

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

"WHEN YE SEE THESE
THINGS COME TO
PASS, KNOW YE THAT
THE KINGDOM OF GOD
IS NIGH AT HAND."

--Luke 21:31

September 1967

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CONVENTIONS

The Temple of the Lord

THE entire city of Jerusalem—both the old and the new sections—seems to be firmly under the control of the State of Israel. The Jews are now free to visit and worship at the ancient wailing wall, which is purported to be one of the few remaining ruins of the Jewish temple which was destroyed by Titus and his army in the year A. D. 70. This has raised some interesting theological questions in the minds of Jewish religionists.

Mamonides, a medieval philosopher, in his Code of Jewish Law, insisted that every generation of Israelites was under an obligation to rebuild the temple if it ever became a possibility. This implied, of course, Jewish control over the temple site. However, since the time of Mamonides most Jewish rabbis have concluded, reluctantly, that the restoration of the temple would have to wait until the coming of the Messiah. In line with this conclusion, the chief rabbinate of Israel issued a warning after the capture of old Jerusalem that no Jew should step inside the temple area. Presumably this would tend to desecrate the area.

There is another problem in connection with the possible rebuilding of the temple. As the Jews understand it, the temple services must be conducted by priests—or Cohens, which is the modern name for priests. While there are many Cohens among the Jewish people, large numbers of these have taken the name, even though they are not descendants of Israel's first priest, Aaron. It is said that now rabbinical experts would face a legal nightmare in trying to trace authentic priestly genealogies.

Another difficulty foreseen by Israel's religious leaders in connection with the possible rebuilding of the temple is that

according to the Torah the temple services call for daily sacrifices of animals. The sensitivities of most modern Jews rebel against this. The Jewish people as a whole never have understood that the shedding of animal blood in connection with the services of the tabernacle, and later the temple, pointed forward to the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus.

Still another difficulty now standing in the way of rebuilding the temple is that it must be constructed on its original site. Islam's sacred Dome of the Rock, the spot from which it is claimed that Mohammed ascended into heaven, now occupies the area of the ancient temple. The Jewish people have little sympathy for the Arabs, but it is said that devout Jews would not like to see one of the Arab sacred shrines destroyed. TIME magazine quotes historian Israel Eldad as saying, "We are at the stage where David was when he liberated Jerusalem. From that time until the construction of the temple by Solomon only one generation passed. So will it be with us." When asked about the Dome of the Rock now standing in the way, Eldad answered, "It is of course an open question. Who knows? Perhaps there will be an earthquake."

The Tabernacle

Shortly after the deliverance of the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage, the Lord gave instructions to Moses to construct a tabernacle. This tabernacle, or "tent," signified Jehovah's presence with his people, and many divinely prescribed services were carried out in connection with it, nearly all of them calling for the sacrifice of animals. The tabernacle itself was 15 feet wide, 15 feet high, and 45 feet long, and was open at the front, or east end. It was covered by a large white linen cloth interwoven with figures of cherubim, in blue, purple, and scarlet. The open end, or front, of the structure, was closed by a curtain of material similar to the covering cloth. This was called "the door, or first veil.

Another cloth of the same material, similarly woven with figures of cherubim, called "the veil," or second veil, hung so that it divided the tabernacle into two compartments. The first,

or larger compartment, 15 feet wide and 30 feet long, was called "the holy." The second, or rear compartment, was called "the most holy." Over the entire tabernacle there was a tent for shelter. It was made of a covering of cashmere cloth, another of ram skins died red, and another of seal skins.

The tabernacle was surrounded by what was called a "court," toward the rear of which it stood. This court, 75 feet wide and 150 feet long, was formed by a fence of linen curtains, suspended by silver hooks set in the tops of wooden posts 7½ feet high, which were set in sockets of copper. Its opening, like the door of the tabernacle itself, was toward the east and was called "the gate." This gate was of white linen, interwoven with blue, purple, and scarlet.

The furniture of the court consisted of but two main pieces. There was the brazen altar, on which sacrifices were offered; and there was the laver, or basin, in which there was water which the priests used for cleansing purposes.

In the first compartment of the tabernacle there was a table bearing two piles of shewbread, a golden candlestick, and a golden altar on which incense was burned.

In the most holy there was but one article of furniture, which was "the ark of the covenant." The cover of the ark served as a "mercy seat," and it was on this mercy seat that the blood of some of the animal sacrifices was sprinkled. Rising from the mercy seat were two cherubim with outstretched wings. In the ark were kept the tables of the Law, a golden bowl of manna which did not corrupt, and Aaron's rod of authority.

The tabernacle and its services were designed by the Lord to point forward to, or "shadow," good things to come. (Heb. 10:1) For example, Paul, in speaking of the Christian's hope, likens it to an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, which "entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." (Heb. 6:19, 20) Thus it is suggested that the most holy of the tabernacle, which was beyond the veil, represents heaven itself.—Heb. 9:24

Speaking of the sacrifices which were offered in the tabernacle,

Paul wrote, "Almost all things are by the Law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." (Heb. 9:22, 23) In the pattern of the better things to come, animals were offered in sacrifice, and these animal sacrifices pointed forward to the sacrifice of Jesus and his faithful followers. To the latter Paul wrote, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, . . . that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Rom. 12:1

In Hebrews 10:4-9 Paul discusses the prominent part Jesus took in the "better sacrifices" (Heb. 9:23) illustrated by the sacrificial services of the tabernacle. He explains that the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, but that the sacrifice of Jesus did atone for sin. He explains further that when Jesus came into the world as a human and offered himself in sacrifice, he took away "the first" that he might establish "the second." From this we conclude that the typical sacrifices of the ancient past are no longer desired by God, those typical services of the tabernacle, and later the temple, having accomplished their purpose.

David's Desire

We read concerning David, "It came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies; that the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." Nathan the prophet authorized David to proceed with the building of a house for the Lord, but the Lord overruled this, and through Nathan he said to David, "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever."—II Sam. 7:1-13

David was permitted to gather much material for a temple, but it remained for his son Solomon, with the assistance of Hiram,

king of Tyre, to construct what became so well known as Solomon's Temple. A description of this temple is presented in I Kings, chapter 6, and II Chronicles, chapter 2. It is of interest to note that all the arrangements were identical with those of the tabernacle, and the dimensions of every part exactly double those of the tentlike structure which it was designed to replace. While the record indicates that vast amounts of gold and other valuable material were used in constructing the temple, it was not actually a large structure as compared with many heathen temples, and with many churches and cathedrals of later times.

Regardless of the great amount of wealth involved in the construction of this temple, Solomon sensed that it was not glorious enough to serve as a house in which God would deign to dwell. In his prayer of dedication Solomon said, "Will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" All Solomon could hope for was that the temple would serve as a symbol of God's presence with Israel, and that since his name was there he would look favorably upon it.—I Kings 8:27-29

Temple of Zerubbabel

Solomon's Temple was largely destroyed at the time the Israelites were taken captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. However, after seventy years of this captivity, Cyrus issued a decree permitting the captives to return and rebuild the temple. We have very few particulars regarding the temple which the Jews then built under the direction of Zerubbabel, and we have no description that would enable us to realize its appearance. About the only measurements of this second temple are those found in the decree authorizing its construction. We quote from this decree: "Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house."—Ezra 6:3, 4

It is believed by many that the temple built by Zerubbabel was much plainer and lacked the abundance of gold and ornamentation displayed in Solomon's Temple. Some writers contend that this led to a greater reverence by the people in their worship, in that they were not so carried away with the splendor of their surroundings, and could concentrate more on the things of God. This, of course, is only conjecture.

Herod's Temple

A temple was also built by Herod. This one was constructed of white marble and overlaid with gold and jewels. It gleamed high on the summit of Zion, and was a spectacular sight to pilgrims. This was the temple which existed in Jesus' day, the temple in which he taught to some extent, and the temple which he cleansed. The actual temple of Herod was probably of about the same dimensions as the former ones, but he surrounded it with various other buildings, courts, and porticos.—John 2:13-16

After Jesus had cleansed the temple he was asked by the Jews, "What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" To this Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2:18, 19) The Jews replied, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" We are told that in making this statement, Jesus was speaking of "the temple of his body."—John 2:20, 21

Beginning with Jesus, a great change in God's dealings with his people took place. The importance of places and temples began to fade and, as Jesus explained to the Samaritan woman, the time was coming when the Lord would desire his people to worship him in spirit and in truth.—John 4:20-24

Symbolic

Simply and briefly stated, the temple of Solomon, which replaced the tabernacle, was the place where God met with his people and blessed them. The Scriptures indicate that this manifestation of divine favor now comes, not through a building, but through God's people themselves. Paul wrote, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth

in you?" (I Cor. 3:16) Again, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Eph. 2:19-22

In the last two chapters of Revelation, in which we are presented pictures of the messianic kingdom functioning for the blessing of the people, reference is made to both the tabernacle and the temple. But these are not literal. The tabernacle and temple are used to emphasize the fact that the kingdom and its blessings will be a manifestation of God's presence among the people, and of his blessing upon them. Revelation 21:3, 4 reads, "And 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, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And 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."

The typical temple was located in the old Jerusalem, but the Book of Revelation describes a "new Jerusalem," which is said to be "the bride, the Lamb's wife," in other words, the glorified church of Christ. Considerable detail is given in the description of this "holy city, the new Jerusalem." John says, "I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." (Rev. 21:22) It is because God will manifest his presence through this symbolic holy city, or kingdom, that he is referred to as its temple. In the divine plan the days of building literal temples are in the past. Now we are near to the time when God will manifest himself to all mankind through Jesus and his exalted followers—that antitypical holy city which will be the channel of blessing for all mankind.

THE BIBLE ANSWERS TV SCHEDULE

ALABAMA

Birmingham	WBRC-TV	Channel 6
Saturdays,	5:30 a.m.	
Decatur	WMSL-TV	Channel 23
Saturdays,	(Time to be announced.)	
Florence	WOWL-TV	Channel 15
Sundays,	11:00 a.m.	
Montgomery	WCOV-TV	Channel 20
Sundays,	8:30 a.m.	

ARIZONA

Phoenix	KTAR-TV	Channel 12
Fridays,	6:00 a.m.	

ARKANSAS

Little Rock	KTHV-TV	Channel 11
Sundays,	1:00 p.m.	

CALIFORNIA

Clovis	KAIL-TV	Channel 53
Sundays,	8:00 p.m.	
Hollywood	KLXA-TV	Channel 40
Sundays,	11:00 a.m.	
Fresno	KMJ-TV	Channel 24
Sundays,	10:00 a.m.	
Mt. Wilson	KMTW-TV	Channel 52
Sundays,	8:30 p.m.	
Los Angeles	KTTV	Channel 11
Sundays,	7:00 a.m.	
San Diego	KFMB-TV	Channel 8
Sundays,	7:00 a.m.	
San Francisco	KSAN-TV	Channel 43
Sundays,	11:00 a.m.	
San Jose	KNTV-TV	Channel 11
Sun., Tues, Thurs., Fri.,	8:00 a.m.	
Visalia	KICU-TV	Channel 43
Sundays,	11:00 a.m.	

CONNECTICUT

Waterbury	WATR-TV	Channel 20
Sundays,	12:30 p.m.	

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington	WOOK-TV	Channel 14
Sundays,	5:30 p.m.	

FLORIDA

Jacksonville	WJKS-TV	Channel 17
Sundays,	8:30 a.m.	

HAWAII

Honolulu	KHON	Sundays, 7:00 a.m.
Wailuku	KAH	Sundays, 7:00 a.m.
Hilo	KHAW	Sundays, 7:00 a.m.

ILLINOIS

Moline	WQAD-TV	Channel 8
Sundays,	11:30 a.m.	

INDIANA

Terre Haute	WTHI-TV	Channel 10
Alternate	Sundays, 12:00 noon.	

