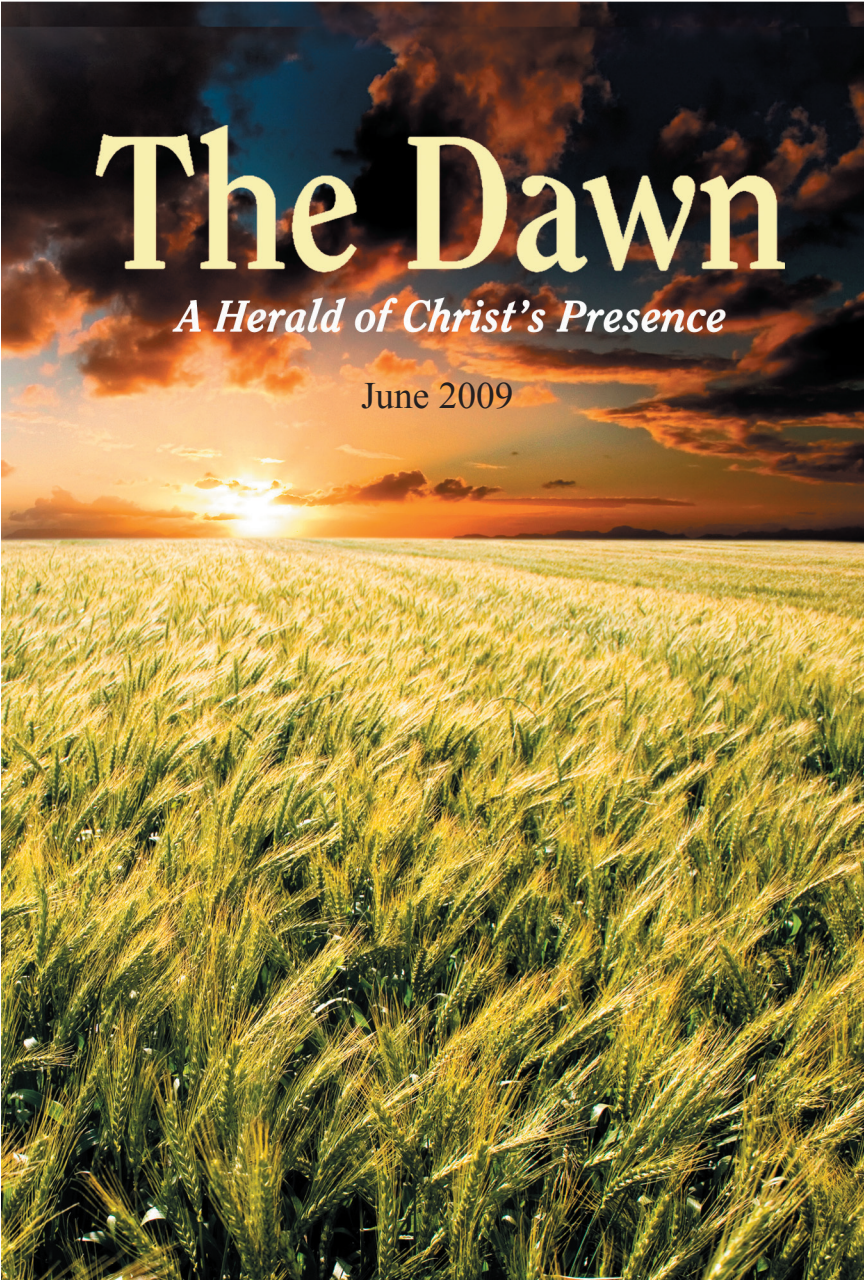


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

The Days of Youth 2

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

God Calls Moses 14

Moses and Aaron Respond 16

Pharoah Ignores God's Call 18

God Calls the People out
of Egypt 20

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

The Heavenly Call—Part 6

The Heavenly Call is
Heard at Athens 22

Our Reasonable Service 34

A Marriage in Heaven 38

God's Unseen Messengers 50

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts 12

OBITUARIES 61

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS 62

CONVENTIONS 63

The Days Of Youth

*“His flesh shall be
fresher than a
child’s: he shall
return to the days
of his youth.”*

—*Job 33:25*

THESE WONDERFUL WORDS

of Scripture were written many centuries ago and foretell a yet future time when the human family will be lifted out of the terrible pit of sin, corruption, and death, and elevated to a relationship of favor with the all-wise and loving Heavenly Father. This great work of restitution for the human family will be accomplished under the establishment of Christ’s kingdom that we believe will soon be set up over all the earth. Under that righteous government, mankind will learn obedience to the Divine rule, and appreciate the provisions provided under the terms of the New Covenant arrangement that will be designed for the blessing of all the families of the earth.—Gen. 22:16-18

A SAVIOR NEEDED

To bring this Divine plan of reconciliation to pass, it would be necessary for our Lord Jesus to leave his heavenly estate, come to earth and pay

the ransom price for sin by shedding his own precious blood for the poor groaning human creation. The Heavenly Father's method would be manifest to all mankind in due time and course. In connection with this plan, we further read in Job's account, "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness; Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom."—Job 33:23,24

Writing many centuries later, the Prophet Malachi also spoke of our Lord as a special messenger from the Heavenly Father. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts."—Mal. 3:1

Great rejoicing will take place when men begin to realize and appreciate the blessed promises of a loving God that will be made available under Christ's kingdom and rulership. We read further in Job, "He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness. He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living."—Job 33:26-30

THE GLORIOUS PROSPECT

From the early days of earth's creation and man's fall into sin and death because of disobedience to the Divine Law, men have been seeking, by their own means, a way to return to the former state of vigor, health, and youthfulness. No one has yet found such a way to do this, but with an ultimate design and purpose our loving Heavenly Father has set in motion a Divine plan for the recovery and reconciliation of the fallen race; and that reconstruction work will be fulfilled under the administration of Christ's future kingdom of Truth and righteousness.

With a theme for the glorious and righteous work of Christ's kingdom, the psalmist wrote, "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."—Ps. 103:1-5

THE FORETOLD PROMISE

This ultimate promise for the sin-sick world of today was foretold in the wonderful words of the Prophet Isaiah, to which Jesus turned when he began his earthly ministry. "He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place

where it was written [Isaiah 61:1-3].”—Luke 4:16,17

When our Lord Jesus began to read he confirmed the Heavenly Father’s promise. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”—vss. 18-21

IN THE DAY THOU EATEST THEREOF

From the Bible record, we read concerning Adam and the penalty that he would suffer because of his disobedience to the Heavenly Father and his righteous laws. “The LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die [dying thou shalt die, *Marginal Translation*].”—Gen. 2:16,17

The alternate translation from the Margin suggests that Adam would not die instantly, but that a dying process would be carried out before his sentence of death would end in the grave. This fact is corroborated in the scriptural record where we learn, “All the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.” (chap. 5:5)

Thus is clearly shown that ‘the day’ of which God was speaking, was a thousand years long. “Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” (II Pet. 3:8) Methuselah lived the longest of any human being, but he, too, died within the divinely established limit of God’s thousand-year day. “All the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.”—Gen. 5:27

THE CESSATION OF LIFE

The seriousness of God’s warning about the penalty of death and its consequences was straightforward, and thus fully understood by Adam. “Unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Gen. 3:17-19) Thus the whole world, including those yet unborn, would come under the penalty of death as explained by the Apostle Paul. “As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”—Rom. 5:12

THE PROCESS OF DYING

Those who have studied the aging process report that it depends on a combination of both genetic

and environmental factors, and that every individual has their own unique genetic makeup and environment. Therefore, the aging process and eventual death occurs at different rates in different people. Genetic factors are usually more powerful than environmental factors in determining the large differences among people in aging and life span.

