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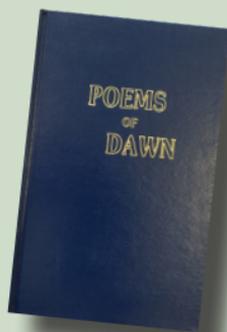
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in Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 2:5*

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O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer.”*

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The DAWN

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The Bible Versus the Traditions of Men

The following article is taken from portions of a public lecture given sixty-four years ago, in 1958, at Indiana University by the late W. Norman Woodworth, editor of The Dawn magazine from the year 1932 until his death in 1975.

The views presented more than six decades ago, we hold as true today; namely, that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, revealing his plan and eternal purpose for the blessing of mankind.

When rightly understood, and human traditions removed, the testimony of the Scriptures becomes harmonious, and criticisms of it unfounded.

BILLIONS OF PEOPLE in the world today profess to accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God. It speaks with relative degrees of authority to the members of thousands of religious denominations. Without doubt it is to be found in the homes of more people than any other book, and at least portions of it have been translated into practically every language of the earth.

The Bible also has more enemies than any other book. Throughout many centuries of the Christian era, devious attempts were made to blot it out of existence. For hundreds of years, it was kept buried in dead languages. To own and read the Bible was a crime which led to persecution, torture, and often death.

As the increasing light of a better day began to dispel some of the superstitions of the Dark Ages, the Bible came under attack by so-called “higher critics” and evolutionists. Its historical narratives were branded as merely allegorical, and its people, it was claimed, were only myths which flitted across the over-stimulated imaginations of its naive and irresponsible writers.

However, the Bible lives on, and today it still enjoys the greatest circulation of any book in the world—and well it might! The efforts made during the Dark Ages to keep it from the people failed. The claims of the higher critics that its records are unreliable have been proven false by the archeologists who have discovered undeniable evidence that the various places and prominent people of the Bible actually existed. Moreover, the Bible is the only book in the world today which furnishes a satisfactory explanation of the present distress of nations, and what the certain outcome will be.

The Bible is also the only book in the world which presents a logical, scientifically correct account of creation. It explains how the first humans came into existence and what the final destiny of man will be. The directness and simplicity with which the opening chapters of the Bible tell the story of man’s creation and listing the names

and ages of the descendants of the first human pair for a period of more than sixteen hundred years, stamps it as being authentic, and just what it claims to be; namely, the inspired Word of God. How else could such detailed information concerning a period predating the most ancient of human records be chronicled?

THE DIVINE PLAN

The reasonableness and harmony of the Bible come more brilliantly to light, however, when we consult its testimony concerning the divine purpose in the creation of man. In Genesis 1:26,27 we are informed that God created man in his own image, commanding him to multiply and fill the earth, and to have dominion over the earth. From this we learn that God's design for man was that he should live on the earth and have dominion over all the lower forms of the earthly creation.

Many long centuries after this statement was made concerning God's purpose in creating man, the Prophet David wrote, "What is man, that thou [Jehovah] art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet."—Ps. 8:4-6

In Hebrews 2:6-8, the Apostle Paul quotes this statement of the eighth Psalm, confirming the Genesis account of creation, in which we are told that God created man to live on, and to have dominion over, the earth. Then Paul adds a significant observation. He says, "But now we see not yet all things

put under him.” In other words, as Paul observes, the original design of God in the creation of man has not yet been realized.

Continuing, Paul indicates why: “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” (vs. 9) Human traditions which have come down to us from past centuries assert that Jesus came to suffer and die in order to afford believing individuals of the human race an opportunity to live in heaven for all eternity, and to escape eternal torment.

However, Paul does not agree with this tradition. His explanation is that in the coming and death of Jesus we see evidence that the original design of God concerning man is yet to become a reality. Why, though, should it be necessary for Jesus to die in order for the divine purpose with respect to man to be accomplished?

The Book of Genesis furnishes the answer to this question. When man was created, he was placed under divine law and warned that disobedience would result in death: “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. 2:17) The record is that man did disobey his Creator’s law, and human experience confirms the reality of the foretold penalty of death which has been carried out ever since. Each generation of the human race has, without exception, gone down into the great prison-house of death. Man lost the privilege of living, and with this he also lost his dominion over the earth.

The Bible, however, reveals that God has a plan for the recovery of humanity from death. That plan

is centered in Jesus, the Redeemer and Savior of the world. Throughout the Old Testament we find many promises of God that he would send a redeemer and a savior; and that this great One of promise would, in an age set aside by the Creator, restore fallen and dying man to life on the earth. The Apostle Peter referred to the combined testimony of the prophets concerning this as meaning that there would be “times of restitution of all things.”—Acts 3:20,21

When Jesus was born the angel testified, “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:10) Thus Paul, in quoting the words of the Prophet David, asserting that man was created to have dominion over the earth, simply explained that the coming and death of Jesus was to the end that this original purpose of God was yet to be accomplished, and that the divine plan for its accomplishment had already been set in motion. Jesus, the Redeemer and Savior, had come for this purpose.

TRADITIONS BECLOUD

God’s plan for the restoration of man to his lost earthly home and dominion has long been hidden by the influence of human traditions which, in large measure, have been inspired by Satan, the great deceiver. His deceptions began in the Garden of Eden. While God had said that death would be the penalty for sin, Satan said, speaking through the serpent, “Ye shall not surely die.”—Gen. 3:4

This lie of Satan has formed the basis of many erroneous human traditions. In essence, it denies

the reality of death. It has made its way into nearly all the non-Christian religions of the world. Among professed Christians, Satan's original lie has also found expression in the claim that man has an immortal soul, so, in reality, he does not die. The Scriptures, however, clearly state, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."—Ezek. 18:4

This human tradition that man's soul is immortal left no place for the teachings of the Bible pertaining to redemption from death through a Redeemer and a resurrection of the dead. Since, according to this tradition, man could not die, he must go somewhere when he seems to die. Believers, it was claimed, went to heaven; unbelievers to a place of torment, which would be either temporary or eternal, depending on the viewpoint of each individual denomination. Obviously, with misleading traditions of this sort beclouding the mind, one would be hindered from seeing the beauty and simplicity of God's plan of recovery for the human race, and the opportunity which would be given for all to live on the earth as restored human beings forever.

THE HEAVENLY HOPE

To be sure, support is found in the Scriptures for the claim of a heavenly hope. The Bible speaks of a heavenly home for the followers of Jesus. "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," wrote Paul. (Heb. 3:1) Likewise, Peter wrote of an "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."—I Pet. 1:4

The Bible reveals, however, that it is only the faithful followers of Jesus, a "little flock," who will receive a heavenly reward. (Luke 12:32) This hope

is not to be thought of as an escape from traditional eternal torture, but that these faithful ones may be associated with Jesus in the glorious kingdom work of restoring mankind in general to perfect human life on the earth. The promise to these is that if they suffer and die with Jesus, they will live and reign with him. (II Tim. 2:12) Thus seen, there is a genuine purpose in the exaltation of true Christians to be with Jesus. These receive immortality in the resurrection, hence the use of the word “immortality” in the Bible. Man is not inherently immortal. Satan’s assertion that there is no death is a lie, and as Jesus said concerning him, “He is a liar, and the father of it.”—John 8:44

With the “heaven and hell” traditions blinding students of the Bible to God’s purpose that man was intended to live on the earth forever, there seemed no reason why the earth should continue to exist. This led to another false claim—namely, that with the return of Christ the earth would be destroyed by fire. This erroneous “end of the world” tradition beclouded still further the glorious truth concerning the times of restitution of all things. The Bible tells us, however, that “the earth abideth for ever,” and that God “created it not in vain,” but “formed it to be inhabited.”—Eccles. 1:4; Isa. 45:18

The Bible does speak of the end of the world, but the reference is not to the literal earth, but to a selfish, sinful social order—Satan’s world. The various upheavals of human society which bring about the destruction of the present world are symbolized in the prophecies by storms, earthquakes, winds, and fire. In an effort to prove the

traditional end of the world, these symbols have been interpreted literally. For example, the Apostle Peter wrote concerning this time that the earth would melt and its works be burned up, but he then follows with the promise of a “new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (II Pet. 3:10,13) The “new earth” in which righteousness will reign will be a new righteous order, under the leadership of Christ, to be established on planet Earth, replacing Satan’s evil world of sin and death.

When we set aside human traditions and accept the testimony of the Bible, we see the true end of the world is something we can anticipate with joy. It will mean the end of the reign of sin and death, and the establishment of the long-promised kingdom of Christ. When properly understood, we can see that the prophecies of the Bible pertaining to the end of Satan’s world are already in process of fulfillment. This is the true explanation of present world events. Man is failing to establish peace and goodwill throughout the earth because the time is near for Christ to take over Satan’s house and assume the rulership of the world. (Mark 3:27; Rev. 11:17,18) We are already in this period of great trouble and turmoil that immediately precedes the establishment of his kingdom.—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21; Luke 21:25,26

THE JUDGMENT DAY TRADITION

The Bible speaks of a future day of judgment, but the true nature and purpose of this feature of the plan of God has also been obscured by human creeds. If, as tradition mistakenly holds, the righteous go to heaven when they die, and the wicked

to a place of torment, with the eternal destiny of both classes fixed at death, there would be no valid need for a future day of judgment.

