

The Dawn

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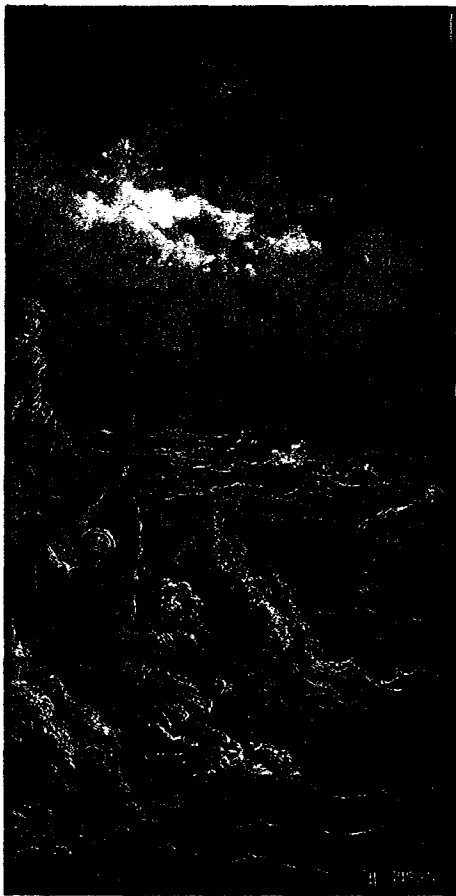
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Highlights of Dawn

Today the world is small, and its many troubles are often brought close to home for all to see. Into the comfort and tranquility of a living room, television transmits scenes of mud-



encrusted bodies pulled from volcanic slides where thousands perish in Columbia. We hear the sobs and see the tears of those mourning their loved ones lost under mountains of earthquake rubble in Mexico City. We shrink from looking at the fly-pestered skeletal forms of starving children hunched in the dust of Ethiopia, and are appalled to see the flattened aftermath and flooded villages in the wake of a killer storm.

Just brief reminders that our world continues on as it has for centuries, a groaning creation, travelling in pain. — Rom. 8:22

Has God No Pity?

"For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up and cast me down. My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. But thou, O LORD, shalt endure forever, and thy remembrance unto all generations. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: For the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD. For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those that are appointed to death."—Psalm 102:9-20

HUMAN suffering is not a new thing, for it has made up no small part of man's experiences throughout all ages. It is only when its ugly form seems about to overwhelm humanity, and there seems to be no God in heaven to interfere, that the question of doubt is raised in so many minds. And then too, suffering needs to come pretty close home before the average man or woman gives any serious thought as to what might be its underlying cause, or whether or not God complacently sleeps, quite oblivious to what is happening to his earthly creatures.

But why should we as Christians have reason to suppose that God may be asleep simply on the grounds that he does not prevent human suffering? Have not most church systems taught that so far as the vast majority of mankind is concerned God intends to perpetuate their suffering throughout all eternity? Have they not taught that the Creator has

prepared a great abyss called hell in which he proposes to torment unbelievers forever?

In view of the fact that a God-dishonoring theory of this kind has been spread upon the church books of Christendom for centuries, how strange that so few have ever thought to raise the question, "Has God no pity?" In seeking an answer, therefore, let us do so not alone in the light of human suffering, but in the light also of what Christendom has professed to believe concerning the God in whose name so many of earth's wars have been waged.

God Does Have Pity

The Bible assures us that God does love the world (John 3:16); that he is a God of compassion and comfort; that as a "father pitieth his children," so does God pity those who fear him. (Ps. 103:13) Our text declares that God looks down from heaven above and beholds the earth, hears the groanings of the prisoners, and rescues those who are appointed to death. These and many other passages of Scripture assure us of God's interest in his earthly creatures. But, the point is, how are they to be understood in the light of the many, long ages of human suffering?

First of all, let us recognize that in order to properly understand any subject relating to God it is fundamentally important that we view it from his standpoint, and not from the standpoint of our circumscribed knowledge and experience. In our Scripture lesson herewith, the prophet gives us a timely hint along this line, saying, "My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass; but thou, O LORD, shalt endure forever; and thy remembrance unto all generations."—Ps. 102:11, 12

Here David is telling us that God is able to take a view of matters that extends over all generations, hence we should bow to his will and wisdom. David himself had suffered. "I have eaten ashes like bread," he declares, "and have mingled my drink with weeping." (Ps. 102:9) It is following this statement that he reminds us of God's ability to take a

comprehensive view of human suffering, and based upon this larger view, he is making preparations to loose those who are appointed to death.

Prisoners of Death

The prophet informs us that God hears the groanings of the prisoners. Who are these prisoners, and how did they come to be incarcerated? The remainder of the passage identifies them as those who are appointed to death. Evidently, then, they are prisoners who are sentenced to death, waiting for the time of their execution. And while waiting, they groan because of the suffering through which they are passing. Who, then, can they be?

These prisoners are viewed by God as he looks down upon the earth; hence, it seems very evident they are the whole human family, who through the sin of our first parents, came under condemnation to death. Paul declares that through one man's disobedience, "sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all for all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) Adam, then, was evidently the first prisoner of death. He was under sentence, but did not actually die for more than nine hundred years.

Likewise, the whole human family are under condemnation, but are permitted to live awhile before the full penalty of sin is exacted. All, nevertheless, from the divine standpoint, are considered dead. This is evident from the words of Jesus who advised a prospective follower who wanted time to bury his father, to "let the dead bury the dead." (Matt. 8:22) God, then, views the whole world as being already dead, so that from his standpoint any measure of life they enjoy, and for whatever time it is theirs, is just that much of a reprieve from, or postponement of, the sentence.

In most cases, God has permitted each individual prisoner to live out his 'natural' lifetime, to be buffeted by whatever trials might lie in the way, and to enjoy whatever blessings were at hand. Sometimes, though, he has interfered, either

to hasten the death sentence or to postpone it beyond the time it would ordinarily fall. He destroyed the Sodomites prematurely, for example, because of their great wickedness, explaining merely that he “took them away as he saw good.”—Ezek. 16:50

God Hears the Groanings

The great prison-house of death has already claimed many billions of prisoners; and throughout the ages, the courtyard of the prison has been filled with convicts waiting their time to answer to the final summons. And these prisoners in the courtyard have done considerable groaning. They have exploited each other and quarreled bitterly among themselves. One group has waged war against another group, and millions have thus been slain before they ordinarily would have died. Being justly condemned to death by their Creator, he has been under no obligation to protect the convicts from the results of their own selfishness and jealousy.

But God has **not** been asleep all the while. He has heard the groanings of these prisoners, and, according to our text, purposes one day to loose those appointed to death. What can this mean? The Scriptures answer by explaining that “God so loved the world [all these prisoners] that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John 3:16

This is a wonderful promise, well known to all readers of the Bible, but how does it affect the problem of human suffering? Does it mean simply that those who are fortunate enough to have the opportunity of believing in Jesus before they die, and accept him, will go to heaven at death instead of to a place of torment? No, this cannot be its meaning. The Bible explains that the “dead know not anything” (Eccles. 9:5), which means that they evidently do not go anywhere when they die, except to sleep. Indeed, the Bible describes death as being a condition of sleep; and Job explains it is a condition wherein “the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.”—Job 3:17

This is a blessed thought. It is comforting to know that after years of struggle, the prisoners of death are finally at rest in a condition of unconsciousness. But how does God's loving gift of his Son affect them? The Bible answers that Jesus died to pay the penalty of death resting against all the children of Adam, and that this makes possible their ultimate release from the prison-house. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," Paul explains. (I Cor. 15:22) The Bible describes this arrangement as being that of a ransom; and Paul says that Jesus gave himself a "ransom for all, to be testified in due time."—I Tim. 2:4-6

In Due Time

Jesus gave his life for the world more than nineteen centuries ago, but still the prisoners continue to go down into death—some by war, some by accident, some by calamities—while others, the vast majority, indeed, from so-called natural causes. Why has not the ransom work of Jesus released those who are appointed to death? The apostle gives us the key to the answer in the expression, 'in due time'. God has a fixed, due time for the accomplishment of all his loving purposes, and the due time to release the prisoners of death has not yet come.

But why the delay? Was not full provision made for the commutation of the death sentence when Jesus gave himself in death for the sins of the world? Legally, yes; but there was further preparatory work to be done. Provision needed to be made for the care of the released prisoners. In this phase of the divine plan for deliverance, the church of this age is being prepared to share. All the hundreds of promises made to the footstep followers of Jesus are with this objective in view.

Through an erroneous understanding of what is actually implied in the divine promises to the church, the thought has developed that the only ones to be saved from among all earth's millions are those who become Christians. With this in view, great and costly efforts have been made to convert

and save as many of the world of mankind as possible. And nearly always as a background of these missionary efforts is the terrifying thought that those not converted must suffer the eternal agonies of the damned.

Changed Viewpoint Forced by Circumstances

Now that missionary efforts have well-nigh collapsed, and what has been considered to be Christianity is on the defensive everywhere, it is time that all thinking Christians reexamine the Bible to find out where they have been wrong in their understanding of it. Doing this, we discover it was not God's intention that the church convert the world in this age, but merely that she should be a witness in the world, meanwhile making herself ready to be associated with Christ in his future kingdom, to reign with him as his bride.—Rev. 19:7

This thought of the future triumph of Christ and his true followers is brought to our attention in a number of ways in the Bible, one of them being in the fact that the church is represented as being exalted with Jesus on Mount Zion—not literal Mount Zion, but symbolic. Many of the promises of the Bible are based upon God's dealings with the nation of Israel prior to the first advent of Christ. This nation was peculiarly God's people. Their capital was Jerusalem, and Mount Zion in Jerusalem was the 'capitol hill' of that city. Hence, Mount Zion, in a very special sense, is an appropriate symbol of the governmental arrangements of the kingdom of Christ in which the church will share with him as joint-heirs.

The kingdom promises of the Old Testament were made originally to the natural seed of Abraham, the nation of Israel. When Jesus came at his first advent, he offered himself to this nation, but only a few individuals out of all Israel accepted him and espoused his cause. Paul explains that the nation as a whole, because of unbelief, lost the great opportunity of association with Jesus which would have been theirs, and, like the natural branches of an olive tree, were

broken off from divine favor, and Gentiles are being grafted in to take their place. See Romans, chapter eleven.

This means that the promises of association with the Messiah in his kingdom work, made originally to the Jews, are now applicable to the Gospel church, selected mostly from among the Gentiles. It is for this purpose that God visited the Gentiles, as shown in Acts 15:13-15. Later, the natural house of Israel will be restored to divine favor; for, says the apostle, out of spiritual Zion "shall come forth the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Rom. 11:26) But the Jewish nation will have lost the high honor of joint-heirship with Jesus in his kingdom.

Zion Class Persecuted

Both the typical and antitypical Zion classes have been persecuted. This has been particularly true of antitypical spiritual Israel, called and developed during this age. These follow in the footsteps of Jesus. They suffer with him. They share his passion, and like him are unrecognized by the world, and often bitterly persecuted. To endure all this they need faith—faith that God is with them, and will finally deliver and exalt them in the Messianic kingdom with their Lord and heavenly Bridegroom.

With these thoughts in mind, we can see a depth of meaning in the prophet's words which constitute another portion of our lesson. We quote, "Thou shalt rise and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come."—Ps. 102:13

Here again we are reminded that God has a due time, a set time, for the accomplishment of his purposes. There is a due time for the final deliverance and exaltation of the Gospel Age Zion class.

