

# The DAWN

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

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### THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH SERIES, Part 1

For a number of years, *The Dawn* has had published on its back cover a brief statement of faith well-known to Bible Students the world over, entitled, "To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach." During 1995, in addition to publishing this outline of faith, we will accompany it with a series of Highlight articles dealing more or less in detail with the various statements.

## The Church

*The first sentence in this outline of faith reads, "The church is the temple of the living God." Leaving the consideration of the 'temple' for a succeeding article, let us here examine the word 'church'.*

A GREAT VARIETY of meanings has been attached to this word, most of them not in harmony with the Scriptures. Its meaning, however, is amazingly simple when the light of the divine plan is focused upon it.

Many have assumed that a beautiful edifice built with marble, or stone, or brick, which has engraved upon it in a prominent place the words, "Church of St. Peter," or "Church of the Holy Nazarene," or "Holy Trinity Church," is what the Scriptures refer to as the 'church'. But this is not true.

Others think of the word church as applying to some one of the many denominational groups to be found throughout the professed Christian world. It has become customary to refer to these various divisions as the "Roman Catholic Church," the "Protestant Episcopal Church," the "Methodist Episcopal Church," the "Baptist Church," or the "United

Lutheran Church," or others. From this, many have erroneously concluded that the church is some earthly organization or society of religious worshippers, or perhaps a group of ethical, social, or moral reform workers.

The word church, as used in the Bible, is really a title—not a name—and is applied to any company of faithful footstep followers of the Master, or to all of them combined. It is a translation of the Greek word *ekklesia*, which literally means 'a called out' or 'select class'. The Bible applies this term to the consecrated followers of Jesus, and by it identifies them as a class that is being selected as co-workers with him in the execution of God's great plan of salvation. Those to whom this term applies are the ones foretold in divine prophecy who were to be associated with the Messiah in the work of his kingdom.

Jesus himself began the selection of this class. To his disciples he said, "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." (John 15:19) While Jesus did not use the word church or *ecclesia* in this instance, the thought is the same—he was telling the disciples that they were to be part of a specially elected, called out, or chosen company, to whom it would be the Heavenly Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom in due time.

### **The Gospel Preached to Abraham**

The elect feature of the Christian's standing in the divine plan is brought clearly to our attention in both the Old and New Testaments. God's purpose to bless all nations through a select 'seed' class was first definitely stated to Abraham when he said to him, "In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. 3:8) Concerning Abraham, God said, "I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." (Isa. 51:2) It is through the spiritual 'seed' of this one whom God called 'alone', that all the families of the earth are to be blessed.—Gal. 3:14,29

Just as God selected, or elected, Abraham, to whom the promise of a coming blessing for all mankind originally was made, so now he is selecting, or electing, those who are to become the 'seed' of that promise—the channel of blessing. Thus in applying the title 'church' to this seed class, its elect quality is emphasized.

Membership in this elect company, however, is not upon the basis of an arbitrary choice by God. He makes the selection on the basis of faith and full consecration to him. The necessary steps on the part of any individual who aspires to become a member of the church class are, first, a turning from sin and the acceptance of Christ's ransom sacrifice; and second, a full and unreserved consecration to do the Heavenly Father's will; and finally, to live up to the terms of that consecration faithfully even unto death. The joining of an earthly religious organization is not at all involved in the matter of membership in the LORD's elect company, his true church, whose names are enrolled in heaven.—Heb. 12:23

Although our English word church, which is a translation of the Greek word *ekklesia*, appears only in the New Testament, the thought of a 'chosen people' was not a new one with God's servants before that time. The entire nation of Israel—the natural seed of Abraham—was a chosen people. God dealt with and blessed them to the exclusion of all other nations. In this broad sense of the word, therefore, all Israel was a church, a chosen or selected people. Of them the LORD says, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) Had the Israelites been faithful to him, God would have completed the selection of the Christian church from them alone.

But the nation of Israel did not prove faithful. When Jesus came at his First Advent, the Scriptures say of him that "he came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11) However, some of the Israelites at that time did receive Jesus, and of these the Scriptures say that "as many as

received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.”—John 1:12

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## ***“Remnant” of Israel, Part of God’s “Elect”***

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### **Gentiles Grafted In**

The Apostle Paul explains that because so few of the Jews did receive Christ, the Gospel finally was taken to the Gentiles. In the eleventh chapter of Romans he aptly illustrates this fact by likening it to the breaking off of the natural branches of an olive tree, and the grafting in of wild olive branches.

In this illustration the apostle likens the Gentile converts to ingrafted wild branches. These now had the privilege of becoming the sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ, even as did the believing Jews. From the standpoint of scriptural terminology this means, in reality, that the entire church of Christ is Israelitish—whether Jew or Gentile, its members are the spiritual ‘seed of Abraham’.

Doubtless this is the reason the Lord, in one of the symbolismes in the Book of Revelation, describes the church, or elect company of his associates in the kingdom, as being made up of twelve thousand of each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The nucleus of this elect class was indeed from among those who originally were members of one or another of the literal twelve tribes of Israel. But Gentiles had to be brought in to fill up the foreordained number, and in this symbolism they, too, are spoken of as Israelites. The calling out from among the Jews of this select Christian company to be ‘spiritual Israelites’ began at Pentecost. In Acts 2:47 we are told that “the Lord added to the church daily,” and at that time all the converts were Jewish.

Later, however, the Lord began to graft Gentiles into the places vacated by unfaithful Jews who had lost their privilege of becoming the spiritual seed of Abraham through which all the families of the earth were to be blessed. The first of these Gentile converts was Cornelius. In order to emphasize this change in God's arrangement of dealing exclusively with the Jewish people, the Apostle Peter was sent especially to Cornelius, and when he accepted the Gospel there was a unique demonstration of God's acceptance through an outward manifestation of the Holy Spirit coming upon him and "all them which heard the Word."—Acts 10:44

Following the conversion of Cornelius, other Gentiles began to come into the church, and it was not long before many of the local groups of disciples were mixed companies, made up partly of Jewish converts, and partly of Gentile converts. Paul's letter to the Romans indicates that the church, or ecclesia, at Rome was made up of both, and the first few chapters of his epistle to them are devoted to the matter of showing that in God's sight there is now no difference between the two—that all must come to him through faith in the shed blood of Jesus.

### **The Bride of Christ**

The word church is not the only title given in the Bible to this elect Christian company. In addition to their being called 'the temple' of God—the significance of which we will consider in a future article—this people, called to be separate from the world, and to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, is also identified, symbolically, as the 'bride' of the 'Lamb', and again, as the 'body' of Christ.

Shortly before Jesus was crucified he prayed that he and his followers might become one even as he and the Father were one, and the application of these various titles to the followers of the Master is designed to help us visualize the full sense in which Jesus' prayer for oneness is to be answered.

The expression, 'body of Christ', is used in the Scriptures in much the same sense that we speak of a legislative body. It simply means that this elect company is to function under the dictates of its Head, Christ Jesus, the King of kings, and that they, as under-kings, will share with him in the work of the kingdom. Paul carries out this illustration in much detail, and indicates that the many members of the Christ body may properly be likened to the various members of a literal body. Some may be likened to a foot, others to a hand, etc., but all must function under the direction of the one Head, Christ Jesus.

In this we see that the body illustration represents the present relative oneness of the Christ company, from the standpoint that every member is expected to function in harmony with every other member because all are subject to the dictates of the Head. Oneness of the body of Christ, while its members are still in the flesh, is only approximate, because the church is as yet merely in the process of preparation.

However, one of the most important lessons for all Christians to learn is to be submissive to the will of Christ. Until that lesson is learned by all, there cannot be perfect unity in the body. The Apostle Paul writes concerning the present state of the church, saying that we should be "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit," but full oneness will not be attained until all the body members have proved their faithfulness unto death, and have been raised from the dead and united with Christ in glory.—Eph. 4:3

### **Future Oneness**

In Revelation 19:7, Jesus, the Lamb of God, is represented as being married to his faithful followers. "The marriage of the Lamb is come," writes the apostle, "and his wife hath made herself ready." In Revelation 22:17 this class, having become the 'bride', is represented as being the agency through which the promised blessing of life for the

world is dispensed—"the Spirit and the bride say, Come. . . Take the water of life freely."

The title of 'bride' as applied to the followers of the Master seems to represent more particularly their future oneness with Christ—a oneness which will be shared with him in the glory of the kingdom. As in the natural realm the bride shares the honor and riches of the bridegroom, so the bride of Christ is to be a joint-heir with her Bridegroom in the honor and glory of the kingdom.

It is when we recognize what constitutes the true church of Christ, and what the work of the church has been throughout the Gospel Age, as well as what her future work and glory is to be in the Millennial kingdom, which is to reign for the blessing of all mankind, that we realize the plan of God in connection with the selection and development of the church has not been a failure.

The only thing which will save the faith of Christians today is a clear understanding of the plan of God as it relates to both the church and the world. In an endeavor to contribute what we can to help others to a better understanding of the divine plan, we will continue this series, and our next article will be entitled, "***The Temple of God.***" ■

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Ezekiel at the river's brink.—Ezekiel 47:6





### A Letter to the Editor

**D**EAR DAWN: The first article in the October [1994] Dawn [magazine] is really confusing. Where does the Bible indicate that the "Day of the LORD" is a thousand-year day? Surely "the day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness" of Joel 2:1,2, and time of trouble of Daniel 12, and indignation of the LORD upon all the nations in Isaiah 34, is not a part of the thousand-year day of the reign of Christ and the church!

If we can now discern Christ's presence as "a thief in the night" because we are watchers, we know we are in the Day of the LORD in the time of preparation. However, we see no evidence of the restitution promised during the thousand-year reign of the Christ (with the church), nor has Revelation 20:1-3 been evidenced. And beyond that, the loosing [of Satan] 'for a little season' before all is turned over to the Heavenly Father, that he may be all in all. . . .

#### Our Reply

Dear Friend: We wholeheartedly agree with you that nowhere does the Bible teach that the Day of the LORD is only a 'thousand-year day', nor that the present time of trouble described by the prophets, to which you refer, is in any way included in the future one thousand-year reign of Christ.

The editorial view of *The Dawn* is that the concern of the LORD is not limited to merely the destruction of the present evil order, but also includes the constructive work of the future Millennial Kingdom of Christ.

The intent of the article was to convey this thought. In retrospect we now realize that the wording was somewhat ambiguous. For instance, the sentence: "Before the entire

thousand years of the Day of the LORD are over, the 'new heavens and a new earth'—the heavenly and material phases of Christ's kingdom—will have put down all unrighteousness and destroyed all the works of sin and selfishness" . . . might better have read: "Before the Day of the LORD is over, the present heavens and earth will have passed away, when Christ, as the 'general of Jehovah' shall have destroyed them. After the present order of things is destroyed, Christ will then exercise his power as king for a thousand years to complete the work of the total elimination of the influence of sin and evil over mankind. This is in harmony with God's benevolent purpose as stated in I Corinthians 15:24-26."