The conclusion drawn by many throughout the centuries has been that the day of judgment spoken of in the Bible is to be twenty-four hours in length. This, another tradition, claims that the righteous are to be brought out of heaven and the wicked from torment, have their virtues and their sins rehearsed, and then be returned to their respective places. Just how so many billions could be brought before the judgment throne in twenty-four hours seems to be quite inexplicable.

How beautiful the teaching of the Bible on this subject is seen to be when human tradition is set aside! In the beginning Adam was on trial—a period of probation which ended in the sentence of death being pronounced upon him. Through the redemptive work of Jesus, Adam and his race are released from that original sentence. During a future judgment day, which will last for a thousand years, each will individually be placed on probation and given the opportunity of accepting the provision of life through Christ by obeying the laws of the kingdom then in force. All who comply with these terms, will live forever.—Acts 17:31; Isa. 26:9; Ps. 96:12,13; II Pet. 3:8-13

The Apostle Peter wrote, “The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (I Pet. 4:17,18) From this statement it is clear that the present age is the judgment day

for the followers of Jesus. Those who have been enlightened with the truth of God's Word, and have dedicated themselves to do his will, following in the footsteps of Jesus, are now on trial for life. For any of these to become fully and willfully disobedient to the gospel would lead to the loss of eternal life.

The tests of the Christian's judgment day are severe. The way is difficult and narrow. (Matt. 7:14; 16:24; I Pet. 1:17) Thus Peter asks, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" He does not reply to this question, but the testimony of the Scriptures is that those who do not now dedicate themselves to do God's will, will appear for trial in the future judgment day of the world, in which they will be judged under the righteous order of that day, not under today's general conditions of sin, selfishness, suffering and death.

In mankind's future judgment day, the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth "as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9) Satan, the great deceiver of mankind, will then be bound. (Rev. 20:1-3) Then the books of divine revelation will be opened, in order that the dead, awakened from death, might know the will of God for them. Those who then bring their lives into harmony with the things written in the books will have their names enrolled in "the book of life," and if they continue faithful, will live forever, as Adam would have done had he successfully passed the test of obedience which was placed upon him.—Rev. 20:12; John 5:28,29, *Young's Literal Translation*

While the tests upon the footstep followers of Jesus during the present time of judgment are more severe than those that will be exacted upon the

world in general in the future judgment day, the reward for faithfulness is correspondingly greater. The disciples of Christ who prove faithful even unto death will be rewarded with immortality, the divine nature. They will live and reign with Christ, and will participate with him in the future work of judging the world.—Rom. 2:7; I Cor. 15:53; II Pet. 1:4; Rev. 20:6; I Cor. 6:2

On the other hand, mankind in general who pass the tests of the future time of judgment will be restored to human perfection and enjoy the beauties and blessings of a perfected earth forever. The dominion over the earth, which was forfeited through disobedience, will be restored to them. Thus, we can understand why Jesus, when providing his model prayer to the disciples, instructed them to pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matt 6:10) Indeed, it is the purpose of God’s coming kingdom that his will be done “in earth,” just as it is done in heaven. What a glorious prospect for mankind’s future!

The Apostle Paul will not then need to write, “Now we see not yet all things” put under man. (Heb. 2:8) Then he will be able to write not only that we see Jesus as the Redeemer and Savior of the world, but also as the great King and Judge. Moreover, he will be the “Everlasting Father” who, through the agencies of the kingdom, has brought eternal life to all the willing and obedient of mankind. (Isa. 9:6,7) The human race, restored to divine favor, will then return to fellowship with their great Creator, Jehovah God. “He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”—Rev. 21:3 ■

Tell Me About the Master

Tell me about the Master!

*I am weary and worn tonight;
The day lies behind me in shadow,
And only the evening is light!
Light with a radiant glory
That lingers about the west,
My poor heart is weary, aweary,
And longs, like a child, for rest.*

Tell me about the Master!

*Of the hills He in loneliness trod,
When the tears and blood of His anguish,
Dropped down on Judea's sod.
For to me life's seventy mile-stones
But a sorrowful journey mark;
Rough lies the hill country before me,
The mountains behind me are dark.*

Tell me about the Master!

*Of the wrongs He freely forgave;
Of His love and tender compassion,
Of His love that is mighty to save;
For my heart is aweary, aweary,
Of the woes and temptations of life,
Of the error that stalks in the noonday,
Of falsehood and malice and strife.*

Yet I know whatever of sorrow

*Or pain or temptation befall,
The infinite Master hath suffered,
And knoweth and pitieth all.
So tell me the sweet old story,
That falls on each wound like a balm,
And my heart that is bruised and broken
Shall grow patient and strong and calm.*

—Poems of Dawn

A New Earth

Key Verse: “*God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*”
—*Revelation 21:4*

Selected Scripture:
Revelation 21:1-7

heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”—II Pet. 3:7-12; Isa. 65:17-25

The term “new heavens” does not mean a new location for God’s throne, but rather new conditions with spiritual power and control by Christ and his church in glory. Similarly, “new earth” does not signify another planet, but rather a new social arrangement on planet Earth, which the Scriptures assure “abideth for ever.”—Eccles. 1:4

“And there was no more sea,” John continues. (Rev. 21:1) “Sea” is a symbol of the masses of people who are in a restless and dissatisfied condition. Under the control of the new heavens, the new spiritual ruling powers of Christ and the glorified church, the reconstructed social

ONE OF THE REVELATIONS

which God gave to the Apostle John was the vision of a “new heaven and a new earth.” (Rev. 21:1) The imperfect world in which we currently live is described as “this present evil world.” (Gal. 1:4) Our adversary Satan is the “prince” and “god of this world,” and has “blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ ... should shine unto them.” (Eph. 2:2; II Cor. 4:4) The “heavens and the earth which are now” will soon pass away, and be replaced by a “new

arrangement on earth will be so satisfactory, complete, and thorough that there will be no more dissatisfaction among the people. This new order of things will secure justice to every person and obliterate the inequalities of wealth and power which now exist.

John states that he “saw the holy city, new Jerusalem.” (vs. 2) In the Bible a city oftentimes is used to represent a government. (Rev. 14:8; 17:18) The “new Jerusalem” represents the new spiritual government of God’s kingdom. It will not be established by men, but rather it is described as “coming down from God out of heaven,” spiritual in every sense of the word.

The new Jerusalem is “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband,” implying that its grandeur, beauty and perfection will be like a bride’s adornment, particular and perfect. (Rev. 21:2; Ps. 45:13,14) In the spiritual government of the future, the judges of the world will be the saints, or bride class, those who are presently being selected and developed through experiences and trials, and who are proven faithful unto death.—I Cor. 6:2; Rev. 2:10; 3:12

“I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people.” (Rev. 21:3) A “tabernacle” is a meeting place between God and his people. (Exod. 29:42,43) God will dwell with mankind through Christ and the glorified church in the sense that he will pour out the holy power and influence of his spirit “upon all flesh.”—Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17

Our Key Verse states that God will wipe away all tears from the eyes of mankind. There will be no more death, sorrow, crying or pain; these former things will pass away. Paul confirms this, saying that when Christ “hath put all enemies under his feet,” “the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” (I Cor. 15:23-28) From that time on, mankind will live in “joy and gladness” forever.—Isa. 35:10 ■

The Holy Jerusalem

Key Verse: “*He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.*”
—*Revelation 21:10*

Selected Scripture:
Revelation 21:10-27

called, chosen and proven faithful.—Rev. 14:1-5; 21:9; 17:14

These spiritual rulers of the kingdom are described as “having the glory of God,” that is, immortality and the divine nature. (Rev. 21:11; Rom. 2:7; I Cor. 15:53,54; II Pet. 1:4) Christ promised, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, ... and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven.” (Rev. 3:12) They will have an active role in restoring and uplifting mankind back to the perfection which Adam originally had.

In his vision John saw this great city as having “a wall great and high,” with “twelve foundations.” (Rev. 21:12-14) The city was in the shape of a perfect cube; the length, width and height were all equal, each measuring

GOD GAVE JOHN ANOTHER

revelation, in which he was carried away “to a great and high mountain.” This “mountain” represents God’s kingdom which will soon come. Transported, in vision, to the future kingdom, John saw a “great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” This great city is the spiritual phase of God’s kingdom—Christ, the Lamb of God, and with him “the Lamb’s wife,” the 144,000 who were

12,000 furlongs. This perfect cube was oriented to the four points of the compass with three gates on each side. The orientation suggests that this city is for the benefit of the people of all lands, in every direction.—vss. 13,16

The identical number of gates on each side of the city suggests that everyone will have an equal opportunity to enter. These gates are a beautiful picture of how the requirements will be the same for all people to enter into the New Covenant arrangement of God's righteous kingdom.

In ancient cities walls were built for the protection and safety of their inhabitants. The wall which John saw illustrates the absolute and complete protection which will be provided to all those who abide inside the symbolic city. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, ... but the redeemed shall walk there."—Isa. 11:9; 35:9

John then states concerning this city, "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." (Rev. 21:22) A temple is a permanent structure, showing that this will be an everlasting arrangement. The city "had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb [Jesus] is the light thereof. And the nations ... shall walk in the light of it." "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there." (vss. 23-25) Gates of ancient cities were shut at night; however, in the holy Jerusalem they will remain open so that all may enter freely.

