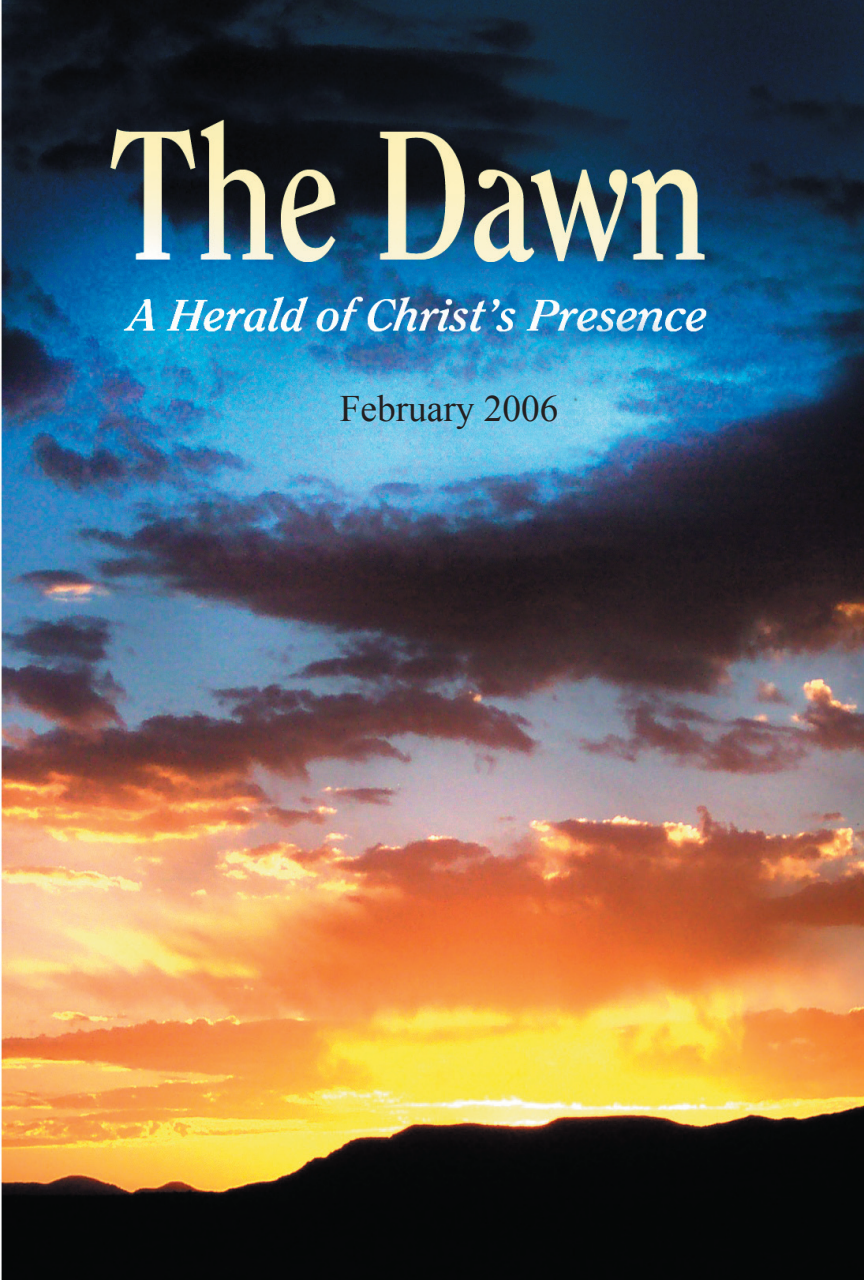


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

Our Changing Climate 2

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

A Heritage of Faith 14

Pursue Righteousness 16

The Marks of a Helpful Mentor 18

Teach Sound Doctrine by Example 20

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

God's Word in Prophecy—Part 2

The Seventy Weeks 22

Pride and the Worldly Spirit 33

Let Us Hold Fast 41

Our Walk of Faith 46

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts 32

ENCOURAGING LETTERS 60

OBITUARIES 62

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS 62

CONVENTIONS 63

Our Changing Climate

***“Have you entered
the storehouses of
the snow, Or have
you seen the
storehouses of the
hail, Which I have
reserved for the
time of distress,
For the day of war
and battle?”***

***—Job 38:22,23, New
American Standard
Version***

GOD ANSWERED JOB OUT of the whirlwind (Job 38:1) with wondrous and unsearchable wisdom, by asking whether his servant was present to witness the foundations of the earth as they were being laid, or if he was there when the seas were ultimately contained in their basins. (vss. 4,8) Job evidently understood and appreciated the impor-

tance of these, as well as the other questions posed to him in the context of this scripture, as it is revealed in his answer which was given later. “I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.” (Job 42:2) In the words of this ancient scriptural passage, we see the eternal and manifest purpose of God as it describes the preparation of earth as a home for the human family. Its inspiring message is directed to the inquiring and reverent mind of his servant Job.

SYMBOLS USED IN THE BIBLE

Various elements of the earth are used in the Holy Scriptures to serve as symbols. They are often used to describe prophetic events, and particularly those events that are to occur at the end of the present Gospel Age. Students of the Bible have noted that hail is frozen water, and is thus used to describe, in symbol, a time when ‘hardened truth’ will ultimately be rendered upon mankind. Truth, when it is revealed to the world, will serve to teach important and valuable lessons during the period when Christ’s kingdom will be established over the earth. John the Revelator was moved by the Holy Spirit of God to further emphasize this symbol of hail when he wrote, “There fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”—Rev.16:21

GLOBAL WARMING

In the light of Bible prophecy, we continue to closely watch the events of our day with increasing interest. During the past few decades scientists have drawn our attention to the alarming and widespread environmental changes that are occurring throughout our world. Specialists who study weather patterns have confirmed that these disruptions are producing a cycle of global warming that could result in catastrophic upheavals. This is not only true in the short term, but also with more serious and long-term effects for the world and its people. These disturbing patterns have greatly contributed to the melting of long-established glaciers, rising

sea levels, floods, increasingly catastrophic storms, and droughts in other areas of the globe. Scientists foresee that a sustained increase in temperature is very likely to continue, and that a disruption to the global climate has now become a reality. From man's standpoint earth's future looks uncertain and grim!

CHANGING WEATHER PATTERNS

Andrew Revkin, writing for the *New York Times* (Feb. 10, 2005), reported on this global warming in a news article entitled, "NASA: 2004 Saw Record Warming." In this report he noted NASA's studies under direction of Dr. J. E. Hansen who said, "Last year was the fourth warmest since systemic temperature measurements began around the world in the 19th century. Particularly high temperatures were measured over Alaska, the Caspian Sea region of Europe, and the Antarctic Peninsula, while the United States was unusually cool. But the global average continued a 30 year rise that is due primarily to increasing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The main source of such gases is smokestack and tailpipe emissions from burning coal and oil. The highest global average was measured in 1998, when temperatures were raised by a strong cycle of El Nino in the Pacific Ocean; 2002 and 2003 were second and third warmest. A weak El Nino pattern was likely to make 2005 at least the second warmest year and could push it beyond 1998 and set a record."

Global warming has alerted scientists to the accelerating changes that are taking place in earth's weather patterns. It has become apparent

that this is causing great concern, and is becoming increasingly serious. These alterations will dramatically affect the lives of many people in many ways, as well as with various plant and animal species that are presently under study.

THE ARCTIC

In the northern hemisphere, and particularly in the region immediately surrounding the Arctic Ocean, there are tremendous and spectacular changes taking place. These abnormalities indicate some of the most rapid and severe warming transitions that have ever occurred on the planet in recorded history. This warming of the climate has resulted in the melting of ocean ice in much of the area which, in turn, is affecting widespread wildlife and plant species as well as certain historical aboriginal cultures. This sudden melting of the ice cap at the top of the world is not only touching the lives of the people who live in the immediate areas of concern, but it is also having its effect on the whole human family with many and very serious long-term consequences.

EIGHT-NATION REPORT

In 2004, a 140-page report was released by an eight-nation Arctic Council that had studied and completed a comprehensive assessment of earth's fragile northern ice cap region. The study, which was a four-year effort involving many scientists from Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States, identifies the impending environmental catastrophe. Usha Lee McFarling, a staff writer for the *Los Angeles Times* (Nov. 9, 2004) said, "Climate change is accelerating

sharply, spurred by human production of greenhouse gases, which have increased in the atmosphere by nearly 30% since the Industrial Revolution. Average temperatures there have risen nearly 2 degrees Fahrenheit in the last century—twice the global average—while winter temperatures have risen nearly 4 degrees. Parts of Alaska and Russia have seen average winter temperatures rise 11 degrees since the 1970's and are at their highest in 400 years, according to the report. The amount of ocean covered by ice over the last three years has been the lowest ever recorded.”

THE HUMAN COST

A large portion of the Arctic Council's study deals with the many perplexing problems that are facing the northern people who reside in these remote areas. They speak of hunters who have fallen through the melting sea ice, and the difficulty of traveling in regions where there are only winter roads available during the period of long freeze-up. Buildings, pipelines, runways, and roads all are giving way as the permafrost thaws and becomes less stable. Accidents occur more frequently and there is growing concern for the livelihood among many who reside in the area.