Some specific genetic disorders may speed up the aging process, but there are also many environmental conditions, such as the available quality of health care that may have a substantial effect on aging. The aging process also causes basic functional changes in the body's cells. The rate at which cells multiply tends to slow down with age, such as the cells that are important for our immune system to work properly. Aging also causes changes in our responses to environmental stresses, exposure and other factors.

A SPAN OF LIFE

Some die at birth or at a very early age, while others may live a few short years longer than the average life span. The process of dying, however, always ends in the grave. This fact is emphasized in the book of Job, where it is made clear, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass."—Job 14:1-5

The psalmist also speaks of fallen man's life span and ultimate fate, saying, "Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." (Ps. 104:29) Again, we read, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." (chap. 146:4) Solomon wrote, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."—Eccles. 9:10

THE FABLES OF MAN

Dating back to ancient times, numerous fables that were surrounded by mystical thoughts and dreams spoke of fountains of youth and healing waters in faraway places. Alexander the Great had searched for such waters in eastern Asia, and medieval writers had mentioned them. There were also similar legends known to the Polynesians whose tradition supposedly located the fountain of youth somewhere in Hawaii.

Soon after the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492, Spanish adventurers sought gold and other riches in the newly discovered lands. On his second voyage to the new world, Juan Ponce de Leon accompanied him and claimed the subtropical islands of Puerto Rico for the king of Spain. The island remained under Spanish control despite numerous attempts of conquest by buccaneers and pirates, as well as by English and Dutch expeditions. In 1508, Juan Ponce de Leon became the first governor.

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

The thirst for wealth and power eventually led some adventurers to an exploration of the territory of what is now the southern part of the United States. In the meantime, Ponce de Leon had become interested in a tradition that prevailed at that time among the natives of Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. They believed that there was a fountain in a mysterious land to the north where there were healing springs with waters capable of renewing the youth, and that would invigorate every person who bathed in its waters.

Ponce de Leon had become wealthy in the colonial service and was therefore financially able to equip three ships for the purpose of setting out in search for the land of riches, and the mythical fountain of youth that would restore his health and make him a vigorous young man again. He perhaps may have been vaguely familiar with some of the fables of the distant past. In hopes of finding such a place, he and his followers roamed throughout the islands of the West Indies, searching for the fountain which had now become the chief object of the expedition. On their voyages, they visited islands and continents of whose existence mankind in former ages had no conception.

On one of these expeditions in 1512, Ponce de Leon discovered a new and strange land which he thought was another island. He named it Florida which means "feast of flowers" having found himself surrounded by unfamiliar and exotic types of plants and flowers. It is also not unreasonable to conclude that he may have thought that the fountain of youth was also nearby. However, he was

never able to locate the elusive fountain of youth that he had spent so much time, effort, and expense to find. He was eventually killed by hostile Indians in a second visit to Florida in 1521.

RAPIDLY PASSING TIME

Time is relentless and everyone feels themselves growing older with increasing speed. It has been said that the older one gets, the faster the time passes. As the years glide by, the ability to look unaffected by the rapid passage of time and to maintain an appearance of youth is a goal that many often seek. As one increases in age, physical and mental strength grows weaker, and yet at the same time the demands of life and time may grow more intense and stressful. This is especially true in our modern-day world that has been accelerated by the great increase of knowledge and the frantic pace of life.

Celebrities and people who have financial means are more able to take advantage of the wide variety of lotions, potions, and other preparations that have been prepared to make one look and feel younger. There are also healing spas, health resorts, invigorating baths and many other related products and techniques that are available to help rejuvenate the human body for a time. More drastic measures including plastic surgery and Botox procedures have also been implemented in an attempt to reverse the inevitable process of aging. The Prophet Isaiah wrote, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."—Isa. 64:6

GOD'S REMEDY

Our loving Heavenly Father has the ultimate plan and only answer for the sin-sick and dying human family. Christ's future kingdom of life-giving blessings will be available for all of the obedient of mankind. In the prophetic words of Isaiah, we read, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying."—Isa. 65:17-19

Under Christ's kingdom rule of righteousness, it will be possible for all who are obedient to the Divine law to return to the freshness of youth, as outlined in our featured scripture. Isaiah said, "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed."—vs. 20

AN ALL ENCOMPASSING PLAN

Isaiah's prophetic words point to our loving Heavenly Father's design for his human creation that will extend blessings of life and peace to the farthest reaches of the earth. All will be brought under the arrangements of his kingdom. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of

a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD."—Isa. 65:21-25

At that time, the wonderful words of our featured scripture will be fulfilled. "His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth."—Job 33:25 ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JUNE 4—"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—I Peter 1:7 (Z. '95-135 Hymn 197)

JUNE 11—"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended."—Philippians 3:13 (Z. '95-250 Hymn 196)

JUNE 18—"In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—Psalm 16:11 (Z. '96-54 Hymn 337)

JUNE 25—"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."—Colossians 4:2 (Z. '96-163 Hymn 241)

Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming!
Rejoice! rejoice! the wilderness shall bloom;
 And Zion's children soon shall sing;
 The deserts all are blossoming.
Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming:
Rejoice! rejoice! the wilderness shall bloom.
 The gospel banner, wide unfurled,
 Shall wave in triumph o'er the world,
 And every creature, bond or free,
 Shall hail the glorious jubilee.

Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming,
Rejoice! rejoice! Jerusalem shall sing.
 From Zion shall the law go forth,
 And all shall hear, from south to north.
Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming:
Rejoice! rejoice! Jerusalem shall sing;
 And truth shall sit on every hill,
 And blessings flow in every rill,
 And praise shall every heart employ,
 And every voice shall shout for joy.

Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming;
Rejoice! rejoice! the "Prince of Peace" shall reign;
 And lambs may with the leopard play,
 For naught shall harm in Zion's way:
Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming;
Rejoice! rejoice! the "Prince of Peace" shall reign.
 The sword and spear, of needless worth
 Shall prune the tree, and plough the earth;
 For peace shall smile from shore to shore,
 And nations shall learn war no more.

—*Bible Students Hymnal, England*

God Calls Moses

Key Verse: “Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.”
—Exodus 3:10

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 2:23-3:12

Israelites brought into Egypt to escape the famine had died.—Exod. 1:6

While these things had taken place, a Pharaoh came to reign that did not know Joseph as the head of the children of Israel. Fearing them, he sent out a decree that all of the male Hebrews born were to be killed. Moses' mother hid him, but when she could no longer do so she placed him in a basket by the river. Having been found by a maid of Pharaoh's daughter, he would be subsequently raised in the royal household. By this arrangement, Moses was raised under the protection of the Egyptian government, and became “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words, and in deeds.”—Acts 7:22

After growing into manhood, Moses would then identify himself with Israel, but there was no such loyalty among his brethren. They would soon come to resent

WE BEGIN OUR LESSON

with a look at the preparation of the one who would be used by God as the deliverer of his people. We can see the hand of the LORD in the life of Moses from the time of his birth. The nation of Israel was in bondage to the Egyptians, and had grown in numbers, and had prospered as a people. Joseph and the entire generation of Is-

him. It serves to remind us how Christ “came unto his own, and his own received him not.” (John 1:11) Upon seeing an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, Moses killed him. Fearing Pharaoh who desired to slay him, Moses fled to the land of Midian.

He was now content to dwell in this Gentile land rejecting his own people, and taking a bride. It looked as though all of his years of education and training had gone to waste. He would dwell as a humble shepherd for forty years, learning a lesson of meekness and full submission to the Divine will. It was a severe lesson to learn, but one that would help to prepare Moses for his future work. In the meantime, the king of Egypt died, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD because of their bondage. It was now time for God to call Moses to be the instrument used in the deliverance of his people.