We regret that this and other statements in the article were not worded definitively enough to properly convey our understanding of this subject.—*Dawn Editorial Committee* ■



## **WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS**

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**JANUARY 5**—"The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."—Romans 15:3 (Z. '96-83 Hymn 13)

**JANUARY 12**—"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."—Galatians 6:1 (Z. '01-150 Hymn 95)

**JANUARY 19**—"O how love I thy Law! it is my meditation all the day."—Psalm 119:97 (Z. '99-156 Hymn 49)

**JANUARY 26**—"When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance."—Matthew 6:16 (Z. '98-45 Hymn 177)

**"O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard: which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved."**

**—Psalm 66:8,9**

**T**HANKS be to God that his grace has preserved us, "kept us from falling," through another year—that so many of us are still of one heart and of one mind in respect to his Word and its service! When we remember that the Adversary is to be permitted to bring "strong delusions" upon the LORD's people for the very purpose of sifting out all not truly his (II Thess. 2: 10-12), it should surely call forth our thanks to God that the opening of another year finds us still standing fast—appreciating the Truth, and in full accord with all the divine appointments by which he has kept us from falling.—Z. '03-3

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**"The meek will He guide in judgment; and the meek will He teach His way."**

**—Psalm 25:9**

**S**UCH a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which cometh from above. They must have a humble appreciation of their own deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind—for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ.—Z. '00-68

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

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### LESSON FOR JANUARY 1

## Deliverance and Forgiveness

**KEY VERSE:** *"Behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."*—Matthew 9:2

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 8:28–9:8

**E**VER SINCE THE disobedience of Adam in Eden, all mankind through inheritance have suffered many kinds of illness. The consequence of sin has been death; and the attendant dying process has been rife with suffering and pain.

Jesus came to earth particularly to become man's Redeemer, but his ministry also included demonstrations of the healing work to take place during his future kingdom. He encountered all types of people in proclaiming the Gospel, and hundreds had serious afflictions. In the cases cited in this lesson, two were possessed with devils, and one man was sick with palsy; our Lord healed all three! In Matthew 8:1–15, we read that

Jesus healed a leper; a centurion's servant who had palsy; and later that day, the Apostle Peter's mother-in-law was cured of a dangerous fever. That evening Jesus healed many others, including some who were possessed of demons.

Then Jesus and his disciples sailed to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. In Gadarenes he met several more people possessed by devils. They were well-known for their fierceness; and they lived among the sepulchres. These afflicted people terrorized anyone who ventured too close. The demons acknowledged knowing Jesus, calling to him, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment

us before the time?" After the Lord cast them out of the two demented ones, the devils asked to enter into a herd of swine grazing nearby. Jesus granted their request, but immediately the swine plunged off a precipice into the sea and drowned! When the swineherders reported this news to the townspeople, Jesus was asked to leave quickly!

Nothing more is said regarding the two who were healed. In the Mark and Luke accounts, one person who had been in the grip of an evil spirit is described as being cleansed, and was found sitting fully clothed, and in his right mind, no longer feared by the people! Possibly it was one of the two in this account. He went back to his home and told his friends what Jesus had done for him. In God's kingdom, those who have suffered similar illnesses will be able to testify to the grace that came to them through Jesus.

Jesus again went by ship, to his own city. There a man sick of palsy was brought to him. Jesus, noting his faith, spoke the words of our Key Verse: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." Some scribes wit-

nessed this event, and said to themselves, "This man blasphemeth." Jesus chided them thus: "Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?" (Matt. 9:5) Since the man remained in his unhealed condition, Jesus followed up his comment with these words: "The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins"—a fact that will be known worldwide in the near future! He turned to the afflicted man and told him to arise, take up his bed, and to go home. He joyfully did as he was bidden and the witnesses "marvelled, and glorified God."—vs. 8

Disobedience caused sickness and death to come upon all mankind; but those who will accept Jesus as their Redeemer will be forgiven their sins and be delivered from the prison house of death, and the result will be good health! Isaiah prophesied, "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." (Isa. 33:24) See also Psalm 103:3.

Thus Jesus showed that forgiveness of sin, and the healing of disease, go hand-in-hand. ■

## A Leader Who Serves

**KEY VERSE:** *"How much more valuable is a human being than a sheep? So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."*—Matthew 12:12, *New Revised Standard Version*

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 12:9-23

**T**HE HEALING JESUS performed, constantly was sought by all in Israel. Once Jesus was in a synagogue on the Sabbath when someone asked to be healed. The Pharisees present asked Jesus, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?" (Matt. 12:10) Their purpose was not to learn from the Master, but to call attention to the fact that the Lord was acting in violation of the Mosaic Law.

So Jesus asked them: "Suppose one of you has only one sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath; will you not lay hold of it and lift it out?" (Matt. 12:11, *New Revised Standard Version*) Certainly anyone would save their sheep, even though their interpretation of the Mosaic Law was that the commandment forbidding the doing of any servile work on the Sabbath should be strictly observed. Then

follow the words of our Key Verse: "So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath," and our Lord proceeded to heal the man's withered hand, making it whole.

Jesus' positive declaration, "It is lawful [according to God's Law] to do good on the Sabbath," overrode the concept of never doing any servile work on the Sabbath. But the motive must be to do good. The Pharisees could only see the letter of the Law and strove never to bend any of the rules. They failed to see that the commandments were designed for man's benefit, not to prevent them from receiving blessings. Everyone needs rest periodically. So Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore, the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath!"—Mark 2:27,28

The Pharisees were incensed at our Lord's display of authority, and held a council to plot how they might destroy him; but Jesus withdrew from the synagogue. Great multitudes followed him, still seeking and receiving his healing miracles. The resentment of Israel's leaders of Jesus grew deeper, and they desired to rid this great teacher from their midst. They did not know that Jesus was fulfilling prophecy.—Isa. 42:1-4; Matt. 12:16-21

There have always been men desiring to attain great heights of leadership simply for the glory involved. This was the motivation of the Pharisees. Rare indeed is the leader who is self-sacrificing and desirous of serving at great cost to himself. Jesus was, indeed, the greatest example of such a leader.

Isaiah's prophecy mentioned above bears this out very well. Jesus did not call attention to himself; he always magnified God and described himself as his servant, despite the fact that he had been specifically chosen by God to be a great leader. His Heavenly Father was well pleased with his be-

loved Son because of his willingness to humble himself.

As the Apostle Paul testifies of Jesus, he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. 2:7,8

Jesus' reward for faithful service was that God exalted him so he could exercise his leadership with authority and power. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—vss. 9-11

Isaiah's prophecy tells how God put his Spirit upon Jesus to guide and direct him. Jesus, as a leader, would offer every opportunity to all to gain eternal life and an everlasting place in his kingdom, soon to be established. Isaiah said, "In his name shall the Gentiles trust."—Matt. 12:21 ■

## Persistent Faith

**KEY VERSE:** *"Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."*—Matthew 15:28

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 15:21-31

**G**OD WAS FAITHFUL to Israel in conferring exclusive favor upon that nation as he had promised. Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9: 24-27) told of favor to continue for seventy weeks, or 490 years—using 'a day for a year' as explained in Ezekiel 4:6. Within that period of favor was included the coming of Messiah, as fulfilled by Jesus' ministry. However, the wonderful healing miracles of Jesus were, with only a few exceptions, limited only to Israelites, although there were Gentiles who heard of Jesus' power and desired to be blessed as well.

A woman of Canaan approached Jesus during his travels through the coastal areas of Tyre and Sidon. She pleaded with him for mercy on behalf of her daughter who was tormented by a demon. "He answered her not

a word." But this woman was not to be denied!

His disciples besought Jesus, saying, "Send her away; for she crieth after us." Although Jesus replied, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," we must note that he later spoke the words of our Key Verse, after explaining to her that "it was not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."—vs. 26, *New Revised Standard Version*

She accepted his comment, saying "Yes Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." (vs. 27, *NRSV*) Observing her great faith demonstrated by these words, Jesus could no longer deny her request. He said, "Great is thy faith," and her daughter was healed in that very hour! This was an exception Jesus



made in granting a blessing to a non-Jew during this closing period of Israel's exclusive favor with God.

Another exception was made to the centurion's servant. The accounts are recorded in Matthew 8:5-13 and Luke 7:1-10. Here again, great and persistent faith was demonstrated, indicative of the fact that when the LORD would extend his favor to the Gentiles that many would respond.

Israel's exclusive favor ended in 36 A.D. as foretold, when the first Gentile converts—Cornelius, his family and friends—accepted the invitation of the LORD to follow Jesus. They were brought into the body of Christ, and received the Holy Spirit. "You [Israel] only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3:2), was no longer in effect.

As Jesus continued to carry on his ministry throughout Israel, there were many who were drawn to him and to his message. After Jesus left Tyre and Sidon, he went up into the mountains, where great crowds came to hear him. Again Jesus healed any who were brought to him, and who displayed their 'persist-

ent faith' in him. When the crowds saw these wonderful works, they "glorified the God of Israel"!—Matt. 15:31

Not only were the wondrous works of Jesus a sample of the great blessings which would be available to all in the kingdom for which he taught us to pray (Matt. 6:9-13), but they were also a way to seek out those of great faith who would be called to run for the prize of the High Calling.

On the Day of Pentecost it is possible that some of the beneficiaries of the marvelous works of Jesus, or members of their families, may well have been among the 3,000 who were immersed.—Acts 2: 37-43

Certainly faith also played a most important part in the healing work carried on after Pentecost by the disciples and apostles of Jesus. For instance, Peter and John healed a man lame from birth. He lay outside the gate to the Temple asking for alms. As the apostles passed by, Peter fastened his eyes upon him and said: "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."—Acts 3:1-16 ■

## Challenged To Hear

**KEY VERSE:** *"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and, behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."*—Matthew 17:5

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 17:1–23

**D**URING THE MINISTRY of Jesus, the disciples had several stirring verifications of the Heavenly Father's good pleasure in his Son. Once was when three apostles, Peter, James, and John, were taken up into a high mountain by Jesus. There our Lord became transformed before their eyes, so that his face shone like the sun, and his clothes were dazzling white. Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared on the scene and spoke with Jesus. Peter was so thrilled that he wanted to stay on the mountain. He suggested building a dwelling for each: Jesus, Moses, and Elijah! While Peter was still making this recommendation, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and they heard a voice speak from the cloud saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."—vs. 5

At first the scene frightened the three men so thoroughly that they fell on their faces. Jesus touched them, assuring them that there was no cause for fear. When they did stand, the episode had ended, and only Jesus was with them. Yes, this experience had a profound effect upon them. God's command to heed Jesus was taken very seriously, but now they would pay even greater heed to his words. But they would not always understand his words.

