

# The DAWN

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# **The Destruction of Enemies**

*There continues to be concern in the world that a war in which nuclear weapons would be used may break out and devastate all mankind. Nuclear bombs—two of them—were used only once in man's experience, and that was to end World War II in 1945. Since that time there have been many conflicts between nations. Wars have been fought with much loss of life; but nations possessing nuclear arms have refrained from using them, being well aware that all life upon earth could be annihilated if a war with nuclear weapons occurred.*

*It was for this reason that conferences were held in the United Nations in April and May of this year, for renewal of a twenty-five-year-old treaty barring the spread of nuclear arms. The United States and at least three other nuclear powers—Britain, France, and Russia—want an unconditional extension of the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which came into force in 1970.*

*China, the fifth acknowledged nuclear power, said it would accept either an indefinite extension, or periods of renewal no shorter than twenty-five years. The concern by other nations is that nuclear powers are using the treaty in ways unfair to countries not possessing these fearful weapons. An immediate worry is that China and*

*Russia are planning to sell their technology in this field to Iran. Meanwhile, India, Pakistan, and Israel are believed to have atomic weapons.*

*Can any treaty safeguard against the possibility of nuclear weapons being used by an unscrupulous nation? Can the world's fears of nuclear warfare be abated in any way?*

*The only reassuring answers to these questions are to be found in the promised establishment of God's coming kingdom as revealed in his Word. Only then will the enemies of righteousness be subdued.*

*"He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.  
The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."  
—I Corinthians 15:25,26*

**M**ORE THAN SIX thousand years ago man disobeyed the law of God, was sentenced to death, and driven out of his perfect garden home into the unfinished earth to die. God permitted this tragedy to occur, for in his wisdom he knew that an actual experience with evil would serve best to teach his human creation the unwisdom of ignoring and disobeying his laws, and that the course contributing to fullness of joy, and lasting joy, was that of obedience to his will.

But man did not at once learn this lesson. Each generation of the human race has, in turn, continued in the course of disobedience. Only during the reign of Christ, when awakened from the sleep of death, and, through the kingdom agencies, enlightened with a true knowledge of God, will they have a full opportunity to benefit from the experimental knowledge gained through contact with sin.

During that time the forces of evil will not be permitted to flourish unopposed; and everything contrary to the will of God will ultimately be put 'under his feet', and, as our text declares, the 'last enemy' to be destroyed will be 'death'. While it will be during the time when the kingdom of Christ

is ruling with power and great glory that this lofty objective of the divine plan will be accomplished, certain preparatory features of the plan are even now in progress. Indeed, this has been true throughout all the ages, and is more particularly so during the present period when Satan's world is disintegrating, and the kingdom of Christ will soon be established.

From one standpoint, a great change occurred at the time of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Just prior to his death Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die." (John 12:31-33) This does not mean that the power of Satan was then actually broken, but the death and resurrection of Jesus was a challenge to the unhindered operation of all the forces of evil. It was the turning point in the divine plan, which ultimately was to result in the complete overthrow of Satan's power, and the drawing of 'all men' to the Lord that they might have an opportunity to obey him and live forever.

The Prophet David wrote, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his Anointed ['saying' not in the original manuscript], Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." (Ps. 2:1-3) In a prayer, Peter and John quoted this prophecy, saying, "Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the LORD, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts 4:25-28

We are not to understand from this that the opposition raised against Jesus, leading to his crucifixion, is the only fulfillment of David's prophecy. But the apostles' application of it to what occurred at that time pin-points the beginning of its fulfillment. They explained that the LORD used this opposition to him and to his Anointed One to accomplish his own purpose, a part of which was that Jesus should die as the Redeemer and Savior of the world.

David wrote that he who sits in the heavens would 'laugh'. How true this must have been when the mighty power of God raised Jesus from the dead! His enemies put him to death supposing that they had ended all possibility that he would ever challenge their right to rule. But their imaginations were vain and foolish, for they did not take into account the unlimited power of the great Creator which was able to raise the King from the dead.

God could have prevented evil from the very beginning of human experience. In the resurrection of Jesus from the dead he demonstrated his ability to put down rebellion against his will. During the thousand-year Judgment Day, he will give the human race an opportunity to return to him and live. Paul said to the Athenians that God had given assurance of this to all men in that "he hath raised him [Jesus] from the dead."—Acts 17:31

The preparation of the spiritual phase of the kingdom began at the First Advent of Jesus, and while those called to live and reign with Christ have experienced much persecution, it has been by divine permission, and utilized by the LORD to accomplish his purpose in the development of those whom he has promised to exalt with Jesus as the spiritual rulers in his kingdom. No weapon that has been formed against these has been permitted to prosper, in the sense of hindering their spiritual growth.—Isa. 54:17; I Pet. 3:13,14

When God's typical kingdom was overthrown in 606 B.C., a lease of power was given to a certain succession of

Gentile kings, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. These have not been the kingdom of the LORD, but have been used by him to maintain a sufficient degree of order in the world to make possible the dissemination of the Gospel, the medium by which the call of God to joint-heirship with Christ has gone forth. In keeping with this divine purpose, Paul admonished Timothy to pray "for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."—1 Tim. 2:2

This prayer has been answered to the extent that divine wisdom has deemed best for the accomplishment of the work of the Gospel Age. Where persecution could work for the best, it has been permitted; and a 'peaceable life' has been assured when this would best accomplish the divine purpose. Through the medium of the Holy Spirit, Jesus himself has been present with his people throughout the age, and they have been comforted and blessed, assured that all things were working together for their good.—Rom. 8:28

And then, in the end of the age, the divine plan moved forward into another phase. He who was present through the Spirit during the age, guiding his people, is now actually present. The governments and institutions of the earth which had been prevented from taking a course that would hinder the outworking of the divine plan for the development of those who were to live and reign with Christ, are now, in keeping with the divine timetable, being destroyed to make room for the kingdom of Christ.

This 'end of the age' period in the divine plan is described in the prophecies as the Day of God's wrath against sin and sinful elements in the earth. Various symbols are used to help us understand what the 'wrath of God' will accomplish in preparing the way for the rulership of Christ. In plain phrase, this period is described as a time of trouble, or of tribulation such as never was since there was a nation. The

various aspects of this tribulation are illustrated as being like 'fire', 'storm', 'floods', a 'whirlwind', and in other ways.

We see the breaking up of the old social order through the processes of war, revolutions, chaos, and anarchy. And although the day-by-day developments at times seem slow, when we look back through the years it is startling to note what has occurred. The lease of power that was granted to Nebuchadnezzar and his successors in 606 B.C. was prophetically due to expire in A.D. 1914. The particular application here was to the old Roman world, with its hereditary ruling houses. While governments are still functioning in the various countries which made up the Roman World, the hereditary kings which once ruled are either now set aside entirely, or else reduced to mere figureheads in the countries where they are still permitted to exercise a nominal rulership.

The former ruling houses of Russia, Germany, Austria, Italy, and France are completely destroyed. In Sweden, where there is still a king, one of his most important duties is to preside at ceremonies for the opening of new bridges and roads. He is the official tape clipper, while sightseeing tours are conducted through his palace to help keep up with the expenses. To go on one of these guided tours through the palace is to be strikingly reminded that "the kings have had their day."

Other forms of government followed the hereditary ruling houses, and revolutionary changes took the form of nations of the East and the West aligned in two opposing blocks with conflicting ideologies. With the demise of communism, the trend now is toward anarchy in smaller nations. The Middle East is in a constant state of agitation.

None of the raging and disintegrating nations are yet ready to accept the rulership of Christ's kingdom. All 'imagine' that they can find a solution for the distressing problems which confront the world. But their plans, one after another, are frustrated, and their efforts 'vain'. (Ps. 2:1-4) Actually,

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their efforts are all against "the LORD and his Anointed," even as has been true throughout the age.

But God, in his wisdom, has made the wrath of man to praise him, and now he is overruling in such a way as to cause this wrath to bring about, ultimately, the complete collapse of the social order over which Satan has been the prince. We do not understand the prophetic meaning of the daily developments, but the general pattern of events is clearly pointed out in the Word of God.

This is particularly true with respect to the position of Israel in the prophecies. The Word of God points out that in the final end of the great time of trouble there would be a concerted attack against Israel, spearheaded by a powerful aggressor nation from the north, with others as allies. Recent developments in the Middle East toward peace might appear to put this event 'on hold' for awhile.

We think it is unwise to speculate regarding the exact details of coming prophetic events. It is better to wait and allow the events themselves, as they take a more definite form, to reveal the meaning of the prophecies. Suffice it now to realize that we are approaching the end of the age, and that soon the new age of Christ's kingdom will begin, during which all the enemies of God and man will be put down and destroyed.

Throughout the age the LORD has overruled in the affairs of men to the extent necessary to provide suitable conditions for the development of the body members of Christ. To many it has seemed that he has not been interested. The LORD himself explained this, saying, "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travelling woman; I will destroy and devour at once."—Isa. 42:14

Many, lacking faith and understanding, have wondered where God has been, and what he has been doing about all the sin and suffering in the world. Not understanding the plan of God for this Gospel Age, they have not discerned



the work of grace that has been going on in the hearts and lives of those who have been suffering and dying with Jesus in order that they might live and reign with him. So far as the unbelieving world has been concerned, God has been silent, which to many has meant that there is no God.

And even now the world does not realize the significance of what is occurring. They recognize the revolutionary changes which are taking place throughout the earth. They know that the pre-1914 world has been almost completely destroyed, yet they do not know as yet that this has come about because the LORD has 'cried' like a 'travailing woman', and thus has brought about a work of devouring and destruction.

Paul identified the time when this would take place, and the circumstances involved. He placed the fulfillment in the 'last days', and at a time when the people of the world would be saying, "Peace and safety." (I Thess. 5:1-4) It would be then, he explained, that "sudden [Greek, 'unexpected'] destruction" would come upon them, "as travail upon a woman with child." Just as Isaiah and Paul foretold, the destruction of the old world is being brought about in spasms, as 'travail' upon a woman whose time has come to deliver her baby.

It has come upon the world unexpectedly, and even now the nations have the vain notion that ultimately they will be able to stabilize national and international affairs and bring about an era of 'peace and safety'. They do not realize that the LORD is no longer refraining from interfering in their selfish rulership. They do not know that the time is soon to come for the kingdom of Christ to exercise its authority in world affairs, and that divine authority and power will brook no interference, that earth's new king is marching on to certain and glorious victory.