The Prophet Isaiah recorded beautiful prophecies which relate to this vision which John saw. (Isa. 26:1-4; 60:11-19) The promise of perfect peace, which so many seek at the present time, will at last be attained among those who enter the holy Jerusalem.—Isa. 35:1-10 ■

A Pure River

Key Verse: “*He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*”
—*Revelation 22:1*

Selected Scripture:
Revelation 22:1-7

Lord. In the book of Jeremiah, God is spoken of as the “fountain [source] of living waters.”—Jer. 2:13; 17:13

“On either side of the river,” there was the “tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits ... every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” (Rev. 22:2) These twelve “fruits” well represent the instruction, help and influence from the church, the 144,000, upon mankind during the entire thousand-year kingdom period.—Rev. 14:1-4; 20:4,6

Ezekiel recorded a prophecy similar to the vision which John had, stating that the fruit which issued from the trees was “for meat,” or sustenance, and the leaves of the trees were for “medicine,” representing healing the hearts and minds of mankind. (Ezek. 47:1-12) Zechariah also prophesied along the same line, stating that “living waters shall go out from Jerusalem. ... And the LORD [with Christ as his representative] shall be

IN ANOTHER VISION, JOHN was shown a “pure river of water of life.” Water is a symbol of truth. A “river of water of life” represents the many blessings and holy influences of truth which will issue forth upon all mankind in God’s kingdom. This water will be “clear as crystal,” without any false teachings or human traditions. It will be a pure message from the

king over all the earth.”—Zech. 14:8,9

“And there shall be no more curse.” (Rev. 22:3) Thus is indicated the removal of the penalty God had exacted upon Adam because of his disobedience. The promised resurrection of the dead will bring back the identity and consciousness of all the billions of people who have died and gone into the grave under the divine sentence: “Thou shalt surely die.” “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”—Gen. 2:16,17; 3:17-19

There could be no resurrection, no escape from this “curse” except in the way God has arranged—namely, that Jesus took the place of the original sinner, Adam. Purchasing Adam from the death sentence meant the purchase of all Adam’s descendants, who died in him. Christ died “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” “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.”—I Pet. 3:18; I Cor. 15:21,22

“They [mankind] shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads.” (Rev. 22:4) No human can literally see God and live. (Exod. 33:20) Therefore, this means that each one will come to know and love God in an intelligent way, based upon learning about his character, precepts and plans. At that time, “they shall teach no more every man his neighbor ... saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”—Jer. 31:34; Heb. 8:8-12

“And there shall be no night there.” (Rev. 22:5) Night is a symbol of the entire “dark” period of time from Adam’s disobedience until the completion of the church class. During this night time, mankind has been experiencing sin, sickness, sorrow, and death. God has promised, however, that “weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”—Ps. 30:5 ■

The Tree of Life

Key Verse: “*Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*”

—**Revelation 22:14**

Selected Scripture:
Revelation 22:10-21

THE SYMBOLIC “TREE of life,” which would have permitted the perfect man Adam and his offspring to live forever, is first mentioned in the book of Genesis. (Gen. 2:9; 3:22) In our Key Verse there is a tree of life from which those who do God’s commandments have a “right to” partake.

Other Bible translations, such as the *Rotherham Emphasized Bible*, render the phrase “they that do his commandments” as “they who are washing their robes.” “Doing” or “washing” both imply a conscious effort on the part of the individual to prove oneself faithful to the requirements of the kingdom arrangement and thus allow them the right to the tree of life.—Matt. 25:34-40

Those not willing to do or wash will be “without,” John says. That is, by their lack of action they will be out of harmony with the kingdom arrangement. Such ones who refuse to reform themselves during the kingdom will not be permitted to continue to live.—Rev. 22:15; Matt. 25:41-46

Revelation 22:16 gives a clear confirmation that Jesus is the one who gives this message. Jesus is “the root.” “Root” signifies the origin or source of life. By being the origin of the purchase of Adam and the whole human race, Jesus can give life to humanity. According to the

flesh, our Lord Jesus was, through his mother, the son or “offspring” of David. By virtue of the willing sacrifice of his undefiled life, he has become the “root” of David.

When and how did Christ become David’s “root,” or source of life? It is by the same means and at the same time that he became David’s Lord—by his death and subsequent resurrection on the third day. (Rev. 1:5; Acts 10:36,40) Paul states, “Christ both died, and rose, ... that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.”—Rom. 14:9

In the kingdom, the Spirit and the bride will say “Come” to each one when they are raised from the dead. (Rev. 22:17) Each person will be invited to willingly enter into the kingdom arrangement and choose to obey God’s principles. No one will be forced or coerced. Those who “hear” and “thirst” for this new righteous order refer to the many people and nations who will be obedient in the kingdom. These, too, will have the privilege to say “Come,” inviting and encouraging others to join them in following the Lord.—Isa. 2:3; Micah 4:2

At that time, God’s heavenly representatives, Jesus and the bride class, “will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.”—Zech. 12:10

John concludes his recording of the revelation given to him, stating, “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely [Greek: *nai*, meaning a strong affirmation] I come quickly.” Then John adds, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”—Rev. 22:20

John must have realized, from the many things which were revealed to him in signs and symbols, that it would be a long period of time before the kingdom of God would be established on Earth. However, Jesus’ last message to John was, “Surely, I come quickly.” How true this is for each of us. Like John, we have only our present lifetime to transform our heart and mind into the likeness of Christ, and if faithful, to be with the Lord in glory. ■

God's Covenants

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.”
—Hebrews 10:1

IN PART TWO OF OUR

lesson on the subject of God's covenants, we will consider further comparisons between the old Law Covenant of Israel and the New Covenant. In addition, we will recall Moses, Israel's deliverer, as he points forward to Jesus, the great Deliverer of Israel and all mankind. Finally, we will discuss the important matter

of the shedding of blood, without which there can be “no remission” of sins.—Heb. 9:22

TYPE AND ANTITYPE

The Law, Paul informs us in our opening text, was “a shadow of good things to come.” We may properly think of the Law Covenant as being a picture, or “type,” of the New Covenant. The necessary preparation for, and making of, the typical covenant required a certain amount of time, and its inauguration was a special occasion for the Israelites. (Exod. 24:3-8) The fulfilment, or “antitype,” of Israel's Law Covenant is far grander, even as an antitype is

always greater than a type. God's law was the basis of the typical covenant. His law, as shown through his character and loving plan, will also be the basis of the New Covenant.

In the making of the typical covenant with Israel there were three important features. First, there was Moses, the mediator of the covenant. Second, there was the writing of God's law on tables of stone, and its acceptance by the people. Third, there was the shedding and sprinkling of blood. (Exod. 24:1-12) All these must, and do, have their counterpart in the making of the New Covenant, but on a much grander scale.

In the New Testament, Christ is identified as being the "mediator of the new covenant." (Heb. 12:24) Just as Jesus alone is not the entire promised seed of Abraham, but has his body members associated with him, so these same body members are referred to by Paul as "able ministers of the new testament [Greek: covenant]."—Gal. 3:16,27-29; I Cor. 12:12,27; II Cor. 3:6

The apostle also speaks of a writing of the law, but as should be expected, in a far different and better way. In the antitype, the law is not written in stone, but, as Paul explains, on "tables of the heart." (II Cor. 3:3) Jesus, by virtue of his perfection, already had his Father's law within his heart, but the writing of the law in the hearts of his body members, who together with him will serve as "able ministers" of the New Covenant, is the work of the entire present Gospel Age. Not until this preparatory work is complete will the New Covenant promise of Jeremiah 31:31-34 begin to be fulfilled toward Israel and all mankind.

In the Old Testament, Moses was hidden in the clouds surrounding Mount Sinai while the Law was being written on the tables of stone by “the finger of God.” (Exod. 31:18; Deut. 9:10) When he appeared with the Law, his face shone so brightly that the people could not “behold the face of Moses.” (II Cor. 3:7) Paul shows that the fulfilment of this will be under Christ’s glorious “ministration of righteousness.” (vss. 8-11) The promise is that then his body members will be “with him in glory.”—Col. 3:3,4

Paul places great emphasis on the glory phase of the antitype. He concludes this lesson with the expression, “Seeing then that we have such hope.” (II Cor. 3:12) This tells us that the glory feature of the making of the New Covenant is not yet a reality, only a hope, and, as the apostle further wrote, we do not hope for that which is already possessed. (Rom. 8:24,25) However, it is a wonderful hope of the “glory that excelleth.” (II Cor. 3:10) It is a hope of the “eternal weight of glory,” which will become a reality if we endure patiently our present “light affliction, which is but for a moment.” (II Cor. 4:17) It is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”—Col. 1:27

Christ, as the “Lamb that was slain,” and together with him the hundred and forty-four thousand who will share the glory of his kingdom, are shown as standing on “mount Sion.” (Rev. 5:12; 14:1) Sion [Hebrew: Zion] is symbolic of the spiritual phase of God’s kingdom, under the rulership of Christ, and the promise is that “the law shall go forth of Zion.” (Micah 4:2) God’s law will be able to “go forth” from Zion because the Zion class has been receiving, learning, and having it written in their hearts throughout the present Gospel Age.

