a tent, and there Israel kept alive their relationship with God.

King David was instructed to build an altar on the threshing floor of Oran, the Jebusite; and later, although a temple for the Lord was built on that site, David was not permitted to be the builder. It was a beautiful building, divided into a holy and a most holy. It was built quietly, the stones having been prepared beforehand. Here Israel were to worship and sacrifice, and God wanted it to be unto them a sacred and holy place. At its dedication God told the nation that if they would keep his statutes and do all he had commanded, then he would establish the throne of their kingdom forever. Israel soon forgot God and his temple, and turned to the images of Baal. The kings of Israel and Judah gave presents of the various items in the temple to heathen kings, and allowed Baal worship to be performed in the temple.

In the New Testament we learn that the church is the new spiritual temple, and the experiences of natural Israel serve as lessons for spiritual Israel. When Jesus turned

the money changers out of the temple he reminded them that it is written, "My house shall be called the house of prayer." (Matt. 21:13) After this incident Jesus spoke of the temple of his body, and Paul later describes Jesus as the "chief Cornerstone." The Apostles are foundation stones, and together we as followers of the Master are growing into a holy temple in the Lord for a habitation for God. As that new spiritual temple we are to be a house of prayer.

Prayer is important for the man of God. Our Lord's life was filled with prayer, and the apostles in their epistles exhort the brethren to follow his example, "continuing instant in prayer." Let us increase the role of prayer in our lives, as we live in his house of prayer.

The Lion

Following this helpful reminder of the need of prayer in our lives came a talk entitled, "The Lion." The Word of God abounds in practical lessons for the child of God. The natural lion foreshadows the lion of the tribe of Judah, our Lord, who was raised for our justification and is now at the right hand of God. When the life-style of the lion is applied to our Christian life we note that we have to hunt for our food—search for truth. We are exhorted to fight the good fight of faith, in the same manner as our Captain fought and won all his battles. We must beware lest we are tempted to bite and devour, and watch lest we wander from the paths of righteousness.

In Proverbs 30:30 we read that "a lion... is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any." How sad it is in our day that some fall away, to become a tool in the Adversary's hand! A weak lion is a sick animal, and in order to remain spiritually strong we must feed on the living bread and drink of the living water. The lion has padded feet and can move quietly when hunting food, so too we should walk circumspectly. He exercises great pa-

tience; he never gives up; and it is only those who by patient continuance in well-doing and seek for eternal life who are victorious. The lion has no fear, and our God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of love, and of a sound mind. At every time we are to remember we walk in the strength of the Lord God.

Pillars in the Temple

After tea we enjoyed a talk entitled, "Pillars in the Temple." "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple." This indicates a work of preparation, for a pillar must be strong, upright, and durable. To be stable it must stand on a firm foundation. (II Tim. 2:19) God himself will make us perfect, firm, and strong (I Pet. 5:10), but Paul exhorts us to make ourselves strong (Eph. 6:10), and so we become workers together with God.

"The joy of the Lord is your strength." (Neh. 8:10) "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." (Isa. 30:15) To become upright we need a point of reference, and this is to be found only in our Lord's life while he walked among men. Nothing of mushroom growth is durable. It may take years to bring a Christian to maturity, and God will himself make you strong, after your brief period of suffering (I Pet. 5:10 N.E.B.), which Paul calls the little troubles that are so transitory. We can only view our experiences in this light if we look not at the "seen" things, which are transitory, but at the unseen things, which are eternal. The experiences which are making us stable, strong, upright, and durable are transitory, but when we are established as pillars in the temple the "seen" things will be no more, and the unseen things will become a glorious reality, as we spend all eternity in the presence of God and our glorified Lord as pillars in God's glorious temple.

A Saviour

After a night's rest we assembled for the final sessions which, contrary to the printed programme, covered the entire day, as we were to hear one of our overseas visitors after tea. The first of the two morning talks referred us to the words of Isaiah 19:20: "He shall send them a Saviour," a Great One, and which provided a helpful lesson and much encouragement for us in these days of trouble and distress of nations. This promise given by the Lord, although addressed to the people of Egypt, has its full application to the world of mankind—the groaning creation—who in "this day," because of their great need, require a "great Saviour." They need one who will deliver them from their bondage to every oppressor, including those of sin and death.

This great Saviour is our returned Lord Jesus, who together with his body members, his bride, will effect the great work typified by Moses at the time of the Exodus. This work not only effected a deliverance of God's people from bondage to Pharaoh, but also brought glory to Israel's God. So it will be in "this day," as a result of the work of the Deliverer "greater than Moses." A brief survey of this 19th chapter of Isaiah revealed its apt portrayal of present world conditions. God heard the cry and groanings of Israel in Egypt, and similarly, when mankind cry unto the Lord because of their oppressions, the great Saviour will be sent for their deliverance. "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper." (Ps. 72:12) It was suggested that God's plan of salvation was corroborated in symbol and in type by the "stone witness" referred to in Isaiah 19:19 and Joshua 22:28. This Great Saviour, Head and body, are the special care of the Heavenly Father, of whom we read, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son," in this work of saving grace. (I Cor. 1:9) Such are loved by the Father, even as was our Lord.