This was demonstrated immediately as they came down the mountain, when Jesus charged them, saying, "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." (vs. 9) Just six days previous to this, Jesus had told them that he must go to Jerusalem to be killed, and be

raised the third day. Peter remonstrated with Jesus, trying to prevent him from going to Jerusalem. Not until Jesus had been crucified and raised from the dead, were they able, at last, to comprehend his words.—Matt. 16:21-23.

As they descended the mountain, the marvelous vision they had just beheld prompted them to ask: "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" (Matt. 17:10, (*New Revised Standard Version*) Jesus said that the scribes taught this because Malachi had written, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful ['glorious', *Septuagint Translation*] Day of the LORD." —Mal. 4:5

Jesus answered: "Elias [Elijah] truly shall first come, and restore all things." (Matt. 17:11) He continued, "Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them." And they knew he was speaking of John the Baptist.—vss. 12,13

Jesus did not mean that John the Baptist, as the fore-

runner of the Messiah, Jesus, completely fulfilled the prophecy of Malachi. True, he had come in the spirit and power of Elijah to make the Israelites aware of their great need for repentance and forgiveness, preparing their hearts to receive their Messiah.

But there was more to the symbolism. Elijah was a picture of the footstep followers of Christ; the selection of whom was the chief work of God during the Gospel Age. Jesus' primary work at his First Advent was to lay down his life in sacrifice for all mankind. As a reward for faithfulness, he was raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God.

The Elijah class would be composed of all those who, during the Gospel Age, heeded Jesus' invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." (Matt. 11:28-30) If faithful now, these will actually turn "the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers" (Mal. 4:6) during the Millennial Age."—Matt. 17:11 ■

## Welcome the Savior

**KEY VERSE:** *"The multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD: Hosanna in the highest!"*

—Matthew 21:9

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 20:17–21:17

**T**HE LAST WEEK of our Lord Jesus' life on earth had come. He was constantly discussing his approaching death and resurrection to prepare his disciples for this event. See Matthew 20:17-19. But his disciples could not comprehend what he was telling them. When they approached Jerusalem he sent two of his disciples to the village of Bethphage with the instructions to find a donkey with a colt, and to bring the animals to him. They did as he bid them.

When they brought the donkey and her foal to Jesus, they placed their clothes on the animals, and they set Jesus upon the donkey. Jesus entered Jerusalem in this manner in fulfillment of a prophecy in Zechariah: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King

cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass." (Zech. 9:9) "All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet."—Matt. 21:4,5

Matthew described the scene in these words: "A very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way." Then, following the words of our Key Verse, we read: "When he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."—Matt. 21:8-11

This event was what the Christian world today calls Palm Sunday. It was significant that Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey. These animals were used by kings

and great men when they rode to a peaceful mission; horses were used when they were bent upon battle. In this case, Jesus presented himself to Israel as their king, as Zechariah prophesied. But Israel—as represented by their scribes and priests—did not receive their king. (John 1:11) Instead, they crucified him. John the Revelator informs us that centuries later Jesus would return riding upon a white horse to do battle with, and to conquer, the forces of evil, sin, and death. —Rev. 19:11

But the day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem upon the donkey's back, Jesus' disciples recognized and received him as the Son of David, lawful heir to the throne of Israel! Their king and Savior had come, and was welcomed royally! After entering Jerusalem he exercised kingly authority to drive out the money changers and those who made merchandise out of the holy Temple. Jesus said, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." —Matt. 21:13

Again, the blind and lame came to him there, and he

healed them. Young boys waved palm branches, and continued to cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" When the chief priests and scribes observed the healing work, and heard the boys' shouts of 'Hosanna', they were angry. They told Jesus he should stop their shouts. See Luke 19:29-40. Jesus quoted from Psalm 8:2: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." (Matt. 21:15,16) He said, "If these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out." (Luke 19:39, *American Revised Version*) This welcome of Jesus as Israel's king and Savior could not be denied. It had been prophesied and the prophecy was fulfilled!

John gave us an even more remarkable prophecy concerning the future welcoming of Jesus: "Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, . . . heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." —Rev. 5:13

For Paul's description of this scene, see Philippians 2:10,11. ■

### The Wisdom from Above

*"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."*

—James 3:17,18

**W**ISDOM IS THE proper application of knowledge. One might know a great deal about many things and yet be very unwise in the use of that knowledge. This is particularly true of the Christian with respect to his knowledge of God's plans and purposes as they are revealed in his Word. It is a blessing to be able to quote many texts of the Bible, and to know where they are found. It is a further blessing to be well acquainted with the beautiful and meaningful stories of the Bible. And every Christian should endeavor daily to become better acquainted with the life and teachings of Jesus; in fact, we should ever seek to become more and more fully acquainted with every part of the Word of God. However, all of this would merely be the acquiring of increasing knowledge, and regardless of how important that may be—and it is important—we would be very unwise if we did not properly apply our knowledge as the governing factor in our lives.

On the other hand, one cannot be wise toward God—blessed with the wisdom from above—**without** doing all he can to acquire a knowledge of God's Word. It is exceedingly unwise to decide that it is not important to become very familiar with his Word and plan, that it does not make any

difference what we think or believe as long as we endeavor to live righteous lives. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom," the psalmist tells us, and a proper fear or reverence for the LORD will lead us to study his Word, which he has given to us for our instruction and guidance. (Ps. 111:10) In Jeremiah 8:9 we read of a class who rejected the Word of the LORD, and of these the prophet asks the question, "What wisdom is in them?" The obvious answer is that they have no true wisdom.

In I Corinthians 1:21 the apostle tells us that "the world by wisdom knew not God." The world's sources of knowledge, as well as its methods of applying knowledge, lead away from God rather than toward a better understanding of him. In reality the world desires to forget God, and because of this their foolish hearts become darkened. (Rom. 1:21) There are many brilliant minds in the world, minds which can philosophize on many matters, but because they reject the Word of the LORD, their reasonings are of little value, since they lead away from God and away from an understanding of his plans and purposes.

Paul speaks of praying for the Ephesian brethren that the LORD might give them the "spirit of wisdom and revelation," and as translated in the **Margin**, this would result in "the acknowledgment of him." (Eph. 1:17) True wisdom manifests itself in an acknowledging of the LORD as the king of our lives. Any other viewpoint of life and its meaning is unwise. A refusal to give recognition of God's right to rule our lives may seem wise to the world, but the Scriptures tell us that "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."—I Cor. 3:19

### **First Pure, Then Peaceable**

The apostle says the "wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." (James 3:17) To express this in another way, we could say that the application of the teachings of God's Word must first of all be along the lines of divine righteousness, and that strict adherence to these

standards must be considered ahead of living peaceably with those around us. The Apostle Paul admonished that so far as possible we should endeavor to live peaceably with all men. (Rom. 12:18) In writing thus he placed peace in the same relative position that the Apostle James does in our text.

To get along amicably with the world, or even with the brethren, as desirable as that may be, should not be the first consideration of a Christian. There are a number of scriptures which should help us make a wise application of the truth in this connection. Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: . . . but a sword." (Matt. 10:34) Jesus is not here advocating the use of the sword, but is explaining rather that those who follow his teachings faithfully will find themselves at enmity with the world, that the world will despise and oppose them. To try to please the world and please God at the same time would be very unwise.

And it is not always possible to live peaceably with those who profess to be followers of the Master. Among these there are varying degrees of knowledge and experience; and while all may profess to be fully consecrated to the LORD, a great deal of self-will often manifests itself. These factors sometimes make it impossible to live peaceably with the brethren. Regardless of consequences, every truly consecrated Christian must take a stand on the side of truth and righteousness; for the 'wisdom from above is first pure'.

But even though it might be necessary to take a stand that is contrary to the wishes of others, we should not be contentious about it. "The servant of the LORD must not strive" (II Tim. 2:24), wrote the apostle, setting forth one of the qualifications of teachers in the church, and all the LORD's people are teachers in the sense that they are all ambassadors for Christ. If we make our position clear and take a stand on the side of right, we can leave the rest with the LORD, knowing that in ways far better than we can even



imagine he manifests his blessing toward those who walk humbly with him.

**'Then peaceable'**—from the standpoint of the 'wisdom from above', living peaceably is a secondary consideration. And we should not think of this only as it relates to our association with others. The life which is wholly devoted to God, endeavoring faithfully to be guided by heavenly wisdom, will have much opposition from within. We will be at war with our flesh, and often the struggle will be a bitter one. There will be times when we may long to take the easy, the tranquil road; but if to do so means compromising the will of God, the deciding factor must be, **'first pure'**.

And we must also expect to have enemies without. Even among our own brethren in Christ we will find that at times they will misunderstand our position and unwittingly deride us for being 'narrow minded', or 'sectarian', or 'intolerant', or 'self-seeking', or 'jealous'. It frequently happens that when a brother or sister, or a group of brethren, take a definite stand for what is right, others will attribute a wrong motive for the stand instead of examining their own course of life to find out why they do not see the matter in the same light as those they criticize.

One of the most severe trials which can come upon any Christian is to have his motive impugned; and to avoid the pain that this causes there may be a great temptation to compromise the truth and its application for the sake of peace. We all like to be well thought of, and it requires real courage and a full reliance on God's grace deliberately to take a stand which we know will cause us the loss of prestige among our friends.

And when we use that word 'friends', another point is raised for consideration. It is very easy to permit friendship to blind us to real and important issues of the truth and our responsibilities in connection with them. "We have been friends for years," we say to ourselves concerning brethren whom we feel are taking a wrong course, "and why should

I take a stand now that will cause them to feel badly toward me, or break friendship's ties?" The flesh reasons us into a compromising position, and while we may maintain a good standing with our friends, we have permitted an earth-born cloud to come between us and the bright smile of God's full favor.

### **Easy to Be Entreated**

The 'wisdom from above'—that is, a knowledge of the truth properly applied in our lives—results in a wonderful balance of Christian character. It causes one to be firm and resolute in his stand for the truth, and for all the divine principles of righteousness represented in it, yet it teaches one to give all due consideration to the viewpoints of others. A true Christian, in other words, will not be austere and unapproachable. If we find that we have such a tendency, we should realize that the mind of the flesh has reasoned us into taking a wrong viewpoint of what it means to take a stand for truth and righteousness.