In the type, after the Law was written on the tables of stone and presented to the people, they simply agreed to obey its various precepts. In this, also, the antitype will be much grander than the type. How widely different indeed are the two procedures, and the results. Under the New Covenant arrangement, the law will not be presented to the people on tables of stone by an imperfect human mediator, but by the divine Christ, with the law of God contained in the very being of every one of this glorified company.

In the Old Testament, upon hearing the Law read to them, the people said, "All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." (Exod. 24:3) However, in the establishing of the New Covenant through the ministry of the Christ class, while there will first be a willingness to receive and obey the law, the making of the covenant will continue until God's law is fully written in the hearts of the people. Simply to say that they will keep the law will not be enough. Before the people will be able to enter into full, individual covenant relationship with God, his law must become a very part of their being. This implies a process of restoration to perfection, which will result in a return to that covenant relationship with God enjoyed by Father Adam prior to his transgression.

SPRINKLING OF BLOOD

Before the Law Covenant could become operative with Israel, blood had to be provided. (Exod. 24:3-8) Paul explains that blood was used to sprinkle "both the book, and all the people." (Heb. 9:19,20) Moses referred to it as the "blood of the covenant." Blood

is also provided prior to the making of the New Covenant. On the night before Jesus was crucified he referred to his own sacrificed life as the “blood of the New Covenant.”—Matt. 26:28, *International Standard Version*

In the type, the blood of the covenant was first used to sprinkle the book of the Law, so also in the antitype. A key feature of the divine law associated with the sprinkling of blood is God’s principle of justice. “Without shedding of blood is no remission” of sins. (Heb. 9:22) When Jesus died as a “ransom for all,” he provided an exact corresponding price for Father Adam before he sinned, and thus satisfied the requirement of God’s justice—Jesus’ perfect human life for Adam’s forfeited life. (I Tim. 2:5,6) This “ransom” feature, having satisfied God’s law of justice, is to be “testified in due time,” Paul says, releasing Adam and all his posterity from the penalty of death. (Rom. 5:12,18; I Cor. 15:21,22) The full benefits of the ransom, represented in Scripture by the blood of Jesus, will be “testified” when the making of the New Covenant begins to take place with the people under its Mediator, the Christ class.—Heb. 9:11,12

With the satisfaction of God’s law of justice fully complete in his “due time,” the symbolic sprinkling of “all the people” will begin, and thus make operative all the divine promises to give life under the terms of the New Covenant. To those who abide under those terms, God has promised, “I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”—Jer. 31:34

One of the promises given in connection with the original Law Covenant was that if Israel was

faithful it would become a priestly nation, representing God as teachers of the people. (Exod. 19:5,6) However, this is not one of the provisions of the antitypical covenant. When the New Covenant has been fully made with the people, and they have been proven faithful to it, all will have a complete knowledge of God, his laws, and his character. Concerning this glorious time, the prophet says, “They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.” —Jer. 31:34

THE DELIVERER

From Exodus 24:12 we learn that the tables of the Law were provided for Moses in order that he might teach the people. Similarly, Jesus and his joint-heirs, the Zion class, will be the source of the law to Israel and all nations under the New Covenant arrangement. One of the results of this is mentioned by Paul, when he wrote, “There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” (Rom. 11:26) This is to take place, Paul indicates, after “the fulness of the Gentiles be come in,” when the last member of the church class will have been found faithful unto death.—vs. 25

In this chapter, Paul explains that many of the nation of Israel, as “natural branches,” were broken off from the tree of promise, and that the Gentile branches are “grafted in” to take their places. (vss. 17-24) Thus the opportunity to qualify as the faithful seed of Abraham, which is to be the source of blessing to all mankind, has belonged to Gentiles as well as

to Jews, all those who are proven to be “one in Christ.”—Gal. 3:28

With the full number of this seed selected and proved faithful, there will begin the work of the next age, that of making a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, and eventually with all mankind. This is the work described by Paul’s further statements: “There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [God had changed Jacob’s name to Israel. See Gen. 32:24-28]: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.” (vss. 26,27) What more definite identification could we have for the beginning of the blessings promised under the New Covenant, as first prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31-34?

After presenting God’s glorious program for blessing Israel under the New Covenant, Paul adds, “The gifts and calling of God are without repentance”—that is, they are irrevocable. (Rom. 11:29) At the same time, however, it is to be remembered that God’s “gifts and calling” are not unconditional. For example, God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants, but in the final reckoning the only ones among them who will dwell in it forever are those who will qualify under the New Covenant terms.

God promised the Israelites that if they would obey his law they would become a “holy nation” unto him, but as a nation they failed to keep the Law Covenant. God, however, in his great love and mercy, promised to make a New Covenant with them. This promise also stands sure. If, when the time comes, there are any who do not yield to the

beneficent terms of the New Covenant, as they will be available to Israel and all mankind, they will not receive its blessings.

CLEANSING THROUGH THE BLOOD

The great objective of God's plan is the reconciliation of the fallen and dying race to harmony with the Creator. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, is essential to the carrying out of every aspect of this plan. Those of the faith seed of Abraham, called from the world and prepared to be the future source of blessing to all mankind, need the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ will also be needed to sprinkle all the people so that they might be brought into heart harmony with God's law under the New Covenant.

Paul brings these two uses of the blood together for us in Hebrews 9:14,15. Referring back to the typical "blood" sacrifices under the Law Covenant, the apostle says, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Furthermore, Paul continues, Christ is the "mediator of the new testament [covenant], that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament [the Law Covenant], they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

Certainly Gentile believers were not transgressors of the Law Covenant, so Paul is simply telling us that in addition to what the blood of Christ accomplishes for the faith seed of the present age, it will also be used by Christ, as Mediator of the New

Covenant, for the benefit of those who transgressed the Law Covenant.

In a reference to God's promises to Israel, Paul says, as we have noted, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Israel was a called people. Wonderful promises were given to them. In due time, they will receive these promises, chief of which will be that of perfect, unending life upon the earth, with God's law written in the hearts of all. What a glorious prospect for Israel, as well as for the whole world of mankind, who will be blessed with Israel by also coming into this New Covenant arrangement.

AN ALLEGORY

Vines Expository Dictionary of biblical words defines an "allegory" as a statement of certain facts which are then used to illustrate principles or lessons. Paul, speaking in an "allegory" recorded in Galatians 4:22-31, indicates that Sarah, Abraham's wife and a "freewoman," represents the covenant arrangement under which the faith seed is brought forth, just as Sarah brought forth Isaac, which had been promised by God. Hagar, a "bondmaid" of Sarah, foreshadowed the Law Covenant. She also brought forth a son by Abraham, named Ishmael, who represented the nation of Israel. Thus is shown that the Law Covenant [Hagar in the allegory] brought forth the typical nation of Israel [Ishmael]. After the death of Sarah, Abraham married again. The name of this wife was Keturah, and several children resulted from this marriage. (Gen. 25:1,2) While the Scriptures do not so state, we may think of these numerous children of

Abraham, mothered by Keturah, as representing all who will ultimately receive the blessings promised under the New Covenant.

Thus we understand that the promised blessings of the covenant God first made with Abraham were expanded upon by Israel's Law Covenant, and also by the covenant represented in Sarah, under which the faith seed is developed. Finally is the promise of the New Covenant. Taken together, all of these arrangements and their related promises imply the restoration "in due time" of all the willing and obedient among mankind to perfection of human life here on the earth, and the restoration of that original covenant relationship with God under which Adam lived before falling into sin. No wonder the Apostle Paul, contemplating these wonderful arrangements of the divine plan of reconciliation through Christ, wrote, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"—Rom. 11:33 ■

*I stand all astonished with wonder
And gaze on the ocean of love;
And over its waves to my spirit
Comes peace, like a heavenly dove.*

*The cross now covers my sins;
The past is under the blood;
I'm trusting in Jesus for all;
My will is the will of my God.*

—*Hymns of Dawn*

The True Worship of God

*“The hour cometh,
and now is,
when the true
worshippers shall
worship the Father
in spirit and
in truth: for
the Father
seeketh such to
worship him.”*
—John 4:23

THE NARRATIVE FROM which our opening text is taken furnishes many valuable lessons in connection with our subject, and it is well that we consider it carefully. Our Lord was on his way from Judea to his homeland, Galilee, and had to pass, therefore, through the region

of Samaria. When he reached Samaria and came to the city of Sychar, he became wearied and in need of refreshment from the arduous journey northward. In the ordinary method of counting time in those days, it would appear to have been around mid-day when he reached this point.—John 4:1-6

While Jesus' disciples went into the city to obtain food, as the account shows, a woman of the city of Sychar in Samaria came out to get her customary supply of water, and there at the well of Jacob she came upon the Master resting. He asked her for a drink, but she hesitated and inquired, “How is it

that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.” (vss.7-9) At that time, the Jews considered Samaritans heathen and outcasts; therefore, for Jesus to ask a favor of a Samaritan was out of the ordinary in the general course of life.