Our text declares that Christ must reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. It was disobedience to God's law that led to death.

Selfishness with all its attendant evils has continued to hasten mankind over the broad road which leads to destruction. While remnants of the original godlikeness with which man was originally endowed have manifested themselves in many noble endeavors and deeds on the part of rulers and the ruled, sin and selfishness have predominated.

This has been true of the various governments of the earth, and it is no less so today. They are out of harmony with God and with his principles of righteousness, and must be destroyed. And while death is the last enemy to be destroyed, all things else which are contrary to the will of God—because they lead to suffering, sorrow, and death—must also be destroyed.

It will be then that the willing and obedient of the human race will have the original dominion over earth restored to them. A few days before Jesus died as the Redeemer of the world, his disciples asked him what would be the sign of his second presence. (Matt. 24:3) In reply, he foretold the great time of "tribulation" through which the world is now passing, and identified other events now taking place. And he continued presenting the many facets of the 'sign', the last one being in the form of the parable of the sheep and the goats.—Matt. 25:31-46

Introducing the parable, Jesus said, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels [messengers, his church] with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations." This is an aspect of Christ's presence which is still future. When it becomes a reality, all the joint-heirs of Jesus will be with him, sharing his glory. The nations which will then be gathered before him will not be governments, but the people of all nations—their selfish governmental arrangements having been destroyed in the time of 'great tribulation'.

As the age progresses, they will be divided into two

classes—represented by sheep and goats—the sheep representing the meek, docile, obedient ones of that time, at the 'right hand'; and the goats, the disobedient class on the 'left hand'. To the 'sheep', on his right hand, Jesus will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The "goats," on the left hand, will be destroyed, as also shown in Acts 3:23.—Matt. 25:31-34,41

Then all unrighteousness will have been destroyed. Restored mankind will be in harmony with God. Sickness and death will be no more. The kingdom of Christ will have accomplished its full purpose, and God will be "all in all."  
—I Cor. 15:27,28 ■

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## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

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**JULY 6**—"What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose."—Psalm 25:12 (Z. '99-13 Hymn 110)

**JULY 13**—"Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness."—II Corinthians 11:14,15 (Z. '99-62 Hymn 294)

**JULY 20**—"I am the true vine, and my Father is the Husbandman. . . . Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."—John 15:1,2 (Z. '99-109 Hymn 67)

**JULY 27**—"We shall not find occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."—Daniel 6:5 (Z. '99-167 Hymn 261)

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

### LESSON FOR JULY 2

## *Condemning for National Wrongs*

**KEY VERSE:** "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos 3:2

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** Amos 2:4-8; 3:1,2

**T**HE EXPERIENCES OF Israel are unique among all the nations of the world because of its special relationship with God. This is the nation for which God blessed and fought—the nation that received miraculous deliverance time and time again. But with this special relationship came special responsibilities to live up to their covenant with the LORD—responsibilities to their Creator, and to each other as a community of faith. It was this second responsibility that the prophet Amos referred to when he proclaimed to Israel the words of our Key Verse.

As members of the human family, mankind, as well as nations, are accountable to their Creator. All are required to live by his laws of righteousness, or bear the punishment resulting from disobedience to them. Amos pronounced punishment upon Damascus,

Gaza, Tyrus, Edom, Ammon, and Moab for various transgressions against God's ways. (Amos 1:3-15; 2:1-3) Israel, despite its special relationship to God, despite being chosen by God from among all the nations of the world, was not exempt from similar required obedience.

In pronouncing punishment upon Judah and Israel, Amos reminds the Jews of their exodus experience, their defining experience as a nation: "I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite. And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazarites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the LORD."—Amos 2:10,11

Amos reminded the people of Israel that they shared this common experience, that

they were connected by it as a community. The special blessings they received from the Creator demanded special responsibility both to God and to each other. They, among all the nations of the earth, should always have honored the traditions of their nation. They, among all the nations of the earth, should have honored all within their community from the most prominent to the very least prominent—from the wealthiest to the poorest. They, among all the nations of the earth, should have cared for all within their community just as the LORD had delivered all from the bondage of Egypt. But they forgot their responsibilities, and therefore received punishments for their disloyalty.

Today, those who aspire to become part of antitypical Israel can learn an important lesson from the experiences of typical Israel. Just as natural Israel was chosen by God, spiritual Israel is also specially called by God. As Jesus explained: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John 6:44) And just as the nation of Israel became bound by their common experiences, spiritual Israel becomes bonded together with

their brothers and sisters in Christ in a new shared community—the body of Christ. And along with this special bond come unique responsibilities to each other.

The Apostle Paul stresses this fact in I Corinthians 12, where he speaks of many members making up the body of Christ. Just as the nation of Israel had a duty to take extra care for each other, we are told of our duty to care for fellow body members because God has placed each one in the body as it has pleased him. (vs. 18) As Paul tells us, "There should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."—vss. 25-27

Are we caring for our brethren as the LORD has directed? Have we learned from the errors of typical Israel? "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."—I John 4:11,12 ■

## LESSON FOR JULY 9

# *Working for Justice and Righteousness*

**KEY VERSE:** "Let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."—Amos 5:24

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** Amos 4:4,5; 5:18-24

**D**URING THE REIGN of Jeroboam II in Israel, relative prosperity prevailed as both Egypt and Assyria were preoccupied with internal problems, thus eliminating Israel's constant threat on its borders. Left alone to spend their energy on domestic policies and the pursuits of peace, the people soon became more interested in themselves than in God, even though they considered themselves pious and righteous people. Did they not tithe regularly? Did they not sacrifice regularly? Did they not attend festivals and frequent the places of worship?

The disparaging words of Amos must have been very offensive to the Israelites under these circumstances. To suggest they go to Bethel and Gilgal, two sacred places of worship, and "transgress" and "multiply transgression" must have been almost too much to withstand. (Amos 4:4) But

Amos points out their selfishness in worship: "Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free offerings: for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel"! (vs. 5) In other words, these sacrifices were not given out of love, but for self-gratification.

Worship with this attitude is an abomination to God. When one loves the act done in God's name more than God, then it is hypocrisy. Jesus spoke of works as acts of faith in Matthew 6:1-3. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But

when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." The true acts of charity are the ones done out of love for God.

The problem with the people of Israel was not in their form of worship, but rather the attitude they brought to their worship. It focused more on themselves than on God. So sure were they about their piety and righteousness, they desired the hastening of the 'Day of the LORD', declaring their 'faithfulness' to God. Amos said they were in for a rude awakening: "Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the Day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him." (Amos 5: 18,19) Amos went on to say that God hated their feast days and assemblies, and rejected all offerings as unacceptable. What God really wanted, said Amos, is justice and righteousness.

We might properly ask ourselves the same questions Amos asked the people of Israel. Do we want the LORD today? Do we anticipate with joy the Day of the LORD, or

do we fear it? Are we letting judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream? Or are we worshiping in public with trumpets sounding before us?

Many today make assessments of worship on the basis of whether one likes something or not. This approach changes the proper question of "What can we do for the LORD in this church?" to "What can this church do for me?" Are we lured by entertainment in the church as a form of worship? Or are there elements of worship so important that it makes no difference if they are entertaining or not? Like Amos, we should believe that our worship experience should equip us to live godly lives on a regular basis.

The prophecy of Amos makes it quite clear that God is not interested in the outward form of worship, but rather the inward hearts of the people who would worship him. This is in harmony with the words of the Prophet Samuel: "Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."—I Sam. 15:22 ■

## *Demonstrating Undeserved Love*

**KEY VERSE:** *"I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies."*—Hosea 2:19

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Hosea 1:2-9; 3:1-5*

**M**ARRIAGE IS A holy institution that requires love and loyalty between a husband and a wife. A broken marriage is to be grieved over because of the unfaithfulness to the marriage covenant. The LORD instructed the Prophet Hosea to take a wife of whoredoms to illustrate his own experience with Israel. As Hosea's wife was unfaithful, so Israel had been unfaithful to God as if Israel were a wayward spouse.

Hosea's faith was severely tested in this experience. Taking a wife who had broken the marriage vows must have been a humiliating thing, but Hosea was faithful to God's calling. And as he bore children with his wife, Hosea again proved his faithfulness to God by naming the children in accordance to the prophetic order. The names of

these three children, in descending order, demonstrated Hosea's prophecy in his own household.

The first child, a son, was named Jezreel, or Hebrew for "God sows or plants." The second child, a daughter, was named Loruhamah, or Hebrew for "no pity, or she that never knew a father's love." And the third child, a second son, was named Loammi, or Hebrew for "not my people." The progression is easy to see. Israel began with a planting, but because of unfaithfulness, lost the pity of a father's love, and finally lost their God altogether.

Throughout this continuing ordeal, Hosea continued to be faithful to his wife, showing total commitment to her without reserve. This faithfulness illustrates God's love for his people despite their un-



faithfulness. When thinking of the pride that Hosea had to forego, Israel was correspondingly struck by God's pride that had been shamelessly presumed upon by Israel. And whatever the people thought of Hosea and the management of his household, they had to apply these to God and the house of Israel. What an unflattering picture this was!

But all is not hopeless in this prophecy. God told Hosea to take back his wife, and in so doing shows Israel his continued love for that people. Hosea purchased her and placed restrictions on her, forbidding her ever again to play the harlot, and to stay exclusively with him. And Israel is promised discipline followed by a future return to her place with God.

To spiritual Israel, marriage is a grander picture, because the bride is pure and faithful. Hosea's prophetic theme applied to the church is a powerful picture of a heavenly marriage where the church is the bride of Christ, and Christ is the bridegroom, as our Key Verse describes this union. The parable in Matthew 25:1-13 tells of the ten virgins then faithfully awaiting the arrival of the bridegroom, and five fall asleep. Described as virgins,

the church, pictured by the faithful virgins, shows herself ready for the bridegroom, Jesus, and separated from the world.