"Thou shalt arise"—this gives the thought that there had been a period during which it might have appeared to the less strong in faith that God had been inactive on behalf of his people. A similar thought, and evidently applying to the

same time and event, is given in Daniel 12:1, where we read, "At that time [the set time] shall Michael [one representing God] stand up, the Prince that standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."

All down through the centuries there have been princes and rulers of various sorts, but none has stood for God's people, the Zion class. This class, on the contrary, has usually suffered at the hands of earthly rulers. But finally the set time comes for a change. The LORD arises, and through Christ—styled Michael in the prophecy—makes manifest his favor toward his hitherto apparently neglected people. Coincident with this development there comes upon the people of the world a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.

The 'Set Time' Here

The worldwide distress and trouble today is, therefore, one of the outstanding signs that the time is come when we may expect soon to see evidence that the LORD is not sleeping, but is about to demonstrate his power in the restoration and blessing of the people. Jesus mentioned Daniel's prophecy of the time of trouble. He said there would be upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity. For the special benefit of the Zion class who would be living when the set time should come for these events to occur, the Master then added this thought, "When ye see these things come to pass, look up, lift up your heads, for your deliverance draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28

The deliverance of the church, described in Revelation 20:6 as taking place in the "first resurrection," signals the time for the blessing of the world, for the church is delivered and exalted with Christ for the express purpose of reigning with him for the dispensing of the blessings of life purchased by the Savior's death. David further elucidates this point in our lesson, saying, "So the heathen [all not previously the LORD'S people] shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the

kings of the earth thy glory, when the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.”—Ps. 102:15, 16

“He shall appear in his glory,” Paul says, “when Christ who is our life shall appear also with him in glory.” (Col. 3:4) This will be when the Zion class of this age is all complete, and with her Lord as his bride. In the second psalm, Jehovah declares that he has set his king upon his holy hill Zion, and that he shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, and as a potter’s vessel shall they be broken. In Revelation 14:1, this king, as the slain Lamb, is shown on Mount Zion, and the church class is shown there with him. In the last verse of the prophecy of Obadiah, these, all together, are represented on Mount Zion as “saviors,” and the time is shown to be when the kingdom is the LORD’S.

Clearly then, all of these scriptures add up to definitely prove that since the first advent of Christ the work of the LORD has been that of preparing the kingdom class, and now that this work is about complete, we may expect that soon the kingdom work will be fully established and operating for the actual blessing of the people with life, liberty, and happiness. This, then, at long last, will be the answer to the prayer, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”—Matt. 6:10

The Prayer of the Destitute

The Prophet David continues his outline of the divine plan for the blessing of the people by informing us that after the LORD has built up Zion and appeared in his glory, then he “will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.” (Ps. 102:17) How different this has been from the experiences of the destitute heretofore!

“Now,” another prophet says, “we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up: yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.” (Mal. 3:15) Now the poor, the destitute, the suffering among the prisoners of death, go apparently unnoticed by him, even though many of them do

fervently pray to the LORD for help, with the result that gradually they come to believe either that God is asleep or else there is no God.

The prophet did not mean that in his day the prayers of the destitute would necessarily be answered, nor that the prayers of the destitute and suffering in any age before the set time would be heeded. He makes this point plain in verse eighteen of the psalm, saying, "This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people that shall be created [resurrected] shall praise the LORD." Then he adds, "He hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth; to hear the groanings of the prisoners; to loose those that are appointed to death." —Ps. 102:19, 20

Yes, God does have pity! For six thousand years he has been hearing the groanings of earth's prisoners appointed to death. He has taken note of their cries for help. And all the while, although apparently asleep or indifferent, he has been preparing to answer their prayers by setting them free from the penalty of death that rests upon them, and by restoring as many as will to his full favor and to everlasting life upon the earth.

Like the sympathetic doctor who hears every outcry of his suffering patient, yet in the interest of his final recovery does not yield to his feverish pleading for relief, except when his professional skill deems it wise, so the Heavenly Father, through his beloved Son as the Great Physician, will ultimately heal the world of mankind of all its sicknesses. He waits until the due time decreed by his wisdom to be for the best interest of all concerned.

Liberty to the Captives

Yes, Christ in his kingdom glory, and associated with him, his bride, the church, will be the Great Physician and Deliverer, who throughout the thousand-year Messianic reign will be instrumental in setting free the prisoners of

death—those who have actually gone down into the tomb, as well as those who are still in the prison courtyard awaiting the full execution of their sentence. In the synagogue at Nazareth the Master quoted the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1, which he said he had come to fulfill. It reads, “The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”

This comforting message is another proof that God does have pity. It assures us that God has indeed heard the groanings of the prisoners, and that nearly two thousand years ago he sent his beloved Son into the world to initiate a program by which the groaning ones would ultimately be comforted and blessed. This program calls for the liberating of the captives of sin, and the freeing of the prisoners of death—a program that is to be fully consummated at the set time, the due time, mentioned by Paul when the good tidings of the ransom sacrifice of Jesus will be made known to all mankind.—I Tim. 2:3-6

Another prophecy assuring us that the prisoners of death are to be released is that of Isaiah 49:8-10. In II Corinthians 6:1,2, Saint Paul quotes a part of the eighth verse of this prophecy, and applies it to the church. It is one of the many promises of the Bible which associates the church with Jesus in the work of restoring the world of mankind to life during the kingdom period. The prophecy reads: “Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pasture shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for he that

hath mercy on them [in releasing them from the prison house of death] shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.”

Note the reference in the foregoing prophecy to the acceptable time. This is the same period mentioned in Isaiah 61:3, as the “acceptable year.” It refers to the entire Gospel Age, from the first advent to the second advent of Jesus. During this time the followers of the Master are invited to lay down their lives in sacrifice with him, with the assurance that such sacrifice will be acceptable. “I beseech you,” said Paul, “to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”—Rom. 12:1

Few have been willing thus to take up their cross and follow the Master—only a “little flock” in all—but these have the assurance that it is “the Father’s good pleasure to give them the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32) The object of inviting them to sacrifice is in order that thus they may be prepared to share with Jesus in the future work of liberating the captives of death, and leading them by the springs of life-giving waters. It will be then that this class, as the bride of Christ, will say, “Come, and . . . partake of the water of life freely.”—Rev. 22:17

Gates of Hell Will Not Prevail

Psalms 102:16, already quoted, speaks of building Zion. As noted before, Zion is one of the scriptural titles of the Gospel Age church. Jesus told Peter of the divine purpose to build this church, and he added that when built, “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matt. 16:18) The word hell in this instance is a translation of the Greek word, **hades**, meaning ‘the state of death’. It is the same as the Hebrew word **sheol** in the Old Testament, which is translated ‘grave’ in Ecclesiastes 9:10, where we are told that it is a condition of unconsciousness.

In Revelation 1:18, the resurrected Jesus informs us that he has the “keys” of death and of hell—**hades**. In John 5:28,

Jesus declares that all are to hear his voice and come forth from death. The combined thought of these texts is that Jesus will use the keys of hell to unlock its gates and set its captives free. The church is to share in this work with the Master. Hence it is when the church, Zion, is fully built, the gates of hell will not prevail to prevent its prisoners of death from coming forth.

Thus, again, we are assured that God **does have pity** on the dying world, and that in loosing those who are appointed to death the work will be so all-comprehensive that even the ones who have actually gone down into death are to be brought forth and blessed. We have also in this statement of the Master, a further confirmation that God has not been asleep down through the centuries, but has been building his church, preparing her for association with Christ in the joint administration of the future kingdom blessings of life.

Restitution—The World's Only Hope

The Apostle Peter says, "He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the LORD your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." —Acts 3:20-23

This prophecy locates the time for the restoration of the world to be following the second advent of Jesus. That God does not act to relieve the sufferings of the prisoners before that time is indicated by the Master when he explained that when he should return, there would be upon the earth "distress of nations with perplexity." Also, "All the tribes of the earth" would "mourn" because of the great "time of trouble" which would then envelop the world.—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21

But following that last great trouble will come the healing blessings of the kingdom—the times of restitution mentioned by Peter. That these times of restitution described by Peter in Acts actually do mean the restoration of the dead world to life is clearly shown in the beginning of chapter four, where we are told that Peter was persecuted because he had preached the resurrection of the dead through Christ.

This prophecy was not merely an expression of Peter's personal enthusiasm, for he assures us that these restitution blessings had been foretold by the "mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began." Yes, this has been God's provision for the dying world all along! And for the encouragement of those who could exercise faith, he has caused his prophets to describe many of the rich blessings which will come to the prisoners of death when the due time arrives.

It is because God sees the end from the beginning and knows, therefore, that all who die—whether by war, famine, plague, accident, disease, or old age—are to be restored to life upon the earth under conditions far more favorable than they have ever been up till now, that he can be merciful in letting the reign of death continue until the time set by his wisdom to stop it.

If those killed by war, or otherwise, were being hurried into a hell of torment by divine decree, without a proper chance for repentance, or if no further opportunity for blessing was ever to be theirs, God would, indeed, be cruel.

From the LORD'S standpoint, however, it is similar to the case of the surgeon who puts his patient to sleep during what would otherwise be a painful operation. The doctor knows the patient will awaken and afterward be healthy—at least this is what the doctor hopes. One looking on who did not understand might criticize the doctor for having no pity because he deprives the patient of consciousness. But the doctor administers the drug **because he does have pity.**

Just so with the LORD. He sees that while sin still abounds, the prisoners of death are in many ways better off while actually asleep in the tomb. So, he seldom interferes with the circumstances which end their present sufferings. His wisdom sees they need the experiences they are getting, because ultimately they will help them the more fully to realize the terrible results of sin and selfishness. After their lesson has been experienced, he permits them to fall asleep to await the glad morning of the new day, when Paradise will be restored.

True, it has seemed like a long night of weeping through which the prisoners have continued to groan. But for each individual it has been comparatively brief, while the blessings of the new day will, by contrast, be everlasting to all who will accept them on the divine terms. God, on the other hand, with his great heart of love, has patiently endured hearing the groanings of the prisoners throughout all the ages, as each successive generation has come and gone. He has endured this—yea, has even endured having his own glorious name blasphemed on account of it—because he knew that his time and way for answering the cries of the suffering was the best way, a way that would lead to the greatest and most lasting blessing for the largest number of the prisoners.

Whole Creation Groans

St. Paul tells us about the sons of God, the church class, who suffer with Jesus and who, in the future, will reign with him. And then he explains that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now." (Rom. 8:22) The reason these groanings must continue, the apostle explains, is because the prisoners—all mankind—must wait "for the manifestation of the sons of God."

This coincides with what we have already seen; namely, that God is waiting to answer the prayers of suffering humanity until his work of selecting the church is complete.