Our Lord thereupon suggested that he had “living water,” and rather than her providing him a drink, she might more appropriately ask him for this “gift of God,” as Jesus called it. A question presented itself to her mind, so she asked Jesus what sort of a person would presume to be greater than their father Jacob, who originally had ownership of this well and gave it to his progeny. Jesus explained that anyone who drank from Jacob’s well would thirst again, but “whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst,” to which the woman replied, “Sir, give me of this water, that I thirst not.”—vss. 10-15

As our Lord’s conversation with the Samaritan woman continued, she perceived that he was a prophet. Thereupon she raised the question of the proper place and method of worship. She said, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” No doubt she was aware of the formalism and traditions which had attached to the worship of the Jews. She may have felt that the simple worship of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, was more effective and had divine approval, as well as the more ceremonial worship of the Jews at Jerusalem, which had been established at a later date.—vss. 19,20

It is thought by Bible historians that it was upon this very site that the Samaritan temple was built at the foot of Mount Gerizim. If such was the case, the attitude of this woman toward the proper place for worshiping God, “in this mountain,” seemed but natural. Jesus, however, did not agree with her and indicated in no uncertain terms that true worship of God must come through a specific pathway. Jesus said, “Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. ... But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.”—John 4:21,23

Our Lord did not subscribe to the commonly accepted thought that any religion and worship is better than none, and that all forms of worship have their respective merits. Rather, he gave unmistakable testimony to the fact that there was only one proper and suitable form of worship that henceforth would be recognized by God—“in spirit and in truth.” He did not say that there had been no true worshipers before, but none of those who had worshiped the Father prior to the time of Jesus could possibly be said to worship him “in spirit and in truth.” This is because up to that time, none had been begotten by God’s Holy Spirit. None, therefore, had had the light of truth to a sufficient degree to fully worship God as implied in the words of the Master to this woman of Samaria.

WORSHIP “IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH”

In order to understand what is meant by the worship of God “in spirit and in truth,” it is essential,

first of all, to have clearly in mind the meaning of worship. In Old Testament times, the meaning of the Hebrew word, *shachah*, translated “worship,” was to prostrate oneself, to bow in obeisance. In the New Testament, the Greek word is *proskuneo* and means much the same thing as the Hebrew word. However, this is only the outward method of recognition of that which is superior or which merits devotion, esteem and honor. It is merely the way the ancients had of acknowledging a greater power or being, and if sincerely done, it was representative of their inmost feelings and sentiments. In other words, it represented their attitude. It will be recalled that it was this form of outward worship that Cornelius manifested toward Peter when the apostle brought to him the words of life and promptly rebuked as improper when offered to him as a servant of God. Such obeisance is only properly offered to God himself. John on the Isle of Patmos offered this same prostrate worship to the angel of the Lord who brought the Revelation to him, which the angel also rebuked, reminding John that only God was to be thus worshiped.—Acts 10:24-26; Rev. 22:8,9

The definition of the word “worship” as given in dictionaries today includes the following: To engage in an act of worship or have feelings of worship; to honor or adore; to pay homage; to show reverence, as in prayer and praise; the attitude of deference or respect; ardent admiration. From these meanings of the word “worship,” we see that it covers a wide variety of thoughts, attitudes and actions.

Based on the foregoing, anything to which a high degree of admiration can be attached is “worship” in the same sense of the word, whether it be of a

religious character or not. The thought of our time has been to separate the religious from the purely secular and to consider them two completely separate and distinct fields. However, with the Jew this distinction was not as clearly drawn as it is today.

It will be recalled of those chosen to perform the work of constructing the Tabernacle, and who had been trained in their respective arts, that not only did they have the necessary natural qualifications for the work in hand, but additionally, they were filled "with the Spirit of God in wisdom and understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship." (Exod. 31:1-11; 35:30-35) Similarly, those who have been called of the Father in this present Gospel Age are given this same Spirit of God, only that its action and operation are in a different manner and for a different purpose. However, the same sense of consecration and devotion to the divine service is to be rendered.—Isa. 11:1-4; Col. 1:9-13; Rom. 14:8; Col. 3:17; I Peter 4:11

This thought of complete surrender to the loving influence of God in every aspect of life is rarely understood or appreciated by the majority of professed Christians. If this fact were clearly seen, what a difference it would make in the fabric of world society today. Even the activities in normal everyday walk of life would have a different meaning than they now have. No longer would it be said that "business is business," and "religion is religion;" but business, and all other facets of life, would be conducted religiously, conscientiously, and benevolently as they should always be conducted.

One day, and we trust that it may be soon, the whole world will recognize the true meaning of worship.

Then the principles of Christ will be in full operation and no longer will the great Adversary be permitted to confuse the minds of the people upon all these questions of such great eternal importance.

Worship in spirit and in truth does not apply simply to acts of prayer, praise, supplication and thanksgiving. It goes deeper than all these and takes hold upon the affections and upon the heart. Hence, it signifies not an “act” of worship but rather a “life” of worship. Those who through the begetting of the Spirit and the knowledge of the divine plan, have become so in harmony with God and with his law and all the features of his loving purposes, will find themselves, in the words of our Lord, delighting to do the Father’s will.—Ps. 40:8

This is worship in spirit and in truth. It will find its expression in personal prayer and in a humble and reverential demeanor in approaching God. It will be further manifest in all the acts and words of life. The captivated heart will seek to bring every ability and talent into complete subjection to the will of God and of Christ. No less than this is the worship which God seeks. Surely, only those who are fully devoted to the Lord in heart, and who serve him in Spirit and in truth, are in the full sense the true worshipers whom the Lord desires: the “little flock,” the faithful “royal priesthood.”—Luke 12:32; I Pet. 2:9

FURTHER LESSONS FROM THE NARRATIVE

When the woman of Samaria perceived that Jesus had a message of such great import for her, she called attention to the promise of God to send a Messiah, and that he would tell them all things. This showed that although considered an outcast

from the covenants of promise by the Jews, she had a keen sense of values and appreciated the words of promise. The Master then did something that he had done only once before during his earthly ministry. Here in Samaria where the interests of the kingdom of God were thought to be little esteemed, he made a statement of the greatest importance. Answering the woman's statement, Jesus said: "I that speak unto thee am he."—John 4:25,26

Here in this supposedly ungodly country, Jesus acknowledged to this Samaritan woman the fact that he was the Messiah sent of God. It is true that he acknowledged his identity to the disciples, but never did he come out with a similar statement to the Jews in general except to the blind man, the record of which is found in John, chapter 9. Had he done this among the Jews, immediately he would have been branded as an impostor and a blasphemer. In fact, this is just what the scribes and Pharisees hoped to charge him with—blasphemy. It will be recalled that this man, blind from his birth, was healed by Jesus on the Sabbath day. This gave occasion to the scribes and Pharisees to declare him a lawbreaker on this account—that is, they wished to discredit the miracle and indicate that our Lord was just a sinner like everybody else. They went to the blind man's parents to influence them to deny that a miracle had been performed by Jesus. While the parents readily stated that their son had in fact been blind from his birth, they were unwilling to acknowledge that it was Jesus who had healed him for fear of being cast out of the synagogue.

The parents turned the matter over to their son to make a statement himself. While the son was not sure of our Lord's identity as the Messiah, he did not deny the fact that he had worked a miracle in his interest, thereby attaching himself to, what was in the Jews' eyes, the name of infamy—Jesus of Nazareth. The healed son's statement to the Pharisees is worthy of note in this connection: "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." How much of truth this man had! In fact, he entirely confounded these learned men by his statements, and they could do nothing against him, so they "cast him out" from their presence. While the religious leaders of the Jews cast him out as unworthy of their recognition, Jesus thereupon disclosed to the man that he was the Messiah, and told him his purpose in coming to Earth.—vss. 23-41

Returning to the account of the woman of Samaria, the effect of what Jesus said to her was electrifying. Leaving her water pitcher at the well, she rushed into the city to tell her friends and neighbors of the Messiah. They went out to learn for themselves. When they, too, were convinced, they insisted that he remain with them, and he abode with them two days. (John 4:28-44) Another point of interest in this narrative is the fact that when the disciples returned from their mission to the city and found this Samaritan woman in the company of the Lord, they did not question him about it. (vss. 8,27) This was evidently because they had sufficient confidence in their Master that they knew there must be some good reason for his conversing with her.

HINDRANCES TO TRUE WORSHIP

One of the main hindrances to the proper worship of God is the acceptance of the “commandments” or “traditions” of men, which often manifests itself in false doctrine. How much of persecution and suffering might have been avoided had the powerful influence of false theology not been permitted to interfere with the proper understanding of God’s character and plan for the salvation of mankind. Only the truth fully and clearly discloses the purpose and character of God. In addressing the scribes and Pharisees, our Lord characterized them as hypocrites in their superficial and formalistic attitude toward the true worship of God. He said: “Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”—Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:7-9

The majority of those addressed with the above words, it seems, were outwardly very pious. They fasted and prayed much, and for a pretense made long prayers in the streets; but theirs was not true and acceptable worship. Therefore, they were not prepared to be introduced at Pentecost to the begetting of the Spirit and thus to become worshipers in Spirit and in truth. Our Lord shows one important hindrance to their acceptance as worshipers; namely, false doctrines, based on human traditions and commandments, instead of the pure teachings of God’s Word. Similarly, all down through this Gospel Age many have been hindered from proper development as true worshipers of God, in Spirit

and in truth. They have been impeded by the same baneful influences of false doctrines, human creeds, and traditions of men accepted and held to instead of the pure Word of God, the true bread which comes down from heaven.—John 6:32

Another hindrance to the proper worship of God is the excessive admiration that some have had for organizations, man-made institutions, religious councils, and influential individuals. In I Thessalonians 5:12,13, the Apostle Paul says: “We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.” However, this loving esteem for, and confidence in, the servants of the Lord should never go to the extreme that sees them as perfect or incapable of error.