Revelation uses the symbolic image of a wedding, saying, "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 church is depicted as Christ's bride in Revelation 21:9, which reads: Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." And, finally, as the divine wedding between Jesus and his church is complete, the people worship God: "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." (Rev. 19:7) This is a picture of the marriage of Jesus and the church, which results in a great blessing to the world of mankind: "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) "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21:4 ■

## LESSON FOR JULY 23

### *Experiencing Undeserved Love*

**KEY VERSE:** *"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him."*—Hosea 14:4

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Hosea 11:1-9*

**H**OSEA PROPHESED DURING the period of the last kings of the ten-tribe kingdom, about the middle of the eighth century B.C. He was the only prophet who recorded the messages associated with the northern kingdom. Since he also had many references in his book to Judah's kings during that interval of time, it has been assumed by some that he went to Judah after the fall of Samaria, and wrote while there. His message is directed more especially to the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel than to Judah.

Our lesson begins with the text: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." (Hos. 11:1) God considered Israel as a son (Exod. 4:22), having loved them he used Moses to lead them out from Egyptian bondage. Matthew quotes this text when speaking of the time that Herod died, and the child Jesus returned

from Egypt where the family had fled. (Matt. 2:15) This portion of the prophecy, however, is aimed at the wayward son, not appreciating his father's love. Israel's waywardness and God's love for them is the subject of the first four verses of the eleventh chapter.

Because Israel refused to repent, the LORD punished them. Some were carried off to Assyria and some fled to Egypt—ironically, the very place that they had escaped from bondage centuries before. Their punishment, however, was not to be forever. They were not to be destroyed as were Admah and Zeboim, cities of the plain located near Sodom and Gomorrah. (Gen. 14:8; Hos. 11:8) First, those in exile would have an opportunity to return to their homeland. "They will come trembling like birds from Egypt, like doves from Assyria. I will settle them in their homes, declares the LORD."

(Hos. 11:11, *New International Version*) God's anger would be abated.

Although the nation returned to their land, and God's favor was restored, they rejected the Messiah and were punished again. In Hosea's prophecy he alludes again to their downfall, saying, Now they sin more and more; they make idols for themselves from their silver. "Therefore, they will be like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears, like chaff swirling from a threshing floor, like smoke escaping through a window."—Hos. 13:3, *NIV*

God's displeasure with his people is described later in another way: He said, "I will come upon them like a lion, like a leopard I will lurk by the path. Like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will attack them and rip them open. Like a lion I will devour them; a wild animal will tear them apart. You are destroyed, O Israel, because you are against me, against your helper." (Hos. 13:7-9, *NIV*) God had given them loving care, but they forgot him. With this second major punishment it would appear that there would be no recovery. Israel seemed as good as dead.

But not so. The LORD God pleaded with them, saying, "Re-

turn, O Israel, to the LORD your God. Your sins have been your downfall." (Hos. 14:1, *NIV*) And then he spoke the words of our Key Verse: "I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them." (Hos. 14:4, *NIV*) All of this happens after God establishes his kingdom, and the nation of Israel—after being restored in their land a second time—sees God's power used on their behalf. Along with the manifestation of God's power on behalf of this people will come also the resurrection of the dead. This is prophesied by Hosea: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."—Hos. 13:14

As a fitting climax to his lesson on the resurrection, the Apostle Paul quoted part of this verse. (1 Cor. 15:55) Paul tells of Israel's being reinstated into God's favor despite their failure to receive the principal reward, and ties in the resurrection: "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead."—Rom. 11:15 ■

## LESSON FOR JULY 30

### *Beware of Greed*

**KEY VERSE:** *"Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings."*—Micah 3:4

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Micah 3:5-12*

**V**ERY LITTLE is known about Micah as a prophet of the LORD except that he came from Moresheth, most likely Moresheth-Gath in southern Judah. (Mic. 1:1,14) He was a contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea, prophesying against both the ten-tribe kingdom and Judah, most likely from 750 B.C. to 680 B.C. Micah predicted the fall of Samaria (Mic. 1:5-7) and the desolation of Judah.—vss. 9-16

In the second chapter of his prophecy, Micah berates the rich of both nations for their greed. He says, "Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they carry it out, because it is in their power to do it. They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them. They defraud a man of his home, a fellowman of his inheritance."—Mic. 2:1,2, *New International Version*

Both the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah had reached a deplorable state where greed of influential people was ruining the nation. Being under the Law, they knew that such violations of the Law would bring punishments and disgrace. Micah plainly told them, "The LORD says: I am planning disaster against this people, from which you cannot save yourselves. You will no longer walk proudly, for it will be a time of calamity." (vs. 3, *NIV*) But false prophets were saying, "Do not prophesy about these things; disgrace will not overtake us."—vs. 6, *NIV*

Micah then dealt with the leaders of the people, saying to them, "Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel. Should you not know justice, you who hate good and love evil; who tear the skin from my people and the flesh from their bones;

who eat my people's flesh, strip off their skin and break their bones in pieces; who chop them up like meat for the pan, like flesh for the pot?" (vss. 1-3, *NIV*) Greed is a great evil; by it devastation comes to many people.

His prophecy was continued against the false prophets (vss. 5-7) and against the leaders, priests, and prophets (vss. 9-12) who, as a group, were condemned for their corruption and greed. "Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money." (vs. 11) No amount of crying to the LORD could change the condemnation which was coming upon them. Instead, "Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the Temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets." (vs. 12) All of this came upon the nation when Babylon took the people captive.

After the seventy years captivity was ended, God restored favor to this people, and they were permitted to return to their land. But their leaders had not learned the lesson. Again greed became a factor in the decline of the nation. When Jesus denounced the scribes and Phari-

sees as recorded in Matthew 23, he said, among other things, "Woe to you because you plunder the families of widows."—vs. 13, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*

In the parable of the unjust steward, Jesus said, "If you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches." See Luke 16:1-13, *NIV*. There we also read, "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money." (vs. 13) The "Pharisees who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus." This prompted him to say, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men, is detestable in God's sight." (vss. 14, 15, *NIV*) How true that God detests greed, and how surely he will close his ears to those who cry unto him if their hearts are full of greed. How necessary it is for all of us to examine our hearts daily to remove from them any stain or spot contaminating the heart with greed. ■

## Walking with God

*"Can two walk together,  
except they be agreed?"*

*Amos 3:3*

OUR TEXT WAS addressed by God to the Jewish nation with which he was in covenant relationship, and it applies in principle to our association with him. Those who are in disagreement cannot successfully walk together. The words walk, walking, walkest, and walked are used in the Scriptures to denote a course of action, a general demeanor of life.

We read in Genesis 5:24, that "Enoch walked with God." We know little of Enoch except that he prophesied the Lord would come with ten thousand of his saints and would execute judgment. (Jude 14,15) Evidently the LORD gave Enoch some understanding of his plan for human redemption, and he was faithful to the knowledge he enjoyed—this faithfulness constituting his walk with God.

In Genesis 6:9 we are informed that Noah "walked with God." We have a little more information concerning Noah. He was faithful to the LORD, and labored zealously to do his will as it was revealed to him. He walked with God—a walk that involved many long years of toil in building the ark, and of scorn from his fellows as he warned of the coming Flood, and urged upon them a course of righteousness.

In contrast to these two examples of faithfulness, we read that the Israelites walked 'contrary' to the LORD, and because they did, he 'walked contrary' to them. (Lev. 26:40,41) This

well illustrates the thought of our text—"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" The obvious and scriptural answer is that they cannot. It is emphasized that to walk with the LORD, one must be in harmony with him, desirous of knowing his will, and being fully surrendered to it.

To be sure that we are fully devoted to doing God's will requires a sincere and deep search of our hearts. In Jeremiah 11:8 we read of those who walked according to the "imagination of their evil heart [*Marginal Translation*, 'stubbornness' of their heart]." The Apostle Paul reminds us of the LORD's provision to cast down or destroy these imaginations. We read: "(The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations [*Margin*, 'reasonings'], and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (II Cor. 10:4,5) How easy it is to substitute our own reasoning for the clearly expressed will of God as set forth in his Word!

Paul writes of the time when we "walked according to the course of this world," a world which is under the domination of Satan, the "prince of the power of the air." (Eph. 2:2) Peter writes of walking according to our "former lusts," or desires. (I Pet. 1:14) So it is that in order to walk with God, and in full harmony with all the divine appointments, there must be a sincere struggle against our own preferences, a continuous resistance of the spirit of the world, and a constant watchfulness lest we be led away from the path of righteousness by the wiles of the Devil.

### **'FROM BEHIND'**

God has revealed his will through his Word. A beautiful poetic expression of this is given in Isaiah: "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isa. 30:21) 'This is the way'—the LORD's way—the

way in which he walks, and the way in which we must walk if we desire to walk with him.

The 'word' which we hear from behind is the entire Word of God. It is that precious Word which reveals the divine plan of salvation and the place we are privileged to occupy therein. Are we in agreement with that plan? Is every detail of it a delight to our hearts? Are we willing to set aside all our own plans and preferences, and yield ourselves fully to the accomplishment of that which the divine plan reveals to be God's will for us?

God is willing to walk with us, but only if we are in agreement with him. Typical Israel was his chosen people. In the verse preceding our theme text, he said to Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) He had devoted himself wholly to this people, but if this arrangement were to continue, they would have to devote themselves fully to him, otherwise they could not walk together, for they would not be in agreement.

Throughout the Gospel Age, the consecrated followers of the Master are the LORD's chosen people—his 'peculiar', or very special people—as the Greek text indicates. (Tit. 2:14) Peter wrote, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar [Greek, 'purchased'] people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." —I Pet. 2:9

But here again this precious and favored relationship to the LORD is dependent upon our continued agreement with his ways—because we delight in all that pleases him. The LORD is unstinting in showering his blessings upon us. In Psalm 36:8 we read, "Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." The thought is that the pleasures of the LORD become our pleasures if we are walking in complete agreement with him.



## **HIS PLEASURES**

All creation is a pleasure to the LORD—"Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4:11) We joy in the creative works of God because we see manifested in them his infinite wisdom, his mighty power, and his abounding love. Even the sunshine and the rain are evidences of his loving care for his creatures.

Jehovah rejoiced in his Son, who willingly and joyfully obeyed him. To him he said, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22) Are we 'well pleased' with Jesus? Do we see in him the one who is "altogether lovely"? (Cant. 5:16) Naturally, we rejoice that through his death he has provided salvation for both the church and the world; but apart from this, are we 'well pleased' with Jesus because he loved righteousness and hated iniquity?