MASSACHUSETTS

Springfield	WHYN-TV	Channel 40
Sundays,	8:30 a.m.	

MINNESOTA

Alexandria	KCMT-TV	Channel 7
Every Third	Sunday, 8:00 a.m.	
Hackensack	KNMT-TV	Channel 12
Every Third	Sunday, 8:00 a.m.	
Walker	KNMT-TV	Channel 12
Every Third	Sunday, 8:00 a.m.	

MISSISSIPPI

Biloxi	WLOX-TV	
Sundays,	1:00 p.m.	
Columbus	WCBI-TV	Channel 4
Sundays,	7:30 a.m.	

NEVADA

Reno	KTVN-TV	
Sundays,	(Time to be announced.)	

NEW MEXICO

Farmington	CATV-TV	
Sundays,	8:30 p.m.	

TV BROADCAST

NEW YORK				Odessa	KOSA-TV	Channel 17
Binghamton	WNBF-TV	Channel 12		Sundays, 10:00 a.m.		
Sundays, 8:00 a.m.				Port Arthur	KJAC-TV	
				Sundays, (Time to be announced.)		
OHIO				San Antonio	KWEX-TV	
Cambridge	WHIZ-TV	Channel 80		Sundays, 3:15 p.m.		
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.						
Cincinnati	WCPO-TV	Channel 9		UTAH		
Thursdays, 1:30 a.m.				Salt Lake City	KUTV	Channel 2
Columbus	WBNS-TV	Channel 10		Sundays, 10:00 a.m.		
Saturdays, 7:30 a.m.						
Coshocton	WHIZ-TV	Channel 71		VIRGINIA		
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.				Roanoke	WRFT-TV	
Kettering	WKTR-TV	Channel 16		Sundays, 12:00 p.m.		
Sundays, 3:30 p.m.						
Zanesville	WHIZ-TV	Channel 18		WEST VIRGINIA		
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.				Fairmont	WDTV	
PENNSYLVANIA				Sundays, 1:00 p.m.		
Lebanon	WLYH-TV	Channel 15		Huntington	WHTN-TV	Channel 13
Sundays, 11:30 a.m.				Mondays, 7:30 a.m.		
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Mondays, (Time to be announced.)						
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				Milwaukee	WITI-TV	Channel 6
TEXAS				Sundays, 11:30 a.m.		
Big Spring	KWAB-TV	Channel 4				
(Day and time to be announced.)				BERMUDA		
El Paso	KTSM-TV	Channel 9		Hamilton	ZFB-TV	Channel
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.				Sundays, 11:00 p.m.		

SPANISH RADIO BROADCASTS

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

COLORADO				PHILIPPINES		
Denver	KFSC 1220	8:45 a.m.		Zamboanga City	DXJW	9:45 p.m.
PARAGUAY				SURINAM		
Asuncion				Paramaribo	620	Tuesdays, 8:15 p.m.
Z. P. 9 Comuneros	970 kc.	10:15 a.m.		URUGUAY		
PERU				Montevideo	Radio El Espectador	810 kc.
Lima	Radio America	7:00 p.m.		Fridays,	2:15 p.m.	

"Frank and Ernest"

BROADCAST SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

ALABAMA

Decatur WMSL 1400 11:15 a.m.
Haleyville WJBB 1230 12:00 p.m.

ARIZONA

Phoenix KUEQ 740 8:30 a.m.

ARKANSAS

Jonesboro KBTM 1230 12:05 p.m.

CALIFORNIA

Chico KPAY 1060 10:35 a.m.
El Centro KICO 1490 10:30 a.m.
Los Angeles KBIG 740 10:00 a.m.
Redding KVCV 600 7:45 a.m.
Sacramento KGMS 1380 8:30 a.m.
San Diego XERB 1090 9:45 a.m.
San Francisco KSAY 1010 10:00 a.m.

COLORADO

Fort Collins KZIX 600 1:00 p.m.
Pueblo KDZA 1230 10:05 a.m.

DELAWARE

Wilmington WTUX 1290 10:15 a.m.

FLORIDA

Tampa WFLA 970 9:30 a.m.

IDAHO

Lewiston KRLC 1350 9:35 a.m.

ILLINOIS

Chicago WEAU 1330 10:00 a.m.
La Salle WLPO 1220 9:45 a.m.
Rockford WRRR 1330 8:30 a.m.
West Frankfort WFRX 1300 9:15 a.m.

INDIANA

Gary-Hammond WJOB 1230 8:30 a.m.
Indianapolis WIBC 1070 10:30 a.m.
Muncie WLBC 1340 8:45 a.m.

IOWA

Clinton KROS 1340 7:15 p.m.

KANSAS

Goodland KLOE 730 7:45 a.m.

KENTUCKY

Bowling Green WLBK 1410 12:05 p.m.
Louisville WAVE 970 8:15 a.m.
Newport WNOP 740 9:10 a.m.
Winchester WWKY 1380 10:30 a.m.

MAINE

Bangor WABI 910 12:00 noon

MASSACHUSETTS

Orange WCAT 1390 9:15 a.m.

MICHIGAN

Detroit WLDM(fm) 95.5 9:00 a.m.
Saginaw WSGW 790 10:30 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Duluth-Superior WAKX 1480 12:15 p.m.
Minneapolis KQRS 1440 12:30 p.m.

MISSISSIPPI

Biloxi WLOX 1490 12:00 p.m.
Waynesboro WABO 990 2:00 p.m.

MISSOURI

Farmington KREI 800 9:00 a.m.
Kansas City KCMO 810 9:35 a.m.
St. Louis KWK 1380 8:00 a.m.

MONTANA

Great Falls KFBB 1310 9:15 a.m.
Miles City KATL 1340 9:15 a.m.

NEBRASKA

Grand Island KRGI 1430 10:05 a.m.

NEW JERSEY

Newark WJRZ 970 9:30 a.m.

NEW MEXICO

Silver City KSIL 1340 10:05 a.m.

BROADCAST SCHEDULE

NEW YORK

Albany WEEH 1300 9:00 a.m.
 Buffalo-Niagara Falls WHLD 1270 12:00 noon
 Kingston WBAZ 1550 9:45 a.m.
 New York WJRZ 970 9:30 a.m.

NORTH CAROLINA

Elizabeth City WGAI 560 12:05 p.m.
 Leaksville WLOE 1490 12:05 p.m.

OHIO

Akron-Canton WHLO 640 7:45 a.m.
 Cincinnati WNOP 740 9:10 a.m.
 Columbus WBNS 1460 10:05 a.m.
 Piqua WPTW 1570 11:30 a.m.
 Zanesville WHIZ 1240 6:45 a.m.
 Cleveland (Sat.) WXEN (fm) 106.5 11:45 a.m.

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City WNAD 640 8:10 a.m.

OREGON

Lebanon KGAL 920 9:00 a.m.
 Portland KLIQ 1290 9:30 a.m.
 The Dalles KODL 1440 9:15 a.m.

PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown WHOL 1600 10:45 a.m.
 Connellsville WCVI 1340 12:05 p.m.
 Pottstown WPAZ 1370 8:30 a.m.

PUERTO RICO

Aguadilla (Fri.) WGRF 8:00 p.m.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Yankton WNAX 570 10:45 a.m.

TENNESSEE

Clinton WYSH 1380 7:00 a.m.

TEXAS

Lubbock KDAV 580 9:45 a.m.
 Pampa KPDN 1340 12:00 p.m.
 San Antonio KBOP 1380 7:15 a.m.
 Sherman-Dennison KRRV 910 11:45 a.m.
 Wichita Falls KWFT 620 10:15 a.m.

UTAH

Salt Lake City KSOP 1370 9:30 a.m.

VIRGINIA

Richmond WLEE 1480 10:45 a.m.

WASHINGTON

Bellingham KPUG 1170 9:30 a.m.
 Centralia-Chehalis KELA 1470 10:35 a.m.
 Olympia KGY 1240 10:35 a.m.
 Quincy KPOR 1370 10:35 a.m.
 Seattle KAYO 1150 10:30 a.m.
 Tacoma KMO 1360 9:45 a.m.

WISCONSIN

Fond du Lac KFIZ 1450 11:05 a.m.
 Milwaukee WEMP 1250 8:45 a.m.
 Neillsville WCCN 1370 9:15 a.m.

WYOMING

Cheyenne KVWO 1370 10:05 a.m.

VIRGIN ISLANDS

Christiansted WIVI 970 9:00 a.m.

CANADA

Calgary, Alta. CKXL 1140 11:30 a.m.
 Corner Brook, Nfld. CFCB 570 10:30 a.m.
 Dauphin, Man. CKDM 730 10:30 a.m.
 Oshawa CKLB 1350 9:45 a.m.
 Prince Albert, Sask. CKBI 900 10:30 a.m.
 Vancouver CJOR 600 7:15 p.m.

AUSTRALIA

Geelong 3GL, 222m. 10:00 a.m.

RADIO TOPICS FOR SEPTEMBER

3—"Peace When There Is No Peace"
 10—"The Penalty for Sin"

17—"Why God Permits Evil"
 24—"Worlds and Ages"

LESSON FOR SEPTEMBER 3**Witness Before Rulers**

MEMORY VERSE: "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men."—Acts 24:16

ACTS 24:10-21

TRUE to what the Holy Spirit had prophesied, when Paul reached Jerusalem circumstances developed which led to his imprisonment. Actually, however, his imprisonment was in the nature of a protective custody. The Jewish religious leaders would doubtless have put him to death had not the Roman authorities interfered by rescuing him from the infuriated mob and placing him in prison. Even so, Paul's enemies plotted to reach him in some way and put him to death, whereupon he was removed from Jerusalem to Caesarea by a small army of Roman soldiers.

During his turbulent experiences in Jerusalem, Paul let it be known that he was a Roman citizen; hence the Roman authorities were obligated to protect him and to see to it that he received a fair trial. He was taken to Felix, a Roman governor, who ordered that Paul be kept in Herod's judgment hall until his

accusers arrived from Jerusalem. When they arrived, the trial was held, and today's lesson is Paul's reply to the charges brought against him by his accusers.

Tertullus was the spokesman for Paul's accusers, and he charged that this man was a "pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes: who also hath gone about to profane the temple." (Acts 24:5,6) Felix gave Paul an opportunity to reply to this charge; he did so, briefly, by denying that it was true.

But Paul did have a confession to make. He said to Felix: "This I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of

the dead, both of the just and unjust."—vss. 14, 15

Paul was a conscientious man, as he expresses in our memory verse, and he stedfastly proclaimed the great hope of the resurrection set forth in the Old Testament Scriptures. "Touching the resurrection of the dead," he said, "I am called in question before you this day." (vs. 21) Paul not only preached the resurrection of the dead, but he affirmed the resurrection of Jesus and taught that the resurrection of all "the just and unjust" would come through him. It was this point that particularly angered the Jewish religious leaders.

While Paul reminds us that the resurrection of the dead is taught in the Old Testament Scriptures, we do not find the word "resurrection" until we reach the New Testament. In the Old Testament various words and expressions are used to set forth the hope of the resurrection. In a prayer to the God of Israel, Moses said, "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men." (Ps. 90:3) Here the word "return" expresses the thought of the resurrection.

The Old Testament likens the dead to prisoners, and speaks of their awakening from death as a bringing again of their captivity. Concerning the Sodomites, the Samaritans, and the Israelites, the Lord said, "When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again

the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them."—Ezek. 16:53

Similar language is used to describe the resurrection of the Moabites. "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the Lord." (Jer. 48:47) A similar promise is made concerning the Elamites: "It shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the Lord."—Jer. 49:39

Paul explained that the Law and the Prophets called for a resurrection of both "the just and unjust." Both these groups are mentioned in Daniel 12:2, where the resurrection is likened to an awakening from sleep. We quote: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." It is the "just" who will enter immediately into everlasting life. The unjust will come forth to trial, or a testing. Because of their past wrongdoing these will be held in contempt until they reform, as they will then have the opportunity of doing. In the Hebrew text, the passage rendered "everlasting" contempt in the King James Version, is age-lasting, or lasting to a consummation.