One day, while he was tending his flock in the land, he would have an experience that would forever change his life. “The angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.” (Exod. 3:2) Most men would have fled at this sight but Moses climbed up to see this remarkable thing, using his knowledge of the terrain; which was a great advantage to him later as leader of Israel through the wilderness. He would be told, “Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”—vss. 5,6

God reminded him of his special covenant with Abraham, that he had seen the affliction of his people, and that the time for their deliverance had come. The LORD had called Moses, and although he humbly doubted his worthiness, he would be assured that, “I will be with thee.”—vs. 12 ■

Moses and Aaron Respond

***Key Verse: “Aaron
spake all the words
which the LORD
had spoken unto
Moses, and did the
signs in the sight of
the people.”
—Exodus 4:30***

***Selected Scripture:
Exodus 4:10-16,
27-31***

quently, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.”—Exod. 4:10

The LORD assured Moses that he would be with him and teach him what to say. Still doubting his ability to carry out such an important task, he would be admonished by God. Aaron would be chosen to be his mouthpiece. “Thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.”—vs. 15

It was now time for Moses to return back to Egypt to fulfill all that the LORD had planned concerning the deliverance of his people. He was first assured that all of the people who had sought his life over forty years

WHEN THE HEAVENLY FA-
ther called Moses into duty, Moses was full of doubt with respect to his abilities to complete such an important work. He had to remember the circumstances that had caused him to flee from his own people for so many years. Moses was so meek that he could not realize that with Divine help he would be successful. “I am not elo-

earlier were now dead. Before leaving the land of Midian Moses, being a good man, met with his father-in-law Jethro. He asked permission to return to Egypt, and “Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.” (Exod. 4:18) It really is a lesson to us to be considerate of others who have been an important part of our lives, and to take care of our obligations.

Moses now focused his attention on his return to Egypt, and God instructed him in all that he would say and do. “When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.” (Exod. 4:21) Aaron was instructed to go out into the wilderness and meet Moses. Aaron willingly obeyed and “met him in the mount of God, and kissed him.” (vs. 27) Moses related all that God had told him, and of the signs which God had commanded him to perform.

Moses and Aaron then called together all of the elders of Israel, and told them of the events that would soon take place, including the signs concerning their deliverance. The first sign or testimony to Israel was the casting of Moses’ rod upon the ground, and its becoming a serpent, and then becoming a rod again in the hands of Aaron.

The people would see this miracle and would know that God was using his mighty power on their behalf. A rod symbolizes authority. Moses’ rod was frequently used in connection with the signs, as signifying Divine authority. A serpent is a symbol of evil—of sin and all of its consequences. The lesson for us is that evil in the world is a result of God not exercising his rod or authority, but allowing Satan, “that old serpent,” to work his evil ways. (Rev. 12:9) We should further understand that it is God’s intention, purpose, and promise to take hold upon the present evil conditions. He will then reestablish his authority in his own hand. ■

Pharaoh Ignores God's Call

Key Verse:

“Afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.”

—Exodus 5:1

Selected Scripture:

Exodus 5:1-6:1

AS GOD DESIRED THEM TO

do, the children of Israel believed the signs that Moses and Aaron showed to them. They were thankful that the LORD had seen their afflictions and they gave thanks to him for his mercy. As we will come to see, Pharaoh did not have the same reaction when he was shown signs and miracles from the LORD God of Israel.

The contest with Pharaoh began with the first demand as recorded in our key verse. Pharaoh's reaction to the request was one of contempt for he considered the sun god of the Egyptians the powerful one. He decreed that the Israelites would now have to make their bricks without the use of straw. The taskmasters were instructed that the tally of bricks made each day could not be even one less in number. “So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw.” (Exod. 5:12) The outcome of this first demand for freedom was that their tasks were in reality practically doubled. Their taskmasters turned to cruelty; the people were beaten, and even prevented from giving

reverence to God. "He said, Ye are idle, ye are idle: therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the LORD." (vs. 17) But by these bitter experiences the people were being prepared to welcome their liberty when it would finally come. It was a testing of faith, not only of Moses and Aaron who had to confront Pharaoh, but also of all Israelites. Pharaoh represents Satan, and the land of Egypt represents his dominion of sin and death over the whole world in which mankind is in bondage. Similarly, we should appreciate the privilege of being set free from the power of sin and death and of being inducted into God's family.

In the face of the righteous demand of the true and living God and the tremendous demonstration of miracles that he was indeed God, and that Moses and Aaron were his representatives, Pharaoh hardened his heart. Instrumentally, God hardened Pharaoh's heart by forcing him into an issue against which he hardened his own heart in refusal. Light rejected, rightful obedience refused, inevitably hardens conscience and heart.—Rom. 9:17-24

The people were greatly troubled as were Moses and Aaron concerning the reaction of Pharaoh to God's request and his subsequent punishment of the people. "They said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us." (Exod. 5:21) Moses entreated God in prayer to show him what to do in response to the evil that had been since he first approached Pharaoh to free his people.

The answer to Moses' first prayer would come quickly. God would assure Moses that he would complete his deliverance of the people, and that nothing would stand in the way of it. "Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go."—chap. 6:1 ■

God Calls the People out of Egypt

Key Verse: *“Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.”*
—Exodus 14:30

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 13:17-14:30

EXODUS IS A BOOK OF REDEMPTION, and teaches us that redemption is wholly of God. (John 3:16) It teaches us that redemption is provided through a person or servant. (Exod. 2:2) It shows to us that a requirement for redemption is by blood. (I Peter 1:18) It also reveals the important aspect that redemption is an evidence of God's power. (Rom. 8:2) A great example of all of these wonderful aspects of redemption is shown in the events that took place concerning the deliverance of the nation of Israel from Egyptian bondage. God's purpose was to lead them to the land of Canaan, the promised land.

As a result of Pharaoh's defiance and his bitterness of heart, his people would have to endure many hardships. God inflicted his displeasure upon them in the form of plagues. The first three of the ten plagues were common to all in Egypt. They consisted of the smiting of the rivers and waters in the ponds and all of the vessels being turned to blood, frogs coming out of the water and spreading over the land, and lice coming out of the dust and spreading over all of Egypt. (Exod. 7:15-25; 8:1-19) As the Scriptures reveal to us, and as an assurance that God was

controlling the events, the next plagues affected only the Egyptians. They included for example: swarms of flies, the death of all of the cattle, boils breaking out on man and beast, hail and fire from the sky, swarms of locusts that devoured everything, and darkness over the land. (Exod. 8:16-32; 9,10) The plagues were doubtless a full compensation of justice upon the Egyptians. It again was God's goodness that hardened Pharaoh. When the LORD relieved the land and the people from one plague, Pharaoh seemed to conclude that it was past and that perhaps no more would come. In actuality, step by step, God's mercy led him further and further into his hostility against the Israelites and their God.

Even after these severe judgments that had come upon the land, his people, and even his own household, Pharaoh continued to defy God. This is shown by his words to Moses, "Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die." (chap. 10:28) It was at this time that the LORD would bring one last plague upon Pharaoh. "All the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts."—chap. 11:5

The children of Israel would be saved or 'passed over' from this last plague by following the instructions from God concerning eating of the lamb, and spreading its blood on their doorposts. (chap. 12:1-30) Pharaoh would now let the people go, and they journeyed out of Egypt taking the spoils of the land with them. However, Pharaoh would soon pursue them and, coming to the Red Sea, all was seemingly lost. But, through God's power, the people were saved, and all the hosts of Pharaoh were destroyed.

Sometimes when we come to the end of all human possibilities, our trust in God causes us to listen to his voice and go forward.—Ps. 116 ■

The Heavenly Call is Heard at Athens

“Now those who escorted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left.”