We should recognize the difference between being firm for the truth, and being conceited and intolerant. If we find that the moment a brother attempts to approach us with a view that is different from ours, we refuse to listen, and give the impression that he is ignorant of what really is the truth, then we should take ourselves in hand, realizing that we have not yet come wholly under the influence of heavenly wisdom, which is 'easy to be entreated'.

To give ear patiently to a brother's viewpoint does not mean that we agree with him. It does mean—if we are good listeners—that we will get to understand his viewpoint better, and be in a better position to help him over his difficulties. Probably one of the most frequent causes of misunderstanding among people—and the LORD's people are no exception—is failure to listen to what the other fellow has to say.

The whole world is living under strained conditions in this "Day of the LORD." Nervousness, irritability, and lack of

patience are on the increase everywhere, and we are no exception. One of the ways this manifests itself is in our failure to listen to one another politely in ordinary conversation. Where there may be a slight difference of opinion, we will frequently be thinking up 'our side of the argument' while our brother is trying to state his. The result of this is that we probably interrupt him before he has finished; and, without knowing what it was he was trying to say, we endeavor to present our answer. Then, he, in turn, treats us the same way, so it is no wonder that we continue to disagree!

Let us learn to be good listeners. This is undoubtedly one of the elements involved in the statement that we are to be 'easy to be entreated'. No one can entreat us about anything unless we are willing to give them a respectful and sympathetic hearing. To be a good listener means more than to refrain from interrupting while someone is explaining a point to us. We should give earnest attention, and make a sincere effort to understand the viewpoint being expressed, and not 'jump to conclusions'. A little more self-discipline along this line on the part of all the consecrated will contribute mightily to richer blessings in our meetings, and a greater degree of understanding and unity—and without compromising the truth.

### **Full of Mercy and Good Fruits**

A proper application of the truth should lead us to be merciful in our dealings with others. While the truth gives us a greatly enhanced appreciation of divine righteousness and of the high standards which God sets for his people, it also reveals how much we are indebted to divine mercy through Christ which has made it possible for us to be called the Sons of God. If we are unmerciful in our dealings with others, and in our judgment of them, it indicates that we have not yet come to realize as fully as we should how far short we come of the glory of God.

The fact that we have experienced God's great favor in receiving the truth could lead to a sort of spiritual pride. We might reason that God has given us the truth and invited us to joint-heirship with Christ because he saw that we were a little better than others. Any semblance of this sort of reasoning will lead us to be unmerciful toward others. It was to remind us of our own need of mercy that the Lord taught us that "if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6:14) If we follow this counsel sincerely it will help us to realize our own need of God's mercy, and that if we are to be godlike we must, from the heart, exercise mercy toward others.

The exercise of mercy is not necessarily concerned with great issues in our lives. It is a touchstone by which we may gauge our progress in heavenly wisdom when concerned merely with the little things of life—in the home, the office, the ecclesia, or wherever we come in contact with others. Do we find ourselves tolerant of the little mistakes people make; are we inclined to take the blame ourselves for those little irritating things which should not have happened? If so, it is an evidence that we are looking upon others with mercy. On the other hand, if we constantly find ourselves endeavoring to excuse our own mistakes, or to pass the blame to others, and are irritated by the 'slips' which others make, it is well to take ourselves in hand, for this would be an indication that the quality of mercy is not filling our hearts as it should.

The **Marginal Translation** of our text states that the wisdom from above is "without wrangling." The Greek word used means literally, 'undistinguished'. The thought may be that of contending over points not clearly defined, or even unimportant. In any event, how foolish it is to wrangle over the truth! And it is even more foolish to wrangle over other things, such as our meetings, and our service of the truth.

We are to “earnestly contend for the faith,” yes, but wrangling is no part of a mature Christian’s life. (Jude 3) Where wrangling exists among the LORD’s people it means either that they are mere babes in Christ, or have permitted jealousy, envy, and strife to enter in among them.

Wrangling evidences a lack of faith in God and in the outworking of his plans and purposes. When a Bible study meeting or a business meeting is given over to wrangling, one could get the thought that those involved think that the LORD will direct his plan according to who wins the argument. How foolish! How far short of the wisdom from above! Let us all endeavor to realize the importance of a humble approach to the sacred truths of God’s Word, and manifest a great desire to be taught of him. Let us not be like those the poet described as wanting to “teach the Book instead of being taught.”

### **Without Hypocrisy**

Hypocrisy is claiming to be that which we are not. The proper application of the truth precludes the possibility of a false position of this kind. It is a lack of sincerity. One who is wholly sincere is not a hypocrite, and we should endeavor to keep our hearts pure and sincere before the LORD. To be sincere does not mean that we necessarily attain the goal of righteousness for which we strive, but it does mean that we do not give assent to our failures—that while we may fall over and over again, we will keep trying, and continually look to the LORD for his grace and strength.

If we know that a certain course is wrong, but willfully decide to follow it, while pretending something else, then we are not sincere; and if the LORD continues to deal with us at all, we will sooner or later experience severe chastening to correct the wrong way in which we are walking. Sincerity is a very important element of Christian character. But, as we have noted, to be sincere does not mean that we never transgress God’s law.

If we should say that we have not sinned for twenty years, we would be hypocrites; but we can claim to be trying our utmost to please God in our every thought and word and deed, and if we are sincere in this claim, the LORD will continue to bless us. How wonderful is the mercy of the LORD, through Christ, which he so gladly extends to those who cry out to him for forgiveness of those imperfections against which they sincerely struggle, but often fail to overcome!

### **The Fruit of Righteousness**

The wisdom from above, our text declares, is full of mercy and good fruits, and, as the apostle further states, "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." (vs. 18) Those who make peace are referred to by Jesus as peacemakers—"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." (Matt. 5:9) The word 'peace' is a translation of a Greek word, the basic meaning of which is 'to join', or 'to make a pact'. The Sons of God, those who are to be with Christ in the kingdom and 'see him as he is', are invited to joint-heirship with Christ for the very purpose of being associated with him in making a 'pact'—even the New Covenant—between God and man.

This, then, is to be the ultimate 'fruit of righteousness' which will be produced by the wisdom from above. The apostle explains that this fruit of righteousness is sown in peace. The entire period from our consecration until we make our calling and election sure by being faithful unto death is the sowing time. Paul wrote, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7) From another standpoint we could say that we are now in training for the future work of making peace between God and men. Because of this, we must now learn and apply all the principles of righteousness represented in the wisdom from above which will be taught to the world and used as a basis of the covenant to be made with the people.

Those who will make progress in the Millennial Kingdom along the "highway" (Isa. 35:8) will not be able to compromise in their obedience to the laws of the kingdom. With them it will be 'first pure', even as with us; hence the importance of our learning well this lesson now. For this same reason every element of divine wisdom will need to become a very part of our lives during this training period. This means that there will be 'good fruits' in evidence even now—the fruits of joy and peace, kindness and love—which give evidence of our own heart-harmony with God and his will.

And if our harmony with God's will and our union with Christ are complete, and the divine will is manifesting itself in our daily words and deeds, those around us will have an opportunity to partake of the 'good fruit' of our lives, and themselves to be blessed. Our service as peacemakers is by no means limited to the next age, when, if faithful, we will be united with Christ in glory, honor, and immortality. It begins now. And to be wholly under the influence of the wisdom from above means that we will be active in telling all, as we have opportunity, God's great plan of the ages, and encouraging all who have a hearing ear to surrender themselves to God, and to the doing of his will. ■

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"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."  
—Isaiah 11:9

"The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."  
—Habakkuk 2:14



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# "FRANK AND ERNEST"

## Sundays Unless Otherwise Noted

### ARKANSAS

Little Rock	KAAY 1090	6:30 a.m.
Marshall	KCGS 960	4:30 p.m.

### CALIFORNIA

Claremont	KTSJ 1220	9:45 a.m.
Lancaster	KVOY 1340	8:15 a.m.
Monterey	KNRY 1240	8:30 a.m.
San Francisco	KEST 1450	3:30 p.m.
Tehachapi	KTFI FM 103.1	8:15 a.m.

### FLORIDA

Jacksonville	WXTL 1010	7:45 p.m.
Orlando	WGTO 540	9:00 a.m.
St. Petersburg	WTIS 1110	5:00 p.m.

### GEORGIA

Augusta	WGAC 580	8:00 a.m.
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### ILLINOIS

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

### INDIANA

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

### KANSAS

Goodland	KLOE 730	7:30 a.m.
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### KENTUCKY

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

### LOUISIANA

New Orleans(Sat.)	WWL 870	9:00 p.m.
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### MICHIGAN

Detroit	WLQV 1500	9:30 a.m.
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Fremont	WSHN 1500	9:00 a.m.
	WSHN FM 100.1	9:00 a.m.

### MISSOURI

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

### NEW JERSEY

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

### NEW YORK

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

### NORTH CAROLINA

Wendell	WETC 540	4:45 p.m.
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### OHIO

Cleveland	WRKG 1380	7:45 a.m.
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### OREGON

Portland	KKEY 1150	7:00 a.m.
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### PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown	WHOL 1600	10:45 a.m.
Pottstown	WPAZ 1370	12:45 p.m.

### SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston	WOKE 1340	7:45 a.m.
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### TENNESSEE

Nashville	WSM 650	7:45 p.m.
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### VIRGINIA

Richmond	WGGM 820	7:45 a.m.
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### WASHINGTON

Spokane	KAQQ 590	7:00 a.m.
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## Canada

### ALBERTA

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

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Duncan	CKAY 1500	9:00 a.m.
	CKAY 1500	7:30 p.m.
Grand Forks	CKGF 1340	9:00 a.m.
Qualicum-Parkville	CHPQ 1370	9:30 p.m.

### MANITOBA

Winnipeg	CKJS 810	9:00 a.m.
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### ONTARIO

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

Rosetown	CJYM 1330	9:45 a.m.
Weyburn	CFSL 1190	8:45 a.m.
Estevan	CJSL 1280	8:45 a.m.

## WORLDWIDE RADIO BROADCASTS

### Argentina (Spanish)

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

### British West Indies

Trinidad Radio Trinidad 610 10:30 p.m.

### Chile (Spanish)

Talcahuano Radio Almirante Latorre

### Costa Rica (Spanish)

San José Radio Sonora 105.9 FM, 700 AM  
6:15 a.m.

### Mexico (Spanish)

Culiacán Ranchera	XECQ	8:30 a.m.
Guadalupe	XEWK 1130	8:30 a.m.
Monterrey	XHSR FM	10:00 a.m.
Toluca	XETB 1350	8:15 a.m.
Tuxtla Gutierrez	XEON 720	7:30 a.m.