Then the church, appearing with Christ in glory, will be "manifested" for the blessing of the groaning world. (Rom. 8:19) This will mean that the kingdom of Christ is finally established, and then the world will no longer wonder if God is asleep. Their prayers will then be answered with dispatch: "It shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." (Isa. 65:24) What rejoicing there will be when that glad day comes! It is to be a day of peace and harmony everywhere, as beautifully and poetically pictured by the prophet, who said, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [kingdom] saith the LORD." (Isa. 65:25) In this symbolic mountain, the kingdom, the LORD will "swallow up death in victory, and the LORD God will wipe away all tears from off all faces."—Isa. 25:6-8

Who then will wonder whether or not God has pity! Instead, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of his glory "as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. 2:14) Then every creature in heaven and on the earth, and everywhere, will be heard saying, "Praise and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever!"—Rev. 5:13 □

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"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High: to show forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night, upon an instrument of strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound. For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands. O LORD, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts very deep. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." —Psalm 92:1-5, 14, 15 □



THE NEW YEAR



*Into the silent past the year has fled,
With all its hope and fear, its joy and pain;
And now, like an interminable plain
On which our eager feet have yet to tread,
The New Year lies before our gaze, o'erspread
With golden prospects; hopes that once in vain
Were entertained, now spring to life again
And heaven's bright sunshine gleams above our head.*

For Your Newspaper

To the right 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

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International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR JANUARY 5

Persons Are Important

KEY VERSE: "Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."—Matt. 10:31

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Matthew 10:28-31; Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-6

NOTHING happens to the child of God without the Heavenly Father's awareness and permission. This often includes what might appear to be undue suffering or an untimely death. To the casual Christian this no doubt presents an enigma, since it would seem that one who is faithfully doing God's will would be saved from such painful circumstances. But Jesus, in this lesson of which our key verse is a part, had previously said: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. . . . Beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues, and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake. . . . And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."—Matt. 10:16-22

Plainly, our Lord was warning his disciples that those who would bear the message of truth could well expect suffering and

even death at the hands of an unbelieving world. His words carry the strong implication that being shielded from such experiences by the providences of God does not constitute salvation. But, on the contrary, it is through the enduring of them faithfully unto the end that we are delivered.

Elaborating on this thought the apostle continues: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul [being], but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [**gehenna**]." (vs. 28) Here our Lord points out to his followers the great cause they had for courage and bravery under the most trying circumstances. They were to expect to have evil spoken against them falsely for the sake of the good tidings of which they were ministers, knowing that some would even consider that putting them to death would be doing God a service. Jesus taught that the consolation and reward for the Gospel's ministry

was to be received, not in the present life, but in the life to come.

Under present conditions men are able to kill our bodies, but nothing they can do will affect our future being, which God has promised shall be revived or restored by his great power in the resurrection. God alone has power to utterly destroy our being; he alone, therefore, should be feared, and the opposition of men even unto death is not to be feared, if thereby we gain divine approval.

The apostle's injunction then is, fear not them who can terminate the present dying life in these poor, imperfect, dying bodies; care little for it in comparison with our promised future existence which God has provided, and which, if secured, will be our portion forever! Fear not the threats, disdain, and acts of men whose power can extend no further than the present existence, who can harm and kill these bodies—but can do no more. Rather, have respect and deference to God, with whom are the issues of life everlasting—fear him who is able to destroy in **gehenna**, the second death, both the present dying existence and all hope of future life.

In his desire to assure us that the well-being of our destiny is no small thing with God, Jesus

went on to say that nothing happens without the Heavenly Father's notice. As even the sparrow which falls to the ground, how much more the things pertaining to his children, the very hairs of their heads being numbered. This knowledge that God's great power, in a very intimate and personal way, is protecting us in the ultimate sense, should cause us to face the circumstances of this life without fear. We only need fear lest our faith should falter, and our confidence in God be shaken.

The knowledge of his Heavenly Father's closeness was a great comfort to Jesus throughout his earthly life, and no doubt was even more vivid as he was dying upon the cross. As the disdain of his enemies was poured out upon him, his thoughts on that occasion were reflected centuries before in the twenty-second psalm. "Be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, hast thee to help me. . . . For he [God] hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard."—vss. 11, 19, 24

As with Jesus, so also with us: "God is our refuge and strength, a **very present** help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1), for are we not of more value than many sparrows? □

The Inwardness of Morality

KEY VERSE: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."—Ps. 51:10

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Mark 7:1-5, 14-23; Matt. 5:21, 22

THESE pleading words of David sound a kindred note in the hearts of all who, like David, have a desire to live after the precepts of God. Ah, yes! the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. With all his attainments, his wisdom, skill, and sound judgment, and, yes, his humility and reverence for God, the fallen human nature of this great and good man succumbed to evil temptations. It is hard to account for the fall of one with a character so strong.

But David's transgressions were not altogether sudden. There had been missteps along the way—the process was gradual with a climax reached almost imperceptibly. As is often the case, David had become quite overcome with a prideful attitude which in this world sometimes attends power, popularity, and success. As a result he was, no doubt, greatly oblivious to his own moral decline. As king, his word was supreme, and the people of Israel waited to do his bidding. Triumph had attended him on the battlefield; his kingdom had expanded and was enjoying

a new height of prosperity. But in all this victory and exaltation, there lurked subtle temptations which he neglected to guard against.

He began to think of his privileges in terms of other kings. The Scriptures reveal he multiplied many wives to himself; he resorted to unusual cruelty in battle with the Ammonites, and unnecessarily subjugated those he conquered. And, contrary to the law of God and the counsel of his own advisers, he numbered the people of Israel, resorting to the strength of manpower and much battle equipment, rather than trusting in God's help for security.

It was in the midst of this outward prosperity, yet decline of inward piety, that David committed the dreadful crime against God and man recorded in II Samuel 11:1-27. Poor, fallen human nature, how weak and prone to sin; how it will blindly lead those under its power to commit acts which in more sober thought would be shunned and despised. And so it was with

David—a man greatly beloved and honored by God, yet he fell.

Thanks be to God there is such a thing as repentance and remission of sins! God was exceedingly angry with David, yet in his wrath he remembered mercy, and sent the Prophet Nathan to reprove him. Changing the circumstances, Nathan presented a simile of the king's own transgressions in the form of a parable, which David thought was an actual case. In righteous indignation he demanded to know the man who had been so cruel, in order that justice might be done. Then came the numbing reply, "Thou art the man."

There were but two courses before the king: one was repentance, confession, and reformation; the other, to denounce the prophet and misuse his royal power to punish one who presumed to reprove a king. Such was the custom with other kings. After all, what king would need to consider the rights of fellow-man in preference to his own desires? But the deep-rooted nobility of David prevailed, and with anguish of heart, he said, "I have sinned against the LORD."

The king then meekly accepted the punishment the LORD pronounced against him, realizing his sin was very grievous, and his example very detrimental to the moral interests of the people.

He resolved to make the example of his deep contrition and repentance as far-reaching in its effects for good, as his sin had been for evil.

In this victory over his own pride and selfishness, David proved himself a greater hero than in all his previous conflicts and exploits in battle, including his triumph over the giant, Goliath! As Solomon, his son, later reflected, "He that ruleth his spirit [is better] than he that taketh a city."—Prov. 16:32

In the fifty-first psalm, David makes public confession of his sin, and of God's great mercy in forgiveness, And he exhorts all sinners to pray to God for this divine forgiveness in a time when they may be found, before their hearts become set in an evil course. "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about."—Ps. 32:6, 10

As freely as God forgave, so must we; and we rejoice to recognize David as one worthy of our love, our confidence, and a noble example for our imitation. The victory he gained over himself is one of the greatest and grandest achievements in the pages of history, and his course is to be commended to all who have to any degree departed from the ways of the LORD. □

Ways Christians Serve

KEY VERSE: *"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."*—Matt. 25:40

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 25:31-46*

IN THIS parable spoken by Jesus, these words of commendation are to those who inherit the kingdom of earth, and intrinsically express how they merit such a grand reward. With this parable of the sheep and the goats, Jesus concluded his very descriptive reply to the disciples' question about the signs of his return and second presence. The opening words, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory," are a clear reference to their question, and his answer relates to the time of his kingdom, stating that then he shall sit upon the "throne of his glory." Important also to this illustration is the fact that all nations, peoples of the earth, will be gathered before him.

It is well to guard against interpreting parables too literally. The peoples of the earth will not be gathered before the throne of Christ's glory in the sense of all being assembled in one vast area and separated into two groups—the righteous and the wicked—and judged on how they have

lived their lives now. The thought is, rather, that the people of the world, including all who have died and have then been brought forth in the resurrection, will be given an opportunity to be active in the work of Jesus' kingdom. They will be invited to cooperate with the agencies of his rulership in the interest of restoring righteousness. Through this method of participation he will deal with them for uplifting development, with the view of determining their worthiness or unworthiness for everlasting life. This judgment will be made on how they perform during the one thousand years of his kingdom.

Other Scriptures clearly inform us that the judgment day will be a time when the world will learn righteousness. (Isa. 26:9) Those who persist in the ways of disobedience will not learn righteousness in that "land of uprightness," nor will they "behold the majesty of the LORD." (Isa. 26:10). Jesus represented these in his parable as goats.

The sheep class hear the king say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:34) This was the kingdom mentioned in Genesis 1:26-28. It is man's dominion over the earth, a dominion that was lost because of sin. The ultimate purpose of Christ's return and second presence is the restoration of man to life and to his lost dominion.

To the sheep class of the parable, the king said, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." (Matt. 25:35,36) The 'sheep' seem surprised at this, and ask when they had rendered all these good services. The king's reply is, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—vs. 40

These commended ones of the parable demonstrate their worthiness of inheriting the kingdom and its reward of life, by their loving interest and concern for those about them. Hunger, thirst, loneliness, nakedness, sickness, and imprison-

ment, symbolize a fairly complete cross section of human needs. The 'sheep' sense these needs of their fellows, and do what they can to help. They do this out of the goodness of their hearts, and because it is in harmony with the principles of righteousness, and not because it is necessarily expedient to their own welfare. They learn and practice the ways of love, God's divine law for life, and at the end discover they are worthy of inheriting the lost dominion of earth.

The Prophet Isaiah wrote concerning the qualification of the great king of this parable, who, ruling and judging with his associates, will accomplish these changes in the hearts of men. "The Spirit of the LORD shall be upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and fear of the LORD. . . . With righteousness will he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." (Isa. 11:2-5) The high principles and philanthropic spirit of his government will set the standard for the people, and those with a kindred response will qualify to inherit the kingdom prepared for mankind from the foundation of the world.

What a wonderful blessing from the Heavenly Father! ☐

Be Forgiving

KEY VERSE: *"Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive and ye shall be forgiven."*—Luke 6:37

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 18:21-35*

ONE cannot read this moving story in Matthew without having emotion aroused to a keen sense of the injustice done by a servant on the one hand, and a compelling desire to applaud his master, a king, who was so moved by compassion himself and angered at the lack of it in his subject. And such feelings are indeed proper, for it is stated that this is a parable of the kingdom of heaven, and the king is none other than Jehovah God.

This parable was in response to Peter's inquiry as to how many times he should forgive his brother. Jesus' instruction was that he should be willing to forgive seventy times seven. This is not only a reflection of our Master's own attitude in extending forgiveness, but also that of the Heavenly Father as well. The parable conveys the lesson that God should be looked to in these matters as an example of character to which our thoughts and actions should be conformed.

In the beginning, divine justice called for the condemnation of the human race to death because of sin. Just as with the servant in the parable, mankind owed to God a very large debt. But our compassionate Heavenly Father provided a way of escape which Jesus expressed in these words: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16

How effectively this was portrayed by the servant of the parable, whose situation was hopeless unless the king extended mercy to him. He pleaded for the exercise of patience, promising that in time he would make full payment. The king was "moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt."—vs. 27

It is the love of God expressed through Christ which constrains us to present ourselves in consecration to do his will. Thus

we become his 'servants', and our appreciation of the divine mercy and love extended to us should influence us to be merciful also. Mercy is one of the expressions of true holiness; we are admonished to be holy, as God is holy.