—Acts 17:14, New American Standard Bible

FROM THE SCRIPTURAL RECORD, we learn that it was necessary for the Apostle Paul and his companions to suddenly leave his newly found brethren at Thessalonica and Berea in order to escape mob violence and threats to his life. He was escorted to safety by his friends to a port city where he then boarded a ship bound for Athens. As he departed, he left word for both Timothy and Silas to join him at Athens when they had finished their ministerial activities in Thessalonica and Berea.

PAUL'S CHANGE IN PLANS

In Luke's scriptural record, we learn about some of the important and interesting details that led up to the apostle's sudden change in plans, and that

led to his escape to Athens. Soon after arriving at Thessalonica on his pilgrimage, the Jews began to be threatened by the apostle's ministry in that area. "The brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews." (Acts 17:10) The church at Berea was composed of serious students of the Truth. "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."—vs.11

Paul was overjoyed with the new brethren in Christ at Berea because of their keen interest and love for the Truth. This could be seen in their spiritual growth as revealed in the historian's account. Reading further, we note, "Many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people."—vss.12,13

SILAS AND TIMOTHY

Although Paul departed from Berea, Silas remained there. "Then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still. And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed."—vss. 14,15

From the apostle's other writings, we learn that Timothy went to Thessalonica for a time. This is recorded in his first letter to the Thessalonians, where he said, "When we could no longer forbear,

we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith.”—I Thess. 3:1,2

THE AFFLICTIONS OF CHRIST

Preaching the wonderful word of Truth and of the heavenly calling during this present Gospel Age was a cause for much affliction to those who carried forth its message during the time of the Early Church. The apostle addressed this point in his letter, as we further read, “That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.”—vss. 3-5

TIMOTHY’S GOOD REPORT

The young brother Timothy’s presence with the church at Thessalonica was a blessed one, and he carried back to Paul a very good report of his experiences when he arrived at Athens. “Now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you: Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God.”—vss. 6-9

ATHENS A CULTURAL CENTER

While waiting in Athens for his two companions to arrive, Paul was not idle. “Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.” (Acts 17:16,17) Athens was the most celebrated city in ancient Greece, and it was especially noted as a learning and cultural center. This included studies in the arts, sciences, music and philosophy. A few centuries before, when Alexander the Great conquered the world, and during the height of the Grecian Empire, it was known as the capital of the world. Although it was forced to yield that distinction to Rome, it still retained its reputation as the cultural center of the then known world. Many outstanding men came from Athens, including Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Sophocles, and Demosthenes.

SEARCHING FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

Athens, however, did not immediately appear to be part of the Apostle Paul’s plans to search out a people for God’s name. He found himself there mainly because persecution and the providence of the loving Heavenly Father had driven him there. He probably did not expect to stay there any longer than was necessary, and as soon as Silas and Timothy joined him there he planned that they would leave.

Here among the most learned men of the ancient world, there were three thousand idols. It has been said that no matter where anyone would stand in Athens, his eyes would range over innumerable

temples, altars, and various statues of gods. Of all the cities in the world, Athens boasted of having the most learned and cultural activities, and yet it was the most idolatrous. Religion was exploited in stone, silver, and gold.

When Paul went to the synagogue, it is recorded that he reasoned with the Jews, but there are few details written about his visit there. It is not indicated whether he found either acceptance or violent opposition. Perhaps the Jews had come considerably under the influence of worldly wisdom, and that he found little by way of response to the Truth. Not only did he attempt to reason with the Jews, but he also sought out people who were religious, successfully finding them in the marketplace. As the apostle could speak Greek fluently, he was able to reason effectively with many people, informing them of Jesus and the heavenly calling extended to believers in Christ during this Gospel Age. Luke records some of what took place at these meetings. “Disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.”—Acts 17:17

ATHENIAN PHILOSOPHERS

We read, however, “Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babblers say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.”—vs. 18

Men in all parts of Athens soon heard about the Apostle Paul’s presentations of new ideas and thoughts that they were not familiar with. He was

assisted in his efforts to spread these glad tidings by the customs of Athenians themselves, who spent their leisure time in discussing and deliberating over the newest thoughts on philosophy. We are informed that this was their major form of entertainment. “They took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)”—vss. 19-21

GODS AND GODDESSES

Throughout ancient civilizations there were numerous deities. The pattern among each was similar, but each god or goddess had a different function that mainly consisted of control over the natural elements of the earth. Unknown to Paul, a law had been passed in Athens that prohibited the introduction of any more new gods. It seems that the three thousand they already had were more than enough.

Perhaps one of the reasons for adopting the new Athenian law which attempted to limit the introduction of any more gods was that the number they already had was so large. When Paul’s preaching relating to the resurrection of Jesus reached the ears of the Epicureans and Stoicks—two major groups of philosophers—they decided to charge him with violation of this law and brought him before the Areopagus, which was the supreme court of Athens.

The Greek deities were thought to live on the top of Mount Olympus, or sometimes in the air above it. However, they were free to wander about the world at will. Although Zeus was the chief ruler, there were many other gods and goddesses. Some of the well-known were Hera, Apollo, Artemis, Ares, Hermes, Aphrodite, Athena, Poseidon, Demeter, and Persephone.

MYTHOLOGY

It is thought by some that much of this mythology may have had its origin during the time that the angelic creation materialized and came to earth in the days before the Flood. During that early time in the earth's history, some of these mighty beings took on human form and intermarried with the daughters of men. The scriptural record explains, "It came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."—Gen. 6:1,2

MIGHTY MEN OF OLD

This unauthorized union produced a hybrid race, and it also contributed to much evil in the earth during Noah's time. "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."—vss. 4,5

Greek mythology even refers to this, speaking of gods coming and going to and from the earth, marrying fair maidens and of their offspring performing mighty deeds. The number of deities increased with mythology, as these events of Noah's day began to be told and were being handed down from one generation to another. This is a possible indication that mythological worship had its beginning with the fallen angels of Noah's day.

PAUL'S SKEPTICAL AUDIENCE

Some of the men of Athens believed that the Apostle Paul was a proclaimer of strange gods, and they wanted to know what his new doctrine was. (Acts 17:18,19) However, their statements about Paul were not complimentary and they called him a 'babbler.' It seems more likely that they wanted to prevent him from speaking in public and found an opportunity in what they thought was a violation of the law.

Paul's teachings were contrary to theirs, and he had introduced an entirely new idea of there being a resurrection from the dead. His audience no doubt realized that their law forbidding new gods could then be used to prevent him from further preaching these strange new truths. We are not told what the penalty would have been if the Areopagus had decided that the apostle was guilty, but whatever the prospect may have been he was not in a very friendly environment.

TEMPLES, ALTARS AND STATUES

While looking around Athens, Paul had examined many of the inscriptions on the various altars, temples and statues, and noticed that one of them

was dedicated particularly to an ‘Unknown God.’ Perhaps in their concern to not overlook any deity, the Athenians had erected this special altar in their honor. It was around the existence of this distinctive altar to the unknown god, that Paul wisely took advantage in developing his message in response to the people of Athens.

THE UNKNOWN GOD

From Luke’s account of what actually happened when the Apostle Paul rose to preach the wonderful message from God’s Word, we read, “Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”—Acts 17:22,23

In Paul’s opening remarks, it is interesting to note that he referred to the men of Athens as being ‘too superstitious.’ The word superstitious is derived from a Greek word meaning, ‘a demon or pagan god.’ [*Vine’s Dictionary of New Testament Words*] The apostle thus made the important connection with the giants or mighty men of Noah’s day who had not kept their former estate and had married the daughters of men. This produced a hybrid race of people that were destroyed during the flood.