QUESTIONS

Explain the circumstances which led up to Paul's imprisonment.

What was one of the main points Paul's enemies held against him?

How is the resurrection taught in the Old Testament?

Ambassador in Chains

MEMORY VERSE: "And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."—Acts 26:29

ACTS 26:24-32

IN A hearing before Festus, Paul was asked if he would return to Jerusalem and let himself be tried by the religious rulers there. Paul refused to do this. He said, "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews I have done no wrong. . . . If I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar."—Acts 25:10, 11

According to Roman law, Paul's appeal to Caesar made it mandatory that he be taken to Caesar. However, Festus was in a quandary, for it was customary in sending a prisoner to Caesar to supply information concerning the charges against him, but so far as the Roman authorities were concerned, there were no charges. So Festus sought the aid of King Agrippa, and arrangements were made for Paul to appear before Agrippa, where Festus was also present.

When given an opportunity to testify before Agrippa, Paul explained that from his youth he had

been loyal to the Jewish religion. He said, "After the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." (Acts 26:5) He said further, "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews." (vss. 6, 7) Then Paul asks the question, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (vs. 8) Here Paul again identifies the real reason for which he was being persecuted.

Paul then tells Agrippa of the severe manner in which he himself had persecuted the followers of Jesus, and of his experience on the Damascus road. He relates with feeling the power of the vision which caused him to realize that Jesus was indeed the Christ of promise. "Whereupon, O king Agrippa," he said, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."—Acts 26:19

The vision had revealed to him that he was to be "a minister and a witness" both of the things which

he had seen and of those things which the Lord would still reveal unto him. (vs. 16) Paul explained to Agrippa that, being faithful to the vision, he had indeed preached Christ, and that because of his continued ministry the Jews had apprehended him in the temple and were determined to kill him. But, as Paul explained, God had helped him, so that he could "continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come."—Acts 26:21,22

What were those things which the prophets and Moses had foretold concerning the Messiah? Paul explains, "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." (vss. 22,23)

In a reference to Jesus' resurrection and exaltation, the Prophet David wrote, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou has hast led captivity captive." (Ps. 68:18) Paul quotes this and applies it to Jesus. He wrote, "Wherefore he saith, When he [Jesus] ascended up on high, he led a multitude of captives." (Eph. 4:8, margin) In this prophecy death is symbolized as a state of captivity. Jesus was a captive in death, but when, by the power of the Heavenly Father, he was brought forth "he led a host of captives." (R.S.V.) This, of course, implies, as Paul affirmed, that Jesus was to be the first to rise from the dead. Paul further wrote,

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." (I Cor. 15:20) Following Jesus in the resurrection are those who are brought forth in "the first resurrection." These will live and reign with Christ a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4,6) Eventually the whole world will be restored to life and will live on the earth as humans.

Festus interrupted Paul and said, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." (vs. 24) Paul said, "I am not mad, . . . but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." He explained that Agrippa knew about these things, because his ministry had not been conducted "in a corner." Then he pressed the point, asking Agrippa if he really did believe what the prophets had foretold. Agrippa replied, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Paul replied in the words of our memory text. With this, the hearing closed, and Agrippa conceded that Paul was innocent of wrongdoing, but since he had appealed to Caesar, he would have to be sent to Caesar.

QUESTIONS

Relate the circumstances leading up to Paul's appearance before Agrippa.

What was one of the main objections the religious rulers of Israel had against Paul's teachings?

Quote from the Old Testament a promise of Jesus' resurrection which indicates that he was to be the first to be raised from the dead.

Journey to Rome

MEMORY VERSE: "Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."—Acts 27:25

ACTS 27:21-26, 33-38

OUR memory verse suggests the secret of Paul's unusual spiritual strength and courage. "I believe God," he said, that it shall be even as it was told me." God had told Paul that he would appear before Caesar. Paul possessed mountain-moving faith. He believed that when the Lord gave him an assignment it would be made possible for him to fulfil it. As one follower of the Master has said, "If God does not remove the mountains, then he gives us strength to climb over them."

Today's lesson finds Paul on the way to Rome as a prisoner. While this was not the ideal way to travel, under the circumstances it was probably the only way Paul could travel to Rome without the risk of being killed by his Jewish enemies; for he was under protection of his Roman guards.

Because the bad weather of winter was approaching, Paul advised that their ship put up in Fair Haven for the winter. But the master and owner of the ship did

not agree with this. So against Paul's advice they continued their journey, only to run into treacherous weather, which caused the loss of the ship. This was a very difficult experience, but the Lord was with Paul and assured him, even before the ship was wrecked, that neither he nor any of the passengers or crew would lose their lives.

And so it resulted, although only because those on board followed the instructions of Paul as to when they should abandon the ship and get to shore the best way they could. "The soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose." (Acts 27:42, 43) It was God's purpose that Paul should be taken to Rome, and he permitted nothing to interfere with that purpose.

Just as Paul was taken to Rome under the protective custody of Roman soldiers, so his whole journey in the narrow way was under the protection of his Heavenly Father. This did not mean, however,

that his life as a follower of the Master was an easy one. He knew from the beginning that it would not be. At the time of Paul's conversion the Lord said to Ananias, "I will show him [Paul] how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:16) So Paul embarked on his service to the Lord with this certain knowledge that it would entail much suffering.

In II Corinthians 11:23-28 Paul refers to some of his experiences as an ambassador of Christ. We quote: "In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

Thus Paul describes his life's experiences as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. One of these is the wrecking of the ship that forced a landing of the 260 aboard on the Island of Melita—now known as Malta. The people on the island

received their shipwrecked visitors kindly. It was evidently late in the fall of the year. It was cold and rainy; so the island people, spoken of in the record as Barbarians, built a fire to provide as much warmth and comfort as possible, and gave them food.

There came a viper out of the heat, and fastened itself on Paul's hands. When the Barbarians saw this they concluded that Paul was a murderer and doomed to die. But when he did not die, "they changed their minds, and said that he was a god." (Acts 28:1-6) The chief man of the island was Publius. He received Paul and his friends and provided lodgings for them three days. Publius' father was sick, and Paul healed him.

Although the record does not so state, in all probability Paul and his companions used whatever opportunities came to them to bear witness to the Gospel. They remained on the island for three months, which would bring them to early spring, and in that length of time they would have made many acquaintances. In the spring a new vessel was acquired, and they moved on toward Italy.

QUESTIONS

Under what circumstances did Paul journey to Rome?

How did Paul appraise the meaning of the many difficulties of his Christian life?

What were some of his experiences on Melita?

The Continuing Witness

MEMORY VERSE: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also."—Romans 1:14, 15

ACTS 28:23-31

PAUL had long wanted to visit the brethren in Rome (Rom. 1: 11-13), and now he was there. The brethren in Rome heard that Paul had landed in Italy and was on the way to Rome, traveling over the Appian way, and they went out as far as a place called "The three taverns" to meet him. When Paul saw them "he thanked God, and took courage." (Acts 28:1) Paul had had a long journey, and a difficult one, and all the way in the custody of Roman soldiers, having been made a prisoner when rescued from the mob of Jews in Jerusalem who sought to kill him. How encouraging, indeed, it must have been to have the brethren come out from Rome to meet him!

Paul could previously have been released as a prisoner had he not appealed his case to Caesar. But he knew that by doing this he would be taken to Rome, and his Jewish enemies would not be able to harm him on the way. So far as the Roman authorities were concerned, Paul was there to be tried

in Caesar's court. But to Paul this was incidental. His real mission was to preach the Gospel. As our memory verse indicates, Paul felt an obligation to preach the Gospel at Rome, and was eager to do that to the fullest extent possible.

It is doubtful that Paul realized, when he wrote his epistle to the brethren in Rome, that he would be taken there as a prisoner. However, Paul had not been convicted of any crime, and he was treated very favorably, being permitted to live in his own hired house for two years, but doubtless under the watchful eye of a Roman guard. This degree of liberty as a prisoner enabled him to continue bearing witness to the Gospel.

In most places visited by Paul during his various journeys, he first went to the synagogues and witnessed to the Jewish people. He could not do this in Rome, but he sent word to the Jews to visit him, and many of them did. A special day was appointed for this, and to the Jews assembled in his lodgings Paul "expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them

concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening."

Some of the Jews believed the Gospel of Christ which Paul preached to them, and some did not. "And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed," but not until Paul had quoted from the Old Testament to show why many of them had rejected the message. He quoted from Isaiah, saying, "Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."—Acts 28:26, 27; Isa. 6:9, 10

Paul then explained that the Gospel was being sent to the Gentiles, which meant that no longer did the Jews have the exclusive opportunity of hearing and believing this glorious message. After this the Jews departed "and had great reasonings among themselves."

Paul's quotation from Isaiah, indicating that there would be those whose ears of understanding would be closed, is revealing, in that the reason for it was that "the heart of this people is waxed gross." There must be a right heart condition in order to understand and appreciate the Gospel of Christ. The "salvation" that is offered by the Gospel during the present age

is that "great salvation," which includes the opportunity of living and reigning with Christ a thousand years. There will later be the opportunity of the general salvation, and we believe that many Jews and Gentiles who disbelieved in this present Gospel Age will then believe and receive everlasting life on earth as humans.

And Paul did witness to many Gentiles while a prisoner in Rome. Writing to the brethren at Philippi from Rome, Paul said, "I want you to know, my brothers, that what has happened to me, has, in effect, turned out to the advantage of the Gospel. For, first of all, my imprisonment means a personal witness for Christ before the palace guards, not to mention others who come and go."—Phil. 1:12, 13; Phillips

It is clear that Paul let his light shine while in prison. Thus he becomes a good example for all the Lord's people. If we wait until all the circumstances for witnessing are favorable, it is likely that we will do little to make known the glad tidings of the kingdom. Paul rose above his circumstances and continued to hold forth the Word of life to whoever would listen.

QUESTIONS

To whom did Paul first witness at Rome?

What special salvation is offered to believers in the present age?

What salvation will be available for mankind during the next age?

The Return of Christ

"This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—I Thessalonians 4:15-18

"Comfort one another with these words," Paul wrote, and the hope of Christ's return was indeed very comforting to the brethren in the Early Church. They were in the difficult position of bearing witness to One who could not be seen. Their enemies would taunt them with the fact that their leader, their Messiah, had been put to death. To this they could counter that he had been raised from the dead, and that there were many "infallible proofs" of this. But still he was not in their midst, and they realized that this absence would continue until his promised return. So they earnestly looked for his coming, for they knew that when he returned he would receive them unto himself, that where he was, there they would be also.—John 14:3

The brethren in the Early Church believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the One whom the Creator had sent to deliver Israel from her yoke of bondage to Rome, and to set up a kingdom which would rule over the people of all nations. Through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit they knew that the messianic kingdom would not be set up in the earth until the Messiah returned. During his first visit to earth he gave

himself in death as "a ransom for all," and they believed that during his second presence this great truth of redemption through the blood would be "testified," or made known, to all.—I Tim. 2:3-6

They would also doubtless have in mind the promise Jesus had made to his disciples while he was still in the flesh, that when he returned he would gird himself and serve his household with "meat in due season." (Luke 12:35-37) They would know also from Jesus' prophecy concerning the judgment day that when he came in his glory with all his holy angels, or messengers, he would sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations would be judged by him and his associates.—Matt. 25:31, 32

According to the prophecies there were also other things to be accomplished during the time of our Lord's second presence, outstanding among these being what Peter described as the "restitution of all things." This, Peter said, would be in fulfillment of the testimony given by God's holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21) So the hope in which the brethren of the Early Church rejoiced was very comprehensive. All their expectations concerning the accomplishments of the Messiah were dependent upon his return. Jesus' death and resurrection would have been in vain should he not return to reward his faithful followers and to bless all the families of the earth through the agencies of his kingdom—that thousand-year kingdom in which they believed that, if faithful, they would live and reign with their Master.