We read: "The LORD taketh pleasure in his people." (Ps. 149:4) Do we? Are the LORD's people our people, the people with whom we delight to fellowship? Perhaps if we had had the selection of the LORD's people we would have chosen quite a different group, especially those in our community. But God is too wise to err. He saw in each of his chosen ones certain heart qualities which he could use, and which would enable them to make their "calling and election sure."—II Pet. 1:10

Are we looking for the same qualities in our brethren which we find in Jesus, and finding joy in their fellowship? Or do we see only the weakness of their flesh—and seeing this, half wish, perhaps, that we did not have to be so closely associated with them in the meetings, and in the service of the truth? It is a test of our love for those whom the LORD loves—an opportunity for demonstrating that we are in agreement with him, and that we take pleasure in those who are a joy to him.

In Isaiah 53:10 we have that very vivid description of the suffering and death of Jesus, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter. We are told that it pleased the LORD to "bruise

him," and that he "shall see his seed," and "the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand." The 'pleasure of the LORD' here mentioned is undoubtedly his loving purpose, centered in Jesus, the Redeemer, of recovering the world of mankind from sin and death.

We are likely to talk about those things which give us pleasure, and in his Word God has said much about his plan for human restoration. This aspect of the divine plan is described by the Apostle Peter by the word 'restitution', and Peter says of the "times of restitution," that concerning it, "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19,21

Yes, the prospect of restitution for dying humanity has been such a pleasure to God that he continued to talk about it throughout all those centuries of the past when he was speaking through his holy prophets. Are we 'drinking' of this 'river' of God's 'pleasure'? We are if we are in agreement with God, sufficiently in harmony with him, to warrant his walking with us.

This involves more, we think, than merely being thankful that God has blessings in store for the world. Do we continue to realize how important this aspect of God's plan is to him, and that for us to discuss this and related truths pertaining to his provision for the world's blessing is a pleasure to him, even as it should be for us?

Jesus, in whom the Father was well pleased, rejoiced to discuss the many aspects of the divine kingdom plan for blessing all mankind. In one of the last parables, a prophetic parable given as one of the signs of his second presence, Jesus spoke of the 'sheep class' as those to whom it would be said, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"—the restored earthly dominion.—Matt. 25:34

The apostles all preached and discussed the purpose of our Lord's return. "The last enemy to be destroyed is death "

wrote Paul. (I Cor. 15:26, R.S.V.) There is to be a "dispensation of the fulness of times," he explained, in which "he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." (Eph. 1:10) The hope of the world is set forth over and over again in the Book of Hebrews. Peter also reminds us of God's promise to create a "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—II Pet. 3:13

The last three chapters of Revelation are devoted almost entirely to emphasizing God's wonderful provision of life for the world. Hell gives up its dead, and the books are opened. There shall be no more death, for the former things are passed away. There will be a river of water of life, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. Finally, the Spirit and the bride say, "Come, . . . take the water of life freely."—Rev. 20:12,13; 21:4; 22:1,2,17

We see that from first to last in his Word, God continues to talk about 'restitution'. It is one of his favorite themes. Do we find it a 'pleasure' to join in the conversation concerning his Word as we walk with God? We do if we are in agreement with him, having the same interest in mankind as he displays throughout his Word. This interest is prompted by his love, and if this love fills our hearts they will overflow with enthusiasm over his glorious restitution provision for the world of mankind.

God also takes 'pleasure' in the 'high calling' of his house of sons. (Phil. 3:14) Paul wrote, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (Eph. 1:5) This feature of the divine plan should also be a 'pleasure' to us, especially if we are running for the "prize of the high calling." Our joy will be increased as we realize that we are being prepared to live and reign with Christ for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

"Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound," wrote the psalmist. "They shall walk, O LORD, in the light

of thy countenance." (Ps. 89:15) This is the joyful sound of the truth, Present Truth, the glorious harvest message, including the doctrine of restitution. What a blessing it is to know this truth! That we have been permitted to know these 'mysteries of the kingdom' is evidence of the LORD's favor, that we are walking in the light of his countenance. Let us, then, never lose our enthusiasm for any part of the truth. Let us continue to take pleasure in it as we walk together with the LORD.

To Gaius, one of the early disciples, the Apostle John wrote, "I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth." (III John 3) To the "elect lady" he wrote, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." (II John 1,4) To walk in the truth is to walk with the LORD, and John properly speaks of his rejoicing to know that this was the happy experience of Gaius and the 'elect lady' and her children. We cannot truly walk with the LORD without rejoicing.

### **"AS HE WALKED"**

Again John wrote, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he [Christ] walked." (I John 2:6) Certainly Jesus walked with his Heavenly Father. So closely did he walk with God that he could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14:7-10) Jesus said that the words which he spoke were not his but the Father's, and the works he did were the Father's works.

Jesus testified that he always did the things which were pleasing to his Father. For this reason, he could say to his Father, "I know that thou hearest me always." (John 11:42) In walking with God, Jesus was guided by the 'word' from behind. "It is written," was his reason for every step which he took in his walk with God. He then is our perfect Ex-

emplar and Guide, and if we profess to be his, and to be 'in him', we ought to walk as he walked.

The only way we can be 'in Christ' is by being baptized into his death. 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." (Rom. 6:4) Jesus was raised from the dead literally, and exalted to the divine nature. What a glorious new life he entered. This is our hope, also, but if our hope is to be realized we must begin now to walk 'in newness of life'.

We are no longer to walk "after the flesh." Our human ambitions and desires must be kept under while we walk "after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:1,4) "Walk in the Spirit," Paul explained, "and ye shall not fulfill the lust [desire] of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16) We receive God's Spirit through the Word of truth. Every instruction of the Word is a leading of the Spirit. The Spirit leads in the way of sacrifice. Actually, it was not the Roman soldiers who led Jesus as a lamb to the slaughter, but the Spirit of God, and it leads us to follow in his steps. This is God's will for us, and when we walk in this way we are walking with him.

It is glorious to walk with God. Concerning Levi, who represented the head of the priestly tribe of Israel, the LORD said, "My covenant was with him of life and peace; . . . The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity."—Mal. 2:5,6

If we have been baptized into Christ, we are members of the antitypical priesthood. The LORD has entered into a covenant with us. It is a covenant by sacrifice. (Ps. 50:5) It is a covenant, therefore, which, if we are faithful to it, will eventually lead to death by way of toil, ignominy, and suffering. Nevertheless, it is a covenant of peace because we have peace in the consciousness that we are walking with God, and that through all our experiences, regardless of how trying they may be, he is holding us by the hand. We have

the "peace of God" which passeth all human understanding.—Phil. 4:7

### **A WALK OF FAITH**

The enjoyment of this peace while we walk with God depends upon our faith. We must believe that "he is," and that he is the "rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6) Thus, as Paul wrote, "We walk by faith, not by sight." (II Cor. 5:7) We do not see God literally. Our faith must lay hold upon the promises of his presence, and enable us to see in every experience of life the overruling of his providences for our good.

If we have a faith that firmly trusts God, come what may, we can continue to walk with him in peace and joy, and not become weary. Isaiah expressed this thought beautifully, saying, "They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint. (Isa. 40:31) If we are not to faint as we walk, we must remain close to the LORD, walking with him, and in full agreement with every detail of his will, rejoicing in every feature of his glorious plan of salvation.

### **WALKING HUMBLY**

The Prophet Micah wrote, "What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6:8) Paul confirms this thought. He wrote, "I therefore, the prisoner of the LORD, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love."—Eph. 4:1,2

There is an important relationship between walking humbly with God and walking worthy of the vocation to which we have been called by God. It is a very honorable vocation. We have been called, or invited, into partnership with God, to be "workers" with him, in his great plan of salvation. (II

Cor. 6:1) We have also been called to "glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) Through Christ, we have "access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."—Rom. 5:1,2

It is surely a 'high calling'. No wonder we are admonished to walk worthy of it, but to do so we must walk humbly with our God. It is important ever to realize that we have not been called to this high position because of any merit of our own. We are "not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think." (Rom. 12:3) Our trust, our confidence, is "through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves; . . . but our sufficiency is of God."—II Cor. 3:4,5

So it is that as we walk together with God, rejoicing in all his arrangements for us and for all mankind, we can humbly look to him as the one whose grace has given us such a glorious privilege. And the more we realize this, the more earnestly and zealously we will strive to show ourselves approved by him through a prayerful and careful study of his Word, that we may know with precision just what the 'word' from 'behind' is saying to us from day to day as it outlines the way of the LORD in which we are to walk.

### **WALKING TOGETHER**

All of the LORD's people during the present Gospel Age are called to walk in the same way. We are walking together. Paul wrote, "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." (Phil. 3:16) There is no question as to what Paul means by the 'same thing'. He has just finished explaining what it is, and has emphasized, "This one thing I do." —vs. 13

The 'one thing' mentioned by Paul was "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." In doing this, Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (vs. 14) This is simply another way of defining the 'vocation' to which we are called. And (Cont'd on page 37)

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#### **ARKANSAS**

Little Rock KAAY 1090 6:30 a.m.  
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Claremont KTSJ 1220 9:45 a.m.  
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Monterey KNRY 1240 8:30 a.m.  
San Francisco  
KEST 1450 3:30 p.m.  
Tehachapi  
KTPI 103.1 fm 8:15 a.m.

#### **FLORIDA**

Jacksonville  
WXTL 1010 7:45 p.m.  
St. Petersburg  
WTIS 1110 5:00 p.m.

#### **GEORGIA**

Augusta WGAC 580 8:00 a.m.

#### **ILLINOIS**

LaSalle WLFO 1220 9:45 a.m.  
West Frankfort  
WFRX 1300 9:15 a.m.

#### **INDIANA**

Hammond WJOB 1230 8:30 a.m.  
LaPorte WCOE 96.7 fm  
10:00 a.m.  
North Vernon  
WKRP 1460 8:00 a.m.

#### **KANSAS**

Goodland KLOE 730 7:30 a.m.

#### **KENTUCKY**

Bowling Green  
WBGN 107.1fm 8:15 a.m.  
Winchester WHRS 10:30 a.m.

#### **MICHIGAN**

Detroit WLQV 1500 9:30 a.m.  
Fremont WSHN 1500 9:30 a.m.  
Fremont WSHN 100.1fm

9:00 a.m.

#### **MISSOURI**

Excelsior Springs  
KEXS 1090 7:30 a.m.  
Osage Beach  
KRMS 1150 8:30 a.m.