THE TRUE GOD

The apostle then quickly turned his attention to explaining the meaning of the true God, the supreme ruler of the universe. He emphasized that they could never make a likeness of him with gold, silver, or precious stones and place him in a man-made

temple. He explained to them, “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.”—vs. 24

Paul proclaimed to the people of Athens that the mighty Creator that he worshipped had created all life upon earth and that all life was dependent upon him for their existence. He continued, “Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.”—vss. 25,26

The apostle spoke of the loving and eternal Heavenly Father, and that “they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.”—vss. 27-29

THE APOSTLE’S LOGIC

It is interesting to note the great tact and logic that the Apostle Paul used in presenting his message, and how well he was able to use a form of teaching that was accepted as truth by them. Upon this foundation of truth he built the further structure of God’s wonderful plan and design for his human creation. He did this by quoting from the writings of their own Greek poets.

As Paul stood there being judged by the supreme court of Athens, he reminded his listeners that they will come under judgment too. He then said, "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—vss. 30,31

ONLOOKERS MOCKING

The great Supreme Creator of the universe, of whom he spoke, has appointed a day in which he will judge all the inhabitants of the world, and has appointed his own judge for this task. Paul proclaimed that the proof of this lay in the fact that this judge had been raised from the dead. "When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them."—vss. 32-34

Paul had made it clear to his listeners that he was not introducing a new god, but was speaking about a God that they already worshiped as the unknown God. It was not necessary for the court to hear more of his defense, so he was free to go. When the crowd took over with its shouts and disorder he then left.

THE LORD'S CALLED ONES

Athens was not a place that the Apostle Paul had particularly planned to visit, but it seems reasonable

to conclude that the Lord overruled in his circumstances to take him there. His peculiar trials helped to put him in contact with several of the Lord's people who were being called. Only two of these are named, and their names appear only here in the Scriptures. One of these was Dionysius, a judge of the Areopagus, and the other was a woman called Damaris. These newly called brethren adhered to Paul and he became their teacher, and established a congregation there.

Although the Scriptures do not provide us with much information concerning them, it is possible that Paul may have spent several weeks in Athens while waiting for the arrival of Silas and Timothy. They had been very busy helping the brethren in Berea and in Thessalonica, and did not come as quickly as Paul had anticipated.

It is necessary to go to sources outside of the Scriptures to obtain information about our Christian brethren who were living in Athens. It has been said that Dionysius, the most prominent of these, was immersed and later became an elder in the congregation. According to traditional historical writings he is known as the first bishop of Athens, and later suffered martyrdom. Our Heavenly Father has often shaped the circumstances in the lives of those he calls to be his people so they can hear his Word and to be brought into the body of Christ. He knew in advance about Paul's detour to Athens where a few were waiting to learn about God's plan and the wonderful features concerning the heavenly call. ■

Our Reasonable Service

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

—*Romans 12:1*

strength, or our time and talents, we must be used in the Lord's service as the opportunity affords or as he has directed. Greater faithfulness may involve activities that pertain to our preaching the message of Truth in some of the many ways that have been made possible to us. This may include ministering to those who have a hearing ear, or visiting the sick and isolated.

A LIVING SACRIFICE

Our consecrated life is a 'living sacrifice' because from God's standpoint we have had the benefit of

IN OUR FEATURED SCRIPTURE

the Apostle Paul is admonishing consecrated brethren to greater faithfulness in their covenant of sacrifice. To be faithful to our commitment, it is necessary that we yield ourselves to the Heavenly Father's will. This means that without consideration of self, our physical

Christ's blood applied on our behalf. This means that Adamic condemnation has been lifted from us, and that we are now reckoned as having a perfect life to offer in sacrifice even as Jesus did. The sacrifice is holy and acceptable only because of the application of the blood of Christ. Such a sacrifice is a 'reasonable service,' and is thus the fulfilling of a good conscience toward our loving Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus.

In our everyday experiences, we must endeavor to walk in the footsteps of Jesus which is a necessary part of our preparation to be a part of the royal family. These day-to-day experiences were also necessary for Jesus, as the Apostle Paul wrote, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."—Heb. 5:8,9

LEARNING OBEDIENCE

The question may be asked why it was necessary for Jesus to learn obedience? We know that he was a perfect man and was always obedient to his Heavenly Father. It was from the standpoint of his changed status after being spirit-begotten, and this took place at his baptism in the River Jordan. From that time forward, he had to be tried, tested, and proven. In his letter, Paul used the word 'obedience' which means to be submissive, and he also used the word 'suffer' which suggests endurance. This points to our Lord Jesus having learned to be submissive by the many experiences that the Heavenly Father permitted to come upon him.

These experiences came to him under very difficult and trying circumstances, and his final test of obedience resulted in his death on the cross. The matter of Jesus 'being made perfect' is that his experiences crystallized his character and made it possible for God to resurrect him from death and exalt him to the Divine nature. The purpose of Jesus' suffering is affirmed by the Apostle Paul, saying, "It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."—Heb. 2:10

FILLING UP THE AFFLICTIONS

Speaking of himself, Paul revealed his innermost feelings in his letter to the brethren at Colosse. "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." (Col. 1:24) Here Paul must have had in mind the many difficult experiences that he had suffered at the hands of the Jews and others as he endeavored to serve and encourage the brethren. It is apparent that he rejoiced in the privilege of being a partaker of Christ's sufferings, realizing that they were brought about in the course of his ministry to the church. Therefore, it was accounted to him for righteousness.

The footstep followers of Jesus must be partakers of Christ's sufferings if they are to share with him in the glories of the kingdom. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we

suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. 8:16,17

It is only through suffering that the church is enabled to perfect the new mind, to learn to be submissive under difficult and trying circumstances, and to develop the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. If we were to attempt to overcome all of these things in our own strength we would surely fail. The disciples, in contemplating some of these very matters, questioned Jesus on one occasion. “They were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.”—Mark 10:26,27

Like the Apostle Paul, we too must endeavor to rely completely on the power of God, “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.”—II Tim. 1:7,8 ■

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A Marriage in Heaven

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”
—*Revelation 19:7*

THE CONSECRATED CHILDREN of God are now living in a most important time during these closing years of the present Gospel Age. We are now living in the final hour of the church’s testing which takes place just prior to the introduction of the faithful members of the bride of Christ into the marriage feast. At that time, they will be married to our dear Lord Jesus, the Son of our loving Heavenly Father who is the king of the whole universe. The revelator further wrote, “To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”—vss. 8,9

The faithful bride class will become “The Christ” and share in the great work of restoring the human

family to obedience to the Divine law. The Apostle Paul wrote, "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." (Gal. 3:8,9) It is by faith that we thus look forward with great desire and anticipation to this wonderful scene of splendor and blessing that will be made available for all the families of the earth.

A PROPHETIC VISION

The psalmist also spoke of this marriage in heaven, saying, "The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee." (Ps. 45:13,14) Our attention is drawn to one of the beautiful figures by which the close and very precious relationship between our dear Lord Jesus and his elect bride has been scripturally portrayed. This may also be seen in the illustration of the captain and his soldiers, the shepherd and his sheep, the master and his servants or, as in this case, the bridegroom and the bride. In each of these instances our Lord's relationship to his true followers teaches a particular and valuable lesson.

The picture under consideration is very important because it brings to our mental vision our Lord Jesus who has been highly exalted to the Heavenly Father's right hand in his throne on high. We see the church in glory as a queen that will be associated with him in his glorious millennial kingdom

reign, and for the ages to come. These, and many other scriptural illustrations of heavenly hopes, lift the minds of the faithful members of his bride from that of earthly desires, aims, and ambitions, to those of heavenly blessings.