How sad that in the parable the servant to whom so much had been forgiven should refuse to show mercy toward a fellow-servant, who, by comparison, owed him a very small debt. His fellow-servants, as well as the king, were displeased with his ungrateful attitude, and saw to his proper punishment.

Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Then he emphasized the importance of this, saying, "For 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. 6:12,14,15) As Jesus' statement to Peter implied, there is no limit to the number of times we should forgive those who trespass against us; for there is no limit to the times we need the Heavenly Father's forgiveness, and will receive it, if we have forgiven others.

Our Heavenly Father desires that we recognize our need of his forgiveness, and to ask for it;

likewise, it is proper that our 'debtors' ask our forgiveness. But, it is important that we, like God, have a heart desiring to forgive even before forgiveness is asked. How well this was manifested in the spirit of mercy and willingness to forgive which prompted God's gift of love to the world, in the person of our Savior. Had God waited for the world to repent and seek forgiveness, a redeemer would never have been provided.

As servants of the Most High we have been invited to be a part of his plan for the recovery of mankind from sin. But to effectively serve, our motives and our actions must reflect those of our Master. And to develop this is the whole purpose of the Christian life.

God's plan of salvation is centered around his desire to forgive. The stated objective of the New Covenant is, "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:34) Remember the returning prodigal son? When "yet a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him," and said, "For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" —Luke 15:20, 24

Let us learn to forgive as God forgives. □

Christian Life and Doctrine

CREATOR'S GRAND DESIGN—PART 12

Hell Gives Up Its Dead

IN REVELATION 20:13 we read that "death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them." This is one of the ways in which the Bible describes the resurrection of the dead. The Apostle Paul, quoting an Old Testament prophecy concerning the resurrection of Jesus, wrote that he had "led a multitude of captives." (Eph. 4:8, margin) Here we have the dead described as captives and their awakening as a release from captivity. Daniel 12:2 describes the dead as sleeping in the dust of the earth, and their coming forth as an awakening from sleep. Moses describes the awakening of the dead as a returning from destruction.—Ps. 90:3

According to the traditions of the Dark Ages, hell was a place from which there would be no return, an abode in which, moreover, there would be eternal suffering. But this is not in agreement with the Bible. As the Apostle John wrote, hell will deliver up its dead. (Rev. 20:13) This is a flat contradiction of the tradition that hell is a place of eternal torment. But to appreciate the full beauty of the Bible's teachings on this subject it is essential that we examine more of its testimony on the topic of hell.

Just what is the hell that is taught in the Bible? To answer this question satisfactorily it is important to know that the English word hell as used in the Bible is a translation of the Hebrew in the Old Testament and of the Greek in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word from which hell is translated is **sheol**. This word appears sixty-five times in the Old Testament. Thirty-one times it is translated 'grave', thirty-one times 'hell', and three times 'pit'. This variation of translation has helped to conceal what the Bible hell really is.

In Genesis 37:35, the word **sheol** appears for the first time in the Bible. It is used by the faithful patriarch, Jacob. His son, Joseph, had been sold into slavery in Egypt, and Jacob's other sons had deceived their father into believing that Joseph was dead. Mourning over the supposed death of Joseph, Jacob said, "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning." Here **sheol** is translated 'grave'. Had it been translated 'hell', as it is thirty-one times in the Old Testament, the reader would have known that Jacob, a faithful servant of God, expected to go to hell when he died, and from this he would also know that hell is not a place of torment for sinners, or for anyone else.

No Knowledge in Hell

In Ecclesiastes 9:10, this same Hebrew word **sheol** is again used and is translated 'grave', which in reality is the Bible hell. The text reads, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave [**sheol**, the Bible hell], whither thou goest." Here is a definite statement revealing that **sheol** is a state of unconsciousness, agreeing with the fifth verse of the same chapter, which informs us that "the dead know not anything."

The Prophet Job understood this, and in a period of extreme suffering asked the LORD to let him die. Job prayed, "O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave [**sheol**, hell], . . . until thy wrath be passed." (Job 14:13) Suffering as he was, Job surely would not ask God to let him go to a place where he would suffer even more and where his torture would last forever. No, Job wanted release from suffering, so he asked God to let him go to **sheol**, to hell.

According to tradition, hell is a place where God visits his wrath upon sinners, but in Job we have a righteous man asking to go to hell to escape God's wrath. What did he mean? The wrath of God here referred to by Job is the curse of death, which came upon all mankind through original sin.

David referred to it as God's anger, and assures us that it endures but for a moment, and added, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."—Ps. 30:5

Knowing that God's wrath would not continue forever upon the human race, Job prayed for release from it until it was past. Job knew that then he would be restored to life. He said, "If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time [in death] will I wait, till my change [from death to life] come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." (Job 14:14, 15) Here we have definite assurance that those who go into the Bible hell do not remain there, that a time will come when hell will give up its dead.

Hell Destroyed

Hosea 13:14 reads, "I [the LORD] will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Here grave is again a translation of the Hebrew word **sheol**, the Bible hell. In this promise the LORD reveals his intention of destroying **sheol**. He promises to ransom the people from the power of hell. This is a reference to God's grand design of redemption through Jesus. The destruction of hell implies the release of its prisoners of death. This is brought about by virtue of the fact that Jesus took the sinner's place in death.

In Psalm 16:10 Jesus' soul is indicated as being in hell, and Jesus' own confidence is expressed that he would not be allowed to remain in hell. In the New Testament the Apostle Peter, speaking on the day of Pentecost concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus, quotes this promise of Jesus' resurrection and uses the Greek word **hades** to translate the Hebrew word **sheol**. Thus we know that **hades** in the New Testament has the same meaning as **sheol** in the Old.

Jesus' soul, his being went into hell (death, the grave) when he died. He went to hell to take the sinner's place in

hell. Isaiah describes this as a pouring out of his soul unto death. (Isa. 53:12) Thus he provided redemption, or a ransom from the power of death; and in God's due time this leads to a release of all mankind from death, or hell. Confirming this, Jesus said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:18) Jesus will use the keys of hell to unlock its doors and set its prisoners free.

Jesus forecast the opening of the gates of hell in a statement to Peter. He said to him, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18) The church, as we have seen, is a company of faithful followers of the Master who are called out from the world to be associated with him in the future work of blessing the world. These are, together with Jesus their head, the "Seed" of Abraham which will be God's instrument in blessing all the families of the earth.—Gal. 3:8, 16, 27-29

But the vast majority of the people to be blessed through Christ and the church are asleep in death. They are in the Bible hell. In order to receive the promised blessings of life, they must be awakened from death. "The gates of hell" must be opened for them. Jesus has the keys of hell, and he, together with his church, will open the gates of hell and set its captives free. The gates will not prevail against the accomplishment of the divine purpose through the church. Hell will give up its dead.

We are not here attempting a complete study of the hell subject as set forth in the Bible. For this we refer the reader to the booklet "The Truth About Hell," which examines every text in the Bible in which the word hell appears, including the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.* In this discussion we are merely calling attention to the fact that, ac-

*Obtainable from Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, New Jersey 07073, at ten cents per copy.

(Continued on Page 38)

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ILLINOIS			Lancaster	WAGL 1560	9:30 a.m.
LaSalle	WLPO 1220	9:45 a.m.	TENNESSEE		
Rockford	WXTA	6:15 a.m.	Memphis	WMSO 640	10:00 a.m.
West Frankfort	WFRX 1300	9:15 a.m.	TEXAS		
INDIANA			Fort Worth	KFJZ 670	6:15 a.m.
Hammond	WJOB 1230	8:30 a.m.	Pearsall	KVWG 1280	9:15 a.m.
LaPorte	WCOE	10:00 a.m.	VIRGINIA		
KANSAS			Richmond	WGGM	7:45 a.m.
Goodland	KLOE	8:15 a.m.	WASHINGTON		
KENTUCKY			Clarkston	KCLK	10:00 a.m.
Bowling Green	WLBK 1410	8:00 a.m.	Kirkland	KARR	8:15 a.m.
Winchester	WWKY 1380	10:30 a.m.	Spokane	KUDY 1280	9:45 a.m.
MAINE			Tacoma	KAMT 1360	7:30 a.m.
Portland	WDCS-FM	9:45 a.m.	Yakima	KUTI 980	6:45 a.m.
MARYLAND			WISCONSIN		
Baltimore	WCBM	6:45 a.m.	Milwaukee	WNOV	7:00 a.m.

WYOMING

Cheyenne	KSHY 1370	10:15 a.m.
Sheridan	KWYO 1410	12:00 noon
PUERTO RICO		
Aguadilla	WABA (Fri.)	8:00 p.m.

FOREIGN RADIO BROADCASTS

BRITISH ISLES

Isle of Man	MANX Radio	7:00 p.m.
Radio Caroline (Tues.)	KHZ962	8:45 p.m.

BRITISH WEST INDIES

Grand Cayman	Radio Cayman	9:30 a.m.
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CANADA

Edmonton, Alta.	CJOI	3:00 p.m.
Lethbridge, Alta.	CJOI	7:15 a.m.
Castlegar, B.C.	CKQI	8:45 a.m.
Duncan, B.C.	CKAY	9:00 a.m.
Duncan, B.C.	CKAY	7:30 p.m.
Grand Forks, B.C.	CKGF	9:00 a.m.
Penticton, B.C.	CIG	10:15 p.m.
Vancouver, B.C.	CJJC 80	9:45 a.m.
Churchill Falls, Lab.	CFLC	7:15 a.m.
Winnipeg, Man.	CKJS	9:00 a.m.
Corner Brook, Nfld.	CFCB 570	7:15 a.m.
Deer Lake, Nfld.	CFDL-FM	7:15 a.m.
Goose Bay, Nfld.	CFLN	7:15 a.m.
Pt. au Choix, Nfld.	CFNW	7:15 a.m.
Pt. aux Basques, Nfld.	CFGN 910	7:15 a.m.
St. Andrews, Nfld.	CFCV-FM	7:15 a.m.
St. Anthony, Nfld.	CFNN-FM	7:15 a.m.
Stephenville, Nfld.	CFSX	7:15 a.m.
Wabush, Nfld.	CFLW	7:15 a.m.
Yellowknife, N.W.T.	CJCD	9:00 a.m.
Hamilton, Ont.	CKOC	7:00 a.m.
Leamington, Ont.	CHYR	8:00 a.m.
St. Thomas, Ont.	CHLO	10:45 a.m.
Windsor, Ont.	CKLW	9:00 a.m.
Montreal, P.Q.	CFMB	5:15 p.m.
Prince Albert, Sask.	CKBI 900	7:30 a.m.
Whitehorse, Yukon	CKRW	9:30 a.m.

CEYLON

Columbo	Radio Sri Lanka (Sat.)	7:15 p.m.
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ITALY (Italian)

Europa Radio Milano		
	FM-83.300	11:30 a.m.
Euro Tele Radio Calabria		
	102 MHz (Fri.)	5:30 p.m.
Radio Corleone Centrale		
	FM88-500 FM92	11:00 a.m.

MEXICO (Spanish)

Mazatlan	XECQ	8:30 a.m.
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NEW ZEALAND

Dunedin	4XD	11:15 a.m.
Whakatane	IXX	6:45 a.m.