#### **NEW JERSEY**

Camden (Tues.)  
WTMR 800 2:30 p.m.  
Salem WJIC 1510 9:45 a.m.  
Salem WNNN 101.7 fm 9:45 a.m.

#### **NEW YORK**

Buffalo WHLD 1270 12:00 noon  
New York WOR 710 9:15 p.m.

#### **NORTH CAROLINA**

Wendell WETC 540 4:45 p.m.

#### **OHIO**

Cleveland WRKG 1380 7:45 a.m.

#### **PENNSYLVANIA**

Allentown WHOL 1600  
10:45 a.m.  
Pittsburgh WPLW 1590  
8:00 a.m.  
Pottstown WPAZ 1370  
12:45 p.m.

#### **SOUTH CAROLINA**

Charlestown WOKE 1340  
7:45 a.m.

#### **TENNESSEE**

Nashville WSM 650 7:45 p.m.

#### **VIRGINIA**

Richmond WGGM 820 7:45 a.m.

#### **WASHINGTON**

Spokane KAQQ 590 7:00 a.m.

## .... WORLDWIDE RADIO BROADCASTS

### CANADA

#### ALBERTA

Banff CFHC 1340 11:45 a.m.  
 Brooks CIBQ 1340 8:00 a.m.  
 Canmore CFNC 1450 11:45 a.m.  
 Stettler CKFQ 1400 7:45 a.m.

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Duncan CKAY 1500 9:00 a.m.  
 Duncan CKAY 1500 10:00 p.m.  
 Grand Forks CKFG 1340 9:00 a.m.  
 Qualicum-Parksville  
 CHPQ 1370 9:30 p.m.

#### MANITOBA

Winnipeg CKJS 810 9:00 a.m.

#### ONTARIO

St. Thomas CHLO 1570 10:45 a.m.

#### SASKATCHEWAN

Rosetown CJYM 1330 9:45 a.m.  
 Weyburn CFSL 1190  
 Estevan CJSL 1280



#### Argentina (Spanish)

Buenos Aires (Sat.) FM Malvinas  
 91.5 mHz 10:00 a.m. & 10:00 p.m.

#### British West Indies

Trinidad Radio Trinidad 610  
 10:30 p.m.

#### Chile (Spanish)

Talcahuano Radio Almirante Latorre

#### Costa Rica (Spanish)

San José Radio Sonorara  
 105.9 fm & 700 am 6:15 a.m.

#### Mexico (Spanish)

Culiacán Ranchera  
 XECQ 8:30 a.m.  
 Guadalajara  
 XEWK 1130 8:30 a.m.

#### Nigeria

Radio Africa (Thurs.) 7:45 p.m.

#### Panama (Spanish)

Panama City (Fri.)  
 HOQ 1250 6:15 p.m.

#### Peru (Spanish)

Trujillo 105.7 fm  
 9:30 a.m. & 10:00 p.m.

#### Philippines

Manila (Sat.)  
 DZAM 1026 kHz 7:15 p.m.

#### South Africa

Swaziland SWAZI  
 Commercial Radio 1400 AM  
 Shortwave 49m 6156 kHz  
 8:15 p.m.

#### Uruguay (Spanish)

Radio CX32 1170 kHz 9:00 a.m.

(Cont'd from Page 31) to walk worthy of it, we must give ourselves wholly to it. We cannot expect to walk with the LORD, and have the assurance that he is walking with us if we are half-hearted in the matter, giving only partial attention to him, and to the steps we are taking as we walk in this 'narrow way'.

We should not expect that the LORD will outline a special path for each one of us, one, perhaps, that may be a little more favorable to our flesh, a little more in keeping with our particular likings. No. There is only one way, and all the consecrated are walking in this way, all minding 'the same thing'. We are not only walking with the LORD, but we are walking with one another. And this, too, is an added joy—"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Ps. 133:1-3

### **IN HIS PRESENCE**

Our walk with God today is a walk of faith. He speaks to us through his Word, and through his providences, and we speak to him through prayer—a blessed fellowship! Meanwhile, however, we are inspired with the hope of actually being with him, and in his presence enjoy fullness of joy! Jesus promised, "They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."—Rev. 3:4,5

Only the pure, symbolized by white raiment, will have the inestimable honor of being introduced to the Heavenly Father by his beloved Son. That will be after "this corruptible" has put on "incorruption." (I Cor. 15:53) But prior to that there must be a purity of heart, while the imperfections of the flesh are covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness.—Isa. 61:10

Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8) Purity of heart leads to faith's vision

of God even now. It is the pure in heart who are privileged to walk with him and enjoy the delights of his fellowship. It is these who, as they walk with the Heavenly Father, tell him all their sorrows and all their joys. It is to these that, through his Word, he gives assurances of comfort, and makes declarations of his delight in them.

We walk and talk together with our God, and it is this walk of faith and joy which eventually—beyond the veil—will culminate in our being presented to him by Jesus. The hope of entering into the Father's actual presence as a divine being was one of the joys set before Jesus, which enabled him to endure the cross, and despise the shame. (Heb. 12:2) This prospective joy will enable us also to continue on zealously in the way of sacrifice, until, being faithful unto death, we receive the crown of life. Walking with God, we have the same assurance Jesus did, and like Jesus, we can say to him, "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—Ps. 16:11 ■



## OBITUARIES

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*The following brethren have recently finished their Christian courses. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to the families and friends in the loss of these dear ones. We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.*

Brother Edouard Pilarski, France—April 1. Age, 68.

Sister Bobby Yost, Hartford, CT—April 23. Age, 55.

Brother A. Benton Dial, Walnut Creek, CA—April 27. Age, 93.

Sister Sophie Klimek, LaSalle, IL—April 28. Age, 94.

Sister Barbara Haddow, Vancouver, B.C. Age, 95.

Sister Irene B. Mitchell, Hampton, NJ—May 13. Age, 90.

Sister Lottie Trevethon, Wilkes Barre, PA—May 20. Age, 100.

Brother William Geisinger, Phoenixville, PA—May 22. Age, 71.

## **God's Gifts to the Faithful**

*"God hath not given us the  
spirit of fear; but of power,  
and of love, and of a sound mind."*

*II Timothy 1:7*

**E**VERY PRECIOUS TEXT of the Bible is like a rare jewel, which by itself is brilliantly beautiful, yet the more glorious when viewed in the light of its setting. This is certainly true of the text which heads this article. We know that God has not given his people the spirit of fear, and we know that he has given them the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, yet these blessed assurances take on an added depth of meaning when examined in the light of the subject matter of which they are a part, and the background of the epistle in which they appear.

What is that background? The epistle was written by Paul during his last imprisonment in Rome, and shortly before he was executed—at a time when he knew that he was to be put to death. It is therefore in the nature of a farewell message to Timothy and to the church. "I am now ready to be offered," he wrote, "and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the LORD, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—II Tim. 4:6-8

The epistle indicates that Timothy was planning to visit Paul before he was executed, and the apostle encouraged him to carry out his plan. Paul knew, and so did Timothy, that there was a certain amount of risk attached to an undertaking of this kind, but apparently Timothy was willing to hazard his life in order to encourage Paul in this great time of need. And Paul was quite willing to have him do so—indeed, he urged him to come.

There would seem to be a connection between this contemplated visit and the words of the apostle in the verse following our text, where he writes, "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." These words are not outlining a mere theory, for they were written from the heart, and reveal the true attitude of Paul and the experience of his entire Christian life. That life had been one of suffering, of privation, of weariness, of imprisonment; and now it was to be climaxed by violent death at the hands of pagan executioners. Yes, Paul had truly experienced the 'afflictions of the Gospel', but in so doing he had also experienced the power of God to sustain him in his every time of need. God had given him the spirit of power.

And now he was assuring Timothy that God would also strengthen him, that the divine spirit of power would be his ready helper, no matter how severe the afflictions of the Gospel might become—and they are severe for all those who are truly faithful to the Gospel. No follower of the Master has known that better than did the Apostle Paul. Indeed, he was told about it right at the beginning of his walk in the narrow way. Concerning Paul the Lord said to Ananias, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."—Acts 9:16

This statement was verified throughout Paul's entire Christian life, for it was almost continuously marked by suffering. Nor did he ever try to sidestep the opportunity of

suffering with Christ. That which directed every decision of his life was not how it would affect him, but what the will of the LORD might be, and oftentimes the will of the LORD directed him to do things and to go to places which the apostle knew in advance would lead to suffering.

A notable example of this was when he was journeying to Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit testified that bonds and imprisonment awaited him there. The brethren who had less spiritual discernment than did the apostle interpreted these testimonies of the Holy Spirit to be warnings from the LORD, a definite indication that he should *not* go to Jerusalem. But Paul disagreed. He decided, and properly so, that the LORD was merely testing him by giving him this further opportunity to suffer for his name's sake. So he said to his advisers, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."—Acts 21:13

Paul went to Jerusalem, was imprisoned, and by his own choice, appealed his case to Rome, knowing that it would prolong his bondage and perhaps lead to his death. Truly, Paul was a partaker of the 'afflictions of the Gospel', not because he was unable to escape persecution, but because his faithfulness to his covenant led him to the forefront of the battle against the powers of darkness. In this he followed the example of Jesus, who voluntarily laid down his life for the sins of the people and to the glory of God.

### **SUSTAINED BY GOD'S POWER**

Paul, like every other follower of the Master, could not have walked the Christian way alone. He struggled, and suffered, and endured, only because God gave him the spirit of power. And the apostle could rely on the everlasting arms always being underneath and around him to sustain and to comfort, for God had promised that it would be so, and each day of his life of faithful service this promise was verified over and over again.



Not once, merely, had God promised to give Paul, and all of his people, power and strength, but hundreds of times, and in many meaningful ways. "They that wait upon the LORD," wrote the prophet, "shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isa. 40:31

It was because Paul had experienced the fulfillment of this and the many other promises of help in time of need, that he could write so confidently to Timothy—even when facing the executioner's axe—that God gives his people the 'spirit of power'. God does not give the 'spirit of fear', he wrote. It was this spirit that had caused some to forsake Paul in his hour of need. (II Tim. 1:15; 4:10,16,17) But not all had thus succumbed to the spirit of fear. Onesiphorus was one who had remained loyal in the face of danger, and concerning him the apostle wrote: "He oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me."—II Tim. 1:16,17

What a beautiful compliment to Brother Onesiphorus! This humble brother in the LORD could not be an apostle, but he shared in the apostle's ministry by his willingness, at the risk of his life, to stand by Paul and encourage him. This was doubtless one of the ways that the LORD gave Paul the spirit of power, for he uses his consecrated people to strengthen one another. Those who are fearful, however, cannot thus be used by the LORD.