THE ANTARCTIC

In the southern hemisphere, signs are also being detected that indicate changes are taking place. A recent and alarming news item, submitted by Jenny Hogan, *NewScientist.com* (Feb. 2, 2005), entitled “Antarctic Ice Sheet is an Awakened Giant,” reports, “The massive west Antarctic ice sheet, previously assumed to be stable, is starting

to collapse, scientists warn. Antarctica contains more than 90% of the world's ice, and the loss of any significant part of it would cause a substantial sea level rise. Scientists used to view Antarctica as a slumbering giant, but now see it as an awakened giant."

It has been further noted that glaciers on the Antarctic peninsula, which protrude from the continent toward the north, are beginning to retreat. Also, glaciers on the much larger western ice sheet are recently disappearing. Hogan notes, "If the ice on the peninsula melts entirely it will raise global sea levels by 0.3 meters, and the west Antarctic ice sheet contains enough water to contribute meters more. The last report of the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, published in 2001, said that the collapse of this ice sheet was unlikely during the 21st century. That may now need to be reassessed. Changes on the peninsula, where 75% of the 400 mountain glaciers are in retreat, have provided new insights into the way that ice sheets may disintegrate."

FLOATING ICE SHELF COLLAPSES

One such incident concerns a particularly huge floating ice shelf on the peninsula, called Larsen B, which collapsed in 2002 and shattered into numerous icebergs. Hogan writes, "This turned out to have the effect akin to pulling a cork from a bottle. With Larsen B no longer impeding movement, the ice floes that fed the shelf began moving faster towards the sea and started to thin. The findings took scientists by surprise when it was first revealed in September 2004, and now modelers are working to

include such mechanisms in their predictions.” These sorts of changes which are taking place at the bottom of the world, the historical storehouse of the world’s ice supply, will have significant long-term effects on the whole planet.

MAJOR GLACIER SHRINKING

Another report, published by *Inter Press Service*, confirms the rapidly and irregular events that are taking place in Antarctica. Daniella Knight, whose article appeared under the title “Major Glacier in Antarctica is Shrinking, Say Scientists,” writes, “A major glacier formation in Antarctica is shrinking, according to a new scientific report which is likely to heighten concerns that global warming is causing the world’s ice cover to melt. The Pine Island Glacier is the largest of all the ice streams that feed into the ocean, and could therefore be a key indicator of any larger changes afoot in the ice sheet’s interior, according to researchers. Scientists have taken an interest in monitoring the West Antarctic Ice Sheet because it contains enough water to raise global sea levels by approximately five meters if the ice melted.”

Scientists say that if the melting conditions in the area around the south pole continue to accelerate, the resulting increase in sea levels around the globe could be significantly higher within a much shorter period of time than had been previously anticipated. It is also noted that with the disappearance of earth’s ice cover there would be inevitable changes to the overall climate. Ice reflects large amounts of solar energy back into space which helps keep the planet cool. With the removal of this ice cover, land and

water surfaces that retain heat are thus exposed. These conditions would further lead to even greater melting along with overall warming cycles.

GLACIERS MELTING FASTER NOW

Related to these ominous predictions the above subheading, “Glaciers Melting Faster Now,” is the title of a news article submitted by Charles Hanley of the *Associated Press*, and which appeared in the *Los Angeles Daily News* (Jan. 30, 2005). Reporting from Chacaltaya Glacier, Bolivia he writes, “Up and down the icy spine of South America, the glaciers are melting, the white mantle of the Andes Mountains washing away at an ever faster rate.”

The Chacaltaya Glacier was once a grand ice floe high in the thin air of the Bolivian mountains of South America. La Paz, a two-mile-high city is located in the nearby area and has survived on the melting water that has been available from this supply of ice. “The glacier is a frozen storehouse of such water, and it will be gone in seven to eight years” according to Edson Ramirez, a Bolivian glaciologist who accompanied Hanley. He said, “Some small glaciers have already disappeared and in the next ten years many more will. They’ll disappear far beyond Bolivia. From Alaska in the north, to Montana’s Glacier National Park, to the great ice fields of wild Patagonia at this continent’s southern tip, the rivers of ice that have marked the landscape from prehistory are liquefying, shrinking, retreating. In east Africa, the storied snows of Mount Kilimanjaro are vanishing. In the icebound Alps and Himalayas of Europe and Asia, the change has been stunning. From South America to south

Asia, new glacial lakes threaten to overflow and drown villages below.”

THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

In 1997, a meeting was held in Kyoto, Japan, by representatives from 141 countries, who met to find ways to cut emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that many scientists believe contribute to global warming. The accord came legally into effect February 16, 2005, with demands that greenhouse gas emissions from industrialized countries be cut by 5.2 % by 2012. These emissions are blamed largely on heavy industrialization and traffic that traps the earth’s heat.

At issue is how mankind should deal with global warming, the risks of which, although alarming, are still not fully understood. The 141 nations account for approximately 55% of all greenhouse emissions on the planet, and Russia’s entry into the accord in November 2004 was vital because that figure had finally been met for the agreement to be ratified.

The world’s foremost polluter, however, is the United States, which has not signed the treaty. President George W. Bush pulled the United States out of Kyoto in 2001 believing that the accord’s demands would be too costly to meet, and that it wrongly excluded large developing nations, including India, China, and Brazil, from cutting emissions until 2012.

Although Bush admits there are serious problems from global warming, he believes that more research is necessary before going ahead with very expensive stopgap measures to confront the issue.

The major uncertainties concerning global warming yet remain: How much more warming will occur? How fast will these conditions come upon us? What are the potential adverse or beneficial effects of these alterations to our environment?

MAN'S EFFORTS UNCERTAIN

The Kyoto protocol, and other efforts by man to find ways to remedy earth's perplexing environmental changes, is a matter that only God can remedy. He created earth as a home for mankind and surely has all things under his control. From man's standpoint, the rapidly deteriorating weather patterns, along with melting glacial ice, increased intensity of storms of all kinds, devastating floods, droughts which destroy crops and cattle, and other natural disasters, are problems too large and too difficult for man to deal with. Top weather scientists can barely cope with the impending transition that is forecast to come upon the earth in the next few decades. Yet these irregularities continue to accelerate at an ever-alarming and increasing rate. The future is clearly uncertain, the risks remain ominous, and we must put our total trust in God to bring order out of what seems to be potential chaos.

PEACE BE STILL

In God's eternal purpose and providence for his human family, he has promised to put into action his wonderful plan of reconciliation for their recovery from the ravages of sin and death. We believe that this time is soon at hand. Under the administration of Christ's kingdom, all mankind will be lifted up from the depths of death and despair. The wastes of time and disease will be repaired, and the

earth, together with its inhabitants, will ultimately all be at peace. We realize the tremendous power that our Lord Jesus exercised, even during his earthly ministry, over the elements of this earth. On one occasion he was accompanied by some of his disciples as they made their way across the sea in a boat. "There ariseth a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the boat, insomuch that the boat was now filling. And he himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they awake him, and say unto him, Teacher, carest thou not that we perish? And he awoke, and rebuked the wind and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful? have ye not yet faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?—Mark 4:37-41, *American Standard Version* (1901)

THE UNFINISHED EARTH

Since the early days of creation, when our first parents disobeyed God's law, sin and its penalty death resulted in their being banished from their perfect surroundings which they had enjoyed in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve were thus driven out of the garden, and into the unfinished earth where they would experience the dying process. After their expulsion from Eden, they became aware of the cyclical nature of the seasons. "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." (Gen. 8:22) The seasons as arranged by God provided nature with a period

of dormancy in which even ‘mother earth’ could also rest. It was not until sin had entered the earth that severe climatic changes became more evident, especially after the flood of Noah’s day.

THOU RENEWEST THE FACE OF THE EARTH

The psalmist, writing under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, put into perspective the necessity of placing our trust in God’s everlasting plan and purpose to provide a perfect earthly home for his children. He wrote, “Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.”—Ps. 104:29,30

During the future time of Christ’s kingdom, the people of this world will learn righteousness, having experienced firsthand the consequences of the sentence of death. They will learn to dwell in peace, and the earth itself will have undergone a total transformation to perfection and will also be at peace. The wonderful words of the psalmist will have come true, for surely ‘the face’ of the whole earth will be renewed by God’s wonderful hand of providence which will then be exercised on behalf of the entire earth and his human family. ■

“O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?”

“The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.”

—Psalm 89:8,11

A Heritage of Faith

Key Verse: *“When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.”*
—II Timothy 1:5

Selected Scripture:
II Timothy 1:3-14

in supplying it through word and example to future generations, was especially commendable and pleasing to the Heavenly Father. It is evident that both Lois and Eunice, Timothy's grandmother and mother, shared the same sentiments as expressed later by the Apostle John, when he stated, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in Truth.”—III John 4

The faith that Paul saw in Lois and Eunice he recognized, as stated in the last part of the Key Verse, to be evident in Timothy also. For this reason, and because he realized that his own Christian walk was nearly finished, Paul took the opportunity in this, his final letter, to admonish young Timothy of things needful for the

THE APOSTLE PAUL'S SEC-

ond letter to his beloved Timothy is believed to be the last of his writings prior to his death in Rome. Knowing this, Paul opens his letter with a heartfelt acknowledgement of Timothy's heritage. The Key Verse indicates that Timothy's faith was rooted both in his mother and grandmother. Paul realized that their faithfulness, not only to the Truth in their own personal lives, but also

continuance of the spread of the Gospel message in its simplicity and purity. He first reminded Timothy everything that was to be accomplished in the Lord's service would be done, not through human power or ability, but through the Holy Spirit. He told Timothy that this Spirit was not one of slavish fear toward God, but was the Spirit "of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."—II Tim. 1:7

The Apostle Paul continued his letter to Timothy by telling him not to be "ashamed of the testimony of our Lord," even though this would cause trials and afflictions (vs. 8), stating that all this was "according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (vs. 9) The central theme of this purpose was that, through Jesus, death would eventually be abolished, and life and immortality would be brought to light—made to be understood, as well as available—through the Gospel. In verse ten of this lesson, the Apostle Paul says that these things had now been "made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ." Through his death as a ransom price and his subsequent resurrection by the mighty power of God, all mankind will have the opportunity for everlasting life, either in the heavenly ("immortality" of verse ten), or earthly ("life" of verse ten) phase of Christ's kingdom.