The Glorified Jesus

When we study the promises and prophecies of the Bible pertaining to Jesus' second visit to earth it is important to realize that they apply not to a human, of flesh and blood, but to a divine being. The Scriptures teach that when Jesus was raised from the dead he was no longer human, but the very "image of the invisible God." (Col. 1:15; II Cor. 5:16; I Pet. 3:18) Because of this, the fact of his return and second presence is revealed, not by seeing him with the literal eye, but by signs which are mentioned in the prophecies.

It is true that Jesus did appear in the form of a man to his disciples on several occasions following his resurrection, but this does not mean that by nature he was still a human. The circumstances of his few brief appearances prove to the contrary. For example, he always appeared in a different body, which would not have been the case had the human body in which he appeared been his real body. Jesus was present with his disciples for forty days between the time of his resurrection and his ascension; but only during a very small portion of this time were his disciples able to see him, and then only when he miraculously appeared to them. It is this Jesus, therefore, who is able to be present invisibly with humans, who, the Scriptures declare, was to return to earth for the purpose of establishing a kingdom of righteousness, by means of which the redeemed race is to be restored to life and happiness on the earth.

That Jesus still possesses the power to appear to humans, as he did to his disciples following his resurrection from the dead, we do not dispute; but the Scriptures do not say that his second presence will be revealed to the world in this manner. His appearances following his resurrection were evidently intended to establish in the hearts and minds of his disciples the fact that he had been raised from the dead; but this truth having been established, we have no reason to expect the repetition of such appearances.

In Romans 1:20 we read concerning God, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Here is a key which will help us to understand the significance of the prophecies pertaining to the second coming of Christ. Christ is now invisible to human eyes, even as our Heavenly Father is invisible; hence at his second advent he can be recognized only by the visible things which transpire, and which can be identified through the prophetic pages of the divine Word as the signs which were to mark his return.

Let us state the matter in another way: we believe in the

existence of God, not because we have ever seen him, but because we see his works. With our limited abilities we survey the vast universe, and we conclude that a powerful, all-wise Creator must be responsible for what we observe. Similarly, in the Bible we find set forth an impressive array of events which were to take place in the world following the return of the divine Christ; hence, if we can recognize that many of these events are already taking place, the logical conclusion is that that which the Bible describes as the second coming of Christ must already have taken place.

We have another illustration of this principle in the presence and activity of Satan, the Devil. Satan is a person, but no human has ever seen him; but we have all seen the results of his wicked influence throughout the earth. The Apostle Paul informs us that Satan is "the god of this world," the one who now "works in the children of disobedience." (II Cor. 4:4) Paul also explains that Satan is a spirit who is "the prince of the power of the air." (Eph. 2:2) Jesus speaks of Satan as "the prince of this world." (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) If we believe the Bible, we must believe that this powerful, invisible being has, throughout the centuries, been exercising control over the affairs of men.

The Apostle Peter writes concerning this invisible ruler of the present social order and declares that he goes about "as a roaring lion," seeking whom he may devour. (I Pet. 5:8) This clearly indicates again that Satan's field of activity is right here on earth, and among humans; yet even those of us who realize this most fully have never literally heard him "roar." Nor is Satan actually a lion, but the meaning of this language is easily understood by those who know the ways of lions in seeking out their prey.

Picture Language

Since the prophecies pertaining to our Lord's return forecast the coming of a powerful divine being, invisible to human eyes, it requires the use of more than mere words to convey their meaning to us. In addition to words, it requires pictures, symbols, and illustrations. The Lord tells us, "As the heavens are higher

than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:9) In order for the Lord to convey his exalted thoughts to our finite and puny minds he has used many illustrations in his Word. We speak of these as figurative, or symbolic, language. In this symbology of the Bible essentially all the principle things of nature are employed, the things, that is, concerning which we humans have some knowledge.

In the firmament above there are the sun, the moon, and the stars. We know something of the functions of these creations of God, so the Lord uses them in his prophetic picture language. We know, for example, of the health that is engendered by the warming rays of the sun. The rays of the sun are likened in the Bible to the giant wings of a bird, and in a promise of the blessings of health which will be radiated throughout the earth under the administration of Christ's kingdom, Jesus is referred to as "the Sun of Righteousness" which will arise "with healing in his wings." (Mal. 4:2) What a meaningful illustration!

On the earth itself there are mountains, hills, rivers, oceans, islands, and deserts. We know the characteristics of all these, and the Lord uses them to help us understand the high thoughts of his plan, and this is particularly true in the prophecies pertaining to the return and second presence of Christ.

In the animal world there are horses, cattle, sheep, goats, and other domestic animals, in addition to the wild animals, many of which have been used by the Lord in his Word to help us understand his will and ways. David pictures himself as a sheep, and he writes, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." (Ps. 23:1) What a vivid assurance this is of our Heavenly Father's care over his people!

The Prophet Isaiah, writing of the kingdom age, and picturing the people at that time as returning to God over a "way of holiness," says concerning that way that "no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon." (Isa. 35:8, 9) When we think of all the "beasts" which today are ever present to devour those who would serve God, how reassuring it is to know

that these conditions will be changed by the establishment of Christ's kingdom! How much more meaningful is this promise of kingdom blessings when thus so vividly and understandably illustrated.

Then there are the wheat, the tares, the grass, the flowers—and even the thorns—in the vegetable kingdom, which are incorporated in the picture language of the Bible. The psalmist, writing concerning the one whose delight is in the law of the Lord, says, "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Ps. 1:3) No one, in reading this beautiful text, has ever thought that a servant of God is literally like a tree.

We are also acquainted with the characteristics of wind, storms, earthquakes, fire, and so forth, and these the Lord has also employed to help us grasp the meaning of many of the Bible's prophecies, particularly those pertaining to Christ's second visit to earth. In this context, even the earth itself is used as a symbol. Misunderstanding the symbolic nature of some of these prophecies, many students have reached the erroneous conclusion that it is God's intention, at the return of Christ, to destroy the literal earth by actual fire.

For example, Zephaniah 3:8 reads, "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured by the fire of my jealousy [Hebrew, zeal]." Here, both the earth and the fire are figurative, or pictorial. The "nations" and "kingdoms" of the prophecy make up a social order referred to as the "earth." Fire is a very destructive element and is used to symbolize destructive trouble which comes upon man's civilization to consume, or devour it.

In addition to God's use of the works and phenomena of creation as pictures to help us grasp the meaning of his prophecies, there is another advantage in this sign language

of the Bible, which is that it does not change in meaning. Through the centuries the meanings of many words have changed, but the creative works of God do not change. The characteristics of a sheep are the same today as when the Lord used sheep to illustrate certain important truths concerning his people and his dealings with them. The same is true of the sun, the moon, the stars, and the earth, with its mountains, valleys, rivers, and oceans. The characteristics of these are fixed, and so the lessons they teach can be relied upon.

As a Thief

The Apostle Paul wrote, "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." (I Thess. 5:2) Here another symbol is employed—a "thief." "The day of the Lord" is the day of his presence, the time of his second visit to earth. Obviously Jesus does not return to steal the possessions of others. The symbolism of a thief is used, rather, to illustrate the manner of his coming. A thief enters a building quietly and, if successful, without being observed. Thus the Lord would have us grasp this fundamental fact concerning Christ's return and second presence. So far as the unbelieving world is concerned, it is unknown.

But Paul wrote, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness." (I Thess. 5:4, 5) This harmonizes with Jesus' own prophecy concerning his return, a prophecy in which he also employs pictorial language. He said, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."—Matt. 24:42-44

Here Jesus' clear implication is that those who would be watching, while not knowing in advance of the time of his return, would become aware of his presence after it became a reality. It also means that Jesus would be present invisibly, that none

but the faithful watchers would know, and that only those who watched the fulfilment of the "sure word of prophecy" would be aware of his return. All others, as Paul states it, would be "in darkness" so far as this great development in the plan of God was concerned.

With a Shout

Thieves do not announce their presence with a shout. Since Jesus comes in the manner of a thief, that is, secretly, it is manifest that when Paul wrote in our text that Jesus would "descend from heaven with a shout," he must have been using pictorial language. The Greek word here translated "shout" means literally to incite, or to urge. What is the import of this statement? Paul explained that in the day of the Lord the unbelieving world would say, "Peace and safety"; and that then "sudden destruction" would come upon them, "as travail upon a woman with child," and that they would not escape. (I Thess. 5:3) Let us keep in mind that the main objective of our Lord's return is the establishment of the messianic kingdom. This means that the kingdoms of this world, the social order established by man, must be set aside to make room for the kingdom. In this prophecy we are told that this destruction of man's world will be as "travail upon a woman with child"—that is, in spasms, with periods of easement between.

This annihilation of man's selfish social order is not brought about by destructive forces, such as fire tumbling down from the sky, but by an uprising of the people, in which there is a great struggle for human rights, real and fancied. In the Lord's providence, the great increase of knowledge of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the enlightenment it has brought to the people world-wide has incited a clamoring for equality and rights. And how this symbolic "shout" has already ripped the fabric of the pre-1914 world, and shaken its very foundations!

Daniel foretold the increase of knowledge which brought about this clamoring for human rights. (Dan. 12:4) This increase of knowledge along all lines, which is arousing the people to throw off their age-old superstitions, has come about as a

result of the fact that we are already in "the day of the Lord." True, the foundation for this general dissemination of knowledge had already been laid through the use of the printing press and other latter-day devices of communication. Now the general diffusion of knowledge has gained sufficient momentum to stir up the masses to begin casting off their shackles of superstition and class rule, and it is creating within them a desire for that economic liberty, security, and happiness which they insist should be the heritage of every human.

Hence it is seen that a mighty "shout" has attended our Lord's return, even as Paul predicted. The people have heard it and have taken it up, having been incited to clamor for the things which they now believe are rightfully theirs. By it the Lord is creating a state of mind in the masses of the oppressed and suffering millions of the world that will ultimately contribute to the complete overthrow of the present social order. This shout is also accomplishing a gradual preparation of the hearts and minds of the people for the blessings of the coming kingdom of Christ, blessings which will be dispensed to a dying world just beyond the final spasm of this great "time of trouble."—Dan. 12:1

Voice of the Archangel

In our text Paul prophesied that the Lord would return "with the voice of the archangel." There is only one archangel mentioned in the Bible, and his name is Michael. This name is symbolically applied to Jesus at the time of his return and second presence. In Daniel 12:1 we read of the time when "Michael" would "stand up," and when as a result there would be "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." Jesus refers to this prophecy in Matthew 24:21, 22, and indicates that it would be one of the signs of his second presence. He speaks of it as a time of great tribulation—tribulation so destructive that if it were not shortened, no flesh would be saved. We are now living in that time, and the wise of the world are freely admitting that the human race is now threatened with total destruction. How evident it is that the

commanding voice, or authority, of the archangel, Michael, the divine Christ, is already causing the foundations of man's world to tremble!

Throughout the history of man there have been wars and revolutions, but in some way the people have at least temporarily solved their disputes, even if, as in most cases, it has been upon the basis of one group yielding to the superior power of another. But Daniel said that the trouble resulting from the exercise of authority by the symbolic Michael would be such as never was since there was a nation. One of the ways in which the present trouble upon the world is different from all others is in the fact that no solutions can be found for the problems posed by human selfishness. We believe the reason for this is that the returned Lord, in ways unknown to us, is overruling in world affairs in preparation for the full establishment of his kingdom and authority, and thus all humanly constituted authority must be set aside.