### Nigeria

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

### Panama (Spanish)

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

### Peru (Spanish)

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

### Philippines

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

### Portugal (Portuguese)

Vila Nova de Gaia Radio Minute 8:45 a.m.

### Russia (Russian)

Novgorod FM 71.3 10:00 a.m.

### South Africa

Swaziland SWAZI Commercial Radio 1400 AM  
Shortwave 49m 6155 kHz 8:15 p.m.

### Tonga

Nuku' Alofa (Mon.) 10:15 a.m.

### Uruguay (Spanish)

Radio Mundo CX32 1170 KHz 9:00 a.m.

## THE BIBLE ANSWERS TV PROGRAMS

### **CANADA:**

Programs are shown every Sunday morning. Consult your local newspaper for the station in your area:

Atlantic Time—10:30 a.m.

Eastern Time—9:30 a.m.

Central Time—8:30 a.m.

Mountain Time—7:30 a.m.

Pacific Time—6:30 a.m.

## CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

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### On Reading the Bible

*"Faith cometh by hearing,  
and hearing by the Word of God."  
—Romans 10:17*

**H**OW MANY MILLIONS of copies of the Bible have been distributed throughout the past centuries no one today may know, but there is no other book in the world that has had such an enormous circulation and distribution. Our museums contain remarkable examples of the loving care taken in the making of beautiful hand-lettered and illuminated copies of portions of the Bible of the earliest examples of printing; and of the many famous translations made by noble men—translations from Hebrew and Chaldee into Aramaic and Greek, from Greek into Latin, from Greek and Latin into Anglo-Saxon, from Saxon into the classical English of Shakespeare's day, and from that into what we are pleased to call 'modern' speech.

The story of the Bible is the story of man's struggle by reason of sin and oppression to some degree of liberty, and with this Book as the assigned cause, countless have been the murders both individual and *en masse* which have punctuated its history. It has been enshrined in gold and jewels, revered as of itself possessing some magic quality. It has, at the instigation of men paradoxically vowed to uphold its teachings, been publicly burned as the curse of humanity. A strange history has this remarkable Book, but through all its vicissitudes it has been preserved by a Power greater than any arrayed against it, and it has triumphed over all its enemies—for it is the Word of God!

This, then, is the Book which perhaps graces some prominent point of vantage as an ornament of the home,

and which, in common with all the other valued ornaments, is periodically moved and dusted, and replaced in its appointed position. Or perhaps it occupies a more honored place on one's bedside table—the last object on which your hand rests and your eye falls each night.

It may remain, year after year, unsullied because unread; or it may have become dog-eared and tattered from much conning and study. It may be a source of exasperation because of the tenacity with which it seems to hold its secrets of wisdom and instruction; it may be an open book which yields ever richer treasures because the mind explores it in the spirit of humility and in the sincerity of desire to know the great Mind of its Author—the Great God and Creator of the universe.

Many of its readers have approached the study of this inspired record of the divine will and purpose with befitting reverence, desirous of knowing what message it may contain for themselves; others have regarded it with lofty detachment, have referred to it as 'great literature', and have paid it the compliment of admiring its style as a fine example of the purest of English speech.

Others, again, have discarded the Bible and its contents as superstition and Hebrew tradition; have scoffed at its teachings as worn-out formulas suitable to the simple lives of a pastoral and nomadic people, or to the social and political economy of a reduced and captive nation, but containing no message for the complicated world economy of our day.

Again, some have made what they have believed to be an honest attempt to understand its teachings and have given up in despair, declaring that the Book is filled with contradictions and contains no continuity of message or clarity of thought. Scholars have written thousands of weighty tomes designed to explain what the Bible really means, and critics have spent thousands of hours and used millions of words to

prove that no part of it is authentic, or that any claim made for it as being divinely inspired is credible.

In spite, however, of the well-meaning efforts of its friends to simplify and explain it, and of its enemies to destroy it, the Bible as we have it today continues to enjoy the greatest circulation of any book in the world, and is read more consistently, if, in many cases, with less understanding, than the typographical effusions of all the novelists whose works flood our bookstores, and whose words are forgotten almost before the ink is dry on the paper.

There are those who read the Bible, apparently with the nebulous idea that it contains some intrinsic magical power, that the mere act of reading it has power unto salvation, and so these people dedicate their lives to a reading through of the Bible completely each year at the rate of so many chapters per day. Such value as this method of Bible reading may have is probably summed up in the fact that it IS a good book and that time so spent is never entirely wasted. But the hearing of which the apostle spoke in our text is akin to the hearing to which Jesus referred when, at the end of his parables he said to the multitude which had assembled to hear him, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Here was the implication that there was more in his stories than appeared casually on the surface.—Matt. 13:9

Paul says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God . . . rightly dividing the Word of Truth."—II Tim. 2:15

Actually, once the key to the inner teachings of the Word is obtained, and its treasures unlocked, the Bible shows a definite continuity of narrative from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation. The Book is a continuous and progressive story of man's fall and the need for his redemption, and the reward to follow faithfulness in obeying divine law.

The scope of the story is on a far grander scale, however, than any novelist would dare to envision, covering, as it does, seven thousand years of history. And yet, in its presentation,

the Bible narrative is clear and concise, though in much detail. It starts out with the prostration of two of the leading and primary characters, Adam and Eve. They are shown as being happy and content in a state of Edenic innocence. Evil suggestion comes to them in the guise of a serpent, the most 'subtile' of the beasts of the field who, working through the curiosity of the woman in the absence of her spouse, prevails upon her to violate the only law to which the happy pair has been made subject—the requirement of implicit obedience—and through her violation, she involves her husband in the sin of disobedience.

Carping critics, reading the realistic record of the fall of man, have derided Adam as a man devoid of the instinct of chivalry, in that, when queried by God as to the fault, he said, "The woman tempted me, and I did eat" (Gen. 3:12) thus, in the eyes of such critics, attempting to lay the blame upon his weaker companion and hide behind her weakness.

It would be a strange thing, indeed, if Adam had, so early in his experience, learned to lie and dissemble, by attempting some subterfuge in order to save his beloved from legitimate condemnation. He only knew the truth, and told it as he knew it. Admitting his own complicity in the sin, righteous condemnation fell upon him as the responsible partner, the one to whom the original restricting had been made known. And the promised sentence, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die [*Margin: 'dying thou shalt die'*]" (Gen. 2:17), fell upon him and his unborn offspring.

This divine principle, that disobedience to righteous law should be followed by the death sentence, was countered by the adversary of God and man, Satan, with the statement, "Ye shall not surely die." Thus early in the experience of the human race was born the great lie that has cursed mankind from then until now. Originated by Satan, the enemy of the race, and perpetuated by him through the writings and utterances of those sworn to uphold the purity of the teachings of God's Word, that pregnant phrase, "Ye shall

not surely die," has come down through the ages, embalmed in the creeds of the so-called Christian churches as the doctrine of the inherent immortality of the soul. It has served to obscure the vision and deafen the ear of many who might otherwise have read the inspired record with some hope of gain.

In reading the Bible, the first thing essential to an understanding of its message is to approach it with an open mind, unobscured by the misconceptions of creedal teachings, and to hold the mind constantly receptive to the inherent truth which God has recorded there for our instruction and admonition.

It is a prime requisite to understanding that we, the descendants of Adam, must identify ourselves with our original father, admit the justice of God's position, and grant unhesitatingly his right to deal with his creation as he sees fit. Having conceded this position, we readily recognize the need of special aid, if the human race is ever to be rescued from the condition of sin, degradation, and death, and that help must come from a source much greater than those to be aided; for, "none can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."—Ps. 49:7

So we resume the reading of the divine Word, still in Genesis, and we see there how the angels endeavored to infuse new life into the dying race, but how they themselves fell victims to the lust which was abroad in the earth. As it is written, "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair." (Gen. 6:2) Their attempt at such an unauthorized regeneration of the race failed and came to naught as the record shows.

Next we read how God, determining to demonstrate to mankind their helpless condition and, at the same time, reward faith as demonstrated under adverse conditions by men and women of the fallen race, first chose Abraham, then his son and grandson, then the offspring of the grandson, whose descendants became the twelve tribes of



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Next we read how God, determining to demonstrate to mankind their helpless condition and, at the same time, reward faith as demonstrated under adverse conditions by men and women of the fallen race, first chose Abraham, then his son and grandson, then the offspring of the grandson, whose descendants became the twelve tribes of

Israel, and made covenants and agreements with them that he would make them a great people, and a great kingdom blessed of God if they, in turn, would keep his Law.

### **The "Old Testament"**

Many people reading the Scriptures have regarded the Old Testament as of little practical value to the Christian life, for, they have said, it is simply a record of Jewish history and philosophy, interspersed with songs and poetry of the time, and replete with somewhat shocking episodes of national and individual degradation, and the warnings and punishments which followed such lapses.

True, such a summary of the Old Testament record is, in the main, correct, but also, it is extremely superficial. Think for a moment of those two words—Old Testament. What do they really mean? Actually, they mean the Old Covenant, for that word covenant has the significance of a last will and 'testament', and this in contradistinction to the New Covenant or Testament which God planned to make with his human creation at a time future to the happenings as recorded in the books of the Bible we call the Old Testament.

Much of that early part of the Bible, then, is the detailed history of one nation making another attempt to find a way of escape from sin and death—to find a way to redeem the race through man's efforts, divinely directed and safeguarded. We know then that the Old Testament, with all its reports of human frailty, its scenes of national decadence, its stories of fortitude and faith triumphing over temptation and death, of the corruption of priests and people alike, and of God's great patience with them, does have value.

As the pages of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are turned, there is revealed a tremendous epic of God's triumph over the enemies of his people, of his rescue of them from bonds and slavery, and of his leading them forth to a land of promise. We see unroll before us a great record of aid and deliverance, of patience and mercy,

in an endeavor to help his covenant people make good their promise to obey his Law.

With Moses we travel the weary years of the wilderness wanderings, so often close to the land of hope—again, so far away. We bear with the complaints of Israel even as we watch the families and flocks and herds increase, and we share that great leader's impatience, when he strikes the rock in anger at Israel's importunities, when God had told him only to speak to it. The water gushed forth to slake the thirst of the people, but with its rivulet it bore away the hope of Moses that he might share the triumph of that final entry into the Promised Land.

With Joshua we pass over Jordan and take the land, but not fully, not wholeheartedly. We faint at the last and compromise with sin as we have done so often in the past, and shall do so often in the future, and so we do not enjoy the full measure of peace and quietude that God was so anxious to have us possess, and that would have been ours had we had complete confidence in his Word.