This lesson concludes with the Apostle Paul stating that these beautiful truths are the reasons for which he was glad to suffer affliction, having confidence that God was fully able to keep the promises of his word concerning his plan of salvation. (vs. 12) Paul admonished Timothy to keep these precious truths at the forefront of his heart and mind, saying, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us."—vss. 13,14 ■

Pursue Righteousness

Key Verse: “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”
—II Timothy 2:22

Selected Scripture:
II Timothy 2:14-26

contains several warnings of the Apostle Paul given to Timothy and to us. These warnings seem to be centered in the thought that the true follower of Christ should not be engaged in strivings and debates, whether along lines of Truth or otherwise, which do not build up the body of Christ. Such things Paul says include “words to no profit,” “vain babblings,” and “foolish and unlearned questions.” (II Tim. 2:14,16,23) Rather, Paul states we should “study to shew thyself approved unto God.” (vs. 15) The primary focus of our study of God’s Word is that it might have its sanctifying effect upon us, make us ‘approved unto God.’ He further says that in doing so we will not be ashamed, but will be “rightly dividing” God’s Word. That is, such study and application will have the effect of directing one’s paths (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary* comment on ‘dividing’), as the psalmist says, “He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.”—Ps. 23:3

The Apostle Paul continues this lesson by saying that some had not heeded these warnings, even to the point of damaging the faith of others. (II Tim. 2:17,18) This is a dangerous condition, and Paul counsels any

guilty of such things to “depart from iniquity.” (vs. 19) As a result, there will be those in God’s plan who attain varying degrees of faithfulness, described as “vessels of gold and of silver, . . . also of wood and of earth, . . . some to honour, and some to dishonour [less honour].” (vs. 20) Continuing, Paul admonishes any tending toward these unrighteous traits of character to purge themselves from these things, that they might be “a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”—vs. 21

The Key Verse lists many of the righteous and Christlike characteristics, which, in all of the Lord’s people, are to be pursued and gradually replace the tendencies of the fallen flesh. The pursuit of righteousness, faith, charity (love), peace, all out of a pure heart, is a most noble, and life-consuming work. We are not to think of these as merely something to be casually striven for. The word ‘follow’ in this verse is the same Greek word as is translated “press” in Philippians 3:14, where Apostle Paul says, “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Here we are again impressed with the thought that ‘the prize of the high calling’ will only be attained by diligent, and constant, effort. Such effort does not mean that we will be perfect, or always achieve the high standard of character set before us to which we desire to attain, but it does mean we will continually follow, pursue, and press toward these things.

In the closing verses of this lesson, the Apostle Paul gives special counsel to Timothy as an elder in the church. “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.”—II Tim. 2:24,25 ■

The Marks of a Helpful Mentor

Key Verse:
“Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.”
—II Timothy 3:14

Selected Scripture:
II Timothy 3:10-4:8

CHAPTERS THREE AND

four of Paul’s second epistle to Timothy contain the final written thoughts he left for the church. In these words we see his sincere care and concern for the church as his time of departure drew near, as well as a personal reflection on his own Christian walk. A personal testimony begins this lesson, as Paul tells Timothy he should be

well aware of “my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity [love], patience, Persecutions, afflictions.” (II Tim. 3:10,11) Paul’s life was a living example of all these things, and he realized that all who similarly would strive to do God’s will would suffer persecution and affliction as he did, saying, “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”—vs. 12

Although the Apostle Paul had previously warned Timothy of certain ones who would try to cause trouble in the church, he does so again here, saying that such shall even “wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” (vs. 13) In the Key Verse, Paul states the matter very plainly, counseling Timothy and us to continue in the things we have learned and are sure of, remembering

of whom we learned them. He tells us by these words that the truths we have once learned do not change, just as God does not change.—Mal. 3:6

The truths Paul, Timothy, and we have learned come from the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God. This should be the proving ground for any teaching, doctrine, or principle of Truth. Anything that does not meet the standard of God's Word we should not consider to be of fundamental importance in our understanding of Truth. "All Scripture, divinely inspired, is indeed profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for that discipline which is in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly fitted for every good work."—II Tim. 3:16,17, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*

The Apostle Paul continues by giving Timothy some final exhortations. He says, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (chap. 4:2,5) These were important admonitions for Timothy, because there was soon to come a time in which many would fall away from faithfulness to the Lord and his word.—vss. 3,4

Finally, after giving much exhortation and admonition, the Apostle Paul turned his thoughts inward, speaking personally of his Christian walk, soon to draw to a close. He says, "I am now ready to be offered, 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." (vss. 6-8) Although we may never feel we can make these statements ourselves, yet we should reach the point in our Christian walk, as Paul did, where we can say we have done with our might what our hands have found to do.—Eccles. 9:10 ■

Teach Sound Doctrine by Example

Key Verse: *“In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.”*
—**Titus 2:7,8**

Selected Scripture:
Titus 2

TITUS, LIKE TIMOTHY, WAS

a young elder in the early church, and to whom the Apostle Paul gave important admonition and instruction. Today’s lesson includes instruction concerning doctrine, personal living, good works, and the hope of salvation. In the first lesson, concerning doctrine, he states that it must be “sound.” (Titus 2:1) Later in this chapter, he identifies two fundamental points of doctrine—that Jesus gave himself a ransom for all, and that, as a result, we have the opportunity to be “a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (vs. 14) Only those who have completely given themselves in consecration to God can

truly appreciate these teachings at this time. In Christ’s kingdom, though, all will come to know him.—Jer. 31:34

In giving Titus instructions for the church concerning personal living, the Apostle Paul says we should be vigilant, serious, prudent, sound in faith, loving, and patient. (Titus 2:2, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*) Paul in this chapter, realizing the distinctions of age and gender,

went to the additional effort of speaking separately to the aged men, aged women, younger women, and younger men, giving each group special instruction just for them. (vss. 2-6) This shows that Paul realized each group has an important role to play in the body of Christ, and all need help and encouragement in their own circumstances of life.—I Cor. 12:12

Good works are especially commended by Paul in this lesson. In the Key Verse, he says that our lives should be a ‘pattern’ of good works. This means that others should be able to look upon us and see an example of Christian living. Such a pattern should encompass every aspect of our life, to the best of our ability. Paul lists some of the areas that should be part of the example of works we set: doctrine, dignity, soundness of speech, showing good faith, denying ungodliness and worldly desires, living sensibly, righteously, and godly. (Titus 2:7,8,10,12, *New American Standard Translation*) It is clear from Paul’s list that these works are to include, to the greatest extent possible, all our motives, thoughts, words, and actions. The more our works conform to these, the better pattern we will be to others.

The final aspect of this lesson is that of our hope of salvation. “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” (vs. 13) In these words, the Apostle Paul stresses the importance of keeping our spiritual eyes focused on the goal, the hope of our calling (Eph. 4:4), and the ultimate purpose of God’s plan to bless all the families of the earth. This purpose will be revealed to all mankind once the “little flock” (Luke 12:32) is complete and God, through his Son and his bride—the Christ, head and body—begin the process of teaching all mankind righteousness. “When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Isa. 26:9) This hope of salvation for the church, as well as the world, based on the ransom price paid by Jesus, are the keys to all sound doctrine. ■

The Seventy Weeks

***“Seventy weeks are
determined upon
thy people and
upon thy holy
city.”
—Daniel 9:24***

THE VISION GIVEN TO

Daniel, in answer to his prayer for the forgiveness of his people, was in reality an important time prophecy. ‘Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people,’ said Gabriel to Daniel, ‘and upon thy holy city.’ In verses twenty-five through twenty-seven, these seventy weeks are divided into three periods—“seven weeks” plus “threescore and two weeks” were to reach “unto the Messiah the Prince.” This prophetic time measurement was to begin from “the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.” Not only did Gabriel assure Daniel that his prayer had been heard, but from this he would know that it was to be favorably answered. The closing words of Daniel’s prayer were, “O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.”—Dan. 9:19

‘For thy city’—Jerusalem had been destroyed at the beginning of Israel’s captivity in Babylon. But now Daniel was told that a decree would go forth authorizing it to be rebuilt. This meant that the captivity would end, as God had promised, and that ‘seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks’ from the time authority would be given to rebuild Jerusalem, the Messiah would come.

Most students of prophecy agree, and it is confirmed by secular history, that Israel’s seventy years of captivity in Babylon began in 606 b.c., ending in 536 b.c. Even those who hold to other dates for the period of the captivity vary by only a very few years. It is certain, therefore, that there was to be a lapse of hundreds of years between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah.