NIGERIA

Radio Africa (Wed.)		8:00 p.m.
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PANAMA

Panama City	HOQ 1250	10:30 a.m.
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PHILIPPINES

Manila (Sat.)	DWXX 1026KH2	7:15 p.m.
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SOUTH AFRICA

Joubert Park (Thurs.)		
	SWAZI Music Radio	9:00 p.m.

SPAIN (Spanish)

Radio Girona (Mon.)		9:45 p.m.
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TONGA

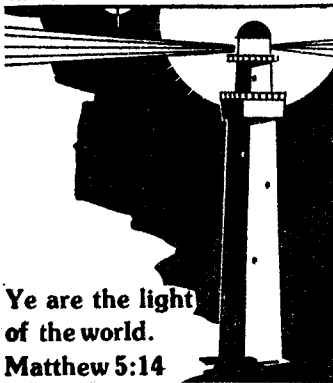
Nuku' Alofa (Mon.)		10:15 a.m.
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URUGUAY (Spanish)

Montevideo (Sun.)		9:15 a.m.
	Radio El Espectador 810	

VIRGIN ISLANDS

St. Croix	WSTX 970	9:00 a.m.
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Ye are the light
of the world.
Matthew 5:14

U.S. RADIO BROADCASTS SPANISH LANGUAGE

ARIZONA

Nogales	KFBR 1340	9:00 a.m.
Phoenix	KPHX 1480	7:00 a.m.

CALIFORNIA

El Centro	KICO 1490	6:00 a.m.
Fresno	KGST 1600	12:15 p.m.

FLORIDA

Miami	WRHC	8:30 a.m.
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The BIBLE ANSWERS

REGULAR TELEVISION BROADCASTS

We regret that we are unable to furnish the date and time of the broadcasts for the stations listed below:

CALIFORNIA
Chico KMPN-10
Sunday, 8:30 p.m.
Davis
Community Cable TV

FLORIDA
Miami WKID
Jacksonville 17

GEORGIA
Albany WTSG, 31
Sunday, 9:30 a.m.
Atlanta WATL

ILLINOIS Champaign-
Springfield WBHW

IOWA
Cedar Rapids KTS, 13
Mt. Vernon/
Lisbon WMVL Cable
Every weekday 7:00 a.m.

MICHIGAN
Ann Arbor WHI
Sunday, 9:30 a.m.

MISSISSIPPI
Jackson WAP1

MISSOURI
Springfield KOLR

NEW MEXICO
Roswell KSWs

NORTH CAROLINA
Hickory WHKY

OHIO
Dayton WHIO

TEXAS
Lubbock KCBD

WEST VIRGINIA
Logan 12-Monday

GUAM
KHAM, 9:00 a.m., Sun.

SATELLITE TRANSMISSION CABLE NETWORK SCHEDULE

This is a new schedule of stations and times of our satellite transmission broadcasts. The broadcasts are on Sundays, and the schedule is on Standard Time.

CITY CHANNEL

ALABAMA-8:00 a.m.
Dothan 3
Montgomery 6, 22
ARIZONA-7:00 a.m.
Phoenix 17, 30, 31, 38, 42
Tucson 37

ARKANSAS-8:00 a.m.
Joplin-Pittsburg 10
Little Rock 7, 23

CALIFORNIA-8:00 a.m.
Alhambra 48
Arroyo Grande 31
Bakersfield 29, 31
Beverly Hills 29
Laytonville 61

Los Angeles 14, 23, 30,
44, 48, 50, 56
Mountain View 34B
Palm Desert 33
Sacramento 25
San Francisco 21
Tulare 23
Ukiah 47

COLORADO-7:00 a.m.
Cortez 2
Denver 20

CITY CHANNEL
Englewood 35
Fort Collins 28
Greeley 22
Longmont 29
Parker 28

CONNECTICUT 9:00
Bridgeport 35
Groton G20
Plainville 33
West Haven 32-S

DELAWARE-9:00 a.m.
Dover 14A
Wilmington 2

FLORIDA-9:00 a.m.
Coral Gables 6
Florida City 18
Fort Lauderdale 25
Fort Myers 9
Kendall 33
Key West 5
Madison 4
North Miami Beach 12
Orlando 28
Pompano Beach 32
Sarasota 4

CITY CHANNEL
GEORGIA-9:00 a.m.
Atlanta 27
Augusta C
Decatur 27

IDAHO-7:00 a.m.
Boise 18
Caldwell 18
Idaho Falls 10

ILLINOIS-8:00 a.m.
Bellefonte 24
Elmhurst 19
Joliet 21
Mount Prospect 1
Sunnyside 36
Waukegan 33

INDIANA-9:00 a.m.
Hammond 22
Indianapolis 5
Lafayette 5
Munster 31
New Haven 10

IOWA-8:00 a.m.
Dubuque 22
Sioux City 23
Waterloo R(31)

CITY	CHANNEL	CITY	CHANNEL	CITY	CHANNEL
KANSAS-8:00 a.m.		NEW JERSEY-9:00 a.m.		Providence	30
Roland Park	5A, 10A	Fort Lee-Edgewater	S	Warwick	30
Wichita	13	Suffern (NY)	10		
KENTUCKY-9:00 a.m.		Newark	24	SOUTH CAROLINA-9:00	
Bowling Green	20	Trenton	34	Charleston	P
Covington	B-16			Columbia	4, 19F
Dayton	B-16	NEW MEXICO-7:00 a.m.		TENNESSEE-8:00 a.m.	
Lexington	31	Alamogordo	26	Bristol (VA)	18
Louisville	25	Albuquerque	12	Chattanooga	18
Westwood	21	Santa Fe	22	Knoxville	H, 15, 21
LOUISIANA-8:00 a.m.		NEVADA-6:00 a.m.		TEXAS-8:00 a.m.	
Lafayette	7	Las Vegas	21	Arlington	41
St. Bernard Parish	K(24)			Austin	16
MASSACHUSETTS-9:00		NEW YORK-9:00 a.m.		Brownwood	17
Arlington	32	Albany	29	Bryan	19
Beverly	43	Brookhaven	6	Dallas	71
Boston	B5	Buffalo	11	El Paso	13
Lynn	27	Manhattan	10	Fort Worth	16
Quincy	43	Niagara Falls	3	Galveston	31
		Rochester	12, 32	Harris	25
		Schenectady	8	Hitchcock	31
		Syracuse	17	Houston	22, 31
MARYLAND-9:00 a.m.		NORTH CAROLINA-		Irving	B30
North Brentwood	A-22	9:00		Odessa	25
MICHIGAN-9:00 a.m.		Apex	17	San Antonio	34
Birmingham	51	Greenville	27	Victoria	55
Clinton	10	Rocky Mount	26	Waco	17
Coldwater	27			VIRGINIA-9:00 a.m.	
Dearborn	38	OHIO-9:00 a.m.		Alexandria	30
Flint	23	Blue Ash	38	Chesterfield	28
Lincoln Park	31	Cincinnati	33	Danville	A
Plymouth	39	Cleveland	17	Newport News	13
Southfield	43	Columbus	8, 19	Richmond	11
Warren	10	Mentor-on-Lake	12	Staunton	8
		Poland Village	10		
MINNESOTA-8:00 a.m.		Youngstown	0	WASHINGTON-6:00	
Alexandria	UHF34			Tacoma	10
Richfield	34	OKLAHOMA-8:00 a.m.		Vancouver	28
N.W. Minneapolis	56	Tulsa	10	Yakima	16
St. James	48			WISCONSIN-8:00 a.m.	
MISSISSIPPI-8:00 a.m.		OREGON-6:00 a.m.		Ashwaubenon	31
Lafayette	12	Portland	0, 44	Green Bay	12
Meridian	7	Salem	26	Hustisford	26
				Madison	29
MISSOURI-8:00 a.m.		PENNSYLVANIA-9:00		Manitowoc	30
Chesterfield	32	Aston	3	Milwaukee	31A/B
Columbia	11	Erie	B29	New Berlin	31
Kansas City	8	Lansdale	18	Portage	33
Overland	23	Norristown	29	Sheboygan	13
St. Louis 13A, A13, 28, 33		Pittsburgh	57		
NEBRASKA-8:00 a.m.		Stroudsburg	23	WYOMING-8:00 a.m.	
Columbus	29	Uniontown	22	Douglas	7
Lincoln	36			PUERTO RICO	
Omaha	29	RHODE ISLAND-9:00		San Juan	24
		Lincoln	46		

cording to the Bible, hell is the condition or state of death, and that the dead are to be restored to life, as clearly stated in Revelation 20:13.

The Resurrection

It is this great feature of the divine plan that is described in the Bible as the resurrection of the dead. Paul said that there would be a resurrection of the dead, "both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15) He explains that Jesus was the firstfruits of the resurrection, and that as a result of his resurrection all mankind are to be brought forth from death. He said, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming."—I Cor. 15:20-23

While Jesus is **THE** firstfruits of the resurrection, those who will be associated with him are here also described by Paul as a firstfruits class. In Revelation 20:4, 6 these are shown as coming forth in "the first resurrection" to live and reign with Christ a thousand years. Like Jesus, these also will be highly exalted to the divine nature, and to immortality. Herein is the hope of immortality as set forth in the Word of God. Man is not inherently immortal, but those who qualify to live and reign with Christ will be given immortality in the resurrection.

Paul mentions this in I Corinthians 15:53, saying, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Obviously, if we possess immortality now, it could not be given to us as a reward in the resurrection. The promise of immortality is not made to all mankind but only to those who follow faithfully in the footsteps of Jesus—those who "by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life."—Rom. 2:7

Those who come forth in the first resurrection are among the just referred to by Paul in Acts 24:15. Another group of the just will be those ancient servants of God who lived and died prior to our Lord's first advent. These are often referred to as the Ancient Worthies. Paul mentions a number of them and shows that they will be made perfect in what he describes as a "better resurrection." (Heb. 11:35, 40) These, as we have seen, will be the human representatives of the divine Christ, made up of Jesus and his church.

The General Resurrection

Finally, in the outworking of God's grand design, when all the rulers and servants who will participate in Christ's kingdom are brought forth from death, including "a great multitude" referred to in Revelation 7:9,10, and when the messianic kingdom is established and operative, the awakening of the remainder of the dead world of mankind will begin. This we might refer to as the general resurrection. The great work of the general resurrection will occupy much of the thousand years of Christ's kingdom.

One of the promises of the general resurrection is found in Isaiah 35:10. This text reads: "The ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." The ransomed of the LORD includes all mankind, for, as Paul wrote, Jesus gave himself "a ransom for all." (I Tim. 2:3-6) There will return from death, the Bible hell.

As the ransomed of the LORD return from death they will, as the text states, come to Zion. Zion is one of the symbols of the kingdom of Christ which is used in the Bible, representing particularly the spiritual phase of the kingdom. In Revelation 14:1 Jesus and his faithful followers who will reign with him are shown together on Mount Zion. So, the ransomed of the LORD coming to Zion will mean their recognition of the messianic kingdom authority in the earth. It will be through their obedience to the laws of this kingdom

that they will obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Ezekiel 16:53 sets forth another assurance pertaining to the general resurrection. This promise mentions the people of Sodom and Samaria, as well as those Israelites who did not qualify for the better resurrection. We quote, "When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them." Here is one of the many instances in which the awakening of the dead is likened to the freeing of captives from a prison. In this case the great prison is the condition of death, which is the Bible hell.