"The Trump of God"

The "trump of God" is another meaningful symbol, or illustration, used in our text. In Joel 2:1,2 we read, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains." Note that in this prophecy a trumpet is also associated with the coming of the day of the Lord. It symbolizes the proclaiming of a message, in this case a warning of trouble coming upon the earth, a symbolic day of darkness, when the people would tremble.

Many of the prophecies associate these events with the return of Christ and the ushering in of his "day of the Lord." The Lord's own people fulfil this prophecy of trumpet-blowing, at least in part, for it is our privilege now to call attention to the testimony of God's Word which explains the meaning of present world events. Actually we think that this trump of God will continue to sound throughout the entire period of Christ's king-

dom, announcing the pertinent events which the Lord will want the subjects of that kingdom to know.

This symbolic trumpet is styled "the trump of God" because it sounds during the day of the Lord, and its message pertains, not to what man is accomplishing, but to what the Lord is doing in preparation for the establishment of the messianic kingdom. It is not a literal trumpet, any more than "the shout" and "the voice of the archangel" are literal. While much has already been accomplished throughout the earth as a result of these three manifestations of divine intervention, only those of the Lord's people who are watching the "signs" of his presence understand the significance of what is taking place.

Sleeping Saints Awakened

Describing a further work of the Lord at the time of Jesus' return, the Apostle Paul said, "The dead in Christ shall rise first." Jesus promised his disciples that when he came he would receive them unto himself, and here Paul is explaining to some extent the manner in which this promise is fulfilled. The faithful followers of the Master throughout the age did not receive their heavenly reward with Jesus immediately upon their death. Paul wrote that there was "a crown of righteousness" laid up for him, which the Lord would give him "at that day," and not to him only, he added, "but unto all them also that love his appearing." (II Tim. 4:6-8) Paul was among "the dead in Christ" who were awakened from death and highly exalted to be with the invisible, glorified Jesus when he returned.

Paul further explains that those who are alive and remain "shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Here is the further use of pictorial language—"clouds" and "air." Clouds, in the prophecies, denote trouble—the "storm clouds of trouble"—and we have already seen that as a result of our Lord's return there is "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." The faithful followers of Jesus receive their exaltation—being "caught up"—amidst, or during, this trouble. The "air" is simply a symbol of spiritual power or control, and

the saints are exalted to live and reign with Christ a thousand years for the blessing of mankind with "restitution."

Thereafter

The King James Version reads, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with" the "dead in Christ" who rise "first." The Greek word here translated "then" means, according to Prof. Strong, "thereafter." Prof. Rotherham translates it, "after that." It is clear from the passage, therefore, that after the faithful ones who fell asleep in death throughout the age are awakened and are with the Lord, those alive at the time of his return would remain for a time, "thereafter" to be "caught up," or exalted, to be together with the awakened sleeping saints.

The Greek word translated "together," in the expression "caught up together with," is the same one also translated "together" in I Thessalonians 5:10, where, in speaking of Christ, Paul says "whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." Obviously, the thought here is "close association," as indicated by Prof. Strong as being one of the meanings freely attached to this Greek word. All the true followers of Jesus will ultimately be together—closely associated—with Jesus by virtue of their exaltation to the divine nature; but, as Paul explains, the sleeping saints are first raised and afterward those "who are alive and remain."

In I Corinthians 15:50-52 Paul gives us further information concerning the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus' followers. We quote, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the [rulership phase of] the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

Paul here speaks of a "mystery" concerning the resurrection and exaltation of the body members of Christ. True, the resur-

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rection is always a mystery to our finite minds, but Paul is calling attention to a special mystery, a mystery connected with the time when the "last trump," "the trump of God," would sound, or, in other words, in "the day of the Lord." He said that all the saints would not sleep in death. Paul is one who did sleep, and so did the saints who died down through the centuries of the Gospel Age. But he explains that in the time of the sounding of the trump of God it would no longer be necessary to sleep in death, meaning simply, in harmony with his statement in our text, that those who would be "alive and remain," while they would need to finish their covenant of sacrifice by being faithful unto death, would not need to sleep in death, but would, at the moment of dying, receive their share in "the first resurrection."

This is the class referred to in Revelation 14:13, where we read, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." It is clear from this that at a certain time, mentioned as "from henceforth," those who would die in the Lord would not need to remain asleep in death. The time indicated in the context of this promise is the "harvest," which Jesus said would be "the end of the age." (Matt. 13:39) These participate in the "harvest" work while they "remain" in the flesh, and they join with their Lord in the same work when they finish their course in death. How clear this precious truth becomes when we put together all the scriptures bearing on it, and what a blessing it is to be living in this wonderful time in the outworking of the divine plan!

Paul said that we should "comfort one another with these words," and truly they are comforting words. They should be comforting words to all who have an ear to hear and believe the promises of God. They assure us of the glorious progress of events in the plan of God—events which lead not only to the "first resurrection" of those who will live and reign "with Christ a thousand years," (Rev. 20:4) but also, and soon thereafter, to

the general resurrection of all the dead. May we endeavor to be faithful witnesses to this glorious Gospel of the kingdom.



SACRIFICE IN THE PLAN OF GOD

Section V

A Fellowship of Suffering

IN OUR scriptural study thus far, we have found that the mystical body of Christ is included in the sin-offering picture and that sacrifice is a vital feature of the life of new creatures in Christ. Now we are interested in learning how the Scriptures elaborate upon this matter and how they detail the nature of this sacrifice. To begin this inquiry, we have arranged a number of pertinent texts into two main groupings.

In the first group, the sacrifice of the church is described in language which is highly figurative: Being dead with Christ, planted together in the likeness of his death, buried with him, baptized into his death, crucified with him.

The lesson common to all of these is the necessity for the death of the human will and the acceptance of the will of God instead. Planting, burial, baptism (or immersion,) and crucifixion are all used to illustrate this figurative death and the new life in Christ. In every case the scriptures convey no meaning apart from participation in Christ and the willingness to share his death, his baptism, his burial, and his crucifixion. What strong language to impress upon us the oneness of Christ's sacrifice and the necessity of being counted as part and parcel with him in order to gain the privilege of blessing the nations!

Other scriptural terms are used to describe another aspect of

sacrifice, and these suggest a second grouping of texts: Suffering with Christ, bearing the reproaches of Christ, partakers of Christ's suffering, filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, the fellowship of his suffering, suffering for Christ's sake.

The world has established many bases for fellowship, including service clubs, pleasure-seeking groups of all kinds, fraternities, and numerous other societies, all sharing something in common. But here is a fellowship which is certainly unique among the annals of men—one of suffering with Christ. It is not just any suffering, but a participation in the afflictions, the reproaches, and the sufferings of Christ that is vital. This is the fellowship which distinguishes it from all others and gains the special pleasure of the Lord. As we view the Scriptures, all who have part in this fellowship of suffering and death are also counted as having part in the offering for sin.

To enlarge upon this matter, let us ask, Specifically, what constitutes the sacrifice of the church? What is the practical application of this doctrine as it affects the everyday life of the true Christian? No doubt the kind of sacrifice which the Heavenly Father appreciates most is that which entails suffering or undergoing a hardship for the sake of truth and righteousness. "If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."—I Pet. 2:20, 21

For some of the Lord's people this suffering has been in a dramatic form, involving a clear-cut stand for the principles of truth, which resulted in worldly rejection and persecution. In their refusal to become involved in man's hatred and inhumanity to his fellow man by taking up arms in warfare, many followers of the Master have been severely persecuted in various lands; some preferred to give their lives as a witness for peace and for the Master's teachings rather than participate in any way in the slaughter of their fellows.

For others of the Lord's people, the suffering for righteous-

ness sake has taken a more subtle form. Day after day, week after week, they have endeavored to live in accord with the precepts of Jesus and the Scriptures, letting their light shine out in the darkness of the world about them. In the office or in the plant, at home or away, they have quietly lived out their testimony of a loving God and the coming kingdom, and have patiently held out the Word of life.—Phil. 2:15, 16

Because the darkness hates the light, their zeal for the truth has also met opposition, though in a more refined form, such as being socially ostracized, considered queer, ridiculed, and the like. The words of Paul have proven prophetic in the text which reads, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (II Tim. 3:12) But let us rejoice if we can trace these experiences in our lives, and be found worthy to suffer reproaches with our Lord. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye."—I Pet. 4:14

The Apostle John wrote, "He laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (I John 3:16) In addition to letting our light shine before all, here is another area in which all of the Lord's people can take part heartily and where much of our effort should legitimately be directed. Our brethren, of course, stand in need of mutual encouragement, strengthening, and assistance. This is a peculiar task in which the fellow members of the body—the ones initiated into the fellowship of his suffering—may participate. Our energies should thus be directed particularly toward the household of faith and be consumed in the work of uplifting them. This constitutes an acceptable sacrifice in God's sight.

This is what Paul meant when he wrote: "If I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me." (Phil. 2:17, 18) May all of us indeed recognize our privileges of service, and rejoice exceedingly in our share in this offering.

In I Corinthians 10:13 we read, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man." From the human

point of view, the trials and experiences which make up the church's sacrifice do not appear any different from those present in the world at large. Yet, under the direction and control of our Lord, these are accomplishing significant purposes. One of these is the molding and developing of the character of the Lord's people, which is so necessary for the proper functioning of the sympathetic priesthood class in the next age. All the experiences of life may thus help to shape and formulate the character of the body members who are properly exercised thereby.

The new creature's desire to participate in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings results from having tasted the goodness and mercy of God, and having been drawn within the inner circle of revelation to comprehend something of the grandness of his plan of salvation. Having obtained this glimpse of the program of restitution and the healing of the nations, he is eager to co-operate with the Heavenly Father in carrying his will forward. He realizes that the church, even as her Lord, must endure the sufferings, the trials, and the difficulties of the way as part of the training course for this future day. And he marvels at the privilege the Father has extended to him of being included with his Lord in the sacrifice which from God's standpoint will be accepted as the one grand offering for sin.

Beloved, is not a self-examination in order at this point, as we realize something of the magnitude of God's love in extending this privilege of fellowship in Christ's suffering? May we not soberly ask ourselves, What am I doing in the way of sacrifice, in promulgating the Lord's work? This may well be the most important consideration for us in the entire subject of the sin-offering. It is God who has made possible the church's share in the sin-offering, but are we making full use of this feature of grace? Let us remember our vow of consecration to the Lord and endeavor to honor our commitment to him. If we keep our sacrifice on the altar faithfully until death, we shall rejoice throughout all eternity!

—Contributed



Stedfast and Abounding

CLIMAXING his wonderful lesson on the resurrection of the dead, the Apostle Paul wrote, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."—I Cor. 15:58

In his lesson on the resurrection Paul reveals that there were some to whom he was writing who did not believe in this basic teaching of the divine plan of salvation. "How say some among you," he asked, "that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (vs. 12) Then Paul points out that if there is no resurrection of the dead it would mean that the preaching of the Gospel as it is centered in Christ would be vain. It would mean that there was no basis for Christian faith. To this he adds, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (vs. 19) "But now is Christ risen from the dead," Paul continues, "and become the firstfruits of them that slept."—vs. 20

Because Christ provided redemption through his death and was raised from the dead by the power of his Heavenly Father, all who sleep in death are to be awakened. The first of these, as Paul explains, are those who will be associated with Jesus in the work of the kingdom. These are the "firstfruits" class of verse 23. Then will follow the awakening of all mankind from the sleep of death. This feature of the divine plan will be accomplished during the kingdom of Christ, who will reign until all enemies of God and men shall be subdued, the last enemy to be destroyed being death.—vss. 25, 26

In the resurrection there will be two general classes—the heavenly and the earthly. Following the resurrection of the firstfruits class to heavenly glory to be associated with Jesus in the work of the kingdom, mankind will be restored to live

on the earth, and those who then prove worthy will be blessed with everlasting human life. This will mean that "death is swallowed up in victory." Then it can be said, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—vss. 54, 55

Truly this is a glorious plan for the recovery of the sin-cursed world of mankind from death! Our joy in this plan is now based upon our faith, and it is through faith that we will gain the victory over all of Satan's efforts to discourage and defeat us as we follow in the footsteps of the Master. "Therefore," as Paul admonishes, it is essential to be "stedfast" and "unmoveable."