SYMBOLIC TIME

Confronted by this fact, we are forced to the realization that the seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks must be a symbolic time measurement, for sixty-nine literal weeks would be a period of only about sixteen months. But if the ‘weeks’ of this prophecy are not units of seven literal days, how can we determine how long they really are? Through the Prophet Ezekiel, the Lord reveals that in symbolic time he considers each day to represent a year. (Ezek. 4:6) Sixty-nine weeks on this basis would, therefore, be 483 symbolic days, or 483 literal years.

We can see at a glance that 483 years come very near to bridging the gap between the conclusion of Israel’s captivity and the coming of Christ.

However, there are two other factors to be taken into consideration before we can appreciate how minutely accurate this time prophecy really is. First it reaches to 'Messiah the Prince.' Jesus was not Messiah the prince when he was born. The word Messiah means 'Anointed One,' and Jesus was not anointed with the Holy Spirit until he was thirty years of age.—Luke 3:21-23

It was in the fall of a.d. 29 that Jesus received the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and thus became Messiah the prince. Subtracting these twenty-nine years from the seven weeks and threescore and two symbolic weeks would leave 454 years, which would be the b.c. date established by this prophecy. But this is eighty-two years short of the 536 b.c. date we have seen marked the end of Israel's captivity. This means that there is another factor that needs to be taken into consideration before we have the full truth on this wonderful prophecy.

Gabriel told Daniel that this time measurement would begin 'from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.' At the end of the seventy years' captivity, King Cyrus issued a decree authorizing the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, but said nothing about rebuilding the city itself, or its walls. See Ezra 1:1-4. Some have concluded that this is the decree referred to in the prophecy of the sixty-nine weeks, but it is not.

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE

Under the authority of the decree issued by Cyrus, work was begun on rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. But there were enemies in the land who opposed the project. They dispatched a letter to

King Artaxerxes, which stated, "Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations."—Ezra 4:12

This was largely a misrepresentation, for actually it was the Temple that was being rebuilt, not the city and the walls. But these enemies of the Jews were clever enough to know that no authority had been given to rebuild the city and its walls, and on the basis of this they hoped that they could induce the king to place a ban on all work of reconstruction, which he did, temporarily.

The king sent back a letter, which in part read, "Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me." (vs. 21) Later, on the basis of this letter, Israel's enemies succeeded in stopping reconstruction work on the Temple, but only temporarily. "It ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia."—vs. 24

Then a letter was sent by the Jews to Darius asking him to have the records searched for the decree of Cyrus authorizing the rebuilding of the Temple. Darius honored this request, and the decree of Cyrus pertaining to the Temple was found, and the work was permitted to go on until it was completed.—Ezra 5:4-17

Now this may seem like much detail, but it is important, for it establishes without question the fact that the time measurement of seven weeks, threescore and two weeks did not have its beginning with the decree of Cyrus which was issued at the close of the captivity. So far as his decree was

concerned, the city and walls of Jerusalem could not have been rebuilt, for Artaxerxes directed that the work cease until he gave commandment for it to continue.

Persia had two kings named Artaxerxes of interest to Bible students, and it was the first of these who commanded that the walls and city of Jerusalem not be rebuilt. Apparently he reigned only eight months, and historians are inclined to the view that he was an impostor. But, impostor or not, his command halted the work of reconstruction of the city and walls of Jerusalem.

It was not until the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes II that this ban was lifted. It came about through the zeal of Nehemiah. Nehemiah was a faithful Jew living in Persia, serving as cup-bearer to Artaxerxes. In this position he had opportunity to appear daily before the king.

Certain Jews of Jerusalem had come to visit him. He “asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.” Their report saddened Nehemiah, as well it might. He wrote, “They said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept.”—Neh. 1:2-4

NEHEMIAH SEEKS GOD'S HELP

Then Nehemiah prayed earnestly to the Lord for direction and help in connection with an appeal he decided to make to the king. So, as Nehemiah

reports it, "I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence." But Nehemiah was sad this time, which was noticed by the king, who asked concerning the cause. Nehemiah explained that it was the lamentable condition of his people, and the fact that the city of his fathers' sepulchres "lieth waste." The king realized that Nehemiah was building up to the point of asking a favor, and said, "For what dost thou make request?"—Neh. 2:1-4

Nehemiah was straightforward with his request—"If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it." And then Nehemiah adds, "The king said unto me, For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time."—vss. 5,6

Here, then is the decree, or authority, that was given for rebuilding the city and walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah asked to be sent to Judah for this purpose, and it pleased the king to send him. Historians have set the date of Nehemiah's mission to be 454 b.c. Seven weeks and threescore and two weeks, or 483 years from this date, bring us to a.d. 29. This is the date that, as we have seen, Jesus became Messiah the prince.

FIRST TO REDEEM

Here, then, is a time prophecy of the First Advent of Jesus. Notice how clearly it states the main objective of his first coming. It was "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to

make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”—Dan. 9:24

Much of the work thus described was accomplished by the death of Jesus. It is his shed blood that constitutes the basis for reconciliation with God. It was his death that opened the way to ‘everlasting righteousness,’ rather than the mere temporary and partial righteousness made possible by the typical sacrifices of “bulls and of goats.” (Heb. 10:4) His coming as the Messiah exactly at the time foretold sealed ‘the vision and prophecy.’ The anointing of the ‘most Holy’ is perhaps a reference to the work of selecting the saintly ones of this age to be his partners in the kingdom, beginning with the holy remnant of the Jewish nation. This work was authorized by him by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost. This is where the anointing that came upon him began to reach his followers, constituting them the anointed class.

JESUS’ MINISTRY

This was to be accomplished at the end of the seventy symbolic weeks. It was at the close of the sixty-ninth of these weeks that Jesus began his ministry. It was after this, according to the prophecy that Messiah was to be “cut off, but not for himself.” He was cut off in death for the sins of the world. (Dan. 9:26) Verse twenty-seven states that “in the midst of the week”—that is, of the seventieth week—“he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.” This seems to be a reference to

ending the typical sacrifices offered year by year by Israel's priests. There would be no need for these after the death of Jesus as the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."—John 1:29,36

The prophecy states that Messiah should "confirm the covenant with many for one week." (Dan. 9:27) This also is a reference to the seventieth week, which began with the baptism of Jesus. God had made a special covenant with Israel. He had promised, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."—Exod. 19:5,6

ABRAHAM'S SEED

This was but a further statement of the promise made to Abraham that through his "seed" all the families of the earth would be blessed. (Gen. 22:18) His natural descendants were exclusively entitled to be the 'seed' of blessing under this promise. As later revealed, there were to be two parts to this seed, the earthly and the heavenly; although not until the coming of Christ was anything understood concerning the heavenly seed. However, all the truly faithful ones down through the centuries before he came, qualified to be of the earthly seed. They will, as "princes in all the earth," share in the foretold work of blessing.—Isa. 1:26; Ps. 45:16

The exclusiveness of God's promise concerning Israel was conditional—"If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant." The captivity in Babylon was due to a failure on the part of the nation as a whole to meet this condition. Daniel

was told that seventy symbolic weeks, or four-hundred-ninety years, had been determined upon his people, at the end of which the 'transgression' would be finished, and an end made of sin. He was assured, that the 'covenant' would be confirmed, or continued operative until the full end of the seventieth week.

The expression, 'to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins,' is comparable to the one found in Ezekiel 21:25, which was made to Judah's last king, Zedekiah—"Thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end." This simply meant that the Lord would no longer tolerate the nation's iniquity in the sense of permitting them to continue as a free nation with their own king. But he did continue his exclusive covenant with them in the sense that the opportunity to become fellow heirs with Jesus was not then extended to the Gentiles.

It was the conclusion of this covenant that was to take place at the end of the seventy weeks. Jesus conducted his ministry during the first half of this symbolic week. He understood that his Father's promise to Israel thus confined his ministry, and the ministry of his disciples, to this one nation. He warned the people, however, what to expect. He said that the kingdom would be taken from them and "given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."—Matt. 21:43

JESUS' HOUR HAD COME

The prophecy states that Jesus was to be cut off "in the midst of the week." (Dan. 9:27) Undoubtedly

Jesus understood this time prophecy. This is why he knew when his “hour” had come. (John 17:1) This is why Paul could write that “in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”—Rom. 5:6

After his resurrection, Jesus also knew that there was but a short time left—half a symbolic week, or three and one-half years—before the full end of God’s exclusive covenant with Israel would end, and that then it would be in harmony with the Divine plan for the Gospel to go to the Gentiles. So, when he met with his disciples for the last time, he commissioned them to be his witnesses “in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”—Acts 1:8

Jesus realized that if his disciples began their work in Jerusalem, and then expanded it into Judea and Samaria, it would be three and a half years before the Gentiles were reached. Cornelius was the first Gentile convert, and although historians find it difficult to establish the exact date of his conversion, there is little doubt that it occurred in the fall of a.d. 36, which would be the full end of the seventieth week. How fitting it is that the Lord calls special attention to this conversion, as recorded in Acts, chapter ten.

The completeness of the seventy weeks time prophecy given to Daniel is remarkable. Not only did it foretell the exact time when the Messiah would begin his ministry, and explain that he would die for the sins of the people, but it also mentions the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation that would come upon Israel as a result of the nation’s failure to accept their king.