In his letter to the church at Corinth, the Apostle Paul pointed this out to the brethren, when he wrote, "As it is written [Isa. 64:4], 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."—I Cor. 2:9-12

A HEAVENLY INHERITANCE

The heavenly inheritance is the promise of God for the bride of Christ—the Lamb's wife of which the revelator spoke in our featured scripture. Those who enter into this unspeakable scene and glorious spiritual inheritance are inspired by the words of God that have been revealed to them. Thus the psalmist has directed us, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house."—Ps. 45:10

The present Gospel Age has been especially set apart in the Divine program for the calling, developing, testing, and proving of the bride of Christ

that consists of many members. The kingdom is a great prize which the Heavenly Father bestows upon his beloved Son, and this he is to share with his glorified bride—"The Christ."

SELECTION OF A BRIDE

The Scriptures reveal that God is selecting a bride for his Son during this present time. This is shown by Abraham choosing a bride for his son Isaac, through his servant Eliezer. In this illustration, Abraham typifies the Heavenly Father, Isaac pictures our Lord Jesus, and Eliezer represents the Holy Spirit. Jesus indicated this special relationship, when he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."—John 6:44,45

This he does through the Holy Spirit operating in connection with the Scriptures. Through this holy influence, we have been espoused to one husband, that we may be presented as a "chaste virgin to Christ." (II Cor. 11:2) We must have great appreciation in connection with this espousal, and maintain our purity if we are to be ultimately presented to the glorious bridegroom and to be associated with him in the administration of his glorious kingdom and its ultimate purpose of bringing reconciliation for all people.

A JEWISH WEDDING

The act of betrothal under the established Jewish custom was celebrated by a feast, at which time

the bridegroom placed a ring on the finger of the bride-elect. A ring is the symbol of endless faithfulness, and being placed on the finger indicated that the contract was a binding one. It could not be violated without grave consequences to the offending person. Faithfulness was to be maintained at all cost.

When the Heavenly Father calls us to fully consecrate ourselves and become the espoused of our Lord Jesus, we respond by entering into a marriage contract. God then seals it by the Holy Spirit. This signifies our consecration and acceptance of his dear Son (John 6:44,45), and binds us to faithfulness to our covenant even unto death. Under the Jewish custom an interval elapsed, usually about a year, between the betrothal and the marriage. During this period, the bride would embroider her robe, and do other preparations to make herself ready. This represents how the espoused bride must build the necessary character, and develop the required fruitage of the Holy Spirit.

During this period of time, the Jewish bride continued to live at the house of her father even as does the espoused bride of Christ, all communications being carried on through a friend of the bridegroom which pictures the Holy Spirit. The bride was then regarded as the wife of her future husband, and her faithfulness to him was demanded. The arrangement consisted in the final removal of the bride-elect from her father's house to the home of the bridegroom's father. This shows how the espoused bride of Christ during this Gospel Age will be taken from her father's house, the earthly temporary house of Adam, to the home of

her bridegroom's father, the permanent spiritual abode in heaven.

This is shown in the inspiring words which were spoken by our heavenly Bridegroom, when he proclaimed, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."—John 14:1-4

THE BRIDE'S ROBE

The robe which the bride wore covered her entire body, and it was a most beautiful and distinctive feature of her attire. Isaiah's prophetic words describe the bride's attention to her garment. "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."—Isa. 61:10

The bride's robe was made of white linen which represented purity and righteousness, and it was embroidered with gold thread which is symbolic of the Divine nature. It was scented with exquisite perfume, of which the psalmist spoke, saying, "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad." (Ps. 45:8) The revelator also spoke of the bride and her preparation for the marriage. "I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming

down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”—Rev. 21:2

THE DIVINE ARRANGEMENTS

The Scriptures reveal to us the specific requirements whereby we might be privileged to enter into this exceeding great honor of becoming the bride of the only begotten Son of God. It is made clear that we could not in any sense attain to such an invitation by way of our own ability or position in life. “We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”—Isa. 64:6

Our loving and eternal Heavenly Father devised a way in which he could call from among the sinful race of mankind a special people for his name. The Apostle Paul addresses this special invitation by saying, “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”—Rom. 3:24-26

These have had their sins covered by the robe of Christ’s righteousness. The merit of Jesus’ precious sacrifice is imputed to them, and by wholehearted acceptance and belief in this Divine arrangement, they have been made acceptable to the Heavenly Father. The Apostle Paul explains, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and

the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”—Phil. 3:10

KINGDOM GLORY

The inspired psalmist has given us a glimpse of the grandeur and majesty of the heavenly bridegroom, where we read, “Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.” (Ps. 45:2) Because he loved righteousness and Truth, and was meek and lowly, the Heavenly Father highly exalted him as proclaimed by Paul. “What is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.”—Eph. 1:19-21

During the closing years of this Gospel Age, the church is not yet the bride of the King’s Son in glorious garments. During her present earthly pilgrimage, she is the ‘espoused virgin’ living in an earthen tabernacle. If faithful, she shall have a glorious body in the first resurrection. Then the bride will be all glorious within and without, and clothed with the Divine nature, as indicated by the psalmist, “Kings’ daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.”—Ps. 45:9

INCLINE THINE EAR

From the psalmist’s wonderful words, we read, “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline

thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him." (vss. 10,11) These delicate and beautiful thoughts convey the sublime scene in all its heavenly glory. The bride is asked to hearken and consider that the Heavenly Father has set his wonderful favor and affection upon the specially called of his earthly creation. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke 12:32

FORGET THY FATHER'S HOUSE

In response to the words, 'Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house' we observe that during the present time there are many voices that are calling to those who are the espoused ones. These earthly callings may come from the home or family, pleasure, and self-interests, a desire for wealth and popularity, or other self-interests. We are not ignorant of some of the ways this may occur, either from the flesh, the world, or the workings of the great Adversary Satan. Any of these devices may be used to subtly draw us away from the prize of our heavenly calling in Christ Jesus, or in cooperating with earthly interests and influences. As the espoused virgin listens, she hears the voice of her bridegroom, saying, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15) "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—Rev. 3:21

While the world invites us to be absorbed with its attractions and ambitions, the Lord tells us to

consider that the things of the present life are, at best, only transitory. We have an opportunity to sacrifice these now, and to gain the very highest of all blessings—the crown of life, the Divine nature—and to become the bride of Christ.

The worldly wise do not hearken to this invitation because they are generally absorbed with the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches. They do not fully appreciate the instructions that come from our dear Lord. Those who eventually will constitute the bride in glory, do hearken and consider, and are guided by the counsel from on high. They thus press with vigor along the narrow way of sacrifice which, by Divine grace, leads to a place in Christ's glorious kingdom. "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."—Rom. 2:7

PRESENTED TO THE BRIDEGROOM

Soon, we believe, all of the 144,000 New Creatures in Christ Jesus will be brought together for the marriage to the glorious heavenly bridegroom. She will then be clothed with the Divine nature, and will take her place in the presence of the king. We catch a glimpse of this beautiful scene as written in the words of the psalmist. "The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework."—Ps. 45:13,14

RAIMENT OF NEEDLEWORK

The 'raiment of needlework' of which the psalmist spoke points to the plain white robe which the Lord furnished us for the occasion—the robe of righteousness. This is the robe upon which painstaking

effort has been made by the espoused bride in readiness and anticipation for this most wonderful event. With much patience and carefulness, she has woven on her robe the beautiful adornments of the Christian graces during her consecrated walk in newness of life. This scene depicts great rejoicing in both heaven and in earth, and is associated with her glorious and abundant entrance into the King's palace.