Established

The Greek word translated "stedfast" in this text literally means "to sit," and by implication, to be immovable. It is a different Greek word that is translated "unmoveable," but it has much the same meaning. Apparently Paul used these two words having similar meanings in order to emphasize especially the importance of being established in the faith. He expresses the thought in Colossians 1:22, 23, where, speaking of those who have been reconciled through Christ, he says that these can be presented "holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight" if they "continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel."

Seemingly in the church at Corinth there were some who had allowed themselves to be "moved away" so far from the "hope of the Gospel" that they no longer believed in the resurrection of the dead. These, instead of remaining stedfast, had permitted themselves to be blown about by false doctrines. They were no longer sure where they stood, and were unsettled in both their minds and their hearts. But let us not think of this merely as a condition which existed among some of the brethren in Corinth nearly two thousand years ago. Let us realize that it is something which can happen to some of us in this end of the age as well, and that we should therefore be on guard.

Addressing the Corinthian brethren Paul again said, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." (I Cor. 16:13) We will need to be watchful, on the alert, if we are

to maintain our standing in the faith. And, as Paul further states, we will need to "quit" ourselves like men. The Greek word here translated "quit" means to act in a manly fashion. We are not to be like "children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."—Eph. 4:14

The Fundamental Truths

Since the background of Paul's admonition was disbelief in the resurrection of the dead on the part of some of the Corinthian brethren, we know that when he urges the brethren to remain steadfast in their faith and hope he is referring, not to minor details of interpretation, but to the great fundamental doctrines which constitute "the faith once delivered to the saints." It requires faith in things unseen to remain steadfast in any and all of these fundamental doctrines. For example, the creation and fall of man are among these doctrines. None of us has ever seen the Garden of Eden, nor have we ever seen a perfect man as Adam was when he came from the hand of the Creator. We accept these teachings because they are in the Word of God, and because they are a harmonious part of the entire divine plan of the ages.

We accept the doctrine of the ransom because it is set forth in the Bible. We believe that Jesus was raised from the dead because the Bible says so. We believe in the call and development of the church during the present age, to live and reign with Christ during the age to come, because this precious truth is outlined in the Scriptures. We believe in "the times of restitution of all things" because, as Peter affirms, this glorious future time of blessing for the world has been foretold by the mouth of God's holy prophets since the world began.

Those in the Early Church had to accept by faith the fact that Jesus was the Messiah and that his first presence was a reality because of the many signs which accompanied it. Today we believe in Christ's second presence because of the "signs" outlined in the Word of God and because we see those signs

as they are revealed in the events taking place around us in both the church and the world.

Let us not say that only the noncontroversial doctrines are fundamental, because all the doctrines of the divine plan are denied by some. The resurrection of Jesus was controversial in the church at Corinth. That "the wages of sin is death" is controversial in many quarters today. Indeed, if we carry the thought far enough we discover that even the existence of God is controversial, for millions today do not believe that he exists.

"Thus Saith the Lord"

So when we speak of remaining steadfast in the fundamental doctrines of the truth we refer to those doctrines which, without question, can be established by a "thus saith the Lord," that is, by definite statements of the Bible, concerning the meaning of which there can be no reasonable doubt. It is through these great truths that we are filled by the Spirit of the Lord and motivated to lay down our lives in his service. In our steadfastness we should be willing to die for these great fundamentals of the divine plan.

Beyond these fundamental doctrines there are many viewpoints which through the years the brethren have developed but which are really opinions because they cannot be substantiated clearly by the Word of God. We all like to "fill in the picture" with as many details as possible, but in our discussions and viewpoints of these opinions let us not be dogmatic and judge others to be in error simply because they may not agree with our viewpoints and traditions.

Working Out Our Own Salvation

It is through the truth that God reveals himself to us, and he wants the power of the truth to mold us into his image. Paul wrote, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12, 13) "The work of the Lord," then, is the working out of our own salvation, in the consciousness that God is working in us, and that therefore we are in partnership with him in this great project.

Just how do we work out our own salvation? Does this mean that we are to closet ourselves away from all others and simply study and pray? We do not think so. We think it means the doing of all the things which the Word of God bids us to do. We should mortify the deeds of the body. We are to be emptied of self, that the Lord may fill us with his Spirit. We are to add to our faith virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, and love. (II Pet. 1:4-7) We are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he might exalt us in due time.—I Pet. 5:6

According to the Bible, we are to lay down our lives for the brethren. (I John 3:16) There are many ways in which we can serve the brethren. Important among these is the help we should give in building one another up in our most holy faith. It is through speaking the truth in love that we grow up into him in all things. (Eph. 4:15) Nor can we properly ignore the material needs of the brethren when such exist. When we think of working out our own salvation it is well to ask ourselves if we are doing all we can to serve our brethren, because this is one of the things the Lord expects us to do to show our worthiness of "the great salvation."

Holding Forth the Word

Paul says that in working out our own salvation we should "do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." (Phil. 2:14-16) Here it becomes obvious that working out our own salvation includes holding forth the Word of life, or in other words, bearing witness to the truth.

To bear witness to the truth does not take time and strength away from adding to our faith virtue and patience, or any of the other fruits of the spirit. Indeed, our growth in Christlikeness is augmented by our witnessing for the truth. There is no time

when the truth is a more potent influence in our lives than when we are endeavoring to make it known to others. Besides, when we use the truth for the blessing of others, it helps us to keep it bright and fresh in our own minds, and thus to remain steadfast to the Gospel.

Actually, there are not two aspects of the Christian's life and work, one for himself and one for others. In the Lord's harmonious arrangement and spiritual balance, the working out of our own salvation involves all the things we do in obedience to the Lord, including our witnessing for the truth. If we do not witness for the truth we cannot make our calling and election sure. One of the ways by which God works in us is by giving us opportunities to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom. Faithfulness in this demonstrates our enthusiasm for the Gospel and our spirit of obedience to the Lord's Word.

Jesus commissioned us to let our light shine, and not to hide it under a bushel. (Matt. 5:14-16) We are the light of the world, Jesus said, and how could we be pleasing to the Lord if for any reason we should hide the light of the Gospel under some "bushel" or excuse, fabricated by our own selfish reasoning? How could God continue to work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure if we resisted the influence of his Word in our hearts and lives?

Perhaps the brethren in Corinth who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead did not have much enthusiasm for preaching the Gospel. Indeed, as Paul declares, their preaching would have been in vain even though they did declare what to them was the "Gospel," for their message would have been empty and meaningless.

To a lesser extent there could be some even now who, having lost their first-love enthusiasm for the truth itself, do not feel impelled to make it known to others. They may reason falsely that it is too early or too late, or that the conditions are not favorable. But to take views such as these indicates that one has already allowed himself to be drawn away from his own steadfastness in the truth. The attitude of these is described by Solomon

when he wrote, "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap."—Eccles. 11:4

"Always Abounding"

Paul indicates that those who remain "stedfast and unmoveable" should be "always abounding in the work of the Lord," and they will be! The Greek word here translated "abounding" literally means "more than enough." If we think we have been faithful in the work of the Lord, including the witness work, then we should endeavor to do even more. Do we have this sort of zeal, or do we exert ourselves merely to the extent of what we consider would be the minimum the Lord might require?

When we were first enlightened and became followers of the Master, we doubtless had that "first love" zeal and enthusiasm for every facet of the Lord's will for us, including work in his vineyard. Actually there is no valid reason for our zeal to cool off in any way; but sometimes it does. In the Lord's message to the church at Ephesus he said that these brethren had left their "first love," (Rev. 2:1-4) and this should be a warning to all the Lord's people. A cooling of our zeal for doing the Lord's will is usually a gradual process, and we need constantly to be on the alert lest this spiritual lethargy should be gradually creeping in upon us to keep us from "always abounding in the work of the Lord."

"More Than the First"

Rather than to allow our love and zeal to lag, we should endeavor to be like the church at Thyatira, to whom the Lord said, "I know thy works, and love, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first." (Rev. 2:19) And why should not this be true of all the Lord's people! As we progress in the Christian way should not our increasing knowledge of the Lord, and the realization of the marvelous manner in which he is guiding and helping us in our every time of need, increase our faith and love and our "abounding" as well?

This will be true of those who, in addition to increasing their faith, increase also in patience, as was true of the brethren in

the church at Thyatira. Patient continuance in well-doing is a vitally important attainment in the Christian life. Enthusiastic zeal for the Lord and for the doing of his will are more or less a natural result of our "first love." The test is our ability to maintain this laudable attitude. Are we allowing the trials of the narrow way to lead to weariness in well-doing?

In The Parable of the Sower, Jesus said, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." (Luke 8:15) To "keep" the Word is to remain "stedfast and unmoveable" in the truth, and if we can thus "keep" the Word, and bring forth fruit with patience, it will mean an abounding in the work of the Lord.

"Not in Vain"

Paul concludes: "Forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor. 15:58) There are certain things which a Christian needs to know in order to maintain his faith and zeal and love. For example, he needs to know that the Lord is causing all things to work together for his good as a new creature in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:28) Without this knowledge one might easily become discouraged. And here Paul gives us another important point of knowledge, which is that our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

The Greek word here translated "vain" means "empty." It is used by Paul in verses 10, 14, and 17 of I Corinthians 15. In verse 10 he wrote, "By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain [empty]." In other words, the grace of God in the heart and life of Paul produced results, and in this Paul rejoiced.

In verse 14 we read, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain [empty, void of results], and your faith is also vain"—empty, because it is a faith in that which is not a reality. The same thought is expressed in verse 17. And it is this same word that Paul uses in the 58th verse, where he assures us that our "labor is not in vain [empty] in the Lord." The thought is clear that those who labor in the Lord's vineyard, proclaiming the

glorious message of the Redeemer and the risen Christ, whose kingdom will destroy sin and death, will be rewarded, will not go "empty" of the Lord's blessing.

To the Hebrew brethren Paul wrote, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." (Heb. 6: 10, 11) The reference here is to our service to the brethren. God does not forget this, and will reward according to the abundance of his grace. But even in this it is important that we continue showing diligence in our service, a diligence which will be the inevitable result of having a "full assurance of hope unto the end."

Witnessing to the World

Our witnessing the Gospel of the kingdom to the world is also sure to be rewarded, in God's own due time and way. Solomon wrote, "As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they shall both be alike good."—Eccles. 11:5, 6

When we make known the glad tidings of the kingdom, we do not know just who may be blessed by it. At times it might seem that our efforts are in vain, or "empty." But if we continue to witness, sowing the seeds of truth in the morning, and in the evening withholding not our hands, some will find its way into hearts which will be blessed.

In a lifetime of such diligent efforts the Lord may not bless us with a knowledge of a single individual who really embraces the message and dedicates himself to the Lord. However, there are sure to be some whose hearts are touched to some degree because of having been given a better understanding of God. This is "seed" that will mature in the next age, seed which we sow in our weakness now through our "abounding in the work of the Lord." And then there is that richness of divine grace which

floods our own hearts and lives as we speak to others concerning the glorious hope that lifts us up above the trivial cares and perplexities of the present life.

So we can be sure that our labor is not in vain if we continue steadfast and unmovable. And what a blessed privilege it is to be co-workers with our loving Heavenly Father and with our Redeemer and Advocate, Christ Jesus. Truly, they are rich and powerful partners, and while they do not need our help, we have been graciously given the opportunity of showing our appreciation of their love, and of proving worthy of a share in the messianic kingdom, by preparing ourselves through doing what we can in the divine cause. What a marvelous manifestation of divine grace!

"Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all . . . , especially unto them who are of the household of faith."—Galatians 6:9, 10

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

SEPTEMBER 7—"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."—II Corinthians 5:17 (Z. '03-333 Hymn 246)

SEPTEMBER 14—"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrong-

fully."—I Peter 2:12, 19 (Z. '03-365 Hymn 44)

SEPTEMBER 21—"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."—Psalm 23:4 (Z. '03-413 Hymn 284)

SEPTEMBER 28—"Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith."—I Peter 5:8, 9 (Z. '04-11; '03-32 Hymn 330)

A Shadow of Good Things to Come

ONE of the means whereby God gave divine revelation to Israel was "the Law." Heb. 10:1; 8:5) In this revelation the "better sacrifices" Heb. 9:23) which were to appear later and which would really take away sin were shadowed forth; and we are also shown how, through the Law and the Prophets, a great many other features of the divine plan relating to the earth and the human family were pictured.

In some of these types detailed features may be seen, and in others the complete plan of God for the human family is clearly foreshadowed, giving us remarkable confirmations of the Scripture statement, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," or, according to Weymouth, "who has been making these things known from ages long past."—Acts 15:18

Looking into the Old Testament Scriptures, we find that Abraham and his experiences provide one of the most complete pictures of the divine plan. In the record of his life we can see how he is used as a type of our Heavenly Father, and his sons as types of different classes among men who will eventually become sons of God. One of the most obvious of these typical pictures is that of Abraham offering up in sacrifice Isaac, his only begotten son by Sarah, picturing God's great gift of Jesus on behalf of all mankind.

Not only are Abraham and his sons Ishmael and Isaac used in this and other typical ways, but Hagar and Sarah are also used as types. We are not left to surmise this or to think of such typical pictures as a fanciful interpretation of scripture; for the inspired utterance of the Apostle Paul is a confirmation of this thought.

Galatians 4:22, 24 reads: "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid [Hagar], the other by a free woman [Sarah] . . . which things are an allegory [that is, an illustration of one truth by means of

another; or a typical picture pointing forward to something greater and more important]: for these [two women] are [represent] the two covenants [through which are revealed so much of the great divine plan for human salvation]; the one [the covenant given to Israel] from the Mount Sinai, which [ever since its inauguration] gendereth [children] to bondage [the condition of natural Israel under bondage to the Law Covenant—a covenant Israel promised to keep and then later found themselves unable to], which [covenant] is [symbolised by] Agar [Hagar].” The name appropriately means “stranger,” as she was an Egyptian.

Abraham's Promised Seed

As plainly as it would be possible for anyone to point out, Paul then tells us that Abraham's wife Sarah, the mother of Isaac, represents the original covenant God made with Abraham, through which he promised Abraham he would give him a son to fulfil the promise that his seed should bless all the families of the earth.—Gen. 12:1-3; 22:18; Gal. 4:22-28

Sarah was barren for a long time, during which period Abraham's bondmaid Hagar bore him a son, Ishmael. In this way God showed prophetically how his original covenant with Abraham to bless all the families of the

earth through Abraham's seed would for a long time bear no children. (Isa. 54:1) This foreshadowed how our Heavenly Father, in working out his great purpose, would for a long time have no children developed under the original covenant typified by Sarah. But, as we have seen from actual fulfilment, the Law Covenant typified by Hagar would, throughout the Jewish Age, bring forth an earthly people of God, typified by Ishmael.

The Apostle Paul is used to point out, however, how this hitherto barren covenant, of which God inspired the Prophet Isaiah to speak, would in due time bring forth a “seed,” a class pictured by Isaac, the son of the formerly barren wife, Sarah. In fulfilment of this, we see that from Jesus' first advent onward this long-barren covenant has been bringing forth a spiritual seed, the church—Head and body—typified by Isaac. Thus at last the barren state of that covenant ceased, and, as indicated in Isaiah 54:1 and Galatians 4:27, we find that Abrahamic Covenant personified and called upon to rejoice: “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear.” The prosperity of this original covenant is shown, and the result is pictured, namely, that the fruitage of the covenant shall be very great.

When Jesus, the Redeemer,

appeared, he provided the sacrifice which made possible the bringing into existence of a class who would be recognised as sons of God, typified by Isaac. Then the people of Israel [Ishmael], developed under the Law Covenant, typified by Hagar, were cast off from divine favour. With reference to this, Paul says, quoting from the words addressed to Abraham by Sarah: "Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman." Paul then adds, "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage"—that is, the covenant typified by Hagar.—Gal. 4:31 to 5:1

Thus these verses point out how this hitherto barren covenant, of which God inspired Isaiah to write prophetically (Gal. 4:27; Isa. 54:1), would in due time bring forth a class pictured by Isaac, the son of Sarah, who was for so long barren. "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." (Gal. 4:28) And so, in these types, arranged so long ago for our learning, God has pictured important features of his great plan of salvation, described by Paul as "a plan of

the ages" (Eph. 3:11, Diag.), a plan occupying ages before it would be carried out to completion.

The Firstfruits

However, the Christian church is only the "firstfruits unto God" "of his creatures." (James 1:18; Rev. 14:4) The expression "firstfruits" implies a much smaller number of saved ones, compared with those whom we might refer to as the "afterfruits." And these afterfruits also seem to be foreshadowed in the experiences of father Abraham.

We have seen how Abraham's one son, Ishmael, by Hagar, is a type of natural Israel, which was brought forth and dealt with under the Law Covenant arrangement. Likewise, Abraham's one son, Isaac, born by Sarah as promised (Gen. 17:19, 21; 21:12), is a type of spiritual Israel—Christ and the church, the true seed of promise (Gal. 3:16, 29)—developed under the original Abrahamic Covenant. This class is to be completed in the "first resurrection" (Rev. 20:6) as a kind of firstfruits, after whom and through whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed.

Later, six sons were born to Abraham by Keturah. (Gen. 25: 1, 2) There are many scriptures that give us the inspiring hope of seeing, during the thousand years

of Messiah's kingdom, vast numbers of the human family becoming children of God, children developed under the New Covenant, the blood of which is "shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matt. 26:28; Jer. 31:31) The name Keturah means "perfumed." The New Covenant will be very appealing and will bring a great blessing to all of the human family who in that day will come into covenant relationship with God.

The Completed Kingdom

Today, as the prophet suggests in Jeremiah 31:29, "the fathers have eaten a sour grape [of sin], and the children's teeth are set on edge"—their descendants suffer the consequences. But in those days (verse 30) "everyone [who dies] shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape [of sin], his teeth [only] shall be set on edge." He alone will suffer the consequences. The Prophet Isaiah tells of the outcome of the gracious work of the New Covenant. He says, "Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land [earth] forever, the [human] branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."—Isa. 60:21

And that all might enjoy the blessings purchased by the precious blood of Christ, the

Master assures us that "all that are in the graves shall hear his [the Son of man's] voice, and shall come forth." (John 5:28, 29) But it shall be "every man in his own order: Christ [including the members of his body] the first-fruits; afterward they that are [become] Christ's at his coming [presence]." (I Cor. 15:23) Christ's presence will continue during the thousand years of his kingdom reign.

Thus we have the wonderful hope that eventually the great Messiah will say to the human family of restored sons of God, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you [in the divine purpose] from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:34; Gen. 1:28) Although this great blessing was lost through sin, "the Son of man came to seek and to save [recover] that which was lost."—Luke 19:10, R.V.; Matt. 18:11

Describing the grand outcome of the work of the millennial kingdom, the Revelator says, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes [the eyes of his human creatures]; 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."—Rev. 21:4

"He that overcometh [every

human weakness as well as all other tests to come during the period of Messiah's kingdom] shall inherit all [these] things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." (Rev. 21:7) In other

words, all who overcome in that day will become children of the New Covenant. And of the final result it is written of Jehovah, "The God of the whole earth shall he be called."—Isa. 54:5

BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

C. A. CORNELL		Londonderry	15, 16
Latchford	Sept. 10	Portrush	17
J. H. MURRAY		Lincoln	24
Belfast	Sept. 9, 10	E. T. NADAL	
Dublin	11, 12	Dewsbury	Sept. 16 (Sat.)
Gorticar	13, 14		

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FIVEPENNY BOOKLETS—Day of Judgment; Divine Healing; Peace Through Christ's Kingdom; Life After Death; Reincarnation versus Resurrection; Spiritualism; Jesus, the World's Saviour; Hope for a Fear-Filled World; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; Armageddon; Does God Answer Prayer?; Your Adversary the Devil; The Light of the World; The Church; Born of the Spirit; What Can a Man Believe?; The Blood of Atonement.

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The Unsaved Dead

Does not death end all opportunity for the unsaved?

No! The Bible clearly teaches that many who have died in unbelief will have an opportunity to believe and obey and live forever when they are awakened from the sleep of death. Ezekiel 16: 44-63 assures us that wicked Israelites, and the people of wicked heathen nations such as Sodom and Samaria, will be awakened from death and be brought into covenant relationship with the Lord. (vss. 61, 62) The Sodomites were a notoriously wicked people, yet Jesus assures us that it will be more favorable for them in the day of judgment than it will be for those who rejected and persecuted him.—Mark 6:11

The Scriptures reveal that those who rejected Jesus are to have an opportunity to accept him when they are awakened from the sleep of death. Jesus said to the unbelieving Israelites who were most responsible for his death, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. 23:39)

The fact that they will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" implies their conversion and acceptance by the Lord.

Referring particularly to the Israelites who rejected Jesus, but including all, the Apostle Paul wrote, "All Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (Rom. 11:26, 27 See Jer. 31:31-34) Again Paul said, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." (Rom. 11:32) Yes, there will be mercy for all who have died in unbelief, unless, of course, their unbelief has been wilful, and in the light of full understanding of the issues involved. This been true of a very few indeed of the millions who have died in unbelief.

Baptism

What is the purpose of water baptism? Is it essential to salvation?

The word "baptize" means to bury, or submerge. Paul wrote,

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3) Notice that in this description of baptism, water is not mentioned. The reference is to an immersion of our wills into the will of God, through Christ—a burial with him. This is the true Christian baptism of the Scriptures.

However, the Bible also speaks of immersion in water. This water baptism we understand to be merely a symbol, or picture, of the true baptism. It is not a saving ordinance, because salvation comes only through belief in the shed blood of Jesus. However, those who have surrendered themselves to do the Lord's will, and who desire to participate in the true baptism, or burial into Christ's death, will want to bear public testimony of their stand by submitting to water baptism. Those who recognize that this is a part of the will of God for them will delight to carry it out, and will not consider it in any way a burden.

Israel

Is the name "Israel" ever applied in the Bible to others than the ten tribes, since the nation was divided?

Yes. It is true that when the

nation of Israel was divided following the death of Solomon, the ten-tribe, or northern kingdom, was called Israel, and the two-tribe, or southern kingdom, was called "Judah." However, this does not mean that the people of the two tribes were not considered by God as still being Israelites. Long after the ten-tribe kingdom went into captivity in Assyria, the last king of the two-tribe kingdom of Judah was referred to as a "wicked prince of Israel."—Ezek. 21:25

Jesus said to his disciples, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5, 6) The Israelites in Palestine at the time of Jesus' first advent were the descendants of those who returned from captivity in Babylon some five hundred years previously. Most of these were of the two-tribe kingdom of Judah, although there was doubtless a sprinkling among them from the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. But Jesus refers to all of them as Israelites.

The Apostle Paul was a descendant of Benjamin, one of the two-tribe kingdom, yet he referred to himself as an Israelite.—Rom. 11:1



The Word Goes Forth

THE Apostle Paul wrote, "Though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel." (I Cor. 9:16) All those who have come to understand and appreciate the Gospel—the great divine plan of the ages—and through its influence have dedicated themselves to the doing of God's will, feel as Paul did about making it known to others. They realize that necessity is laid upon them to bear witness to the truth, and that it would be a great spiritual loss to them should they fail to serve zealously as ambassadors of Christ.