We read—"After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."—Dan. 9:26,27

Thus has it been established that this scriptural account of the seventy weeks provides one of the most important features in God's ultimate plan of reconciliation and restitution for his human family. ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

FEBRUARY 2—"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die."—Romans 8:13 (Z. '95-8 Hymn 109)

FEBRUARY 9—"Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."—Psalm 116:7 (Z. '95-250 Hymn 104)

FEBRUARY 16—"Through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; . . . giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed."—II Corinthians 6:8,3 (Z. '01-314 Hymn 110)

FEBRUARY 23—"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."—Psalm 32:8 (Z. '02-251,249 Hymn 242)

Pride and the Worldly Spirit

“All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

—I John 2:16

and actions, it will blight our peace and joy in the Lord, and distort our every outlook in keeping with its own ugly form.

PRIDE IS A POISONOUS

manifestation of selfishness. It is, as someone has well said, selfishness gone to seed. Every Christian should be on the alert to resist the encroachments of pride, because to whatever extent it is permitted to influence our thoughts

SELF-ESTEEM

One of the manifestations of pride is that of undue self-esteem. Paul speaks of it as thinking “more highly” of one’s self than is warranted—than one “ought to think.” (Rom. 12:3) Self-esteem manifests itself in many, and unsuspecting, ways. It may prevent one from accepting the truth from a humble source, and by the truth we mean not only the doctrines relating to the Divine plan, but details of truth on any and all subjects. It is so easy

for any of us to be wrong, even in the everyday things of life, that we should be willing to be corrected no matter from what source the correction may come.

If a person hesitates to seek advice for fear that it may reveal his own lack of knowledge, it is a sign of pride. In the world, the men and women who are the most successful are those who seek the advice of others, especially in fields with which they are not too well informed themselves. This is still more applicable in the Christian life. Our understanding of the Truth of God's Word is less likely to be complete if we are unwilling to take into consideration the viewpoints of others of like precious faith. That is the reason it is so essential that we meet together for mutual study and fellowship.

Undue contention in presenting our views may be a manifestation of pride. The Truth is such a bulwark of strength against error that we do not need to be contentious in its use. To be overly concerned about a point may indicate that what we are presenting is partly our own view, rather than God's, and our pride is causing us to be contentious in its presentation. If such is the case, then pride will cause us to be very reluctant to change our opinion—that is, to admit that we are wrong even when the truth is apparent.

ELDERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The self-esteem manifestation of pride also may cause us to resent or reject reproof, even though the reproof may have been deserved and necessary. On the other hand, a Christian who is properly humble before the Lord, and before his brethren,

will not resent reproof even though it may not be merited. Elders of ecclesias should be especially on guard along this line; for, unless they are, pride may ruin their usefulness as servants of the brethren. If an elder resents having his thoughts called into question by even the humblest member of the ecclesia, it is a sign of undue self-esteem, and he should take the matter in hand before he is slain by the monster.

Elders are servants of the Lord's people, and it is not fitting for servants to resent questioning by those whom they serve. If there is any doubt in the mind of a brother or sister as to where one of their servants, or would-be servants, stands with respect to doctrine and practice, it behooves that servant to display the greatest of patience and painstaking care to make his position clear. A refusal to do this may represent a lack of true humility before the Lord and before the brethren.

HUMILITY

A willingness to listen to others is one of the evidences of true humility, and is of prime importance to our own growth in grace and knowledge. The lowliest saints of God, from the standpoint of education and ability, may often express thoughts that are golden nuggets of Truth, more valuable, perhaps, than a whole discourse by one more talented. If we are not listening when these thoughts are expressed, we lose them; hence we lose the blessings that would accrue from them.

If we are not humble enough to listen to our brethren, we could easily become proud enough not to listen to the Lord. God speaks to us through

his Word. If we go to his Word merely to find that which will bolster up an idea that we have developed in our own minds, it means that we are not truly listening to the Lord, but misusing his Word to satisfy the desires of our own self-esteem. Let us be on the alert to note the slightest manifestation of pride along this line, and, in prayer before the Lord, ask him to help us to be free from it.

Social distinctions among the brethren are generally broken down, but the spirit of pride that was responsible for fastening the ungodlike theory of class distinctions upon the unhappy world is still liable to manifest itself among the brethren. We may, for example, find ourselves seeking the fellowship of only the better educated and talented among the brethren, and ignoring those whom we consider not to be of 'our kind.' If we find any such tendency to be influencing us, we may be sure that the grace of God has not yet taken as full control of our lives as it should. There is also danger that we may develop what might be called a spiritual class distinction complex. That is, we may wish to fellowship with only those whom we consider to be as well developed spiritually as we consider ourselves to be. Sometimes a fear is expressed that newly interested brethren coming into the ecclesia may spoil our deep fellowship. This is to our shame, and is unlike the spirit manifested by the Master. If we feel that we are well developed spiritually, let us rejoice in whatever privileges we may have in helping others to the same condition. If we do not rejoice in thus helping the weak, it is a very good sign that our own development is not as rounded out as it should be.

ALL YE ARE BRETHREN

While it is true that Jesus seemed to love some of his apostles more affectionately than others, this doesn't mean that he didn't love them all and was not glad for every opportunity he had of being with them all and serving them. In our Truth association there will be those to whom we are drawn more than to others, but this doesn't mean that we should ignore any of the brethren, and not rejoice in every privilege we have of being with them and enjoying their fellowship. There should be no cliques among God's people. "All ye are brethren."—Matt. 23:8

Another possible manifestation of pride is the disposition to talk too much about one's humility, as though the friends wouldn't know we were humble unless we told them. Humility doesn't need to be advertised. Like the fragrance of a beautiful rose, its presence is manifested without the necessity of special attention being called to it. The rose does not need to say "How sweet is my perfume"; nor does a truly humble Christian need to call attention to his humility.

SCRUTINIZING OUR MOTIVES

A good test of humility is to note our attitude when others get credit that may properly belong to us. An interesting thought concerning some passage of scripture may be under discussion. The thought may be based upon a suggestion that came from us. Do we desire to let the brethren know this; or are we happy simply in the knowledge that they are being blessed as a result of our efforts? Right along this line, it is well to scrutinize the motives of our every word and deed. In our association

with the brethren, opportunities are constantly arising for rendering a little assistance here and there, by kind words and deeds. If, when we do these things, we look to see whether or not they were noticed by the brethren, it means that a little bit of pride is still left in our hearts.

Along the line of seeking approval from the friends for what we do, is the other test of what our attitude is when someone else is complimented and we are ignored. Do we resent this instead of rejoicing in it? This is a heart-searching test, yet in it we are able to measure our growth in humility, and determine whether or not we have reached the point where we are able to actually esteem others as being better than ourselves, and are therefore glad to see them put forward.—Phil. 2:3

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Success in life, whether connected directly or indirectly with the Lord's service, proves a test to our humility. If we have, by God's grace, learned to do something well, how anxious are we to display our ability? Do we become fretful, and assume a persecuted attitude, when we imagine someone is holding us back? If so, it is well to realize that it is probably the Lord that is holding us back until we have learned well the lesson of humility. In all such matters it is important to remember that there are really no secondary causes so far as our relationship with the Lord is concerned. If our ambitions or plans are frustrated, let us not blame this brother or that sister, but realize that all the brethren could not keep from us that which the Lord wishes us to enjoy.

When we maintain this proper viewpoint of our relationship to the Lord, and of his watch care over our highest spiritual interest, we will be greatly helped along the road to true humility. If our ambitions are checked we will search our hearts, and inquire of the Lord for the reason why, instead of blaming the brethren and becoming embittered toward them. Perhaps the brethren may be wrong in their dealing with us. If so, that's something for the Lord to deal with. Of this we can be sure, that our own position in the matter could only be possible through the Lord's permission. Our faith in his watch care should enable us to believe that he will permit nothing to happen in our lives but what will be for our highest spiritual welfare. In this let us rejoice.

The same viewpoint holds true even though our brethren in Christ may not be involved. In the business world, at our work in the factory or the office, we may seem to be held back from doing things which we aspire to do, and which we believe we have the ability to do. If this be the case, let's not blame our competitor, our foreman, our office manager, or our fellow worker. Let us rather, as in our association with the brethren, seek to ascertain what lesson the Lord may have for us in our experiences. If they accomplish nothing more than to keep us humble before the Lord, they are very valuable indeed. But, if we become embittered toward those whom we imagine to be responsible, we have failed in the test.

Some of us may have imaginary accomplishments, and these cause more trouble than real accomplishments. Real accomplishments often represent years

of patient toil and trials and tests in the school of Christ, hence the cost of attainment is a counter-balance to keep the Christian humble. On the other hand, mushroomlike development of ability, even if it is a real ability, is frequently not accompanied by development along other lines; hence one in such a position needs to be especially on guard. If one's attainments are only imaginary, then the danger is truly great. Such a one may prove to be a great trial to many of the Lord's people. Seemingly, there is always someone to sponsor the cause of a brother who imagines he is being persecuted by the brethren, and thus his pride is further encouraged, and his overcoming made the harder.

GRACES OF THE SPIRIT

In this whole lesson of pride, Jesus is our pattern. He had all knowledge, all ability—earthly and heavenly—yet he said that his teachings were not his but his Father's. He said that he could do nothing of himself, but only as the Father helped him. His words, Jesus claimed, were not his own, but the Father's. In view of this wonderful example of humility, how should we walk who once were sinners, enemies of God, and without any spiritual knowledge, wisdom or ability?