The Psalmist David has written, "Thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." (Ps. 139:13-15) The bride has been fashioned from among fallen mankind, but, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned [what days they should be fashioned, *Marginal Translation*], when as yet there was none of them."—vs.16

These brief glimpses given to us long ago reveal the power of the Heavenly Father to fashion the bride of Christ, who will receive her heavenly inheritance. This is also expressed by the Apostle Peter, who 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 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."—I Pet. 1:3,4

THE LAMB'S WIFE

We read, "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." (Rev. 21:9-11) "I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."—vss. 22-26

THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE

When glorified, the bride of Christ will together share in the great work of Christ's kingdom. It will include the setting up of a new and better covenant especially designed for the blessings of all the families of earth. God's long-prayed-for kingdom in the earth will be established, and at that time the wonderful words of the revelator will be accomplished. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. 22:17 ■

God's Unseen Messengers

*"Ye are come unto
mount Sion, and
unto the city of the
living God, the
heavenly
Jerusalem, and to
an innumerable
company of
angels."*

—*Hebrews 12:22*

THE WORD ANGEL, OR AN-

gels, is used in the Scriptures more than three hundred times, and yet we feel sometimes that we know very little about them. However, a careful study of this subject can be very rewarding and faith-strengthening.

Not all references to angels in the Bible are to spirit beings. The word angel simply means 'messenger,' and though it most often refers to spirit beings it may also apply to any agency or power, whether animate or inanimate, that God would be pleased to use in connection with that service. God could make the winds or the flaming fire his messenger, or another human being.

Our attention here is upon the holy angels of God—his invisible or unseen messengers—which the Bible tells us are the primary agencies by which our Heavenly Father fulfills his will in respect to overruling the affairs of mankind, and they have

been given a special charge over his chosen people—the heirs of salvation. “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”—Heb. 1:14

CHARACTERISTICS OF ANGELS

There are many things we do not know about angels, but there are some important things that we do know. We know that angels were created as free moral agents, mortal beings, in the image of God. They had the freedom to choose between serving God or a course of rebellion against him. Some of them chose a course of evil and became messengers of Satan instead of God. The Bible foretells their ultimate destruction, along with Satan. How many these will be, we do not know.

Job 38:7 speaks of a time in the distant past when there was no rebellion in the angelic realm—“When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” These holy angels are more than just messengers, or servants of God, they are his ‘sons’ and have access to God’s presence at all times.

We believe that the *Logos*—God’s only begotten Son—was the only direct creation of God and that all other life, including Lucifer and all of the angels, were created by the *Logos*. “By him [God’s Son] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”—Col. 1:16

ACTIVITIES OF THE HOLY ANGELS

We learn a lot about the angels when we notice in the Bible the many accounts of their activities as

they carry out the purposes of God in the earth as his messengers. It is our understanding that in nearly every instance the holy angels represented God in his dealings with Israel and all of the prophets in the Old Testament. For instance, when God spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, it appears to be like a conversation between God and Moses, but in Exodus 3:2, it declares that it was an angel of the Lord that spoke to Moses on God's behalf. Likewise, when Moses received the Law in the holy mount and all the instructions concerning that Law and the Tabernacle arrangement, in the Old Testament account it states that it was God who talked to Moses, but in Galatians 3:19, the apostle declares that the Law was "ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator [Moses]." The apostle also refers to this in Hebrews 2:2, "The word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward."

In Genesis 32, it tells of Jacob wrestling with a man (a materialized angel) all night long, and Jacob would not let him go until he had received a blessing. (vss. 24-26) Then in verse 30, the account says, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." We believe that these angels were in the position of representing God so completely that they could speak and act as God himself. If this be true, it is very important then that these holy angels be perfect and thus able to reflect in their own characters the exact image of God, in every way.

We see God's mighty power demonstrated through the angels. It took only one angel to smite all of the firstborn of Egypt, and this same angel led the children of Israel out of Egypt. (Exod. 14:19)

On another occasion, seventy thousand rebellious Israelites were slain by a single angel.—II Sam. 24:15,16

THE ANGELS' MINISTRY TO JESUS

Angels ministered to Jesus throughout his earthly walk (Matt. 4:11), and at the close of his life, as he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, an angel strengthened him. (Luke 22:43) On that same night as Peter was trying to protect him with the one sword that they had, Jesus said to Peter, put the sword away, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53) If it had been God's will for the angels to save our Lord at that time, one angel would have been enough. Jesus, though, continued by saying if the angels were to save him, "How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"—vs. 54

What a great temptation it must have been for his guardian angel, or angels, to reach down, as it were, and protect Jesus on that occasion. They knew, though, that it was God's will for him to be tried, persecuted, and finally crucified on the cross, and these holy angels always carried out the Father's will perfectly.

The holy angels also have emotional qualities such as we of humankind have—they sing beautifully together and praise God when there is some great event to celebrate such as the birth of Jesus. (Luke 2:13,14) They also experience great joy when they observe a sinner repent and turn to the Lord.—Luke 15:7

INVISIBLE MESSENGERS TO THE CHURCH

These same angels that have been fully dedicated to the service of God as his invisible messengers down through the ages have a very special and peculiar mission during this present Gospel Age. Every one of the Lord's little ones, all those who are in covenant relationship with God, have become the special charge of the holy angels. "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."—Ps. 91:11,12

All of the Lord's people should rejoice at this text of scripture! These holy angels are the eyes of God, observing everything that is going on in the lives of the consecrated.

These angels are also spoken of as the eyes of the Lord in the earth. We read in II Chronicles 16:9, "The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." This text should not give us the thought that it is necessary for God to personally behold every individual act of his people. The eyes referred to are God's influence, his power of knowing, whatever the means. Whether his power is exercised and his will executed through angels, other forces or agencies, or by himself personally, it makes no difference, because it all is at his direction and overruling.

MINISTERING SPIRITS

We understand that each one of the Lord's people, in proportion as he is one of God's true children, has a ministering spirit, an angel, who has charge of his affairs. These angels, then, care for

us, supervise our affairs, and are God's agencies or channels of communication to us as to his will and providential care over us. There are two key thoughts that we should have in mind as we consider the ministry of the holy angels. First, our guardian angels abide with us continually and we are their special charge. This is shown in Psalm 34:7, which reads, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them [cares for them]." The word 'encampeth' means to 'abide' or 'perpetual habitation.'

Secondly, our guardian angel has instant access to the Father at all times in connection with his ministry to us. This is indicated in the words of Jesus in Matthew 18:10, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That . . . their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." We should remember that our guardian angels share our Heavenly Father's concern for our spiritual well-being, and being directed of God, and his will, they have never made a mistake in their overruling of the affairs of his people.

Another point to be kept in mind in respect to the ministry of the holy angels is that, notwithstanding their ministry to us, we still "walk by faith, not by sight." (II Cor. 5:7) Therefore, it is God's will that the ministry of the angels in the lives of his people be accomplished in what appears to us as natural processes, rather than direct miracles. Also, the overruling of the angels in our lives is always accomplished in a way that will not interfere with our own free moral agency. If we are determined to follow our own will in a given matter,

and do not seek God's guidance and overruling, then our guardian angel will probably not interfere, and perhaps we will learn a bitter lesson from the experience later. However, if God's will is our chief concern in everything in our lives, then our guardian angels are ready to help us in every way, that as New Creatures we may prosper and be blessed.

GUARDIAN ANGELS

Our guardian angels do many things on our behalf. Sometimes they are used to give us strength to endure our experiences. It may not be God's will for us to be immediately delivered from a trial, but he will always give us strength to go through them. When Jesus prayed during the agony of his Gethsemane experience, it was an angel who ministered unto him, and strengthened him. (Luke 22:43) Our guardian angels will do the same for us in response to prayer.