To keep closer watch on the welfare of the nation, God gives to Israel judges who rule wisely and well; but Israel tires of them and, influenced by the pomp and circumstance of the surrounding heathen nations, demands that kings be set over them. So God, infinite in patience and mercy, gives them kings; but kings are merely flesh with all the frailties of flesh, and, after David, even the kings degenerate.

With David we sing his songs of joy, and pray his prayers of penitence and intercession for his people. We lament with Jeremiah, and sorrow over the division of the people as the ten tribes depart. With Ezekiel and Daniel we look into the future and see the distress to come; but we do not understand it, for it is not yet due time for the vision to be made known. And with the prophets after Daniel, we see the nation sinking ever further and further from the mercies of God, and the steady disintegration of the spirit of oneness with God which had been the nation's stay through centuries of adversity.

And finally, with Malachi, we see even the cleansing sacrifices debased and the priesthood debauched.

As we turn the last pages of Malachi we realize that man's attempt to bring salvation and blessing to all people has failed, and we come to the conclusion that everything has been tried, and God's patience is exhausted. Not through any past or present government has any hope been found for the salvation of the world. But God has promised deliverance and blessing. How is it to be accomplished?

### **The "New Testament"**

We open the Bible again at the commencement of a new era dawning for man's hope of redemption. Here, in the opening pages of the second part of the Book—the sequel, we might call it, to what has gone before—the Book of the New Covenant, we meet a new character. We have caught glimpses of him in the writings of the prophets of old time throughout the whole of the preceding books; we may have suspected from the hints and even the plain statements of some of these prophets that a helper was someday to appear.

Isaiah was very direct in his references, and all the prophets showed to Israel that there would be one of their race who would come to help them. Toward the close of the scenes portrayed in the former writings, and in the convulsions that rocked the nation to its foundation in the wars with the Roman invaders which resulted in the overrunning of the country and the virtual enslavement of the people for the last time before their final dispersion, the divine record tells us that the people, in the midst of their woes, were in anxious expectation of the coming of him to whom they referred as the Messiah. This Messiah, the Anointed, was to be the king who would lead his people again out of bondage, as God had done before, when the Pharaoh of Egypt would not let them go.—Luke 3:7-18

We read of the coming of the one, humble and lowly, with no sound of trumpets, no fanfare, no panoply of state. He came, the man Jesus of Nazareth, born subject to the Law which God had given Israel. He grew up with the people and was one of them. He, like many of his countrymen, went to John, who was a prophet preaching repentance in Israel, and was baptized of him in Jordan, not for sin like others of his nation, but to illustrate the death of his humanity and his subsequent resurrection to walk in newness of life on a much higher plane of existence—the divine.

John knew him and recognized him as the promised Messiah, and gave his life for his faith at the court of the ruling Roman potentate, and Jesus took up the work of ministry and commenced to preach to his people.

The scene changes now, as much is to change in the next few years of Jewish history, for Jesus preached a strange message, vastly different from the formalism and ritual which had characterized the Jewish God-worship from the days of the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

Jesus did not frequent the Temple precincts; he did not make offerings of animals continually upon the altar, nor give money to the priest. In fact, so strange was his approach to the subject of worship that the High Priest of the Temple began to recognize a menace in this man who was turning away the hearts of many from the established form of religion, and who might undermine the prestige of the priesthood and cost them their lucrative traffic and exalted position.

Finally, we see him present himself to Israel as their king, and then we see him rejected. We witness, too, another scene which clarifies much that we have read in the Old Testament; for we see him in sorrow, mourning over this nation which has enjoyed so much blessing at the hands of God and has so ill-requited him for all his favors: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets. . . . Your house is left unto you desolate!"—Matt. 23:37,38

With those words there comes to a final end the second great attempt to rescue mankind from sin and death—an effort which has stretched over many centuries—only to prove abortive in the end. Not abortive to God, however, for these attempts were foreknown to him to result in apparent failure. Nevertheless, they were all working out to an ultimate glorious conclusion according to his divine plan of the ages.

Now, the pages turn faster as the tragedy of Jesus Christ is unfolded before our eyes. We see the culmination of his rejection in the execration of the mob in the judgment hall of Pilate; the condemnation and toilsome march up the hillside to Golgotha; the crucifixion on Calvary; and the convulsions of nature as the innocent blood of the Son of God fell upon the earth.

Now it looks as though the forces of evil have finally triumphed, and even God's own Son cannot withstand the power of Satan. We turn the page, and there we find the miraculous answer! He triumphs over death! Hell [extinction of being] cannot hold him! And for the first time in all this long record we begin to see what is the ultimate vindication of God's Word—that through one out of that stiff-necked and perverse nation of Israel, Jesus of Nazareth, who kept the Law perfectly, there is hope of blessing for all mankind! The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the proof that hope still lives and the rescue of Adam's race is a possibility.—Acts 17:30,31

Not through natural Israel may the promised blessing come, for Israel after the flesh rejects the king and the message. The chosen people of olden time are cast off from divine favor to remain in that rejected and desolate condition through many centuries from that time forward. But a new people is to replace Israel, a new holy nation is to be selected, not from among Jews alone, but from all nations, kindreds, tribes, and tongues: "From henceforth I will go unto the

Gentiles," and the selection commences of a "people for his name."—Rev. 5:9,10; Acts 18:6; 15:14

Does the Bible reveal who these people are? Let us read on for the answer. First, the faithful disciples who followed Jesus and prayed with him; those of whom he speaks in his prayer to his Father with love as "them which thou hast given me," of whom "none is lost, but the son of perdition," who betrayed him.—John 17:9,12

Then follows the record of the work of those faithful ones after Jesus' departure—the story of their slow realization of the meaning of his parting words; the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them, and the illumination of mind which shows them the tremendous thing still to be done before his blessings may flow to all mankind. Jesus will take to himself a bride—for so he lovingly calls his church. Not just one person but one hundred and forty-four thousand!—and yet, few indeed when compared with the millions who are, through those intervening centuries, to call themselves by his name—are to be selected to make up this bride of Christ.

The requirements for membership in that bride class we find in the New Testament. Peter and Paul make clear in their writings what must be done by all individuals who aspire to be of this class and to earn the kiss of acceptance and love from the Bridegroom; and the way is not easy, even as the Master indicated.—Matt. 7:13,14; 16:24

But down through the centuries from Christ until now, there have been in each generation a few who have counted the world well lost if they might by any sacrifice make their calling and election sure. A few who have been glad to give up all hope of earthly blessing that thereby they might be found worthy of the "so great reward"—joint-heirship with Christ. (Matt. 5:12; Heb. 1:5; 10:35; Rom. 8:17) Today the selection is almost complete.

We have reached the last book of the Bible in our reading the book of visions of prophetic things—many of which are not yet, but are to be. Distress and agony will attend the birth



of a new world, the throes of which are even now upon us. But in the pages of Revelation, shining ever more brightly amid the encircling gloom, we see the "holy city," and the marriage of the Lamb with his tenderly loved and long-sought bride. And with John we hear, by faith, and in the distance as yet, but soon to ring out in clarion tones around the world, the voice of the Spirit and the bride saying, "Come. . . . And . . . take the water of life freely!"—Rev. 22:17

Yet a little more of the glorious story remains to be told. Through the eyes of John, the seer, we see the answer to that invitation, earth's redeemed millions released from the thralldom of death by the great sacrifice of Jesus, coming up the highway of holiness with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. And there in glory are the overcomers in Christ, his blessed bride, sitting with him in his throne administering justice and God's righteous law, helping, sustaining, and strengthening the feeble footsteps of the children of Adam as they hesitatingly essay the new way to life.—Isa. 35

A thousand years of education sees the end of all sin and of the arch-knave whose machinations have brought such misery to mankind. The earth is restored to the glory of Eden and the restored millions of earth's people enter into their heritage of peace and joy without end; for death is swallowed up in victory, and the city of God dwells with men.

In the future there will be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in that city. His servants will render him holy service and will see his face. His name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no night there, for the LORD God will shine upon them. And he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, nor sorrow, nor wail of woe, nor pain, for the former things have passed away! See Revelation 21:2-4,9,10.

We close The Book, and reverently lay it down. Here we have read a mighty soul-searching story, which commenced with innocence and happiness, entered into sorrow, but ended with everlasting joy. ■

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE**

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*As the Old Year 1994 fades away, and a New Year 1995 has arrived, how appropriate it is that we "forget not all his benefits" (Psalm 103:2) which the LORD has poured out. As he had promised centuries ago, the windows of heaven were opened and the blessings and privileges which issued forth were as the prophet described, almost more than we could contain.*

*Let us now pause to reflect on these special benefits, and to look forward to the New Year with renewed zeal and greater resolve to accomplish the work that the New Year holds.*

### **Opening the Windows of Heaven**

*"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse,  
that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me  
now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not  
open you the windows of heaven, and pour  
you out a blessing, that there shall not  
be room enough to receive it."*

*Malachi 3:10*

**T**HE SERVANTS OF God should be the most blessed of all the people of earth. If they are not it is because they are living below their privileges. God enters into covenant relationship with his people, and never has he failed to fulfill his part of the contract. This was true with the natural house of Israel, and it is true of us who have entered into a covenant with him by sacrifice. Typical Israel could have been rich in the blessings of the LORD; instead, and because of unfaithfulness, the nation was cast off from God's favor and the people scattered.

In our text the LORD calls attention to the tithing system which he gave to Israel, and by which the religious functions of the nation were maintained. The tithe was one-tenth of an individual's income, and this was to be put into the treasury of the LORD. But, in paying their tithes, as well as meeting their other obligations to the LORD through the Law, Israel was unfaithful; and because of unfaithfulness the people were poor in all those natural bounties which could have been theirs. It was in answer to their complaint that the LORD called upon the nation to change their way, to bring their tithes into the storehouse and thus prove him and discover that their lack of blessings had been their own fault, not his; that he was ready to open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings so rich and abundant that they would be unable to contain them.

The same is true of spiritual Israel. We are under a different covenant than were the ancient Israelites. Theirs was the Law Covenant—a covenant with the LORD which, on his side, promised material blessings to those who were faithful to it, even everlasting life to anyone who could keep the Law perfectly. Under that arrangement it was reasonable that a tenth of their material assets should be devoted to the LORD, and there was no excuse for not adhering to this requirement.

The covenant of this age is one of sacrifice and under its arrangements, no promise is made of material blessings. Ours is a spiritual, or heavenly calling. We are urged to set our affections on things above, not on things of the earth. (Col. 3:2) The sacrificial arrangements of our covenant with the LORD call, not for rendering to him a mere tenth of what we possess, but of all, including ourselves—our time, our strength, and our talents.