The Mind of Christ

Then followed a discourse entitled, "Let This Mind Be in You." In his epistles to the Early Church, Paul expresses the mind of God through Christ. It was a mind or attitude that was intent on doing the Father's will. Jesus sacrificed or laid down his life unto death, and in like manner Paul also suffered in order that the mind of Christ might be displayed in his character. After being beaten, and thrust into the stocks in the innermost prison, he showed no bitterness, but instead he and Silas sang praises to their Lord. When the jailer wished to know how he could be saved, Paul said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," but it was a belief which included a demonstration of their love, loyalty, and integrity to God. Jesus, who had been God's agent in all creation, was the One appointed by God to bring about our salvation. He not only gave up all he possessed, but while on earth sacrificed every element of his human existence.

Like Abraham and Isaac years before, Jesus proved he had the same mind as his Father, and Paul exhorts us to be so at one with Jesus that we are in absolute harmony with the Father also. It is a mind that must dominate all our thoughts and actions, in honour preferring one another, so that in the ages to come we may experience full fellowship and communion with the Father and his Son.

A Man After God's Own Heart

The lunch break was soon over, and we were back in our seats to listen to the speaker of the first session of the afternoon, who referred us to the Psalms of David. The reason for our meeting together in convention was that we may each be joined together in fellowship, and helped to grow into the likeness of our Lord Jesus. The writers of the New Testament frequently quote from the Psalms of David, and in Acts 13:22 Paul refers to God's description

of David as a man after his own heart who will fulfil all his will.

The psalms give us an insight into his thoughts and his heart, and through David we have an impression of God's heart. As we copy David so we can grow more like God. David lived and acted in the strength of the Lord. He was his shield and high tower, and when David gained the victory over Goliath he gave the credit to God. David realised man was as nothing unless he trusted in the Lord.

Saul wanted to rule Israel so that men would look up to him and serve him, whereas David desired to turn men's hearts to God so that they would serve Him instead of other humans. David was humble, and he desired victory in order that the nation could live in peace. In Psalm 144: 15 he says, "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

Then we enjoyed an hour of prayer, praise, and testimony, when we told one another of our love for our Heavenly Father and his beloved Son, singing praises to his Name for his great love to us.

God's Plan in the Bible

After tea we again assembled in Sister Fanny's "upper room" for what was to be the last session of our convention. The brother sketched through the Bible, reminding us of the wonderful plan of the ages which God has preserved for us at this time.

In the first chapter of Genesis we have an outline of history before the advent of man. Nowhere else can we find this knowledge, and God shows us how he started with nothing, and with his Son as agent, worked until at the end of the sixth day he reached the creation of man. As he looked back, God pronounced it "very good." Similarly with the human race—of its own it has nothing to look forward to. God started with this nothingness, and

will make out of it something glorious so that he will look back on the completed plan of salvation and say, "Very good."

The brother then traced the account of mankind through the ages, from which we find that our Lord alone offered an acceptable sacrifice, because he alone could keep his Father's perfect law. During the Gospel Age the Lord has been calling out a people for his name, and the types of Israel's tabernacle in the wilderness picture our need as sinners to have our characters cleansed in the blood of Christ. Now in the harvest-time the Lord's followers are being delivered, no more subject to death. Those of Israel who rejected their Messiah at his first advent will be fully forgiven, and, through the Ancient Worthies, the Law will go forth to all mankind. Thus will be brought about the restitution of all things, and all creation will be in harmony with God.

And so another profitable season of feasting came to an end, but for those who were able to linger a few days longer the blessings of dwelling together in the bonds of Christian fellowship continued. The study in Romans 5:2, squeezed off the schedule on Sunday, was enjoyed on Tuesday evening, for it has been a feature of our Portrush gatherings to spend the evenings following the convention in renewed fellowship at the Master's table. □

Encouraging Letters

Meeting Together

Dear Friends: Greetings in the name of Jesus! I have to thank you for the Hymns of Dawn, and the other interesting books you have sent to me. I have been following gradually

with the aid of the Holy Spirit to understand the secrets of God's promises to those who love and obey the teachings of Christ. Many of us who have been to so many churches, who hold so many shades of belief,

Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

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

J. B. BROWN		Denver, Colo.	12
Grand Rapids, Mich.	Aug. 1, 2	Cheyenne, Wyo.	13
Cincinnati, Ohio	4, 5	Laramie, Wyo.	14
Indianapolis, Ind.	6	Bosler, Wyo.	15
LaSalle, Ill.	7	Boise, Idaho	17-19
St. Louis, Mo.	8	Clarkston, Wash.	20
Kansas City, Mo.	9	Spokane, Wash.	21
Denver, Colo.	11, 12	Wenatchee, Wash.	22
Pueblo, Colo.	13	Kelowna, B. C.	23
Montrose, Colo.	14	Langley, B. C.	24
G. M. JEUCK		Vancouver, B. C.	26
Catawissa, Pa.	Aug. 19	Victoria, B. C.	27
A. H. KRUMPOLT		Bremerton, Wash.	28, 29
Allentown, Pa.	Aug. 26	Tacoma, Wash.	30
M. C. MITCHELL		Seattle, Wash.	31
New Haven, Conn.	Aug. 19	E. K. PENROSE	
K. M. NAIL		Grand Rapids, Mich.	Aug. 1, 2
Baltimore, Md.	Aug. 26	Detroit, Mich.	13
Philadelphia, Pa.	26	Pontiac, Mich.	14
GEORGE PASSIOS		Chatham, Ont.	15
York, Pa.	Aug. 12	Toronto, Ont.	17
HARRY PASSIOS		Buffalo, N. Y.	19
Grand Rapids, Mich.	Aug. 1, 2	Rochester, N. Y.	20
Clinton, Iowa	8	Agawam, Mass.	22
Pueblo, Colo.	10	Hartford, Conn.	23
		North Brookfield, Mass.	24
		Boston, Mass.	26
		Portland, Maine	27
		New Bedford, Mass.	28
		New Haven, Conn.	30

Hartford, Conn. Aug. 12 Sayville, N. Y. Aug. 5

BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

J. HUMPHREY		W. F. READER	
Latchford	Aug. 12	Yeovil - 3, Hill Grove Ave. Sept. 1, 2	
E. T. NADAL		Latchford	16
Hull	Aug. 4	T. UNDERWOOD	
Welling	19	Yeovil - 3, Hill Grove Ave. Sept. 1, 2	
Yeovil - 3, Hill Grove Ave. Sept. 1, 2			

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SEPTEMBER SPECIAL: On Sunday, September 16, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss the subject, "What Is Death?" This topic should be of interest to many. Attractive circulars will be available for announcing this program, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. Address your request to, The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey 07073.

Conventions

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Aug. 5—
2601 Fillmore St., N. E. Mrs. Mike
Nekora, 2601 Fillmore St., N. E.
55418

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Aug. 19—2850
Dunaway, Cincinnati. Mr. John
Slavich, 126 S. 22nd St., Richmond,
Ind. 47374

CHICAGO, ILL., Aug. 26—Masonic
Temple, 5352 W. Chicago Ave. Mr.
Albert Sheppelbaum, 5739 S. Nor-
mandy Ave. 60638

JACKSON, MICH., Sept. 1-3—Jack-
Community College, 2111 Emmons
Rd. Mrs. Ray Lumley, 2531 Ashton
Rd. 49203

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 1-3—
Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, 50th St. and

Park Ave. Mr. G. M. Jeuck, 81
Blauvelt Rd., Nanuet, N. Y. 10954

SAN DIEGO, CALIF., Sept. 1-3—Mrs.
Gilbert L. Rice, 4005 Olympic St.
92115

SEATTLE, WASH., Sept. 1-3—Norway
Center, 300 Third Ave. West. Miss
M. Stevens, 6525 24th N. W. 98117

PITTSBURGH, PA., Sept. 15, 16—Sky-
view Fire Company Hall, Noble
Drive, West Mifflin, Pa. Mr. John
Baracos, 736 Dunster St. 15226

DENVER, COLO., Oct. 5-7

BUFFALO, N. Y., Oct. 6, 7

POTTSTOWN, PA., Oct. 7

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIF., Oct. 13,
14

MILWAUKEE, WIS., Oct. 20, 21

1973 GENERAL CONVENTION CALVIN COLLEGE, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN JULY 28—AUGUST 2

To us the SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH...

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

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

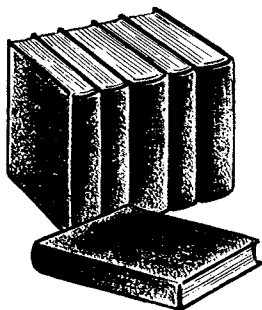
That the basis of hope for the church and the world lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5, 6

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

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

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

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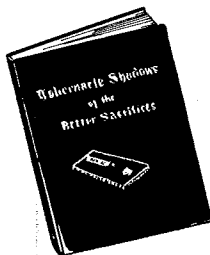
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