There is, of course, a proper fear for a Christian to possess. Paul speaks of it, saying, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1) Here the word fear is used to describe an alertness which we should all exercise in connection with the carrying out of every detail of our covenant of sacrifice. We should have a genuine concern lest, by carelessness, or for some other reason, we come short of doing the whole will of God. But fear in the

sense of being afraid of what the consequences of faithfulness might be to the flesh, does not come from the LORD, but from Satan.

Knowing that God had given him the spirit of power, Paul also knew that he would do the same for Timothy, hence urged him to carry out his good intention of coming to see him in his prison home. In the apostle's own heart and mind there was not a shadow of doubt about the LORD's willingness and ability to sustain him all the way to the end. "I am persuaded," he wrote, "that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (II Tim. 1:12) Being persuaded of this for himself, he was also persuaded of it for Timothy; for he knew that if Timothy was faithful to his covenant, God would also give him the spirit of power which would enable him to endure whatever experiences might come to him as a result. What a blessed assurance!

### **THE SPIRIT OF LOVE**

The LORD also gives his people the 'spirit of love'. In this connection the apostle seems to be speaking of the spirit of love particularly from the standpoint of its being the motive which induces the Christian to choose a path of sacrifice and suffering. Love is a godly motive, exhibited by the Creator's own sacrifice on behalf of humanity when he gave his dearly beloved Son to die for the sins of the people. Concerning this we read that "God so loved the world that he gave." (John 3:16) The natural desire of fallen man is to protect his own interests, and to acquire that which he thinks will give him security and happiness. If one voluntarily takes a course in life which means giving and sacrificing and suffering and finally death, there must be a strong motive for so doing.

There could be various motives to inspire one to sacrifice. Patriotism leads some to lay down their lives. In other cases, the supposed glory of martyrdom has been the motive. Paul indicated the possibility of one giving all his goods to feed the poor, and even of giving his body to be burned, yet not

having love as the motive. But in such a case, the apostle writes, "it profiteth me nothing."—I Cor. 13:3

Paul knew that one of the terms of the narrow way was that of giving all one's goods to feed the poor, for Jesus had so stated it to the rich young ruler. (Luke 18:18-30) He knew also that, symbolically speaking, a Christian must give his body to be burned. (Heb. 13:11-13) Paul was not one to set aside these terms of Christian discipleship, and he is not doing it in this Corinthian epistle. He is merely pointing out the importance of being prompted by the proper motive when we lay down our lives in the LORD's service.

A service rendered to another from a wrong motive might conceivably be a benefit to the one served. It may have been this that Paul had in mind when he wrote: "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the Gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."—Phil. 1:15-18

When Jesus said to the rich young ruler that he should sell all he possessed and give the proceeds to the poor, he added, "and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." (Luke 18:22) But Paul explains that in order for this to be so, the sacrifice must be motivated by love, else it profits us nothing. This is an important principle to remember. Our service in preaching the Gospel at the present time is not so much the blessing it will bring to others—although it will be a blessing to those who have a hearing ear—as it is for the good that it does us, for it is the means by which the bride makes herself ready.—Rev. 19:7

In other words, the true endeavor of a Christian should be to become godlike, and God is love, and because God is love, he gave. So with us, if, through the divine plan of the ages, God has given us a vision of himself and of his love,

and we are inspired by that vision to give as he gave, then our work of sacrifice will not only bless others, but will result in laying up treasures in heaven for ourselves—it will profit us much, even “glory and honor and immortality.” (Rom. 2:7) How glad we should be, then, that God has given us the spirit of love, and thereby has inspired us to lay down our lives in his service. Paul rejoiced in this even though it had resulted in his imprisonment and death.

### **THE SPIRIT OF A SOUND MIND**

It is through the instructions of his Word that God gives us the spirit of a sound mind. The psalmist sums up this thought for us very beautifully, saying, “Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.” (Ps. 119:98-100) How true this is, and even in the material things of life the LORD’s people should be able to exercise better judgment than those who are not blessed by the guiding principles of the Word of God.

Soundness of mind, of judgment, was manifested by Jesus, and we should have the mind of Christ. It was evidently the example set for us by Jesus that the apostle had in mind when he wrote to Timothy that the LORD gives his people the ‘spirit of a sound mind’. However, the apostle’s viewpoint on the subject seems to be quite different from that of many of the LORD’s people when they speak of exercising the ‘spirit of a sound mind’.

Let us, by way of contrast, note that difference. At times we may be inclined to say that we will not attend the prayer meeting this week because the weather is unfavorable and it would not be the ‘spirit of a sound mind’ to expose ourselves to its dangers. Or we may offer excuses for not doing other things which clearly come within our privileges to carry out the terms of our covenant of sacrifice with the LORD. Is

this offering of excuses for unfaithfulness what the apostle meant by exercising the 'spirit of a sound mind'?

Evidently not, for had it been, he would have advised Timothy not to undertake the hazardous effort to come and visit him in prison. Rather, he would have written to him that taking such a risk would not be exercising the spirit of a sound mind. Just the reverse of this is apparently what the apostle was urging Timothy to do, and assuring him that by so doing he would be exercising the spirit of a sound mind. This brings us face to face with the question of what soundness of mind really is from the divine standpoint.

Again we observe that Jesus exercised soundness of mind in carrying out the terms of his covenant with the Heavenly Father, and certainly there is no way for us to manifest the spirit of a sound mind other than faithfully to follow his example. Let us, then, explore the mind of Christ as we see it functioning in connection with some of the experiences of his life. Let us note, for example, what he said to the man who expressed a desire to become a disciple, but asked the Master to wait until he buried his father.

We, of course, do not understand all the customs of that day, and we know that other scriptures reveal clearly that every Christian has a particular responsibility toward those dependent upon him according to the ties of flesh. But aside from this, there is a straightforwardness about Jesus' reply to this man which is worthy of consideration. He said to him, "Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead"—'it is your privilege to become a follower of me without delay'. (Matt. 8:22) Perhaps some of us might have said to this man that what he suggested doing would be but the exercise of the 'spirit of a sound mind', but Jesus did not say this. From the standpoint of worldly wisdom, Jesus' reply might seem unsound—radical, in fact—but because it was Jesus who said it, we have to accept it as a manifestation of true soundness, and therefore an example which should serve for our guidance.

Another occasion in the Master's life furnishes us with even a more striking example of the manner in which his mind viewed the privilege of sacrifice. It was when Peter advised him not to go to Jerusalem, where he would fall into the hands of his enemies and be put to death. "Be it far from thee, Lord," is what Peter said to the Master. The thought he had in mind when offering this advice is what we might have told Jesus, but it would not be exercising the 'spirit of a sound mind'.

Jesus did not agree to Peter's suggestion. In fact, his reply to Peter was in the form of a rebuke: "Get thee behind me, Satan." (Matt. 16:22, 23) Then Jesus explained to this well-intentioned but misguided disciple that his advice was simply a human viewpoint—"Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Soundness of mind from the human standpoint would certainly have dictated that Jesus would be making a terrible mistake to go to Jerusalem under the circumstances. But such is human wisdom, which is based upon self-interest and self-preservation, and in Peter's case, was due to the fact that his mind had not yet been enlightened to spiritual things by the Holy Spirit.

Soundness of mind from God's standpoint is expressed in the Master's words, also spoken on this occasion, "Who-soever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (vs. 25) From the human standpoint a philosophy of this kind seems very unsound, but it is expressive of a principle which we as Christians are to follow. It is a divine principle, and the Master's expression of it, as well as the manner in which he applied it, are among the means by which our Heavenly Father has given us the 'spirit of a sound mind'. For us to plan our lives contrary to this principle of sacrifice would mean that we were not exercising the spirit of a sound mind.

As we noted earlier in this article, the Apostle Paul was confronted with a similar situation to the one which tested the Master's willingness to lose his life sacrificially, when the

Holy Spirit testified that bonds and imprisonment awaited him at Jerusalem. Paul accepted this opportunity of sacrifice in the same manner as Jesus. He expressed himself as being willing to die at Jerusalem if this should be the LORD's will. His advisers, even as did Peter in the case of Jesus, urged Paul not to go to Jerusalem. These were brethren in the truth, but not having advanced far in the Christian way, they were still influenced by the viewpoint of worldly wisdom, to the effect that one's first consideration should be to take care of himself.

### **"YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE"**

Turning from the examples of Jesus and Paul, let us note a well-known statement by the apostle in Romans 12:1. In this Scripture he speaks of a "reasonable service," or "reasonable worship," as some translations put it. What the apostle speaks of as 'reasonable' must of necessity be expressive of a sound mind, for when one is no longer able to reason he is said to be unsound of mind. Obviously, therefore, what the apostle here speaks of as reasonable would manifest what he describes in our text to be the spirit of a sound mind. And what is it?

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, . . ." he writes, "that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." In other words, soundness of mind on the part of a Christian can be manifested only in the presenting of himself and all that he has in sacrifice—the losing of his life, as Jesus expressed it. The mind that leads us to do this is the mind of Christ, for Paul wrote, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who . . . humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:5-8) And the mind of Christ was indeed a sound mind.

Just as the LORD assures us of his sustaining power to strengthen us in our every time of need; and just as through his Word he inspires us with his love, so also through his Word he gives us the 'spirit of a sound mind'. He has done

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this through the types, by precept, and by examples—the examples of Jesus, and Paul, and others who sacrificed their all in his service.

And in Paul's farewell letter to Timothy, we find him urging this faithful disciple not to fear the results of faithfulness, but to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." "It is a faithful saying," wrote Paul, "For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." (II Tim. 2:1,3,11) The apostle verifies the words of Jesus that if we lose our life in sacrifice with him, we will save it, and live with him and reign with him.