No servant, no matter how effective or beneficial his service may prove to be, should ever be so excessively admired that other servants of the Lord are considered as being of little or no value. Neither should anyone presuppose that all the light and truth that God has at his disposal for the interests of his people are committed to one sole group or individual. Only the perfect Son of God, Christ Jesus, is worthy of that distinction. No true servant of God would make any such unwarranted assertion. Nothing should take the place of God in our reverence and admiration, adoration and praise. To whatever extent this fact is lost sight of, to that same degree there is a likelihood of the loss of spiritual insight and discernment. Let none of God’s people be found to be “creature-worshippers” instead of “God worshipers.”

In Colossians 2:18,19, Paul writes: "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels [messengers], intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head, from which all the body by, joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."

This beguiling of the flock away from Jesus, the only true shepherd, to follow a fellow sheep, is not always the fault of the leaders. There seems to be a general tendency on the part of all who have the true, humble sheep nature to follow one another. (John 10:1-5; Heb. 13:7,17,24) It is a cautionary lesson, therefore, for all to learn—that each sheep recognize as leaders only such as are found in full accord with the voice and spirit of Christ, the Chief Shepherd, and that each member of the flock see to it that they eat only "clean provender" and drink only the pure water of truth as directed by the Shepherd.—Isa. 30:24; Ezek. 34:17-19

This implies the exercise of the individual conscience of each member of Christ's flock on matters of doctrine and practice. It also tends to keep each one in sympathy and fellowship with the Shepherd, who knows each member of the flock and "calleth his own sheep by name." (John 10:3) The same intimate relationship of the individual Christian with the Lord is illustrated in the figure of Christ, the Head, and the church as members of his body.—I Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 4:15,16

Many servants of God have been variously used to some extent, by the grace of God, in the ministry of the Gospel. Thus, it is not out of place to say that

while all servants of the Lord should appreciate the love, sympathy, confidence, and fellowship of fellow servants and of the entire household of faith, none should desire homage or reverence. Neither should any wish that others follow them as a special leader or put them above other servants of the Lord. We are all followers of Jesus, our Shepherd. “One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.” (Matt. 23:8) Therefore, the name “Christian” is quite sufficient to designate all the spiritual sons of God, the true brethren of our Lord.

None of us, as consecrated members of the “body of Christ,” should esteem our own interpretations of the many details of truth as being on a par with clear statements of Scripture. The most we should be able to claim is, in humility and sincerity of heart, that our understanding is what we believe to be in harmony with the divine Word and with the spirit of the Truth. Each of us, as students of the Bible, should seek to prove all things by the Scriptures, accepting what we see to be thus approved, and rejecting all else. (Acts 17:11; I Thess. 5:21) Thus, may we be considered as true worshipers of God, both in Spirit and in truth, always building one another up in our “most holy faith.”—Jude 1:20 ■

Trust and Wait

*When I cannot understand my Father's leading
And it seems but to be hard and cruel fate,
Still I hear that gentle whisper ever pleading,
God is working, God is faithful, only wait.*

—*Songs of the Nightingale*

Abounding Grace

“God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.”

—II Corinthians 9:8

IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE

previous and perhaps unexpected liberality of the Corinthian brethren had reminded the Apostle Paul of how much God has done for us. In providing the means for supplying the material needs of their more

needy brethren and thus being their benefactors, the saints at Corinth were manifesting an important characteristic of godlikeness. Thus Paul takes the occasion, in the words of our text, to remind them, and us, that God is able to “make all grace” abound toward us.

The apostle does not mean that God will always give his sacrificing people an abundance of temporal good things, because frequently this would result in their spiritual impoverishment. However, he does mean that our Heavenly Father is able and willing to make his favor abound toward us in all ways that will be for our highest spiritual welfare. Paul himself had learned how to abound in temporal blessings, and he had learned also how to suffer need, but through all these experiences he also had

learned that the grace of God had never failed him. (Phil. 4:12) The love of God seems to have gripped the great apostle to such an extent that he seemed unable to find suitable words adequately to express his understanding and appreciation of God's grace which appeared to him to be boundless and inexhaustible.

In the words of our text, three great truths are expressed pertaining to our precious relationship to God: (1) "God is able to make all grace abound," that is, there is the inflow of divine blessings; (2) "Having all sufficiency in all things," in other words, a sufficient possession of these blessings; and (3) "Abound to every good work," which is the outflow of blessings for the benefit of others. In this process we see the manifold and all-encompassing benefit of the grace of God, as it first comes to us, then abides in us for our spiritual growth, and also proceeds forth from us to others.

THE INFLOW OF GRACE

First there is the inflow of divine favor. In connection with this the apostle suggests three thoughts: (a) the power of God—he is able to provide the needed grace; (b) the provision of God—his divine grace and favor; and (c) the all-sufficiency of God's provision—he makes all grace abound.

What thoughts this induces in us concerning the greatness of the power of God! The human mind is so limited that we have but a poor conception of such a glorious being. "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." Consider him as the Creator, and the vastness of his creation. What a wonderful mind is revealed in the planning of such mighty works as these. Indeed, as the prophet declares, it

is only the fool that says in his heart, “There is no God.”—Ps. 90:2; 53:1

David’s mind was much impressed with the greatness of God when he wrote these words in the 8th Psalm: “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him?” (vss. 3,4) The Prophet Isaiah also speaks eloquently of God’s power, saying, “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?”—Isa. 40:12

What measureless resources of power and wisdom must reside in God who planned all these wonders! We are only now beginning to learn something of his greatness as revealed in the works of creation, and what glory is reflected in the little we are able to understand. We appreciate God’s greatness even more, however, as we come to understand his character as revealed in his wonderful plan of salvation.

Through the plan of salvation we see ourselves as living examples of the power and love of God. We were all servants of sin, but now, through his love and power we have been rescued and have become servants of righteousness. (Rom. 6:17,18) His strong arm is ever being exercised on behalf of his children, and the conviction of the all-conquering ability of God should be very real to each one of us. One of the great sins of natural Israel was doubt, which led to murmuring. This attitude caused them to question God’s ability to furnish them, while in the wilderness, with the necessities of life.

“Is God able?” seemed to be their attitude, and thus they prevented the inflow of blessings from the Holy One of Israel.—Exod. 15:24; 16:2; 17:3

BOTH ABLE AND WILLING

The ability of God to provide grace and favor is something upon which we can depend. Do we feel faint? Are we weary? Then let us remember that God, the Almighty One, “giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. ... They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength.” (Isa. 40:29,31) Are we fearful? God tells us, “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: ... I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee.” (Isa. 41:10) In the operation of his grace it is not our weakness that counts, but his strength. Indeed, God is able and can give the grace that he has so abundantly promised.

God’s abounding grace is his loving provision for his people. Being sinners by nature, we have done nothing to merit such lovingkindness. God has bestowed grace upon us to the extent that we were led step by step to Jesus, “the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6) We learned how we could obtain life through faith in him. Through consecration and spirit begettal, we were delivered from the “power of darkness” into the “kingdom of his [God’s] dear Son.” (Col. 1:13) We learned too, that through Jesus’ great sacrifice we could become reconciled to the Heavenly Father and become his children. (Rom. 5:10; II Cor. 5:18) This was indeed wonderful, but it was not all. God continued to give “grace upon grace.” (John 1:16, *Weymouth New Testament*) He revealed to us his loving purpose concerning the

church; how he intends through her, as part of the Christ class, to bless all mankind. Furthermore, his marvelous grace made known to us that we could have a part in that arrangement if we would but enter the training school of Christ, and learn well the lessons there intended for us.

Surely, God has revealed to us the riches of his grace in that he has opened up to us the privileges of this "high calling." (Phil. 3:14) Constrained by such love, we accepted this calling and entered his service, desiring that his will might be done in us. (II Cor. 5:14,15) Thus it is that he accepted us and enlightened our mind. He gave us his Holy Spirit and has begotten us to a new nature. (I Pet. 1:3,4) We were given an insight into the mysteries of divine love which are found in his wonderful Word. Life under any favorable circumstances is a great boon, but the Heavenly Father has promised us life on the highest plane of all, the divine, there to be "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:17) We are not worthy of such favors. Hence, it is all by God's grace, ever flowing from him to us.

GOD ABUNDANTLY SUPPLIES

The expression, "to make all grace abound," is one of the high notes of our lesson. God does not dole out his blessings in a meager or stingy fashion. The fountain flows copiously, generously, lavishly, not a mere trickle, but a veritable torrent. As his power is great, so is God's grace full, free and generous: "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." "The earth

is full of thy riches. ... These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. ... Thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.”—Ps. 103:11,12; 104:24,27,28

Of a certainty, there is nothing ungenerous or miserly about God if we give our “all” to him. The prophet wrote: “Prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” (Mal. 3:10) How our cup of blessing overflows if we conform our lives to the divine will!