In Jeremiah 48:47, the Moabites are assured that in the latter days they will be brought forth from their captivity in death. In the last verse of the next chapter a similar promise is made to the Elamites. Both the Moabites and the Elamites were ungodly people and are among the "unjust" spoken of by Paul who are to be resurrected from the dead.—Acts 24:15

"The Latter Days"

In the two promises just mentioned, we are informed that the resurrection is to take place in the latter days. The reference here is to the time when the grand design of the Creator for the restoration of the human race to life is being brought to a consummation. In the New Testament, Martha, the sister of Mary, used a similar expression when referring to the time of the resurrection. Her brother, Lazarus, had died, and Jesus said to her that he would live again. Martha replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."—John 11:24

In John 5:28,29, Jesus gives us another promise of the resurrection: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good [the just], unto

the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil [the unjust], unto the resurrection of judgment.” (RSV) Here it is indicated that in the resurrection the unjust will be judged. Note that those who have done evil are not awakened from death to be tormented.

Our Only Hope

No other religion in the world except the religion of the Bible holds out the hope of the resurrection of the dead. One very good reason for this is that all other religions teach that death is not a reality. If, as the claim is, there is no death, then there could be no resurrection of the dead, for no one is dead. The Bible, on the other hand, presents the truth that death is a reality and that mankind is dying because of sin.

“The wages of sin is death,” wrote Paul, “but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23) This gift of life through Christ reaches the people through a resurrection, and except for this resurrection, all the dead would remain in death. Paul stated it very emphatically when he wrote, “If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.”—I Cor. 15:16-18

We are thankful for the many assurances of the Bible that there will be a resurrection of the dead; that hell will give up its prisoners of death; that those held in captivity to death are to be released. These assurances should be of great comfort to all who have lost loved ones in death—and who has not been bereaved in this way?

Think of the mothers who have lost their children in death. The Bible gives us a special promise concerning these. We quote: “Thus saith the LORD: A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel [Rachel] weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work

shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border."—Jer. 31:15-17; Matt. 2:18

Here the condition of death, the Bible hell, is described as the land of the enemy. Paul refers to death as an enemy, an enemy which is to be destroyed by the reign of Christ. (I Cor. 15:25, 26) How good to realize that all the prisoners of death will no longer be incarcerated behind its darkened and gloomy walls, and that the children, and all mankind, will return from this land of the enemy!

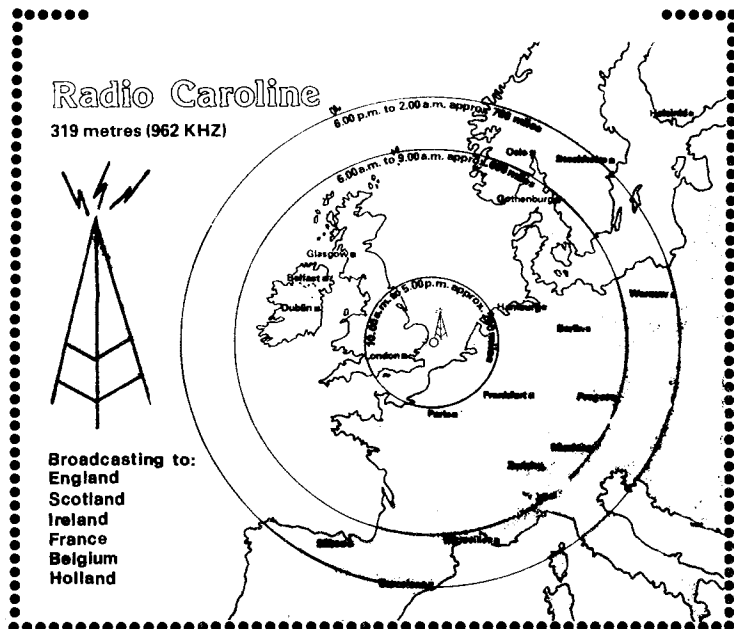
"There is hope in thine end," the LORD said to mothers whose children have died. While our beloved dead are now missed and lamented, this is not the end for them, for we are given a hope that they shall come again to their own border. They will cross over the border from the land of death to the land of the living, which, as far as mankind in general is concerned, the young and the old, will be here on the earth as humans. The young will then mature, and the old will renew their youth. Eventually the willing and obedient of all mankind will be restored to the original perfection lost through the sin of our first parents, with pain and death no longer afflicting them. This is the glorious prospect held out to us in the Bible concerning the sin-sick and suffering world. And what a glorious prospect it is:

"Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow, that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness will be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know

that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete." — **The Divine Plan of the Ages**; Rev. 21:4 □

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"FRANK AND ERNEST" BACK ON RADIO CAROLINE

BEGINNING Tuesday night, at 8:45 p.m., January 7, 1986, "**Frank and Ernest**" will again be heard throughout the British Isles and many other countries of Western Europe. Its weekly broadcast will be beamed to an audience of one hundred and sixty million people!



Christian Life and Doctrine

The Queen in Gold Attire

*"Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear;
forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;
so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy LORD
and worship thou him."* — Psalm 45:10, 11

THE beautiful imagery of our text and context relates to the elect church of this Gospel Age, which is here pictured as a bride, and ultimately the wife of a great king, Immanuel. The Scriptures abound with this view of the church. Notice, for instance, the apostle's words to the church of his day: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (II Cor. 11:2) Note again the words of John the Baptist, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy is therefore fulfilled." (John 3:29) The speaker does not identify himself with the bride class and this with propriety; for, as our Lord declares, John the Baptist was the last of the prophets; he belonged to and was faithful as a member of the house of servants, but did not come in under the Gospel privilege of the Pentecostal blessing following our Lord's redemptive work. Of him Jesus says, There has not arisen a greater man than John the Baptist, yet I "say unto you, . . . he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." (Luke 7:28) In other words, our Lord assures us that to have the humblest position in the church class, in the bride class being selected during this age, is a higher honor than that which belongs to the very noblest of the previous dispensations.

Failure to notice God's dispensational dealings with the patriarchs in the Jewish nation and with the Gospel church has hindered many of the LORD'S people from making good

progress in the study of the Word; and it is time that all awake to this fact and realize that various features of the divine plan belong to various dispensations or epochs, and that all these are working together for the grand fulfillment of God's glorious purposes, of which the apostle writes, "He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth." (Eph. 1:10) This great work is not yet accomplished. The angelic hosts do indeed give reverence and obedience to the glorified Son of God. A little flock of footstep-followers of the Lord Jesus from among men so glorify and honor him as King of kings and Lord of lords. But as for the masses of mankind, living and dead, they have never even heard his name, or known of the grace of God in him.

But according to the LORD'S Word these all must hear and know and have an opportunity for salvation through Christ in the millennium, the great thousand-year day which God has appointed for the world's trial and judgment; as we read, God "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) But prior to that appointed day he is calling out of the world a special class of those who have the hearing of faith and the eye of faith, that he may thus select the bride of Christ to be his joint-heir in that kingdom and his joint-associate in that glorious work of blessing all the families of the earth and granting to all of them a trial of judgment— a knowledge of the truth and an opportunity to show their willingness to obey it.

The Bridal Robes

The context declares (Ps. 45:13), Her clothing is inwrought with gold. But this pictures her as the bride when all the trials, difficulties and testings shall have been successfully passed and she shall be accepted as the very elect, to be forever associated with her Lord and a sharer of his glory. In the symbology of the Scriptures, gold is used to represent the divine nature. Hence the picture as a whole teaches us that when the King of kings shall present his bride before the

Heavenly Father at the close of this age, after she shall have been glorified by the first resurrection, she will receive the divine nature—"glory and honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7

This is what the Apostle Peter assures us will be the outcome. Speaking of the promises of God's word to this bride class, he says that God hath given unto us exceeding great and precious promises whereby we might be partakers of the divine nature. (II Pet. 1:4) We do not get this divine nature or this gold raiment in the present life; our immortality is a hope and not an actuality. As the apostle says, we seek for glory and honor and immortality. How difficult it is for us to grasp the thought that the great Creator, desiring that the elect little flock should be associated with his son in the great work of the Millennial Age, the blessing of all the families of the earth, did not invite the holy angels, but instead has sent the invitation to our fallen race, to such of its members as would have the ears to hear and the hearts to respond to the call of this Gospel Age—to walk the narrow way in the footsteps of our Redeemer!

No wonder the apostle declares that although we have God's assurance that we are sons of God, and although this signifies that we shall be heirs of God, yet it does not reveal what we shall be, how great we shall be. It is too wonderful a matter for us to comprehend; too wonderful to even be described in the Scriptures. Hence, the only information granted to us is that when it is revealed in the first resurrection, God's faithful sons will be like him, for they will see him as he is. (Ps. 17:15; Matt. 5:8) For flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God—though all flesh shall see the salvation of God, shall experience the blessings that will flow from that millennial kingdom and be recipients of the divine favors which will then be poured out upon all flesh with lavish hand and blessed results.—I Cor. 15:50; Isa. 40:5

But the context says more respecting the raiment. Note, "She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle-

work." (Ps. 45:14) This word brought is translated 'led' in the **Revised Standard Version**, and properly enough applies to the present life. All through the Gospel Age, from Pentecost until now, the LORD has used various instrumentalities to call out from the world this peculiar people; and by various instrumentalities he has led them from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, to prepare them for their final acceptance, in the first resurrection, clothed in gold—glory, honor and immortality.

It is in full accord with all this that the Scriptures represent all accepted of the LORD throughout this Gospel Age as having been granted a wedding garment, clean and white, "fine [pure] linen which is the righteousness of the saints." (Rev. 19:8) That robe figuratively represents justification, the covering of our blemishes; and it is a wedding garment because it constitutes a basis of our ultimate acceptance by the LORD in the end of this age, when the marriage of the Lamb shall come. These espoused ones are cautioned that their treatment of the robe will determine whether or not they will ultimately be of the bride class: (1) They must keep their garments unspotted from the world (Jas 1:27), and (2) must embroider them with fine needlework. Painstakingly they must endeavor to fix and establish in their robes the glorious pattern outlined for them by the word and example of their Bridegroom and his mouthpieces, the apostles.