May we indeed remember that before honor, goes humility (Prov. 15:33; 18:12); before destruction is pride (Prov. 16:18,19); and that pride is so displeasing to God that it is classed with murder, bearing false witness, and with lying. (Prov. 6:16,17) Let us then endeavor to be clothed with humility, and being adorned with this and other graces of the Spirit, be truly "meet for the master's use."—II Tim. 2:21 ■

Let Us Hold Fast

***“Let us hold fast
the profession of
our faith without
wavering; (for he is
faithful that
promised.)”***

—Hebrews 10:23

THE LORD’S CHILDREN

who have been enlightened by the glorious Truth of the Divine plan of the ages may recall the great joy that was experienced upon their first having received of the wonderful blessings from the Word of God. Those who have lived during the closing years of this Gospel Age have been witnesses of an abundant and rich pouring forth of Truth that has now been revealed to the consecrated watchers during this present harvest time. This enlightenment on the Scriptures has been a rich blessing and encouragement to the children of God, and they have shared in proclaiming this message of Truth throughout the world.

What a thrill it has been to be given an understanding of God’s plan of the ages which includes the plan of reconciliation for the sin-sick and dying world, and the promised restoration for all of the obedient of mankind under the administration of Christ’s future thousand-year kingdom. These blessings will surely come to pass during the times of restoration of all things as promised in his blessed Word. (Acts 3:19-21) May we continue to

rejoice in this knowledge that our loving Heavenly Father has given us, and let us hold fast the profession of our faith in these blessed promises.

THE HIGH CALLING

During this period of time, God has been drawing faithful believers to himself through the provision made by our degree of faith in our Lord Jesus and the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf. Jesus explains, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."—John 6:44,45

Concerning this wonderful calling, the encouraging words from the Apostle Paul inspire us to greater appreciation. He says, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."—Phil. 3:13-15

The spiritual phase of Christ's kingdom will be made up of Christ and his glorified church. The earthly phase of the kingdom will consist of the resurrected Worthies of old who will be the teachers of Truth as "princes in all the earth." (Ps. 45:16) They will serve as earthly representatives of the glorious kingdom to assist mankind in the ways of truth and righteousness.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

Another blessed portion of present Truth was the revealed fact that we are now living in the closing years of the Gospel Age, and that the millennial kingdom of truth and righteousness under Christ will soon be established. The present age has been the period during which the great salvation is still being offered to the followers of Christ, the time referred to by Paul when he wrote, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (II Cor. 6:2) Since we are living in the closing years of this 'accepted time' the question may arise as to just when there will be no further opportunity to enter the race for the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus, and when that door will be closed. We are encouraged to watch the signs of the times as an indication of the times in which we are living, but not to seek an answer to our request concerning a specific date when the last members of the church may be taken. Our calling is one of faith, and we need to remember that our consecration is one of sacrifice "unto death." (Rev. 2:10) We leave all other matters in our Lord's hands.

God gave his Word to Jesus, and, concerning his followers, Jesus said to his Father, "I have given them thy word." (John 17:14) Jesus told his disciples the use that he wanted them to make of the Word that he had given them. They were to go into all the world to preach the Gospel, and thereby to make disciples from among "all nations." (Matt. 28:19) He had already outlined the manner in which one could be his disciple, which was to "deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. 16:24) He promised that those who would

do this would have treasure in heaven.—Matt. 19:21

GENTILES CALLED

In giving this commission to his disciples, Jesus told them to begin at Jerusalem. (Acts 1:8) This was because the seventy weeks of exclusive favor to the Israelites had not yet ended, so the time had not come for the Gospel to be extended to the Gentiles. Peter was given the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16:19), with the privilege of opening up kingdom blessings, first to the Jews, and later to Cornelius who became the first Gentile convert.—Acts 10:34-36

How wonderfully and miraculously the Lord overruled in the case of Cornelius, in order that Peter, as well as the entire church, might know of a surety that the door to the High Calling had actually opened to receive Gentile converts. Testifying on the matter, Peter later said, “God at the first did visit the Gentiles.” (Acts 15:14) It was difficult for some of the Jewish Christians of that day to become reconciled to the fact that Gentiles could then become fellow heirs with them, but the evidence was clearly before them and they had no alternative but to accept the Lord’s will in the matter. God’s Word was going forth, and it was accomplishing that which he wanted accomplished.

We have seen how definitely the Lord opened the door to the High Calling, first to the Jews at Pentecost, and later to the Gentiles through the conversion of Cornelius. These providences of God left no doubt in the minds of those in the Early Church, regardless of whether they were Jews or Gentiles.

They knew that if God's Word reached them, and their hearts responded to it in the spirit of full consecration, they would be accepted.

It is unreasonable to suppose that God would deal any less definitely with his people now in the closing years of this Gospel Age. His love and justice would not permit him to allow his Word to engender false hopes in the minds of those reached by it, and he is abundantly able to prevent this from occurring. If our consecration is accepted it is accepted for only one reason, which is that God has made us probationary members of the body of Christ. There is no other calling during this age.

The Apostle Paul declares, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. 8:16,17) Let us therefore continue to hold fast the profession of our faith that we may have a place in the wonderful High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. ■

More Likeness to Thee

*O for a heart more like my God,
From imperfection free;
A heart conformed unto thy Word,
And pleasing, Lord, to thee.
A heart in ev'ry thought renewed,
And full of love divine,
Perfect, and right, and pure, and good,
A copy, Lord, of thine.*

—*Hymns of Dawn*

Our Walk of Faith

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

—Hebrews 11:1

PAUL EXPLAINS THAT

‘faith is the substance [foundation] of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.’ If we possessed the things hoped for, and could see the things unseen, we would not need faith. It is because we are surrounded by circumstances and conditions that are adverse to, and hidden from, the view of the glorious things which God has promised, that we need faith—faith to surmount and look beyond them into that spiritual land of promise that is “very far off.”—Isa. 33:17

Those who are acquainted with the Divine plan know why God has permitted evil to reign for more than six thousand years. They believe that thereby the world of mankind will ultimately learn a valuable lesson regarding the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and its terrible consequences upon the sinner. They realize, however, that the world must yet have an opportunity to experience the favorable conditions of the millennium before they will be able fully to understand, and properly appraise, the value of the present reign of sin and death.

The permission of evil is also designed to be of inestimable value to the church of this Gospel Age.

We must learn our lessons from this experience now, and the only way we can do it is upon the basis of faith. In this time when evil flourishes, when the wicked prosper, and when the proud are called happy, it requires faith to stand for unpopular Truth, and with the unprosperous righteous and the persecuted humble and meek.

Under these circumstances, our faith must lay hold upon the promises of God, and believe in his integrity to fulfill them. He has promised us the Divine nature, “glory and honour and immortality.” (Rom. 2:7) Upon the basis of faith and obedience, we must prove ourselves worthy of such high exaltation. Those who walk by faith during this Gospel Age are being formed into a New Creation. We are even now “new creatures” in Christ Jesus. (II Cor. 5:17) In the past, all of God’s intelligent creatures were first created and then tested. But with the New Creation it is different. We are being tested before the creative process is complete, because when it is finished all those who qualify will have immortality. They will be deathproof, so they must be proved worthy of such a high creation before they attain it.

It is for this reason that the Lord permits his people to be surrounded with evil, and evil influences. It is only their faith in him, and in the rightness of his plan for them and for the world, that gives them the victory over their surroundings. The world, under the leadership of Satan, finds an ally in our fallen flesh. Faith in God and in his promises to guide and help—faith in the glory he has promised—is absolutely necessary in order to be victorious over this unholy alliance.

THE WORKS OF FAITH

After explaining that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, Paul reminds us of a number of wonderful examples of what faith will accomplish in the lives of the faithful. He draws his illustrations from the experiences of the Old Testament Worthies. This makes them the more meaningful, for those men of God had less knowledge of the Divine plan than we have been given, and they were not encouraged to run for so great a prize as that offered during the Gospel Age.

The Ancient Worthies, however, did exercise a marvelous faith. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (Heb. 11:4) Enoch walked with God; Noah preached righteousness and built an ark; Abraham offered up Isaac as a burnt offering [or showed his willingness to do so]; Moses chose to suffer with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Joseph stood staunchly for righteousness in the land of Egypt; Joshua conquered Canaan; Elijah challenged and defeated the priests of Baal; Daniel stopped the mouths of lions; the three Hebrews risked the flames of the seven-times heated fiery furnace; and Jeremiah endured the horrors of the dungeon. These men of God had the one thing in common that enabled them to go through these experiences. It was their faith in God and his promises.

Their knowledge of God's promises was the basis for their faith. It was because of his knowledge of those promises that Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (vs. 10) All of these faithful men of old enjoyed a similar knowledge of God's purpose, not

in all its clarity as we are privileged to understand it today, but clear enough to realize that any temporal advantage they might enjoy could not compare in value to the eternal blessings that God had promised.

But the knowledge alone did not give them faith. It was the foundation of their faith only as they were persuaded that God's promises were true, and they could place their heart reliance upon them. By making God's promises their own, they ordered their lives in harmony with them. When, for example, Abraham heard the voice of God calling him to go into an unknown country, he obeyed. Anything short of full obedience would have manifested a proportionate lack of faith.