POSSESSION OF GOD’S GRACE

Why does God supply us such an abundance of his grace? We suggest that it is because he wants us to have something to pass on to others without impoverishing ourselves. There is no waste in the provision and economy of God’s grace. However, if others are to be enriched from us it must be from the overflow and not from that which God intends for us to use. If our hearts are in the right attitude before God, there is sure to be a copious overflow of his grace to us, and through us to others. Thus we must be sure to make the proper use of divine grace in ourselves, so that we will not be among those who will say, “They made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.”—Song of Sol. 1:6

We are like a vessel filled to the brim, and that which overflows is the grace which we have the privilege of sharing with others. If we fail to make proper use of the overflow, however, we may soon find that we are lacking even in the grace needed

for ourselves. "There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."—Prov. 11:24

God's grace is all-sufficient for our possession. We note these statements from Scripture. "God shall supply all your need according to his riches." "I can do all things through Christ." "All things are possible to him that believeth." (Phil. 4:19,13; Mark 9:23) Our lack of faith is often a hindrance to the full possession of divine grace. God is willing, but through deficiency of faith we may fail to receive or properly use that which he bestows. He has promised all things for our needs as New Creatures in Christ Jesus. Therefore, let us rely fully upon those promises and realize that our needs are actually supplied. By faith let us translate God's promises into the realities of divine grace inflowing to us, and then overflowing for the blessings of others.

To the church God says, "All things are yours." (I Cor. 3:21,22) That is why it is further said that we can be "filled with all the fullness of God." (Eph. 3:19) From the moment of consecration and spirit begettal as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, the power of God is ever exercised on our behalf. The grace of God endows us with everything necessary to enable us to have his will worked out in our daily lives and which will help to produce in us a character likeness to Jesus. Thus, we are enabled to be faithful to the covenant of sacrifice which we have made with God.—Ps. 50:5

GRAVEN UPON HIS HANDS

At times we may act as if we have forgotten that the Heavenly Father has a keen interest in us which never fails. While we may forget, however, he never

forgets. He says to us, “Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.” (Isa. 49:16) Our loving Heavenly Father holds each one of us in his hand, and no outside force or being can pluck us out of his power and watch-care. What confidence this should give us!

Since the very moment our consecration was accepted of him, the Heavenly Father’s arms have been around us, and he will never leave us. (Heb. 13:5) From the time when he began the work of sanctification in us, he has been, and will continue to be, in the forefront, as it were, shaping every circumstance of our lives, and arranging his providences on our behalf so that they will work for our highest spiritual welfare.—Rom. 8:28

Entrepreneurs enter into business with the thought of making a success of it. Likewise, our Heavenly Father enters into relationship with us to the end that we may pass through our training and development period successfully. He wants us to be victorious in our walk in the narrow way, but we must do our part. We must cooperate with him and work in harmony with his perfect will for us.—Rom. 12:2; Phil. 2:12,13

We are to be “workers together” with God, acknowledging his wisdom to control and overrule in all our affairs. (II Cor. 6:1) Obeying his instructions, we may confidently expect to share in the success which will attend his plans. However, if we do not cooperate with him, we may put in jeopardy our position as workers with him, the result of which could be that we are counted as unfaithful servants. There can be no doubt that our Heavenly Father will do everything in his power to avert such an

outcome, but it remains with us to make use of every means of grace so bountifully and freely supplied to us.

Of our grace-supplying God it is truly written that he is “from everlasting to everlasting,” and that, like Jesus, he is “the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” (Ps. 90:2; Heb. 13:8) This assurance of permanency should give us much confidence. Our Heavenly Father is the eternal source of all sufficiency, and his grace enables us to cultivate the patience to endure faithfully, and to count our suffering as a “light affliction.” (II Cor. 4:17) It is this fact of the riches of God’s great storehouse of grace that enables us to meet all the emergencies and overcome all difficulties which otherwise might turn us aside from our walk in the narrow way. Indeed, God is the source of all grace, and especially is he “our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”—Ps. 46:1

Surely from such an infinite source of grace there must be an endless supply to meet every need, to compensate for every sorrow of the individual Christian, and to cope with every situation in which the members of his church may be placed. Let us remember this when passing through the barren places of our Christian experience. For example, we may have those apparently fruitless occasions when we have seized an opportunity to tell the glad tidings of the kingdom, and yet there has been no response.

Furthermore, we may wonder how we shall meet this question or that question, and what shall we say if we are opposed. Let us remember that God never sends his messengers upon his errands

without overruling and assisting them as to what to say. God's grace takes care of these situations also; perhaps not always to our liking or preference, but in any event to his glory.

CROSSES—BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE

Sometimes in our lives we are brought face to face with questions which must be settled, or difficult problems to be resolved. Decisions based upon human wisdom could perhaps lead to disaster. However, followers of Christ are assured that if they endeavor to meet these problems as God would have them met, and not to please themselves, divine grace will direct the issues so that "all things work together for good" to them, because they "love God," and because they have been "called according to his purpose."—Rom. 8:28

Divine grace will always guide us through trouble, but it will not necessarily prevent us from experiencing problems and trials. It is no sign that God has forsaken us if storms continue to assail and endeavor to overwhelm us, nor is it a sign of greater spirituality to be free of trials. Frequently, it is the proud and wicked who call themselves "happy" in this time of testing and trial of the true church of God, but he has promised, "My grace is sufficient for thee."—Mal. 3:15; II Cor. 12:9

Though we may not always be spared from trouble, nor promptly delivered from our trials, some good will always come out of them if we are rightly "exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11) The Apostle Paul was shipwrecked, but as a result the island of Melita received the Gospel. Lazarus died, but Mary and Martha had a marvelous foretaste of the

resurrection. “They that go down to the sea in ships, ... These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.” (Ps. 107:23,24) It is often in the deep waters of affliction that the mighty works of God are made manifest.

THE OUTFLOW OF GRACE

“That ye ... may abound to every good work,” our opening text says. The abounding or overflowing of God’s grace resides in Christ. He is the channel through which divine favor comes to us, and “of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” (John 1:16) We have the overflow of God’s grace. It is this that we should pass on to others, knowing that God has abounded toward us. We get no blessing simply from mere selfish enrichment. The only way to be able to truly appreciate a blessing is to share it with others. “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”—Acts 20:35

As an example of this, we should not keep the Word of God continually shut up within ourselves, when there are searching ones looking for the message of hope which we can give because we have learned the character and plan of the comfort-giving God. If we hide away hoping to enjoy God’s blessings for ourselves alone, we will become unfruitful in the work of the Lord. We cannot prosper spiritually unless we are helping someone else to grow. This is true whether it be with regard to our family, the brethren, and even those in the world who we may be able to assist by means of a comforting word or act. As we have been blessed of the Lord, therefore, we should endeavor to pass blessings on to others.

Are we providing portions of spiritual food for those who desire and require this form of nourishment? Are we, on the other hand, so eager to study the Truth, that we have no time to practice its principles for the benefit and blessing of others? By way of example, our attention is often drawn to the need of isolated brethren, and there are many such. We may say to ourselves that God will provide for them, which, of course, is quite true. It may be, however, that he wishes to provide for their needs through us. If we are neglecting our privileges in this respect, he will turn to others who will be more willing helpers, because we have been unfaithful in the use of the opportunity we were afforded.

We cannot retain our blessings unless we endeavor to pass them on to others, especially to those of the “household of faith.” (Gal. 6:10) If, however, we dispense the bounties of God’s grace given to us for the benefit of others, its value to us will be the more deeply impressed, and we will be doubly blessed.

Many years Abraham waited for his son Isaac. He had the promise of God that he would have a son, and how he did love Isaac when he was granted him. However, this joy must have been doubled when Abraham received Isaac back from God after he had given him up as a sacrifice. (Gen. 22:9-12; Heb. 11:17-19) He then possessed him in a way he could never have done before. Thereby the blessing of God was increased to him by virtue of his greater appreciation. It was then that God confirmed the covenant with his oath to Abraham, “By myself have I sworn.”—Gen. 22:16-18

What is given to the Lord is always returned many-fold. “No man that hath left house ... for my sake, and the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time,” the interim dividend, “and in the world to come eternal life.” (Mark 10:29,30) If we would have the increase we must sow accordingly. The principle underlying this is found in the abounding of God’s gift of grace toward us. Peter said, “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”—I Pet. 4:10

We can minister to those around us in the same way as the Master did. He went about doing good and preaching the Gospel of the coming kingdom of God. (Acts 10:38; Mark 1:15; Matt. 24:14) At the present time, the people are utterly unable to free themselves from the condemnation of sin. All human schemes for the salvation of the world are proving to be valueless. God’s kingdom on Earth, for which Jesus taught us to pray, is the only solution to all the various human woes, and we must proclaim this promise. (Matt. 6:10) By thus bearing witness to the Lord and the work he came to do, it may inspire hope where little or none now exists.

MEANS FOR ABOUNDING

God provides the means for our abounding. We can give because we have received. We must continue to receive in order to bestow upon others, and to receive we must be in constant communication with the Heavenly Father, the source of our supplies of grace and truth. Ours will be a continual supply of grace if we daily ask for it in the proper condition of humility and reverence. “Truly our fellowship is

with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”
—I John 1:3

How much should we abound, and what is the measure? As God has abounded to us, so we must abound to others. He gave of his best in the person of his beloved Son. (John 3:16) It cost him a very great deal. It also cost Jesus much to pass on the knowledge of the Heavenly Father’s love to man. Jesus had many bitter experiences, much suffering, and finally it cost him life itself. Should we not follow his example? We should give of our best in the interests of others, abounding to them as God and his Son have abounded to us.