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," wrote Paul. (II Tim. 3:12) We would be manifesting the spirit of an unsound mind were we to chart a course in life with the object of avoiding persecution and suffering, yet the mind of the flesh would have us so do. But let us strive to keep the fleshly body under control, and to be guided by the mind of Christ. This does not mean that we are to search for trouble, but it does mean that we should be faithful to the LORD, to the truth, and to the brethren, regardless of what the consequences to the flesh might be. This we will do if the LORD has given us the spirit of love. And we can be assured of the necessary strength to perform our covenant of sacrifice, for the LORD has also given us the 'spirit of power'—strength for every time of need. ■

IT IS OF THE LORD'S MERCIES THAT WE ARE NOT CONSUMED, BECAUSE HIS COMPASSIONS FAIL NOT. THEY ARE NEW EVERY MORNING: GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS. THE LORD IS MY PORTION, SAITH MY SOUL; THEREFORE WILL I HOPE IN HIM. THE LORD IS GOOD UNTO THEM THAT WAIT FOR HIM, TO THE SOUL THAT SEEKETH HIM. IT IS GOOD THAT A MAN SHOULD BOTH HOPE AND QUIETLY WAIT FOR THE SALVATION OF THE LORD.

~LAMENTATIONS 3:22-26



### Exceeding and Abounding

*"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."*

*—II Peter 1:4,11*

THESE ARE SUPERLATIVE expressions: 'exceeding great and precious promises', and an 'entrance . . . abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord'. Many similar statements are recorded in the Scriptures such as those which assure us that God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," and "is able to make all grace abound" toward us. (Eph. 3:20; II Cor. 9:8) They are generally in relation to what our Lord and our Heavenly Father will bestow upon those who put their trust in him.

The Apostle Peter's salutation at the commencement of his letter is: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you," who "have obtained like precious faith . . . through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." (II Pet. 1:1,2) The Apostle Paul also uses similar expressions replete with adjectives to strengthen the statements referring to the attainment of glory.

In contrasting our afflictions with the glory to be received, Paul says, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment,

worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (II Cor. 4:17) Then we have that wonderful promise of God through the Prophet Malachi: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."—Mal. 3:10

It is all just like our Heavenly Father! He gives unstintingly. Jesus said, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. . . . Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over." God's love has no limit; his grace has no measure; his power no boundary known to men. Out of his infinite riches in Jesus, he gives and gives and gives again! Jesus said to the people, God is full of mercy and compassion, "for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. . . . Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."—Luke 6:35,36,38

Peter states that God "hath given unto us *all things* that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." (II Pet. 1:3) Nothing has been forgotten, or omitted, to complete the call. "Whereby," or, for which purpose, "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world."—II Pet. 1:4

Many of these promises are conditional. Peter says, "If these things [the graces of the Spirit] be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (II Pet. 1:8) We are assured that *if* we cultivate the graces of the Spirit, we "shall never fall." (vs. 10) Since Jesus said, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit," it behooves all his followers to have fruit-bearing as their great objective. Thus they will have an entrance 'abundantly into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ'. (John 15:8) And so we

wish to reflect on what is really the fruitage our Heavenly Father is looking for in us, and to encourage ourselves in reaching out for that which will glorify and honor him as well as prepare us for an abundant entrance into that heavenly kingdom.

The promises given to us from God and our Lord cover every feature and phase of our spiritual and temporal experiences. It was so with the patriarchs and prophets. We are exhorted to be followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises given for them.—James 5:10,11

For the comfort and encouragement of the followers of Christ Jesus during the Gospel Age we read: "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that . . . we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us [in the promises]: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered."—Heb. 6:17-20

Let us recall a few of the hundreds of these great and precious promises by means of which we become partakers of the divine nature, changed from human to spiritual, realizing that God himself is the Author of this great change, and is operating within us. "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth, that we [begotten ones] should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."—James 1:18

The ancient prophets and old-time saints saw many of these promises afar off—many of these great promises which we are privileged to see in our day in the course of fulfillment. Like the patriarchs we should be "persuaded of them," and embrace them, confessing that we, too, are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth.—Heb. 11:13

To Abraham, God promised, "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; . . .

and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 22:17,18) The Apostle Paul, in Galatians, referring to this great promise, reminds us that God said *not*, “And to seeds, as of *many*; but as of *one*, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” (Gal.3:16) “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—vs. 29

- “The LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.”—Psalm 84:11

- “They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength.”—Isa. 40:31

- “Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee.”—Ps. 55:22

- My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”—Phil. 4:19

- “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”—Isa. 26:3

- Jesus promised: “He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”—John 6:35

- “I am the living bread . . . if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.”—John 6:51

- “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

- “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me. . . . The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me.”—Ps. 138:7,8

- “He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.”—Ps. 91:11

- “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 . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”—John 14:2,3

- "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The LORD is my helper."—Heb. 13:5,6

- "What he had promised, he was able also to perform."—Rom. 4:21

- "Having therefore these promises . . . , let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness, . . . perfecting holiness in the fear of God."—II Cor. 7:1

Why are we so slow to believe these wonderful words of life, joy, comfort, and peace—these exceeding great and precious promises of present spiritual inheritance? Be assured that these promises are not given to excite a vague hope of some future mirage or prospective phantom, or ever-failing vehicle of anticipation. They are predetermined promises of God himself to you and to me as his children that we might be satisfied in that life-long urge of soul to become New Creatures in Christ Jesus, members of a New Creation—not barren nor unfruitful, but complete and ready for an 'abundant' entrance into the kingdom, that heavenly kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We will paraphrase the First Psalm, where David beautifully illustrates how we can become 'complete' in Christ. In this psalm we find that David commends a godly life, and describes what makes a man God-fearing or spiritually-minded. It opens with an expression of admiration for the man who lives a godlike life. It proceeds to describe in a simple and engaging manner what such a man avoids, what he delights in, and what he resembles.

The first verse says, 'How happy', or "blessed," is the man who 'walks not', 'stands not' nor 'sits' 'in the way of' 'sinners', nor 'in the seat of the scornful'. By this man the laws of nature are revered, and the slightest revelation from the Word of his God he will welcome and obey. In this day of enlightenment he will be so happy to know Christ that he will find in him the spirit and source of all love.

Christ Jesus and his Word will be the law of his being, and toward the word of Christ Jesus his mind and heart will gravitate; and in the LORD he will discover his songs of hope and joy and peace continually. "His delight is in the Law of the LORD; and in his Law doth he meditate day and night." Such a one comes directly under the care of the great Husbandman. "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water; . . . and his leaf [or profession] also shall not wither."—Ps. 1:1-3

Jesus, using the figure of a well of water, reveals similar expressions and observations of the life of such a one. "Out of his belly", Jesus said, "shall flow rivers of living water." (John 7:38) To the woman of Samaria Jesus declared: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."—John 4:14

The words of Paul still come to the LORD's people today, saying, I "cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." (Eph. 1:16,17) As the mind and heart is filled and fed with the things of God and of Christ Jesus our Lord, being aware also of the blessings of life that will presently flow to all mankind, life in the truest sense finds a swelling, springing up within, which finds expression through the tongue.

All the promises—these great and precious promises and assurances from the Word of God—are productive of faith, strong and enduring faith. Concerning the promises by which one can become a partaker of the divine nature, Peter says: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith" other virtues—fortitude, knowledge, temperance or self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. For, he adds, "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." And, "Herein is my Father glorified,"

said Jesus, "that ye bear much fruit."—John 15:8; II Pet. 1:5-8

Faith alone is not sufficient to insure an entrance abundantly into the kingdom. These virtues need to be secured and maintained to the end. For this reason, how necessary it is to accept the apostle's word and give all diligence to regulate our conduct of life in furnishing faith with these virtues.

The Bible is replete with examples of faith for our benefit. Abraham stands out admirably in this respect. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." (Heb. 11:8) "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: . . . accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."—Heb. 11:17,19

Having Abraham as our example of faith, let us add to, or intensify, our faith with fortitude. This implies strength of will, the power of resistance against our Adversary, an element of character admired by our Father, and in general. We need this strength of character quite early in our walk of faith, and all along our pilgrim way. It encourages singleness of purpose, firm decisions of acceptance and resistance, whereas "a double minded man is unstable in all his ways."—James 1:8

Daniel is a great example of fortitude. He proposed in his heart not to defile himself with the king's meat or wine. (Dan. 1:8) He knew the writing was signed by the king and that "whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man [except the king] for thirty days," was to be cast into the den of lions. (Dan. 6:7) Knowing this, Daniel went into his house, and his windows being open, he kneeled three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before God, as he always had.—Dan. 6:10

Let us have the same spirit of confidence and restfulness, unmoved, unperturbed, strong and faithful, as did Daniel. Let us emulate these stalwarts of faith and fortitude. As the hymn encourages us to do: "Dare to be a Daniel; Dare to stand alone; Dare to have a purpose firm; And dare to make it known." Take heed, be quiet, fear not, neither let your heart be faint.—Isa. 7:4, *American Revised Version*

### **KNOWLEDGE**

And then Peter exhorts us to add, or intensify, our knowledge. Knowledge is always open for growth, and is a gathering of facts. Christian knowledge is knowing God, his Word, his purposes, as they relate to us who have faith in him, and as those recorded purposes relate to the world. To all those who accept the Word of God and the exceeding great and precious promises, it means spiritual knowledge, spiritual discernment of what is wise, just, right, true, philosophical, in all the activities of God, especially so in our devotion to God and his Word.—John 7:17; 17:3

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children; but in understanding be men." (I Cor. 14:20) He prayed for all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, "that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment," or spiritual understanding, or discernment. (Phil. 1:9) Knowledge is most certainly a treasured virtue and should be increased and broadened and diffused for the benefit of others, but knowledge misused or misapplied quickly makes shipwreck of its possessor, and finally leads to disaster.

Solomon was a great example of knowledge; that is, in his early days, at his coronation. Listen to his words: "O LORD my God, . . . I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. . . . Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the LORD." (I Kings



3:7-10) Let us maintain this same sort of humility and meekness first shown by Solomon.