Deliverance will come in the proper time and way in many of our trials, and sometimes angels are used to accomplish this. We remember how Paul was delivered from death on several occasions in order that the Gospel might be preached in other places. Acts 5:17-20 is an account of the priests and leaders of the people taking all of the apostles and putting them in a common prison. The account says, "The angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." (vss. 19,20) That was how they got in prison in the first place, and yet God, through the angel, told them to go out and do the

same things again! This is an important lesson for us. The angel of the Lord will, at times, deliver us also from our trials, but not so we can take it easy and be more comfortable in this life. Rather, they will deliver us in order that we might continue the work of sacrificing the flesh and its interests, laying down our lives for our brethren, and preaching the Gospel to others.

Our guardian angels also protect us from unnecessary evil—they lift us up, lest we dash our “foot against a stone.” (Ps. 91:12) We can think of this as the little unseen things that our guardian angels do for us daily. If we only knew how many times the angel of the Lord has protected us and kept us from harm. The burden of our prayers should be that of thanksgiving to God for his daily tender mercies and care over us through his angels. Prayer is important in these little things. It is encouraging when we hear the followers of the Lord recount the many little leadings of God in their daily experiences which have been the result of prayer and supplication. Our guardian angels respond to these prayers so long as they are inspired by proper motives and in harmony with God’s will.

All of the truly consecrated should be able to testify to the goodness of the Lord in these little things from day to day that sometimes almost seem miraculous. Let us be sure our motives are right, and then seek God’s help and blessing in these little experiences of our daily lives. These holy, guardian angels are carefully watching every aspect of our lives—we are never alone. They represent the Father’s presence with us daily and hourly.

THE PSALMIST'S TESTIMONY

The psalmist describes this close, daily and hourly watchcare of our Heavenly Father, saying, "O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

"Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

“How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee. Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men. For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”—Ps. 139

HEAVENLY MANNA PROVIDED

A very important ministration of the angels is that of assisting in supplying our needs, both temporal and spiritual. God has promised to supply all our needs, and we should thank him daily for his temporal provisions. More important, though, are our spiritual needs. He daily supplies us with manna—bread—from heaven. In the 6th chapter of John, Jesus said he was that bread from heaven (vss. 32,33,35), and the words he would speak are “spirit and life.” (vs. 63) We remember that the manna provided for Israel in the wilderness which they gathered daily was prepared by the angels. In Psalm 78:25, it says that they did eat “angels’ food.” Our guardian angels are very interested in our spiritual well-being. They have arranged the affairs of God’s people so that many have opportunities to study, to fellowship, to learn from one another, attend meetings and conventions, to

partake of this spiritual manna. Some of the Lord's people are isolated and may not have all of these privileges, but, if it is through no fault of their own, we believe that God especially protects them, cares for them, and makes up to them in other ways that their spiritual life may prosper.

THE PROSPECT BEFORE US

The wonderful fellowship we enjoy when gathered together with others of the household of faith is but a foretaste of that grand gathering that awaits us if we are faithful to our covenant with God. Such is the sentiment of our theme text, 'Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.' Oh, what joy awaits us when, if faithful, we come unto the city of the living God and see our Heavenly Father and our dear Lord Jesus face to face, and then meet this innumerable company of angels that were so directly involved in our lives during our earthly walk. Perhaps we will have an opportunity to meet our guardian angel, and to share fellowship and shed the tears of joy together as we talk about some of our experiences in the Christian way, and rejoice with them in the greatness and the goodness of our loving God who has called us to sonship in his Divine family for all eternity.

We should now be making plans to attend that convention in the heavenlies. We do this by our determination to do God's will daily as best we can, and the giving of all diligence to make our calling and election sure. (II Pet. 1:10) We have the mighty power of God working on our behalf, and his great

love and compassion, all being ministered to us through his holy angels. Failure can only come if we neglect our consecration. Let us never “neglect so great salvation.”—Heb. 2:3 ■

“We are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”

—Romans 6:4,5

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Maxine Bacher, Greenwood, MO—April 8.
Age, 95

Sister Ruby Baker, St. Louis, MO—April 9. Age, 76

Brother Jean Liberda, Bollwiller, France—April 9.
Age, 88

Sister Nancy Simons, Jersey City, NJ—April 9. Age,
91

Sister Anne Kwolek, Livonia, MI—April 11. Age, 92

Sister Dorothy Cole, Albuquerque, NM—April 19.
Age, 98

Sister Lucy Panucci, Groton, CT—April 22. Age, 87

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The speakers listed below are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

T. Krupa

Germany

Dortmund	June 1-3
Karlsruhe	5
Stuttgart	6
Ludwigshafen	7

France

Flaxlanden, Bollwiller, Staffelfelden	10-14
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The speakers listed below are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

E. Blicharz

St. Petersburg, FL	June 7
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O. B. Elbert

Portland, OR	June 19-21
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E. Kalinski

Grand Rapids, MI	June 21
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H. Montague

Ghana, Africa

Cape Coast	June 5
Dunkwa-On-Offin	6-8
Western Region	9
Kumasi	10
Accra	11,12

M. Nekora

Portland, OR	June 19-21
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D. Rice

Portland, OR	June 19-21
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T. Ruggirello

Portland, OR	June 19-21
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*“By love serve one another.”
—Galatians 5:13*

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

WATERBURY CONVENTION, June 6,7—Saturday, June 6, held in Morris, CT. Sunday, June 7, at the Litchfield Firehouse Hall. Contact A. Tsimonis, PO Box 1494, Waterbury, CT. 06721-1494. Phone: (860) 567-0109

PORTLAND ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, June 19,20,21—Holiday Inn, 2752 NE Hogan Drive, Gresham, OR 97030. Phone: (503) 907-1777. Before May 15, contact D. Grudzien, 11970 SE Zion Hill Drive, Damascus, OR 97089. Phone: (503) 658-4757

PRINCE ALBERT/SASKATOON CONVENTION, July 3,4,5—Siwak Farm, RR1 (STN) MPP, Prince Albert, SK S6V 5P8. Contact: A. Siwak. Phone: (306) 764-7692

YORKTON CONVENTION, July 10,11,12—Ramada Yorkton Hotel, 110 Broadway Street E, Yorkton, SK. Contact: B. Sweeney. Phone: (306) 782-0436 or (306) 563-5441

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 18-23—University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, PA. Contact M. Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Phone: (310) 454-5248

MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, August 15,16—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact D. Farchione. Phone: (262) 895-4583

NIGERIA GENERAL CONVENTION, August 21-23—Emmanuel College Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. Contact C. O. Egbu, #2 Darlington Street, Mokola Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Phone: 2348033339949

SEATTLE LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 4-7—Seabeck Christian Conference Center, 15395 Seabeck Highway NW, Seabeck, WA 98380. Contact D. Christiansen. Phone: (360) 440-3283

JACKSON LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 5,6—Fa-Ho-Lo Camp and Conference Center, 3000 Mt. Hope Road, Unit 1, Grass Lake, MI 49240. Contact: R. Lumley. Phone: (517) 782-7252

NORTHWEST MONTANA KALISPELL CONVENTION, September 18,19,20—Red Lion Hotel, 20 N. Main Street, Kalispell, MT 59901. Contact M. Burns. Phone: (406) 756-7789

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 24,25—Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Drive (Corner of Hwy. 17-92), Sanford, FL. Contact: J. Kuenzli, 330 Jasmine Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 831-2098

*Precious sons of Zion!
Like gold refined and pure.
Esteemed as earthen pitchers,
Moulded to endure.*

*Precious sons of Zion!
True branches of the vine.
At one with Christ our Master,
In spirit and in mind.*

*Precious sons of Zion!
His bride we're called to be,
To share his throne of glory
And reign eternally.*

—Poems of the Way

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To us the Scriptures clearly teach:

THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD —peculiarly “his workmanship;” that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world’s Redeemer and the chief “corner stone” of this temple, through which, when finished, God’s blessings shall come “to all people,” and they find access to him.—I Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING, AND POLISHING of the 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; Isa. 35