Let us also remember that every act of love shown to the brethren of Jesus is counted as done to the Master himself. As Mary of Bethany did, we should break our alabaster boxes and scatter their sweet-smelling contents as tokens of loving service to one another. Why did Mary break her box? Evidently it was in a full gesture of devotion, and to show her love, that she gave all of its fragrance to her Master. What generous love that was!—Matt. 26:7; John 12:1-3

Love is the greatest commandment and the fulfilling of God’s law. We may ask, how much love are we to give? “Love one another; as I have loved you,” is the answer given by Jesus. (John 13:34) They who hear the gracious words to come up higher and enter the “joy of thy lord,” are those who have already received “all-sufficiency in all things,” and have had it abound toward others in love. (Matt. 25:21) These will receive eternal life in its fullest, grandest sense—glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature.—Rom. 2:7; II Pet. 1:4 ■

Lest Ye Be Weary and Faint

“Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”
—*Hebrews 12:3*

ONE OF THE PRINCIPLE reasons the Lord's people are constantly in danger of becoming weary and faint in their minds and hearts is that they are neither understood nor appreciated by the world. In fact, they may oft times be

misrepresented. The great realities of Jesus' life and ministry were continually contradicted by his enemies, yet he bore up patiently until the end, and died to redeem even those who put him to death. To be looked upon and represented as wrong when the Lord judges us as being right is a severe test. Only through faith in the glorious outcome of our life of sacrifice are we able to continue on without becoming weary.

So far as the flesh is concerned, the Lord's people are faulty and may, frequently perhaps, give just cause for opposition from others. By nature, we have no special reputation or meritorious traits of character above many in the world around us by

which to commend ourselves to those with whom we come in contact. With Jesus, however, it was different. He was perfect: “Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” (Heb. 7:26) Yet his nobility and perfection were denied by those who contradicted him, and he was put to death as a malefactor. All of this he endured without weariness and without fainting. What an example!

CONSIDER JESUS

Therefore, we are to “consider him,” to look upon the Master as a pattern and guide in our lives. We are to realize that as he was, so are we in this world—strangers and aliens. (Eph. 2:12) Jesus himself said, “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.” (John 15:18) The world hated Jesus without a just cause. Let us also strive to live so that any hatred of the world toward us will be, so far as possible, similarly without cause.

If we give others just cause to despise and contradict us it is because we are not following Jesus. For example, we may be guilty of meddling in things that are not, or should not, be our concern. If, on the other hand, we suffer as Jesus suffered—without a cause—then we have whereof to be thankful. In this event we can look to the Heavenly Father, the great source of comfort and strength, in confidence that he will help us to bear the contradictions which his love and wisdom permit to come upon us. We can then say, “He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.” —Job 23:10

Paul admonished, “Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint

not.” (Gal. 6:9) If we are utilizing all of our energies in well doing, both in the development of the Christian graces in our own hearts and also in our endeavors to bless others, we can depend upon divine succor in proportion to our needs. This will enable us to go forward courageously without fainting and without becoming weary, no matter how formidable may be the foes that heap “contradictions” upon us in an effort to beat our courage down.

RENDER GOOD FOR EVIL

Regardless of opposition which may come against us, we must, as followers of the Master, continue in the narrow way. As such, never should we render anything but good in return for evil. (Rom. 12:21) We should “do good unto all men” as we have opportunity, and “especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” (Gal. 6:10) Our doing good must be kept up consistently unto the very end of the way if we hope to be among those who “in due season ... shall reap,” if they “faint not.”

To render good for evil is one of the vital tests of true discipleship. The doing of this, in the name of the Master, will be one of the factors in winning the divine approval and a place with Jesus in the glorious kingdom of blessing soon to be established. To render good for evil is to be like God. His plan of salvation is a revelation of the extent to which this quality of love is displayed by him toward rebellious man. How important, then, that those whom he purposes to use in the blessed work of reconciling the world to himself should prove that at heart, and at the cost of their very lives, they are irrevocably committed to the task of exemplifying this principle

because they have learned that it is the divine will for them and because they know that it is right.

Of the Master it is said that he endured the cross and despised the shame “for the joy that was set before him.” (Heb. 12:2) We also have a joy set before us—the joy of reaping, in due time, if we faint not. We hope to reap a place with Jesus in the kingdom, and with him to share the work of further demonstrating the love of the Father by dispensing to the dying world those lifegiving blessings arranged for them in the divine plan, and provided for them by the death of Jesus.

In the contradiction of sinners against Jesus they cried, “He hath saved others; let him save himself.” (Luke 23:35) How little did they know that through his death he was purchasing the opportunity of salvation for them and for all mankind. Thus his enduring of the contradiction results in the greatest possible blessing to those who did the contradicting. It will also be so in our experience if we follow the Master all the way into death—going down in apparent defeat, but actually in glorious victory. ■

“Blessed be the LORD!

For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.

The LORD is my strength and my shield;

in him my heart trusts, and I am helped;

my heart exults,

and with my song I give thanks to him.

The LORD is the strength of his people;

he is the saving refuge of his anointed.”

Psalms 28:6-8 English Standard Version

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The speakers listed below are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

M. Davis

Zawoja, Poland August 15-19

W. Dutka

Zawoja, Poland August 15-19

M. Kerry

South Africa August 12,13

T. Krupa

Zawoja, Poland August 15-19

B. Montague

South Africa August 12,13

H. Montague

South Africa August 12,13

J. Parkinson

South Africa August 12,13

D. Rice

Zawoja, Poland August 15-19

J. Wesol

Columbus, OH August 6,7



WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

AUGUST 4—“The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.”—II Timothy 2:24,25 (Z. '00-14 Hymn 95)

AUGUST 11—“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Revelation 2:10 (Z. '04-63 Hymn 32)

AUGUST 18—“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”—I Thessalonians 5:21 (Z. '03-26 Hymn 49)

AUGUST 25—“We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”—I John 3:2 (Z. '03-151 Hymn 105)

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, PO Box 521167, Longwood, FL 32752-1167

SOUTH AFRICA CONVENTION, August 12,13—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact J. Isife. Phone: +2348035220141 or Email: johnisife@yahoo.com

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 15-19—Beskidzki Raj Hotel, Zawoja, Poland. Contact M. Davis. Email: lmkdavis@earthlink.net

NEW YORK CONVENTION, September 3,4—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact G. Passios. Email: gpassios11@verizon.net

SEATTLE CONVENTION, September 3-5—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact J. Christiansen. Email: jrchristiansen@comcast.net

COLUMBUS, INDIANA HARVEST CONVENTION, September 17,18—IN PERSON AND BROADCAST ONLINE—**New location**—Harvest Hall, 2620 Valley Branch Road, Nashville, IN 47448. Contact S. Ledwinka. Phone: (812) 350-6791

GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, September 24,25—IN PERSON AND BROADCAST ONLINE—Little Pine Island Camp (Salvation Army Facility), 6889 Pine Island Drive NE, Comstock Park, MI 49321. Contact T. Malinowski. Phone: (616) 304-7691 or Email: TJM@gmail.com

AUSTRALIAN QUEENSLAND CONVENTION, September 30-October 2—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact R. Charlton. Email: randscharlton@gmail.com

LAGOS/IKORODU, NIGERIA CONVENTION,

October 1—Contact I. Ashiegbu. Email: ikechukwua-shiegbu@yahoo.com

WEST NEWTON FALL CONVENTION, October 8,9
—**IN PERSON ONLY**—West Newton Lions Club, 507 Pittsburgh Street, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact L. Mlinek. Email: lisa.mlinek@aol.com

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 29,30—**IN PERSON AND BROADCAST ONLINE**—South Seminole Lodge, 122 Triplet Lake Drive, Casselberry, FL 32707. Contact J. Kuenzli. Phone: (321) 442-1862 or Email: jkuenzli@cfl.rr.com

MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, November 5,6—**IN PERSON AND BROADCAST ONLINE**—Lake Lodge, 1235 E. Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact D. Farchione. Email: debfarchione@aol.com

IBADAN, NIGERIA END OF YEAR THANKSGIVING CONVENTION, December 3,4—Contact C. Egbu. Email: egbucaje@gmail.com

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Doris Moody, Buffalo, NY—May 22. Age, 93

Sister Janina Walnik, Poland—June 19. Age, 87

Sister Antonina Modica, Chicago, IL—June 25. Age, 91

Sister Józefa Bywalec, Krakow, Poland—June 27.
Age, 89

Brother Paul Balko, Chicago, IL—June 28. Age, 93

Sister Kathleen Moore, Bosler, WY—June 28. Age, 95

Sister Glenda Hawke, Portland, OR—July 5. Age, 90

Brother Richard Pless, New York, NY—July 20. Age,
76

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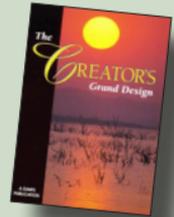
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To us the Scriptures clearly teach . . .

THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD

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

THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING AND POLISHING

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

THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

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

THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH

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

THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH

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

THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD

lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 55