Removing Spots and Wrinkles

If any of those called to be saints, on accepting that invitation and receiving the robe, supposed it would be an easy matter to keep it without spot or wrinkle or any such thing he was soon undeceived. Each one of this class has found out that it requires great circumspection, great care, to live in a world in which sin abounds and, as a new creature, to act through a body, the imperfections of which are continually coming to light as growth is made in grace and knowledge. The great apostle acknowledges the impossibility of perfection under present conditions—except that our hearts, our

intentions, our wills, might be perfect, should be perfect, must be perfect, thoroughly loyal to God and to righteousness. Paul says, When I would do good evil is present with me; and again, We cannot do the things that we would.—Rom. 7:19

The Scriptures declare that "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10); and when the thought of our own imperfections and the sin abounding all about us would make us fearful, convincing us of the impossibility of preventing our garments from receiving spots or wrinkles, what then? Ah, the Word tells us how these are to be gotten ride of; it tells us that the merit of our Lord's sacrifice not only cancelled for us our past sins and covered us with his robe of righteousness, but that all subsequent imperfections resulting from original sin, weakness, and ignorance, may be forgiven us and not remain as spots upon our robes. The apostle says, "The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:7) The thought of this text is not the original justification which we acquired when we received the robe, but a cleansing which may be ours after we are the LORD'S, and have the robe. The word cleanseth here refers not to something already past, but to that which is now at our disposal, which is now in progress—a cleansing or forgiveness which all the LORD'S people need to pray for and to accept, as in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Thus through the age from Pentecost on down, those who have been called, accepted, and robed with the wedding garment have been obliged to strive to keep their garments unspotted, and oft with tears to apply for the cleansing when a spot would be seen. Their consciences are so tender on the subject that their neighbors and friends of the world and nominal Christendom think them strange, peculiar people. They are more distressed to see one spot upon their robe than are many whose garments are filthy. But the effect upon them is a blessed one, as it develops in them more and more

love for righteousness and greater zeal and strength in overcoming. They are making progress, even though to themselves it may appear slow; they are becoming fortified, strengthened, and built up in character—in their love for whatsoever things are just, true, lovely, and of good report. (Phil. 4:8) We are now referring merely to that class of the called ones who will ultimately be accepted as the bride. We are not referring to all who make a consecration and are accepted of the LORD, but who fail to be thus particular about the spots and wrinkles on their robes. These we will consider later.

“If Ye Do These Things”

When the Apostle Peter said, “If ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (II Pet. 1:10, 11), he is referring to the same things that are represented by the embroidering, the needlework upon the wedding garment. All the espoused ones are shown the pattern on the robe. They are all informed of the necessity of working out their own salvation, of cooperating with the LORD in the matter of making their calling and election sure to the glorious station to which they have been invited. They are informed that through much tribulation shall they enter the kingdom. (Acts 14:22) This tribulation is the painstaking fine needlework of our context.

Not all tribulation that may come to mankind is a part of this embroidery. The apostle speaks of some in these words, “But let none of you suffer . . . as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters.” (I Pet. 4:15) The intimation is that such sufferings are not incidental to the embroidering we are to do, but the result of our not being engaged in our embroidering work and having time to meddle with sin or with other matters and affairs. Such tribulations add nothing to our embroidering work on the robe, except as they might awaken us to a sense of our neglect of the important work which must be done in our own characters if we would be fit

for a share with our Lord in his kingdom, fit to be accepted as members of the very elect, the bride, the church in glory.

The baneful experiences which come to us as a result of our faithfulness to the LORD, to the truth, to the brethren—these constitute parts of the embroidering. These help us to fix in our hearts and characters the principles of righteousness and of love divine. How tedious the work appears to us sometimes! At the close of each day we are astonished at how little we have accomplished; and the weeks and months go by with similar experiences. With the close of the year, when we give our robes particular attention we behold the comparatively little that has been accomplished since the examination of the year before. But how does the LORD view this matter? Is he expecting that you and I and all of his followers will be able in every detail to follow the glorious pattern that is stamped upon our robes? Will he require of us as a condition of our acceptance as his bride that not a feature or detail shall be lacking? Oh no! Such a view would swerve and at once discourage us from further effort. The entire tenor of Scripture is to the contrary. As, for instance, in the parable of the talents, our Lord represents some as having less ability and some more, and indicates that his approval will be in proportion as we have endeavored to accomplish his will. The one who had faithfully used the two talents heard the same words of approval as the one who had five talents and used them—“Well done, thou good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy LORD.”—Matt. 25:21

And so with the robe: If the LORD, who takes cognizance of our endeavors, sees persistency and the right intention he counts it unto us as being perfect. We shall not be married in these robes. These are merely the ones in which we are being led to the marriage. More and more they should show our love, our zeal, and patient endurance. As the Master examines the work, will he not expect to find the last better than the first, even though none of it be perfect? Will not this be the basis of his approval of our endeavors and on account

of which he will be willing to give us the new robe of gold?

Some of us, perhaps, remembering that when we were children at school, we had writing copybooks with perfect copperplate engravings at the top of each page to copy. Alas! and do we not remember also that in many instances the first few lines were the best on the page and that carelessness and indifference to the copy and to the necessity for the lesson became more and more marked as we proceeded to the bottom of the page? We remember that we copied our own instead of looking to the engraving at the top. So it is with this matter of the embroidering of our robes. If we become heedless, careless, indifferent, overcharged with the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches and the affairs of this world, our robes will show it. Little embroidering will be done and it will be of poor quality. Spots will get on which we shall neglect to cleanse away. Soon our robes will be entirely unfit for the inspection of the LORD or for the marriage. It is time, dear friends, that we awake to the responsibilities of the hour, that we realize that the Bridegroom is nigh, even at the door; that the last of the wise virgins will soon enter into the marriage and the door shut; and that the choicest blessings of all time will soon be won or lost as far as we are concerned.—Matt. 25:1-13; Eph. 5:15-17

Love Fulfills the Law

Let us make no mistake as respects what constitutes this needlework, this embroidery. It is not knowledge, though knowledge is very necessary to its proper in-working. It represents not natural talents, though these may be utilized in connection with it. It represents not merely laborious works, though these may be very proper and perhaps necessary to it if conditions are favorable. This embroidery represents love; for "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." (Rom. 13:10) This is the new commandment which our Lord has given, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." (John 13:34) Love for the LORD and his truth.

he places on a parity when he says, "Me and my . . . Word." One of course, comes first. To our LORD and his Word we must be true at all hazards. Then comes love for the brethren—because they are his—because they have his Spirit—because they are seeking to walk in his footsteps. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—I John 4:20

This is the forceful argument of the apostle. The love must continue and extend to neighbors, friends, yea, to enemies, so that those who would have the full pattern on their robes must have in their characters a true, genuine, staunch love for all these. And if, perchance, the enemy should be a brother, the testing to love might be all the more severe. But that this feature of the embroidery be worked is our LORD'S requirement. Whoever does not love even his enemies is not fit for the kingdom—whatever else he may be fit for. Love as brethren, be pitiful, be sympathetic, be generous, be helpful, be self-sacrificing, do unto others as you would they should do unto you. Let the Golden Rule measure your thoughts, words, and deeds—measure the length of your stitches in your embroidery and assure yourself that it is fine needlework.

Our context declares that when the bride class shall be the queen and shall be presented before the Father, the virgins, her companions, shall follow after. Who are these virgins? They are those represented in the parable as the foolish virgins. They were as truly virgins as the wise ones, as truly justified and as truly consecrated to the LORD. They also had the wedding garment. Theirs also was stamped with the pattern for embroidery. But they neglected the work. They became overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches. The first spot upon the robe distressed them; but subsequently they became accustomed to seeing it spotted, and thought less and less of the matter. They were themselves free to admit not only their consecration and their possession of the robe, but also its disfigurement by the spots and wrinkles which they did not approve, but which

they had given up the thought of removing as too great a task to perform.—Mark 4:19

What they should do is to apply to the bridegroom for the cleansing fluid, the precious blood—that he would take away these spots and blemishes, giving such chastisements as his wisdom would see best for their inattention and carelessness. They should entreat that they might no longer be of the foolish virgin class but of the wise—wise toward God, wise to appreciate the fact that the great blessing now being proffered to the very elect is valuable beyond all estimate. But the more spots and wrinkles that get on the robe, the more likely is the wearer to be careless. Noting that the majority of even the consecrated have spots and wrinkles, he is apt to conclude he is no worse than others, and not nearly as bad as many. How we would like to awaken some of those to a realization of their proper position and need of prompt action and redoubled energy not only in securing the cleansing of the robe but also in the work of embroidering it with the needlework and graces of the Spirit which they have so sadly neglected!—II Cor. 10:14

Our father's house is the world; for as the apostle declares, we were "children of wrath, even as others." (Eph. 2:3) In accepting our Lord's invitation to be his bride we are joining a new family, a new house. We are exhorted to show our appreciation of our espousal by forgetting the house and family to which we formerly belonged and held allegiance. This is in harmony with the apostle's exhortation, "Forgetting the things which are behind," I press on to "those things which are before"; and again, the things that I once loved, now I hate—things highly esteemed among men I now see to be unworthy of those called to be "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord."—Phil. 3:13; Rom. 7:15

"Forget Thy Father's House"

Here, dear friends, is the gist of the entire question: Our LORD declares that we and the entire world are either for

him and his cause or against the same. There is no neutral ground; and hence in leaving the father's house, the world, and our own people, and in becoming members of the new creation, the church, the body of Christ, begotten of the Holy Spirit, we should understand that the change is a radical one and not any longer seek for our fellowship and joys from the worldly sources but only among those who with ourselves are consecrated to the LORD. The more we attempt to mix worldly things and prospects and aims with our high calling, the more it will be shown that we are at the very most, foolish virgins; for we cannot serve God and mammon. This, of course, does not signify unkindness toward friends or neighbors or kindred. The LORD'S saints are exhorted to do good unto all men as they have opportunity, but especially unto the household of faith. And they must particularly identify themselves with the latter and their aims, if they would come off conquerors and be received by their Lord and king as his joint-heir and bride, and be introduced as such to the Heavenly Father.—Gal. 6:10; 11 John 8 □

—From **Pastor Russell's Sermons**, pp. 251-261

~ ~ ~ Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

JANUARY 2—Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.—I Corinthians 6:19,20 (Z. '97-35 Hymn 191)

JANUARY 9—Who maketh thee to differ from one another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?—I Corinthians 4:7 (Z. '03-430 Hymn 121)

JANUARY 16—Instant in prayer.—Romans 12:12 (Z. '02-172 Hymn 274)

JANUARY 23—Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.—I Corinthians 7:24 (Z. '99-155 Hymn 52)

JANUARY 30—Jesus spoke a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.—Luke 18:1 (Z. '95-214 Hymn 239)

Talking Things Over

Statistical Report

for the year ended September 30, 1985

	Receipts	Expenditures
General Fund	\$265,980.60	
Radio (domestic only)	23,198.41	92,633.87
Television	9,848.78	57,206.44
Traveling Speakers (U.S. & Overseas)	10,079.95	30,534.84
Overseas (including radio)	50,000.00	55,025.05
Recorded Lecture Service	787.50	3,072.91
Free Literature	2,676.93	2,676.93
Free Subscriptions	213.56	213.56
Sales of Dawn Publications	35,735.39	298,860.84
Advertising (magazine & newspapers)	496.00	32,481.06
Film Service	1,179.08	71,647.58
Video Tape Service	10,031.00	8,250.00
Other (interest, securities, etc.)	57,377.12	
Totals before bequests	\$467,604.32	\$652,603.08
Bequests received	346,925.04	
	<u>\$814,529.36</u>	<u>\$652,603.08</u>

FOR the fiscal year reported, the Dawn had an operating loss, before bequests, of \$184,998.76. Bequests in the amount of \$346,925.04 made up this loss and posted a total net gain of \$161,926.28.

Income from contributions was up 9% from the prior year, while expenses also showed an increase of 9%. It is apparent that the LORD is still making it possible for the Word of truth to go forth, and our desire is to make the media for its promulgation—radio and TV, books, booklets, films, tapes and video tapes—available to all at the lowest possible price. Much of it is free.

The brethren of the Dawn rejoice in sharing with you the privileges of doing this work, especially in these closing days of the Gospel Age when our message of hope is so much needed by a troubled world. May the LORD continue to bless and direct us all!