To a large extent the nation of Israel walked by sight; that is, to the degree that they were faithful to the LORD their rewards were forthcoming, and were of a tangible sort which could be seen, felt, and appreciated. Ours, on the other

hand, is a life of faith, and our appreciation of the spiritual blessings which the LORD is ever ready to shower upon us depends upon our understanding of what he has promised and our ability properly to evaluate spiritual blessings when we compare them with the material sacrifices which we have the privilege of making.

Throughout all the centuries, human nature has not changed. Shortsighted self-interest—if by faith we do not rise above it—will still blind us to the real and eternal issues of life. We may feel a degree of satisfaction—perhaps even relief—that we are not living under the covenant that required a tenth. We know, of course, that under the covenant of sacrifice the LORD expects all, but because it is wholly a freewill offering there may be a tendency not to render unto the LORD even as much as the tenth which was required under the Law.

### **The Riches of God's Grace**

As we have already seen, the blessings of the LORD during this Gospel Age are not material, but spiritual. Are we receiving from him that abundant and overflowing portion which he has promised? There are, of course, two viewpoints of the Christian life. It is a narrow way in which we are walking, and sometimes it is very difficult. There are many trials to endure—trials of our faith; but even these should be considered a precious asset because they are helping to prepare us for the eternal joys which await us beyond the veil.

We are called upon to suffer—to suffer with Christ. Suffering is never pleasant, but we can look upon our experiences of this kind as blessings from the LORD because it is through the privilege he has given us of filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ that we will have the privilege of living and reigning with him.—Col. 1:24; II Tim. 2:11,12

However, we are not to think of the Christian life merely from the standpoint of its difficulties, its hardships. If we do we might become long-faced, sorrowful Christians, and the LORD wants us to rejoice—not to be hilarious, but to have an abiding peace and confidence in him. By faith we are able to rejoice despite the trials of the narrow way. Indeed, a part of our present inheritance is the peace and joy which Jesus bequeathed to us when he said, "My peace I give unto you."—John 14:27

The Master's peace and joy were deep-rooted in his confidence in the Heavenly Father, his assurance that not one of all the precious promises of God would go unfulfilled. Not once did the Master doubt the victorious outcome of the divine plan, both for himself and for all mankind.

And this peace of the Christian is ours in a full, rich measure if we can but lay hold of the promises of God as Jesus did. Jesus explained that it is not a peace as the world might give, a peace which at the best is based upon human promises and human ability to make good these promises. Or a peace, perhaps, which is based upon a bank account, or upon the hope of continuing in good health, or upon the security of a home.

How little the world knows about true peace, that peace which passeth human understanding, the peace that abides in the Christian heart despite the turmoil and chaos with which he may be surrounded, and despite the fading of all earthly securities and joys! The man of the world works and strives a lifetime with the hope of finding security and a consequent peace of mind and heart, but seldom does he attain his goal. And even with those who are measurably successful, their peace is short-lived and frequently disturbed by doubts and fears.

How rich indeed are we who have entered into a covenant of sacrifice with the Lord! But it is essential to fulfill our covenant if we would continue to enjoy the showers of heavenly blessings which make us so rich. Jesus said, "If ye

keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." And then he adds, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."—John 15:10,11

Yes, just as the material blessings which the LORD was willing to give Israel were dependent upon their faithfulness, so the peace and joy which can and should be ours depend upon keeping our covenant, obeying the 'commandment' which Jesus gave. And what is that commandment? Jesus stated it clearly, saying, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." (John 15:12) There are many details and ramifications in the carrying out of this commandment, but in reality it comprises all that the LORD expects of his people during the present Gospel Age.

Our covenant of sacrifice with the LORD includes the privilege of loving our brethren as Jesus loved us. Jesus loved us so fully that he laid down his life for us, and we are to lay down our lives for the brethren. The work of the LORD during the Gospel Age is the calling and preparation of the brethren to live and reign with Christ. In Revelation 19:7 this is spoken of as the "wife" making herself ready. When Jesus commissioned his disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, the great objective was the selection and making ready of the "bride" class.—Rev. 21:2,9,10; 22:17

This work on behalf of the brethren has called for sacrifice, the sacrifice of all on the part of every true Christian. It is thus that their love for one another has been manifested. True, our love for the brethren does not end with the efforts we put forth to reach them with the Gospel. When they hear the message and accept it, and together with us enter into a covenant with the LORD by sacrifice, they still need our love. It must be a love that will be patient with their weaknesses, and one that will do everything possible to help them along in the narrow way, building them up in our most holy faith; and when we can, guarding them against the fiery

darts of the great enemy, Satan. In short, to have a proper love for our brethren, the kind of love which Jesus manifested, means that we will sense our responsibility toward them—both in the spread of the Gospel by which they are reached and made our brethren, and in assisting them thereafter.

In almost any united effort the human tendency is to permit the few to shoulder the responsibility while the majority sit on the sidelines giving their approval, but doing little more than this about it. This is not the LORD's arrangement for his people. Each one who has entered into a covenant by sacrifice with the LORD is held responsible for faithfulness to that covenant. We cannot be victorious nor enjoy the riches of God's blessings simply because we are members of an ecclesia. We must be individually faithful!

### **Cooperation in the Ministry**

The LORD is pleased to have us cooperate in manifesting our self-sacrificing love for the brethren. An example of this is in the arrangement he has made for his people to meet together as ecclesias, or local churches. In many Christian circles this arrangement has been distorted considerably so that the clergy are considered the principal ones to serve, while the laity attend the meetings merely to be served. This is a wrong viewpoint.

In the true church, every consecrated follower of the Master is a servant. Each individual Christian is under obligation to lay down his life for his brethren. True, some may be chosen to teach, or to exhort publicly, but this does not relieve the others of the responsibility of being servants. And how rich are the blessings of the LORD for those who maintain and practice this viewpoint! Those who associate with the LORD's people with the thought of serving as well as of being served are the ones who receive the richest blessings.

A great deal is said in the New Testament about a general cooperation among the brethren. The ecclesias of the Early Church were kept more or less in contact with one another through the ministry of the apostles and others, although the spreading of the Gospel and the building up of the

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**HOW MUCH THE  
LORD HAS DONE  
FOR US—DO WE  
DO ALL WE CAN TO  
SERVE HIM?**

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brethren was restricted by the extent to which the servants of the church could travel from place to place, and to the giving of personal testimonies concerning the divine plan as it is centered in Christ Jesus.

Today we are living in a different world. The Gospel can still be spread by the personal testimonies of the saints, in their communities, and in their ecclesias, but its proclamation is not limited to these individual efforts. Through the printed page, and over the radio or TV, the message can be carried far and wide; but this is possible only through the general cooperation of the consecrated. The foretold increase of knowledge which has made this wider proclamation of the truth possible is undoubtedly by divine appointment, and we cannot but think that the LORD wants these facilities used to make known the glad tidings of the kingdom. Do we all feel our responsibilities as we should in connection with this larger work of the church?

And, even though the printed page, the radio and TV make possible a wider dissemination of the truth, the principal objective of our sacrifices in this connection is still the service of the brethren. It is not God's time to convert the world, but it is his time to call, through the truth, those whom he is inviting to be joint-heirs with Christ. This should be our main purpose in making known the glad tidings. Incidentally, as the truth goes out to reach and serve the brethren and



those who will become brethren, a witness is given to the world; and in this, too, we rejoice.

Today there are many of the LORD's brethren being reached by the general proclamation of the truth in other lands, particularly because of changing world conditions. And oh, what joy has been brought into our lives when once again we are privileged to fellowship on a global basis. It is one of the ways in which the LORD opens the windows of heaven for our blessing.

Every truth-enlightened follower of the Master knows that his life is consecrated to the LORD and to his service. We all know that the LORD is requiring not merely a tenth of what we have, but all that we have and are. Yet at times there is an unintentional indefiniteness about our consecration which tends to defeat its objective. We know that we are to serve the LORD. We are willing to make any sacrifice whatever to do so, but how is it to be done? What are some of the practical ways in which we can pay our tithes unto the LORD, and thus rejoice in the blessings poured out upon us from the windows of heaven?

There is a saying, 'Where there's a will, there's a way!' Actually, it often turns out that there are many ways! Once having given our all to the LORD, how is our offering to be made of practical benefit to others? First, of course—and this is true in every Christian's life—is our responsibility toward our families, those who are dependent upon us. The LORD wants that responsibility discharged faithfully, as unto him. Many have testified of the rich blessings which have been theirs as a result of endeavoring to provide for their own with an eye single to the glory of God.

But in the case of most of the brethren, there is something left of time or means after their responsibilities toward their own are properly and faithfully discharged. What can we do with this surplus of time, or energy, or means, which we have covenanted to devote directly to the service of the LORD? The ultimate answer to this question must, of course,

be found by each individual saint of God. None of us would presume to tell another brother what he must do in the service of the LORD. All we can do is to point out what others have done, and the possibilities there may be of rendering practical service.

There is, of course, as has been stated, the privilege of giving our personal testimony concerning the truth to those with whom we come in contact. The LORD would not have us make 'pests' out of ourselves! but there is always the possibility of speaking that "word in season" which often is so effective, "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." (Prov. 15:23; 25:11) to do this costs something. It may cost us our reputation, but this is a part of what we have devoted to the LORD; and how our hearts will rejoice as we endeavor, even in this small way, to "shew forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."—I Pet. 2:9

Brethren may find that keeping a few tracts in our pockets can be used to good advantage as we use public transportation, placing them on our seats as we leave; or handing them to those with whom we have casual conversations on planes or trains; leaving them in rest rooms of restaurants at which we eat, etc. We might find ourselves in a position to send the "Hope" booklet with consolation cards we send to friends or relatives, or by obtaining names from obituary columns of our local newspapers. We might be in a position to entertain one of the traveling speakers, arrange for a meeting in our home or in a small hall to which the public could be invited. In addition to these possibilities we might find that we could help toward the support of the general witness work as it is going forth today.

All of us feel, at times, that there is so little we can do that there is a possibility we will end up doing nothing. This is not the proper course. Even if we could put all our time directly into the LORD's service; and even if we were especially talented along some line which could be used in the

general effort; or if we had millions of dollars to spend for the LORD, we would still be doing very little of what the LORD deserves of us, and would still be unprofitable servants! Let us ever remember that the LORD is not interested in how much we can do for him, but only that we do all we can.

Those who have only a few minutes a day which they can spend in the LORD's service, or a few pennies which they can devote to him, are just as pleasing in his sight as those who can do and give more. If the widow's mite is all we have, that is just as valuable in the LORD's sight as the all of those who have more to give. If we give our all, each day devoting everything we can to his service, we are demonstrating the genuineness of our consecration, and putting ourselves in line for those showers of blessings which continually are flowing from the windows of heaven for those who faithfully bring their tithes into the storehouse.