So it was with all the Worthies of old. They did not entangle themselves with the things of this world, nor did they put their trust in man, nor in the false gods of the people with which they were so frequently surrounded. As Paul shows, they walked as pilgrims and strangers in the earth, longing for the kingdom that God had promised. James writes that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:20), and by their works the Ancient Worthies demonstrated the great vitality of their faith. It was a faith that did not shrink, no matter how formidable the foes were that pressed against them. It was a faith that did not tremble on the brink of any earthly woe.

IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

We, like these faithful men, must have knowledge of God and of his plans in order to exercise a living, victorious faith. In Romans 10:14, Paul asks

the question, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" The Lord wants us to exercise strong faith, a faith that is based upon a verified knowledge, so he has asked us to reason with him—"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." (Isa. 1:18) Men who are overly impressed with their own importance might ask us to accept their word without question or investigation, but the great God of the universe invites us to reason with him, that we may be satisfied that what he has told us is true. How wonderful is our God!

We reason with God through his Word. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," Paul tells us. (Rom. 10:17) When we study and reason on the Scriptures, God is reasoning with us; that is, he is appealing to our reason upon the basis of the marvelous harmony, beauty, grandeur, and reasonableness of the loving plan of the ages which is set forth in his Word. With this firm foundation of knowledge, our faith will be correspondingly strong.

A victorious faith is more than merely to believe in God and in the fact that he has made promises. James tells us the "devils also believe, and tremble." (James 2:19) Our belief, our faith, if it is to give us victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil, must enable us to do more than tremble. It must become a personal, vital conviction that leads to obedient activity in doing the will of God.

FAITH IN GOD AND CHRIST

In addition to having faith in the promises of God, and in his loving plan that they outline, we should have faith in God himself. By faith, our relationship

with our God should ripen into a personal acquaintance in which we appreciate him more and more as our loving Heavenly Father—a Father with whom we can always have sweet fellowship. Our faith should enable us to go to him in our sorrows and pour out the troubles of our heart with the assurance that he will always be ready to provide us with the “balm of Gilead” (Jer. 8:22), to comfort us in our every time of need.

By faith, we should be able to see our Lord Jesus as our tender and loving Shepherd, who is caring for all our needs. Isaiah wrote, “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.” (chap. 40:11) The Lord tenderly cares for us. He may even resort to discipline; but this will not be necessary if faith is wholly obedient to his every call, following him in the paths of righteousness wherever he may lead.

STRENGTHENED BY EXERCISE

Faith grows stronger as we step out on the promises of God and thus put them to the test. This principle is illustrated in the experience of Israel in crossing the River Jordan into the promised land. The priests, marching ahead of the Israelites, were to touch the waters of the river with their feet, and the promise was that then the water would separate to make a path through which they could cross to the other side.

The priests, full of faith, took this step, and the Lord, fulfilling his promise, caused the water to divide. They put God’s promise to the test, and saw it verified. Thus their faith was strengthened. Every faithful child of God should enjoy similar

evidences of God's love, and of his ability to fulfill all his good promises. This will be so if we take the steps of obedience as the Lord indicates them to us through his Word.

Our full consecration to the Lord was our first major step of obedience to the faith that was gradually crystallizing in our hearts as our growing knowledge of the Truth revealed that we did not belong to ourselves, but to the Lord. Then followed the evidence of the Lord's acceptance, and the begetting of the Holy Spirit. Each new step of faith, as we work out the details of the Lord's will throughout our daily walk in life, is rewarded with additional evidence of the Lord's guiding presence, overruling providence, and his sustaining grace.

THE "WORK OF FAITH"

In I Thessalonians 1:3, the Apostle Paul speaks of the "work of faith." Faith initiates our every activity in the Lord's service. It enables us to understand and appreciate the "deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:10), and to teach them to others to whom the Lord has given hearing ears. Through faith in the truths of the Word, we are able to offer acceptable sacrifice to God; to fight the good fight of faith; to remain dead to self and to the world and to be alive toward God; to be zealous in the service of God; to abound in the graces of the Spirit; to suffer for righteousness' sake; and to thwart the fiery darts of the Adversary. Without faith we could do none of these things acceptably to God.

Faith enables us to do the will of God without questioning his wisdom, or considering what the

cost to ourselves may be. Faith says, 'I'll do what you want me to do, dear Lord; I'll be what you want me to be.' Daniel's faith "stopped the mouths of lions" (Heb. 11:33), and it will enable us to bear witness to the Truth to an indifferent and hostile world. Thus will our faith, through our works, overcome the world.

THE TRIALS OF FAITH

Peter wrote, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—I Pet. 1:6,7

The meaning of Peter's illustration is apparent. Our faith, and the superstructure of Christian character built upon it, contains certain elements of dross, of impurities, so the Lord refines us by trials—trials that are represented by the refiner's fire. Elsewhere, the Scriptures speak of our Lord as the Great Refiner, the purifier of silver and of gold.—Mal. 3:3

It is not literal fire that the Lord uses to refine and strengthen our faith, but fiery trials. For the most part they consist of the little vexations of life—losses, disappointments, delays, restraints, being 'put on the shelf,' our own faults or the faults of others, failures, hardships, necessities, oppositions, physical pain, weariness, sorrow, danger, and persecution. None of the Lord's people experience all of these, and with most of us none of them are, as a rule, overpoweringly severe. They do hurt, and

only as our faith can lay hold upon the promise that "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28), will we be able to endure them and continue our rejoicing in the Lord.

At times, the pleasant things of life can also prove to be trials of our faith. Indeed, when our experiences are pleasing to the flesh it is easy to lose sight of the Lord, and of our need to exercise faith in him and in his promises. If to render a service to the Lord means to give up the ease and comforts that we might otherwise enjoy, our faith is tested. Jesus indicated the principle involved here when he said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark 10:23) Not many of the Lord's people today have financial riches, but we may have riches of health and other assets that a strong faith will prompt us to devote more fully to the Lord.

If our faith is strong, we will see in every experience and situation of life a challenge to obedience. We will also realize that every trial and every joy that the Lord permits is designed for our greatest good. Do we really believe that no weapon that is formed against us can prosper, and that no joy of the flesh can lure us away from our God, if we lean upon him and trust him for his promised grace? If so, then we have a victorious faith.

ENDURING TRIALS

Jesus said, "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." (Mark 14:38) While these words were addressed to his immediate disciples during those trying hours in Gethsemane, they are a fitting admonition to us also. We are to be watchful. The

enemies of the New Creature are ever on the alert to ensnare us in the meshes of pride, ambition, earthly honor, ease, and worldly pleasure. The flesh falls easy victim to the blandishments of Satan and the world. How well the poet expressed it:

“My soul be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize.”

It is here that faith will give us victory; a faith, that is, which, fully trusting in the promises of God, will also make us alert to his directives, warnings, principles of righteousness, and fully trustful of his assured help in every time of need. In this, the ‘work of faith’ will be our diligent study of the Word, and its zealous application to every detail of our consecrated lives.

Jesus said we are also to pray. Prayer keeps open the vital lines of communication with our Heavenly Father, he who has promised that “no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” (Ps. 84:11) Jesus said that our Father would surely give the Holy Spirit to those who asked him. By the Holy Spirit he enlightens and strengthens us. Filled with his Spirit, we have the assurance that greater is he who is for us than all who are against us. Faith assures us of this, and thus gives us victory in our trials, of whatever nature they may be. Thus our perplexities are transformed into “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.”—Phil. 4:7

As faith endures trial, giving assurance that every painful circumstance is essential to our being transformed into the Lord’s image, the soul is mel-
lowed to a loving submission to whatever Divine

providence may permit. As our faith grows stronger, we can finally and calmly say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (vs. 13) This is not self-assurance, for when we look to self we tremble. But when, by faith, we look to the Lord, believing that not one of his good promises will ever fail, we are strong; and we can say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—I Cor. 15:57

Each new victory of faith draws us nearer to the Lord and results in a greater determination to know and to do his will. By experience, we learn that, with each step of obedience, the Lord's grace sustains, and his wisdom guides. We may not always know just why certain experiences are permitted, but faith enables us to rest in his will, knowing that he gives his very best to those who leave the choice with him. The victory of faith enables us to know that it is better to walk in the dark with him than to go alone in the light.

Victories of faith will increase our strength to resist the attacks of our enemies—the world, the flesh, and the Devil. The Lord has provided us with a wonderful armor of protection, but we do not know its full value until, by faith, and in obedience to the Captain of our salvation, we become active combatants in the Christian warfare. As we fight the good fight of faith, and learn the value of the armor of Truth that the Lord has provided, we become ever stronger "in the Lord, and in the power of his might." (Eph. 6:10) We learn that greater is he who is for us than all they who be against us.

Victories of faith result in an increased growth in Christian character. Peter admonishes us to add

to our faith virtue, knowledge, fortitude, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. Faith is the foundation of all these graces. When faith is weak, character is unstable, but a strong and ever-increasing faith results in the abounding of “these things,” which in turn will lead to an abundant entrance “into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—II Pet. 1:4-11

Apart from faith, trials often lead, not to mellowness of character, but to irritability of disposition. The disappointed heart becomes resentful and rebellious. But full conviction of faith by which we are assured of the intrinsic value of all our trials, transforms every stinging, burning experience of life into a mellowing providence of God, designed to help produce in us the ripened “fruit” of “goodness and righteousness and truth.”—Eph. 5:9

When by faith we see our joys and sorrows as the providence of God, rather than the mere happenstances of life, a trying experience does not embitter us. Instead, we see each such experience as an opportunity to thank the Lord for permitting further “light afflictions,” which by faith we know are working out in us “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” (II Cor. 4:17) Thus each fiery trial, regardless of who or what might be the immediate cause, instead of being a ‘stumblingstone,’ is a ‘stepping-stone’ to higher planes of grace and truth.