The Word Goes Forth

*"That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving,
and tell of all Thy wondrous works."*

Psalms 26:7

THOSE who are truly thankful to the LORD for opening their eyes of understanding to discern the wonderful works of God on behalf of his human creatures, as revealed through his divine plan of the ages, will be on the alert to seek ways and means to publish these glorious truths, to tell all of his wondrous works.

Your brethren of the Dawn are truly thankful for the privilege they enjoy of being co-workers with so many thousands of the LORD'S people, scattered in so many places throughout the world, in publishing the truth. At the close of another year's activity we can look back and praise the way the LORD has directed in connection with the publishing of his truth as widely as possible in this chaotic world in which we live.

To us the truth which should be published is represented in the basic doctrines of the divine plan which are clearly set forth in the Word of God, such as the ransom, restitution, the high calling of the church, the glorious kingdom blessings for the world, and the hope we have of living and reigning with Christ in that kingdom. There are also those truths pertaining to God's purpose in the creation of the earth and of man, the divine penalty for sin, and the glorious hope of resurrection for both the church and the world. There are also those truths concerning the **Logos** and the Holy Spirit, and how it operates on behalf of God's people.

These are some of the basic truths of the divine plan which are clearly set forth in the Bible, and their proclamation is a veritable melody of praise and thanksgiving to God for his lovingkindness to us! No greater privilege has ever been offered by the LORD to his people this side of the veil than to publish his truths concerning the Creator's grand design.

And it is a particular joy at this time of world distress and chaos to be able to assure those who may have a hearing ear that the glorious messianic kingdom is indeed near. A dense darkness with respect to God's kingdom plan for the blessing of the people now fills the earth. Actually, the whole period of sin and death has been one of darkness, and during this nighttime weeping has continued, but how thankful we are that joy cometh in the morning, and that the promises of God are harbingers of that morning which are piercing through the darkness of the world's long night of sin.

What a glorious message we have to publish! And in our cooperation with the brethren to publish this kingdom of hope we will, as in the past, refrain from in any way interfering with the activities of local ecclesias, no matter how small the ecclesias may be. We will be happy to cooperate in any way we can, and to the extent that we are asked to do so, but to us the independence of the local ecclesia is a sacred thing which in no way should be abridged by a service organization, or in any other way. Throughout the more than fifty-two years we have been cooperating with the brethren, the LORD has continued to bless this principle of noninterference in local ecclesia affairs, and we are confident that he will continue to do so, to his glory, and to the blessing of his people. of his people.

A Good Year

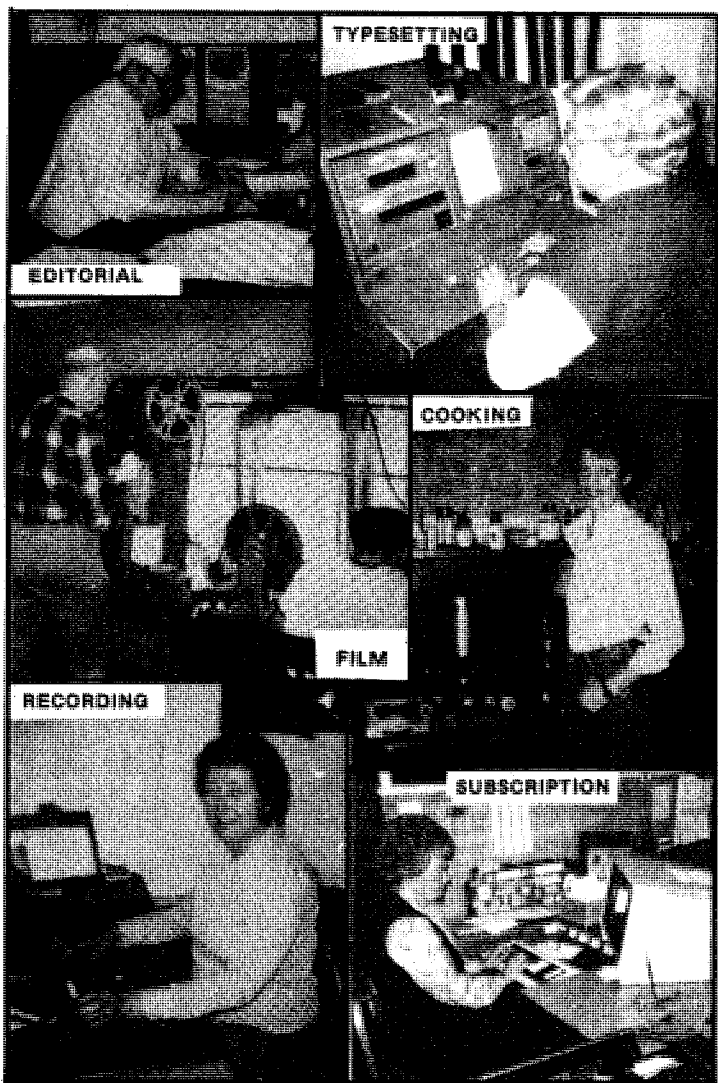
Yes, 1985 was a good year for the proclamation of the truth and the service of the brethren, and we look forward to 1986 with joyful anticipation of the many opportunities of service which the LORD'S people will enjoy. It is easy, of course, to look back and evaluate the past, and to rejoice in the way in which the LORD blessed us. But for the future it is different.

For more than half a century the LORD'S people have been living with the thought that each year may be the last in which a general ministry for the truth could be carried on. But still we go on—although with the certain knowledge that the final year of the Gospel Age will surely come, and exactly

at God's due time. But even with this knowledge, it is the LORD'S will, we believe, that the brethren continue to be alert, and ready for whatever opportunities of service may come to them. We believe that our brethren everywhere share this viewpoint, and that is why we are confident that, the LORD willing, 1986 will be another good year for the harvest work. □







Voices from the Past

BROTHER GEORGE M. WILSON, Chautauqua 1941

A Faithful and True Witness

BROTHER George M. Wilson, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, talked on the subject, "The Faithful and True Witness."

In his opening remarks, Brother Wilson referred to Jesus as the outstanding witness mentioned in the Scriptures, and reminded the brethren of how the Master's faithfulness led to suffering and trial. Being a true witness, Jesus was tested, oppressed, despised, rejected, betrayed, reviled, condemned, scourged, mocked, wounded, smitten, bruised, stricken, forsaken, and finally crucified.



To be a faithful and true witness, it is necessary for us to have the truth, and to know that we have the truth. Brother Wilson referred to a discourse given years ago by Brother B.H. Barton, in which he pointed out many of the reasons why we know we have the truth. Among some of the reasons suggested are the following:

It is Scriptural; we use the entire Bible; it harmonizes; it eliminates harping on one part of the Bible to the exclusion of others; many who now accept it, were once opposed to it; our enemies help to support it; it creates opposition—the darkness hateth the light; it presents a plan with a fixed purpose; it is reasonable and logical; it magnifies God's character; it answers our questions and solves our problems; it comforts us in time of sorrow; it attracts few, but these few are from all

walks of life; it is unpopular now even as it was in Jesus' day; those who really believe it place it before everything else; it sanctifies the believer; it transforms one into the likeness of the Lord; it brings us close to the Lord and to the brethren; a stand for the truth often divides families as Jesus said it would; it leads to and results in a life of self-sacrifice; it is corroborated by the signs of the times and the fulfillment of prophecy; and, it establishes the fact of our Lord's second presence through the help of that wise and faithful servant. The message and the messenger are inseparable.

Stephen was a true and faithful witness who laid down his life because of his faithfulness to the truth. Stephen apparently did not reap any great results at the time, in the way of converting others, but there is no doubt that Saul of Tarsus, who stood by holding the garments of those who murdered Stephen, never forgot what he saw and heard on that occasion. No doubt his witnessing of the courage and loyalty of this faithful martyr, was the beginning of a great transformation in the life of Saul, even though for a short time thereafter he continued to persecute the church.

Later, Paul himself became another of the true and faithful witnesses. May all of these wonderful examples of faithfulness encourage us in our determination to live true and faithful to the LORD as we, during the remaining years of the harvest, endeavor to lay down our lives in bearing witness to the truth. □

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THOU CROWNEST THE YEAR WITH THY GOODNESS.
—Psalm 65:11

SPIRITUALLY, we have feasted on the bounties of divine favor; while in things temporal, under whatsoever circumstances we have been placed, having the assurance that all things work together for good to them that love God, we have realized that godliness with contentment is great gain, having promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come. □

Speakers' Appointments

MINISTERING THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF CHRIST

These speakers are associated with the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their services are furnished free upon request. Write to: Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged when possible.

G. PASSIOS		Fresno, CA	8
Middletown, NY	January 12	Palo Alto, CA	9
		San Francisco, CA	10
E.K. PENROSE		Sacramento, CA	12
Victorville, CA	January 3	Upper Lake, CA	14
Los Angeles, CA	5	Victorville, CA	16
San Luis Obispo, CA	7	Phoenix, AZ	19

OVERSEAS' APPOINTMENTS

DAVID BRUCE

Nabour, Australia	January 27-30
Sydney, Australia	31
Melbourne, Australia	February 1-5
Adelaide, Australia	6, 7
Perth, Australia	8-10
Melbourne, Australia	10-12
Auckland, New Zealand	13-16



Obituaries

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

Sister Naomi R. Price, West Australia—October 25. Age, 68.

Brother Earl Webster, Denver, CO—November 20. Age, 80.

We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.

Conventions

These Conventions are listed at the request of the individual Classes who are sponsoring the gatherings.

ST. PETERSBURG, FL, January 12—Majestic Park Homes (formerly Heilman's), 8300 Seminole Blvd., Alt. 19, Seminole 33542. Contact Mrs. Lloyd Hagensick, 8003 Seminole Blvd., Lot 8, Seminole 33542. Phone: (813) 391-1772

PALO ALTO, CA, January 25, 26—San Jose Masonic Temple, 2500 Masonic Drive, San Jose. Write Mrs. Irene Altuvilla, 1201 Sycamore Ter., Sp. 67, Sunnyvale, CA 94086. Phone: (408) 296-1913

CHICAGO, IL, January 26—Write B.J. Hack, Secy. 3820 W. 116th Place, Garden Homes, IL 60655, for details.

SACRAMENTO, CA, February 14-16—Sierra Inn Travelodge, 2600 Auburn Blvd. Mrs. E.F. Lankford, 6000 19th Avenue, 95820. Phone: (916) 457-0569

FLORIDA BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, March 1-3—Orlando,

FL. For information and reservations (by February 15), contact Michael Balko, 321 Kentia Rd., Casselberry, FL 32707. (305) 339-7580

ROCKLAND BIBLE STUDENTS, March 9—Bear Mountain State Park, Overlook Lodge, Bear Mountain, NY. Mrs. Dawn Sahlhieu, 1041 Johnston Dr., Watchung, NJ 07060

GARY AREA BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, March 29, 30—Hobart YMCA, 601 West 40th Place, Hobart, IN. For information contact John Ulicni, 6703 Tyler Ave., Merrillville, IN 46410. Phone: (219) 769-5647

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, Willingen, West Germany, August 2-8—Der Sauerland Stern Hotel. Write: International Convention of Bible Students, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Phone: (213) 454-5248

**A New Year dawns to mark for us
The measured beat of time;
An opportunity is thus
Extended thee and thine.**



**What will we do, what will we be
In the New Year ahead?
What growth and progress shall we see
As upward we do tread?**



**God grant that as the sands of time
Run low within our glass,
Our faith and hope and love sublime
Shall bring his will to pass.**