### SELF-CONTROL

And to knowledge intensify "temperance," or self-control—that virtue which keeps one moderate, gentle, properly balanced. Paul says: "Let your moderation ['gentleness', *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*] be known unto all." (Phil. 4:5) Be gentle, show meekness to all. (Tit. 3:2) "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." (I Cor. 9:25) Paul says too, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."—vs. 27

Peter, in his later years, was a wonderful example and pattern for us, in growth of grace, and in the virtue of self-control. As a natural man, he was a strange character in many ways. We bring him to your notice for encouragement and comfort. At first he was impetuous, bold, courageous; he was also fearful, slow to perceive, quick to speak, self-thinking; but he was deeply sincere. All these traits are so noticeable in his earlier life.—Matt. 16:22; 18:21; 16:16; 19:27

But from Pentecost onward, when the Holy Spirit of God took more full possession of his mind and heart, Peter had made great strides in temperance, self-control, courage, firmness—manifesting a soberness of faith worthy to copy. He was then an established saint, becoming a pastor of the church, exhorting to traits of character and qualities of mind, many of which he least exemplified prior to Pentecost.

Note his exhortations: "Be ye holy [saith God]; for I am holy." (I Pet. 1:16) "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober." (vs. 13) "Decorate the hidden man of the heart with what is incorruptible—a meek and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God." (I Pet. 3:4, *W.E.D.*) Let us take heart, because Peter was a mirror of ourselves. But he was enabled by the Spirit and grace of God to triumph over natural tendencies of his flesh. His secret of success was his sincere devotion and love for the LORD. If we have similar traits of

character, we also may still triumph over them in the strength of the LORD.

## **PATIENCE**

To self-control intensify the virtue of patience. Patience is the grace which enables one to bear affliction and calamity with calmness and cheerful constancy of mind. Patience is the power of endurance. "Tribulation worketh patience." (Rom. 5:3) "In your patience possess ye your souls."—Luke 21:19

Joseph was a beautiful example of patience. James says: "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the LORD, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure."—James 5:10,11

Joseph waited many years from the time he was sold to the Ishmaelites by his brothers until he received his father at the palace of Pharaoh. The many distressing experiences which he encountered in that period of time without complaint, with pity and mercy toward his brothers, will stand out as a beacon to all the earth throughout the world's Judgment Day. The incidents in Joseph's early life indicate he was a lovable boy, a father's boy, with his mother's traits of affection for those whom he loved. It would have been easy and natural for him to pine, languish, and to long for his parents, home, and homeland, but he remained patient.

It was undoubtedly in his power to have gained leave from Pharaoh's court to visit home, but there is no record of such a request. He was cruelly and unjustly charged by Potiphar's wife, submitted to wrongful imprisonment, and waited even when his brethren arrived, and until they knew him. He remained silent for about two years before disclosing that he was their brother. (Gen. 45:6) Finally, after reassuring his brethren that he would not take revenge for their treachery, he said to them: "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance."—vs. 7

## GODLINESS

To patience, Peter exhorts us to add godliness. This trait enables one possessing it to view every experience from the divine standpoint; to take an exalted position for discernment of every experience; to be seated with Christ in the heavens. (Eph. 2:6) How often we find our judgment of men and things changed when so seated. How often have our second, cooler thoughts disapproved what our first apprehension of things, upon a sudden provocation, have suggested.

Those possessing godliness are inclined to peace, and opposed to strife. They are dignified, just, majestic. If you are with them very long, you are impressed with their influence, and the beauty of their minds. "The LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself." (Ps. 4:3) It was so with David—a man after God's own heart. We read that David behaved himself wisely. (I Sam. 18:5) David's heart smote him for cutting off part of Saul's robe, and he said, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed." (I Sam. 24:6) David's consideration for his parents is very manifest when he went to the King of Moab and said, "Let my father and my mother . . . be with you, till I know what God will do for me." (I Sam. 22:3) "And they dwelt with him [the king] all the while that David was in the hold." (vs. 4) God was with David in battle, prayer, persecution, and kingly courts. He was a type of the church, who also are copies at heart of God's dear Son.

And to godliness, add brotherly kindness. This is a virtue or characteristic that possesses an affinity for others of like mind, in habitation and in parentage. In spiritual things it is manifest in affinity of fellowship, assembly, equal sonship, care, concern, as shielder and helper. Paul was one of our examples. His letters are full of brotherliness. His care for all the churches (II Cor. 11:28); his exhortations to others to be kindly affectioned (Rom. 12:10); his desire that brotherly love should continue (Heb. 13:1); all prove Paul's faith in, and fidelity to, the LORD.

All the virtues are defined by the one word, love. that virtue which emanates originally from God. God is love; a love which possesses no other motive than good; love that is sacrificial, forbearing, merciful, constraining to assist good, abhorring that which is evil.

Christ Jesus our Lord is our example, our pattern to copy; and God, our Heavenly Father is our Creator, our Potter. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (II Cor. 8:9) "The love of Christ . . . passeth knowledge." (Eph. 3:19) "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (I John 4:16) Of Christ Jesus it is said, "Having loved his own, . . . he loved them unto the end."—John 13:1

These are the furnishings of faith. These virtues make one's faith complete in Christ. Without these virtues or characteristics, hope of joint-heirship with Christ is vague. Paul urges that we reach the stature of a full grown man in Christ. (Eph. 4:13) Faith in the exceeding great and precious promises requires growth to maturity in Christlikeness in order to be assured of an entrance abundantly into the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faith, to be complete, must show its fruit or works. Faith without works is like an empty house. It is well built on a good foundation, beautifully situated, but for habitation it needs furnishings; and so it is with our faith. Peter assures us if these things be in us and abound, they make us that we shall be neither barren nor unfruitful. These are the virtues of faith that produce fruit; that is, fruitage of character, fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. If you add these qualities—these furnishings—to your faith, by embracing the exceeding great and precious promises, ye shall never fall. "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:4-11 ■

## TALKING THINGS OVER

### General Convention Bulletin

JULY 29-AUGUST 3, 1995  
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

The 1995 General Convention will be held in exceptional college facilities in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The auditorium has a beautiful pipe organ, the cafeteria is newly refurbished, and there is less walking between auditorium, cafeteria, and the sleeping rooms than ever before. Here are the prices:

	ages 18 and up	13-17	6-12
Breakfast	\$4.25	\$3.40	\$2.10
Lunch	5.75*	4.60*	2.90
Dinner	7.00*	5.60*	3.50
Total, three meals	\$17.00	\$13.60	\$8.50
Lodging (per night)			
double, shared bath	\$18.00	\$14.40	\$9.00
double, private bath	20.00	16.00	10.00
single, shared bath	23.00	18.40	11.50
single, private bath#	31.00	-N/A-	-N/A-
PKG: 7 nights, 18 meals			
double, shared bath	\$184	\$147	\$92
double, private bath	198	158	99
single, shared bath	219	175	110
single, private bath#	275	-N/A-	-N/A-
* Increase these prices by \$3.50 if not staying at the college (to pay the facility fee included in the lodging prices).			
# Available only to those staying on the third floor.			

**REGISTRATION FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE JULY 10TH**

**General Convention Registration**  
1425 Lachman Lane — Pac. Palisades, CA 90272

	Breakfst	Lunch	Dinner	Lodging
Friday, July 28, '95				
Saturday, 29th				
Sunday, 30th				
Monday, 31st				
Tuesday, Aug. 1st				
Wednesday, 2nd				
Thursday, 3rd				

OR check here for package: 7 nights, 18 meals ☐

Select one: ☐ private bath -or- ☐ shared bath

**Names (and ages if under 18) (also Ecclesia name)**


Address:

Telephone number (evenings): area code (    )

How many flights of steps can you walk (0, 1, or 2):

Check here ☐ if you would like to have a roommate.

Give us your flight information if you want to be picked up:

## SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

*The listings in this schedule have been arranged by local ecclesias cooperating with The Dawn:*

**C. Chandler**  
Los Angeles, CA      July 1-4

**J. Freer**  
Los Angeles, CA      July 1-4

**R. Gorecki**  
Middletown, NY      July 16

**B. Keith**  
Sturgis, Sask      July 7-9

**G. Passios**  
Los Angeles, CA      July 1-4

*These speakers 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:*

**M. Balko**  
Los Angeles, CA      July 1-4  
Sturgis, Sask.      July 7-9  
Highland Glen, Man.      11

Moorhead, MN      12  
Minneapolis, MN      13  
Milwaukee, WI      14  
Chicago, IL      16



### The BRANCH

**“Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD. Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”**

**—Zechariah 6:12**

## CONVENTIONS

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*These conventions are listed at the request of the classes who sponsor them. In order to ensure your convention being accurately placed in these columns, please make your request IN WRITING two or three months before the date of the convention: Convention Listing, Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Ave., East Rutherford, NJ 07073*

**LOS ANGELES, CA, July 1-4**—Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, CA. For reservations contact: Michael Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272.  
Phone: (310) 454-5248

**STURGIS, SASK., July 8,9**—Sturgis Legion Hall, Main Street. For information, contact: Connie Jakubowski, Box 10, Sturgis (306) 548-4665 or Doris Karutsky, Box 625, Sturgis (306) 548-2872.

**BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 29-August 3**—Grand Rapids, MI. Reservation forms sent to M. Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272 must be received before July 10th. Information and reservation forms are on pages 61,62 of this issue.  
Phone: (310)-454-5248.

**KALISPELL, HAVRE, SALT LAKE CITY CONVENTION, August 11,12,13**—Big Mountain Ski and Summer Resort, Whitefish, MT. For information contact: Mrs. Marie Lewis, P.O. Box 7205, Kalispell, MT 59904.  
Phone: (406) 892-4103

**BALTIMORE, MD, August 27**—The Columbian Club of Parkville, 7910 Harford Rd.

21234. For programs write: Robert Wagner, 2753 Pelham Ave. 21213.  
Phone: (410) 483-1394

**NEW YORK LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 1,2,3**—Ramada Inn, Two Bridges Rd. & Exit 52, Route 80, Fairfield, NJ 07006. Phone: (201) 575-1742 For reservations and information, contact Mrs. Ann-Truth Lange, 76 Longview Ave., White Plains, NY 10605 *Reservations should be made by August 15th.*  
Phone: (914) 948-5428

**JACKSON, MI LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 2,3,4**—Holiday Inn, I-94 at 127 North, Jackson. Contact: Mrs. Ray Lumley, 2531 Ashton Road, Jackson MI 49203.  
Phone: (517) 782-7252

**SEATTLE, WA LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 2,3,4**—New Location: Best Western Landmark Inn, 4300-200th Street SW, Lynnwood, WA 98036. Reservations must be made before August 9th to receive group rate. Call 800-528-1234 for reservations. For information, contact: Mrs. Michael Brann, 20B East Intercity Ave., Everett, WA 98208.  
Phone: (206) 353-89983