When Jesus was in Gethsemane and knew that his enemies were about to seize and crucify him, he did not think of this bitter cup as one that they had poured for him. Instead, to him, as he said to Peter, it was the cup which the Father had given him. (John 18:11) So it should be with us, and will be, in

proportion to our faith in the promises and the providence of God.

Faith is essential in every aspect of the Christian life. Our study of the Bible would be meaningless without faith. In the Bible are all the treasures of Divine wisdom so essential for our instruction in righteousness and our guidance in the narrow way. We need this wisdom, and James tells us that if we ask God for it, he will give it to us, “liberally,” but only if we “ask in faith, nothing wavering.” (James 1:5,6) Without faith, how meaningless indeed would be our prayers!

Faith is the basis of our fellowship with the brethren. Our activity in the Lord’s vineyard is the work of faith. The Christian warfare is the good fight of faith, and the victory over the world and all our other enemies is the victory of faith. Our journey in the narrow way is the walk of faith.

“The just shall live by his faith.” (Hab. 2:4) Our life as New Creatures depends upon an abiding and growing faith in God, in his promises, and in every loving provision he has made for us—faith in the atoning blood of Christ; faith in the work of the Holy Spirit; faith in the “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.”—Heb. 1:14

The more we experience the blessings resulting from these loving provisions of our Heavenly Father, the stronger becomes our faith, and the greater will be our trust in him. Thus, as we take each step of obedience, our prayer for increased faith will be answered by the revealing manner in which our God proves to us that there hath not failed, nor can fail, one word of all his good promises. ■

2006 MEMORIAL SUPPER DATE

The proper time for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday, April 11, 2006.

A complete Memorial Service is available for isolated brethren, or for any who care to have it, on audio cassette or CD, and video cassette or DVD.

The audio cassette or CD can be purchased for \$3.00, or is available free on loan, from:

Dawn Recorded Lecture Service
199 Railroad Avenue
East Rutherford, NJ 07073

The video cassette, available in both VHS and PAL format, can be purchased for \$6.00. The DVD can be purchased for \$4.00. Either is available free on loan, or can be purchased, from:

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Please note:

Cut-off date for ordering all tapes is April 1.

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*While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."*

—Matthew 26:26-28, *New International Version*

# ENCOURAGING LETTERS

## DEATH AND HELL

Dear Dawn: I have printed a lot of your marvelous booklets, and am taking them home to read over the weekend. You are one of only a few Christians I know of who believe like my husband and I on death and "Hell". Our beliefs are unusual to most Christians for reasons like . . . most believe that unbelievers will suffer in the fires of the lake of fire forever, that Sheol is that place of torment rather than the grave, etc.

I look forward to hearing back from you, and I look forward to delving further into your booklets! Thanks for sharing them, and be blessed! Your sister in Christ—E-MAIL

## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

Dear Whomever: Please and thank you for 2 copies of *Christ's Thousand-Year Kingdom*—one for my

son, who is a preacher. I have just about finished *Armageddon, Then World Peace*. What a blessing! I read it through, then I went back and read it, and searched every scripture.

I am in the hospital. I have been here 11 weeks. Thank you so much for helping me to remember, even though I walk through the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. Sincerely—NC

## THINKING CHALLENGED

Dear Sir/Madam: Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. After following your programme on Radio Africa Two for some duration, I feel compelled to write and cheer you for your excellent message. Surely you challenge all who ever come across this programme. Personally I am always blessed by your teaching each time I listen.

May God give you the power and means to continue the wonderful programme. Yours faithfully—ZIMBABWE

### **FOUND RELIEF**

Hello Dawn: You have the best job in the world. You know what you did for me? I lost my daughter in death 6 months ago and could not get over it. I read all the grieving material from all sources, churches, ministers.

Then your *Hope* booklet arrived as well as more material. I read it over a few times and found relief at last and the *Hope* booklet sent me to the Bible which I also received. I checked it out and told my sister, Read it and check it out for yourself.

I want more material. Send me what is best for me. Your work is so important. All people should get to know it.—OH

### **COMING HOME**

Dear Dawn: I wanted to

thank you for directing me to a local Bible Students meeting. I joyfully attended today for the first time and feel like I've come home!

I also wanted to request a listing of publications available from Dawn Bible Students. Thanks again for your help.—DC

### **IMMIGRANT FROM INDIA**

Respected Sir: Thank you very much for your second letter and the book *Armageddon, Then World Peace*. I am an immigrant from India, 81 years old, living with my son. I have no financial resources from the state or any other sources. Hence, I could not order some of the books listed in the catalogue sent to me along with the first letter.

I am writing to you to assure you that every page is carefully read. Sincerely—CT

## SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

### **M. Balko**

Sacramento, CA February 17-19

### **K. Fernets**

Sacramento, CA February 17-19

*The speakers listed below, in cooperation with the Dawn, are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:*

### **W. Austin**

Sacramento, CA February 17-19

### **C. Chandler**

Sacramento, CA February 17-19

### **M. J. Balko**

Atlanta, GA February 5

### **R. Gorecki**

Sacramento, CA February 17-19

### **E. Blicharz**

Louisville, AL February 12

### **B. Keith**

Sacramento, CA February 17-19

### **W. Blicharz**

Sacramento, CA February 17-19

## OBITUARIES

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

Sister Rosalind Rosswick, Columbus, OH—December 2.

Age, 90

Sister Livina Ekeh, Imo State, Nigeria—December 23.

Age, 36

Sister Vassilia (Pat) Polychronis, Hampton, NH—December

29. Age, 80

Sister Janine Zbik, Detroit, MI—December 29. Age, 81

Brother Joe Fenchak, West Newton, PA—January 3.

Age, 92



# CONVENTIONS

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

## **SACRAMENTO CONVENTION, February 17, 18, 19—**

The Clarion Hotel, 2600 Auburn Blvd. Contact K. Ajise, 6925 Gallery Way, Sacramento, CA. Phone: (916) 421-0755

## **ROCKLAND ANNUAL CONVENTION, February**

**26—**Comfort Inn, Nanuet, NY. Contact D. Shallieu, 1041 Johnston Drive, Watchung, NJ 07069. Phone: (908) 756-4954

## **FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 4, 5, 6—**

Clarion Hotel, Orlando International Airport, 3835 McCoy Road, Orlando, FL 32812. Phone: (407) 859-2711 or (888) 266-2711. Specify "Florida Bible Students Group" in order to guarantee convention special rate. Other information, contact R. Sconyers, 601 S. Winter Park Drive, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 339-0970

## **NEW ORLEANS CONVENTION, March 11, 12—**

Hilton Garden Inn, 3330 Harding Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70807. Phone: (225) 357-6725. Contact hotel directly for reservations, and mention NOBS to get discounted room rate. Other information, contact M. Costelli. Phone: (228) 861-2822

## **NEW YORK SPRING CONVENTION, March 19—**

Wellesley Inn, Two Bridges Road & Exit 52, Route 80, Fairfield, NJ. Contact D. Gorecki. Phone: (845) 758-0223

## **FRESNO CONVENTION, March 31-April 2—**

Best Western Garden Court Inn, 2141 N. Parkway Drive,

Fresno, CA 93705. Contact B. Wilson, 2103 N. Price Avenue, #112, Fresno, CA 93703. Phone: (559) 255-2241

**COLUMBUS PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 1,2**—Church of the Resurrection Banquet Facility, 6300 E. Dublin Granville Road, New Albany, OH 43054. Contact T. Alexander, 5463 Eaglesnest Drive, Westerville, OH 43081. Phone: (614) 519-8282

**GREATER NEW LONDON AREA PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 2**—Bayview Masonic Temple, Niantic, CT. Contact R. Armstrong, 65 E. Town Street, Norwich, CT 06360. Phone: (860) 204-9702

**DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 7,8,9**—Macomb Community College, 14500 12 Mile Road, Warren, MI. Contact F. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

**BOISE CONVENTION, April 28,29,30**—Owyhee Plaza Hotel, 1109 Main Street, Boise, ID. Contact D. Allers, 2438 Bruins Circle, Boise, ID 83704. Phone: (208) 375-6873

**BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 15-20**—University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown, PA. Contact Michael Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Phone: (310) 454-5248

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 6-11**—Nowy Sacz, Poland. (International Youth Seminar follows in Baia Mare, Romania, August 14-18. Contact T. Machacek. Phone: (219) 662-8107



# Studies in the Scriptures

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**THY KINGDOM COME** (\$2.00 + \$1.00 postage) Discusses time prophecies relating to the work of the church at this end of the age, the restoration of Israel, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom. One chapter pertains to the Great Pyramid of Egypt.—384 pages

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*To us the Scriptures clearly teach:*

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

**THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING, AND POLISHING** of the consecrated believers in Christ’s atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these “living stones,” “elect and precious,” shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8

**THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD** lies in the fact that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God “tasted death for every man,” “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5,6

**THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH** is that she may be like her Lord, “see him as he is,” be a “partaker of the divine nature,” and share his glory as his joint-heir.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4

**THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH** is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God’s witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6, 20:6

**THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD** lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35