If we are living where we have the privilege of association with others of like precious faith, then we will want to be on the alert to render whatever direct service we can for their encouragement and blessing. We will want to cooperate zealously in whatever general activities the ecclesia may be sponsoring. We will want to be faithful in our attendance at the meetings, to encourage and uplift one another as helpfully as possible in the study meetings and in the testimony meetings.

These are all privileges of service which, when faithfully used, will increase our own rejoicing in the LORD. There is no truer saying than that which Paul accredits to Jesus; namely, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) It is so easy to overlook this. We may think of our relationship to the LORD and to the truth and to the brethren merely from the standpoint of the advantages accruing to us! But this is the sure way to spiritual poverty. When we take the viewpoint implied in our covenant of sacrifice and begin to search for ways and means of giving and serving—of using our all for the blessing of others—then we will have

real joy in the LORD, and we will find our lives as Christians 'flowing on in endless song'!

God's promises to us as individuals are conditional. He has made every provision necessary for our blessing, but it is essential for us to accept of his grace by complying with the conditions. It is not a matter of earning divine favor. If it were, then it would not be grace at all. However, all that we can do in obedience to the LORD's will is merely a matter of showing our appreciation of what he has done for us, and what he will continue to do if we give all diligence in the carrying out of our covenant of sacrifice.

Paul wrote, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1) How can we come short of a promise? Obviously the thought is that we may come short of the conditions attached to the promises. In the text just quoted, Paul is speaking particularly of the rest of faith which is promised every footstep follower of the Master. Are we enjoying that rest as we should? If not, it would be well to examine ourselves to discover wherein we are failing to live up to our covenant, failing to bring all our tithes into the storehouse.

As we have said, God has made every provision for our blessing, and our lives as New Creatures should be full and rich—yes, overflowing with peace and joy in the LORD!

- Through Christ's redemptive work we have been given a robe of righteousness.

- The Holy Spirit guides and comforts us.

- The angels have been appointed our ministering spirits, and of these Jesus said that they always behold the face of our Father which is in heaven.

- God has given us his Word, and in it we find his will for us, and his plan for the world.

- He has made provision for our fellowship with one another.

■ In this time of the Master's second presence, he has served us specially with 'meat in due season' so that we know the meaning of the chaotic events of the world by which we are surrounded.

■ He has given us the assurance that no evil shall befall us, that no enemy, no matter how cunning or formidable, can take us from under his loving care.

■ He has promised to be our refuge and fortress, a bulwark against all the opposing forces which endeavor to disrupt his plan and destroy his 'seed' of promise.—Gal. 3:29

■ He has promised that he will withhold no good thing from those who walk uprightly; that is, nothing that will be good for us as New Creatures in Christ Jesus.—Ps. 84:11

■ He has assured us that all things shall work together for our good, that every experience, whether of joy or sorrow, will be made an asset, enriching our lives and increasing our joy in the LORD.—Rom. 8:28

What more could we ask? All of these loving provisions are for us, to make us rich in the peace and joy of the LORD. Are we, through faithfulness to our covenant, keeping the windows of heaven open that the life-giving waters of divine grace and mercy and strength may daily keep us refreshed and strong?

If we would enjoy God's grace we must daily go to the throne of grace. If we would know his will we must study his Word and watch his providences. If we would have peace and rest of heart we must believe his promises and comply with the conditions attached to them. At every turn of the Christian way there is something for the follower of the Master to do. Together it means the laying down of our lives in divine service, and, while we are doing it, rejoicing in the merit of the blood which makes our sacrifice acceptable.

Through the grace of God in Christ Jesus we have entered into a spiritual land of plenty. Let us continue therein by rendering to the LORD all we have covenanted to do. ■

### **1995 Memorial Supper Date**

**T**HE PROPER TIME for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be *after 6:00 p.m., on Thursday, April 13, 1995.*

We have a complete Memorial Service available for isolated brethren, or for any who care to have it, on both audio and video cassettes. The audio cassette can be purchased for \$3.00 per copy, or is available free of charge on loan from:

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

The video cassette can be purchased for \$6.00, and is also available free on loan. Send your request to:

**Dawn Video Cassette Service  
P.O. Box 4355  
North Hollywood, CA 91617**

*Please Note: Cut-off date for ordering tapes is March 30th.*

## **OBITUARIES**

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

Brother Sam Kostilancik, Chicago, IL—October. Age, 80.

Sister Banas, Chicago. October. Age, 100.

Sister Anastasia LaSota, Calumet City, IL—October 31. Age, 86.

Brother William McKee, November 17. Age, 80.

Brother Timothy Polychronis, Hampston, NH—November 24.

Age, 69.

Brother Serge DeLoutsky, Manhattan, NY. September. ■

## ENCOURAGING LETTERS

### Two Bible Study Groups in Mexico City

Dear Brothers and Sisters: Greetings in the LORD! How good is our God, and how wonderful to have fellow believers and brothers throughout the world! We want to thank you for all that you have done to help us to proclaim the message always. (II Tim. 4:2) We received the photocopy of the "*Divine Plan*" in Japanese. Yesterday I was in the Japanese coffee shop I sometimes frequent, thinking how the people there might respond. The other day I was invited to a Bible Study in French. It is in a home in an upper-class neighborhood. They invited me to share my views on the Bible. They were examining I John. Maybe God is opening up another area.

The brothers are certainly enthusiastic. See the short note that one wrote to you, and that is added to this letter.) The key is trusting in God, and letting Him work. As for the radio stations, the

closest is 13 hours away. Though it's always good to have the information on hand. One brother has family in Guadalajara, so he is thinking of asking them to tape the show for us.

It seems like every time we write, it is to ask for something. A Bible help that you mentioned that we do not have is the Russian *Photodrama*. Would you send us three copies? Enclosed is our monthly offering to your ministry. God be with all our "gringo" Brothers in the North. Sincerely in Christ on behalf of all.—Mexico

### Note from the Second

#### Bible Study Group

Dear Brothers: My English isn't very good, but I'm trying to improve it. I'm very happy with the Bible Study helps you sent us; my grandfather read Pastor Russell's publications while he was at North Carolina. Oro por ustedes y que el Señor los bendiga siempre. Yours sincerely.—Mexico ■

## The Passing of the Year

Look not with sadness on the passing of the year,  
Behold it as you would a sunset glow  
That streaks the sky with red and gold 'ere night descends  
To say, "Fair day, 'tis time for you to go."

Greet the New Year coming in with upturned face.  
Upon the ladder-rung we can't stand still  
But must climb upward, step by step to reach our goal  
And thus our fondest hopes we shall fulfill!

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Listen to these  
interesting topics  
discussed Sundays  
on

**KEST—1450  
3:30 P.M.**

### **JANUARY:**

- 1-The Lord's Witness
- 8-The Judgment Day
- 15-Christian Baptism
- 22-Swords to  
Plowshares
- 29-Unquenchable Fire

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Box 60, Dept. N  
New York, NY 10116

### **FOR YOUR NEWSPAPER:**

To the left is a suggestion  
for a small advertisement in  
your local newspaper. This  
outline is designed for  
three and one-half inches  
in one column.

### **JANUARY SPECIAL:**

On Sunday, January 15th,  
"Frank & Ernest" will dis-  
cuss a topic of interest to  
many. Attractive circulars  
are available for an-  
nouncing these programs,  
and you are invited to send  
for as many as you can use.  
They are free. Address  
your request to:

**The Dawn**

East Rutherford, NJ 07073



## SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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*These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of the Dawn, or by classes associated with 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.*

**E. Blicharz**

St. Petersburg, FL January 8

**R. Gorecki**

Phoenix, AZ Dec. 30-Jan. 2

**W. Blicharz**

Phoenix, AZ Dec. 30-Jan. 2

**G.M. Jeuck**

Phoenix, AZ Dec. 30-Jan. 2 ■



## CONVENTIONS

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

**PHOENIX, AZ, December 30-January 2**—Wyndham Garden Hotel, 427 N. 44th St., Phoenix. Address all communications to: Mrs. Esther Bachorski, 13223 Palmwood Dr., Sun City West, AZ 85375

Phone: (602) 546-0430

**ST. PETERSBURG, FL, January 8**—Majestic Park Homes, 8300 Seminole Blvd. (Alt. 19), Seminole, FL. Contact: Stella Slavich, 3847 Tarpon Pointe Circle, Palm Harbor, FL 34684  
Phone: (813) 786-3795

**LOS ANGELES, CA, January 22**—Burbank Auditorium, 248 East Olive Avenue. For information contact: Robert Wagoner, 901 North Westwood, Santa Ana, 92703

Phone: (714) 542-88466

**DETROIT, MI, January 29**—Redford YWCA, 25940 Grand River, Redford Township. Contact: Walter Blicharz, 19146 Bedford Road, Beverly Hills, MI 48025  
Phone: (810) 642-1553

**SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, February 11,12**—Cape Coral Masonic Temple, 244 Santa Barbara Blvd., Cape Coral, FL 33910. For information, contact: Sister Phyllis Vrooman, 20550 Polynesian Loop, Estero, FL 33928  
Phone: (813) 922-4814

**SACRAMENTO, CA, February 17-19**—The Beverly Garland Hotel, 1780 Tribute Rd., Sacramento.  
**Cut-off date for reservations: January 31, 1995.**  
Please send your reservations directly to: Betty Lankford, 6000 19th Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95820

Phone: (916) 457-0569

**ROCKLAND BIBLE STUDENTS' ANNUAL CONVENTION, February 26**—Green Meadow Waldorf School, Spring Valley, NY. For programs write: Mrs. Russell Shallieu, 1041 Johnston Drive, Watchung, NJ

07060-6414

Phone: (908) 756-4954

**37th FLORIDA BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, March 4,5,6**—**New location:** Holiday Inn, 304 W. Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL 32801. (Route 50 & I-4)  
For Reservations, request our special convention rate **before February 3**. Phone toll free: (800) 523-3405. For other information contact: Ed. Blicharz, 320 Raven Rock Lane, Longwood, FL 32750  
Phone: (407) 260-8083

**GREECE AND THE SEVEN CHURCHES CONVENTION, June 5-19, 1995**—Contact: Mrs. Mary Mall, 638 Pequot Avenue, New London, CT 06320  
Phone: (203) 447-2872

**BIBLE STUDENTS ANNUAL GENERAL CONVENTION, July 29-August 3, 1995**—Grand Rapids, MI. More information forthcoming in future issues of *The Dawn* magazine. ■



**TO EVERY THING** there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."

—Ecclesiastes 3:1-8