These do not ask if they must use time and strength and means to proclaim the glad tidings. Their inquiry, rather, is, "May I participate in this service?" With this desire in their hearts they seek ways and means of bearing witness to that glorious message which has meant so much to them. Not all have the opportunity of serving in the same way, nor to the same degree, but there is something for all to do.

As we know, in the Lord's vineyard today there are general activities in which the brethren have the opportunity of co-operating. These include the television and radio witness. There is also the distribution of tracts, cards, booklets, and books. One effective way of distributing literature, especially the booklets, is by inserting advertisements in papers and magazines. The brethren in West Covina, California, and in Chicago, took advantage of the great interest aroused concerning Israel by the conflict in the Near East, and they inserted ads in local papers offering "Israel in History and Prophecy." The response was very encouraging.

Many of the brethren will remember Brother and Sister N. J. Hiam, of New Zealand, who visited us here in the United States about two years ago. Brother Hiam is very active in the service of the Lord and the truth, and he has written us recently of the encouragement he has received from the announcing of literature in a magazine which circulates in Fiji. He writes that a man in Fiji has become intensely interested in the truth and has now ordered essentially all the literature we are able to supply. This man is a Fiji-born Indian. It seems that at least half of the population of Fiji are Indians, and this newly interested one has already stirred considerable interest among his people, through tract distribution and otherwise.

Fair Booths

In recent years the brethren in a number of places throughout the country have sponsored literature booths at state and county fairs. This also has been an effective means of bearing witness to the truth. Many such booths will be maintained this year.

Other brethren arrange for literature boxes in their local railway and bus stations. There have been some good results from this method of witnessing. One of the effective and rewarding methods of service is through personal witness work. It is well to keep a supply of booklets on hand for use in this type of service. A glance at the list in the center pages of *The Dawn* will indicate that booklets are available on many different topics. The Lord has richly blessed the use of booklets as an introduction to the truth.

The Radio

We are glad to report that the Lord continues to bless the radio witness. The size of the radio audience has been greatly reduced by the competition of television; nevertheless the radio witness is still worth while, and we have evidence that new interest continues to be aroused through this medium of witnessing. In addition to the programs in English, a number of stations in the United States and in South America are broadcasting the "Frank and Ernest" programs in the Spanish language. At least one small class has been formed in South America as a result of this,

and there are interested individuals in many isolated areas.

The truth is also going out over the radio in the Lithuanian language. Brother Charles Zubowsky, of La Salle, Illinois, is associated with this effort, and we have recently received a letter from him regarding it. We quote in part: "Under separate cover I am returning the 'Frank and Ernest' scripts. Thank you so much for the use of them, and for your co-operation in spreading the message in the Lithuanian language. We are receiving many replies from our radio programs. We have recently contracted for the programs in Pittsburgh, and are receiving many encouraging letters. In the near future we may have a public meeting there. At present we are using five stations: Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and a station in Connecticut. We praise the Heavenly Father and are thankful to him that we have a part in spreading the message in Lithuanian. Thank you again, and may the Heavenly Father bless you all richly."

Television

The Lord continues to bless the television witness. There are now approximately sixty stations televising The Bible Answers programs. As we have explained before, we do not pay the television stations for this service. The only cost to us is the production of the films and a small fee to a distribution agency for each program they arrange to have televised. A number of the stations have been contacted directly by our own brethren, and for these there is no agency fee.

We have been fortunate in securing a company to produce our films which charges much lower prices than most others. Even so, the cost of producing films is considerable; but we are thankful that in the Lord's providence we have been able to produce programs which so many TV stations find acceptable and are willing to show without charge. We find it important to continue producing as many programs as we can, for the greater number of films we are able to provide, the longer a station will continue to use them, although in a few instances stations have used our series over and over again. For this, too, we are thankful.

Since the television witness started, there has been a total of

approximately 10,000 telecasts. Each telecast witnesses to many more people than the largest of public meetings, so we can see that a widespread proclamation of the Gospel has been accomplished through the use of television. The agency which distributes our films, based on ratings furnished them, estimates that The Bible Answers films distributed by them have been witnessed by more than 200,000,000 people—not different people, for many have seen the entire series. This does not take into account the many telecasts of the films which have been arranged for through the faithful efforts of the brethren. It is truly encouraging to realize that the Lord permits his people to co-operate in this work—a work in which a few are able to accomplish so wide a witness of the Gospel of the kingdom.

Film Witnessing

Mention has been made before of the widespread use that is being made of the TV films for public meetings. The New York Church, for example, is now using one of the films on the third Sunday of each month; and while only a small amount of advertising is done, there is an encouraging number of visitors at each of these showings. Other classes are following similar programs. When possible, well-advertised showings are arranged, and in most instances the attendance at these is very gratifying.

In addition to the use the brethren are making of the TV films for public meetings, our distributng agency is offering them to churches and clubs throughout the entire country. Many bookings are made this way. The last report from the agency reveals that as of the end of June there have been 8,186 showings of The Bible Answers films for which they have arranged. The total attendance at these showings was 321,969. Most of these showings have been in churches—churches of essentially all denominations, Protestant and Catholic.

In a number of instances we have received requests from church officials for a quantity of the booklet, "Life After Death," with the explanation that after seeing the film the group to which it was shown has indicated a desire to have study meetings on the subject. We do not know what the end result of this type

of witnessing will be. All we know is that we are bidden in the Word to sow beside all waters; and we believe that we are to do this in every way we can. It is our privilege to "plant" the seeds of truth, and to "water" any interest which might develop, but it is the Lord who gives the increase.

So let us continue in the work of bearing witness to the truth. The world is in a state of chaos, and we do not know how much longer we will have the privilege of serving this side the veil. Let us do with our might what our hands find to do, knowing that this favorable time to proclaim the message will not continue indefinitely. May we all look to the Lord for guidance and help in our every time of need while we continue to show forth his praises!

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

Enjoyed Film

Gentlemen: We just had your film "The Search for An Answer." It was superbly done, and it came at a good time. A local church men's group will probably use the film tonight, and perhaps another church later. I would like to have your booklet "Life After Death." If it is within your policy, I would appreciate twenty to fifty copies. I will try to be judicious in sharing these with others. Thank you for this consideration.—Indiana

To the New York Greek Ecclesia

Dear Brethren: Rejoice in the Lord and delight in his presence. With hearts full of gratitude we offer to the Lord the praises and adoration of our hearts for the abundant blessing which he continues to pour out upon us. Truly this year has been the most blessed and happy of our Christian life. We

are sure that your hearts also vibrate with the same sentiments, because you have been greatly blessed and have been a great help to us. We acknowledge with grateful hearts your co-operation in the Gospel of Christ. We turn our hearts to all the American friends with whom you co-operate, and we express our gratitude for all their labor of love toward us in Greece. We salute you all in the Lord. The Athens Ecclesia—Greece

Wonderfully Blessed

Dear Sirs: I received the book "The Divine Plan of the Ages" and have read it several times. I can truthfully say it is the most informative I have ever read. Certainly no one who reads this book, or who has ever read the Bible at all could fail to understand the beautiful message of our Lord's coming. What a wonderful thought

this is, for we know that when the Lord rules the world all things will become new. May the Lord bless you richly as you bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people by radio and the printed word. I always listen to your program on Sunday.—Michigan

The Dawn a Blessing

Dear Brethren: Greetings in the name of our dear Redeemer! You will find enclosed a check to be used in the General Fund. The Dawn has been a great blessing to the Lord's people, and we remember you daily at the throne of heavenly grace. May you never lower the standard which has been over you so long, until in the Lord's appointed time he may take it from your willing hands and give you rest. May he guide and bless you.—Missouri

Enjoys "Frank and Ernest"

Dear Brothers: I cannot tell you in words how much we enjoy your radio program, and we study the Bible daily. We have belonged to three different churches in our lifetime, but they got so worldly that we did not enjoy them much any more. Please help us and pray for us.—Ohio

Much Appreciation

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Every Sunday morning my husband and I listen to your special program on radio, and we enjoy it very much. We want to thank you for the books you have sent to us. They have helped us very much in our Bible reading, and we would both like to have you keep passing the message along to help other people, as your books have helped us to know the Bible better. We appreciate very

much all the good work you are doing. May God richly bless you.—New York

Given Courage

Dear Dawn Bible Students: On January 12, 1967, I suddenly found myself alone with three children to raise. This was due to the sudden death of my husband. All my life I was taught from the Bible, but there are times like these when one cannot find any consolation. But your booklet "Hope" gave me help and answers to questions in my mind as to, "Why me?" So I am sending one dollar in hopes that it will help someone else, as it inspired me to look up and go forward. Please keep up this wonderful work you are doing.—Kentucky

Many Thanks

The Bible Answers, Dear Sirs: Please send me the little booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave," and thanks so much for the understanding of the Bible, and the peace which it has brought to my mind. You explain things so clearly, and help me to understand points that I have tried so hard all my life to see. I could go on and on, but I will just have to say, many, many thanks, and may the good Lord keep on blessing and helping you in your wonderful work.—Texas

Engineer Enjoys Program

Dear Sir: I am the engineer responsible for putting your "Frank and Ernest" broadcast on the air every Sunday. We here at the station like your program and would like to have a copy of the book which you advertised, "Hope Beyond the Grave." If possible, also send me a copy of The Dawn Magazine.—Virgin Islands

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

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

OTIS R. BARRALL		E. K. PENROSE		H. W. PRICE	
York, Pa.	Sept. 17	New York, N. Y.	Sept. 2-4	Seattle, Wash.	Sept. 2-4
L. PAUL DAVIS		Wilmington, Del.	5	Wenatchee, Wash.	5
New York, N. Y.	Sept. 2-4	Baltimore, Md.	6	Spokane, Wash.	6, 7
New Haven, Conn.	5	Hagerstown, Md.	7	Kalispell, Mont.	8
Waterbury, Conn.	6	Cumberland, Md.	8	Havre, Mont.	9-11
Hartford, Conn.	7	Washington, D. C.	10	Luseland, Sask.	13, 14
Agowam, Mass.	8	Richmond, Va.	11	Saskatoon, Sask.	15
Boston, Mass.	10	Norfolk, Va.	12	Prince Albert, Sask.	16, 17
Somersworth, N. H.	11	Lynchburg, Va.	13	Steep Creek, Sask.	18
PANTEL HATGIS		Greensboro, N. C.	14	St. Brieux, Sask.	19, 20
Pittsburgh, Pa.	Sept. 23, 24	Granite Falls, N. C.	15	Middle Lake, Sask.	21
LEVI JACOBS		Charlotte, N. C.	17	Star City, Sask.	22
New London, Conn.	Sept. 17	Hendersonville, N. C.	18	Porcupine Plain, Sask.	24
G. M. JEUCK		Knoxville, Tenn.	19	Tarnopol, Sask.	25, 26
Catawissa, Pa.	Sept. 10	Nashville, Tenn.	20	Canora, Sask.	27, 28
A. H. KRUMPOLT		Memphis, Tenn.	21	Regina, Sask.	29
Sayville, N. Y.	Sept. 10	Farmington, Mo.	22	C. A. SMITH	
Wallingford, Conn.	17	St. Louis, Mo.	24	Paterson, N. J.	Sept. 17
J. Y. MAC AULAY		Mattoon, Ill.	25	F. S. WASSMANN	
Allentown, Pa.	Sept. 17	LaSalle, Ill.	26	Hartford, Conn.	Sept. 10
Baltimore, Md.	24	Batavia, Ill.	27	C. R. WEIDA	
Philadelphia, Pa.	24	Rockford, Ill.	28	Pottstown, Pa.	Sept. 24
		Beloit, Wis.	29	W. N. WOODWORTH	
		LEO POST		Pittsburgh, Pa.	Sept. 23, 24
		New Haven, Conn.			
			Sept. 17		
		Waterbury, Conn.	17		

The listings in this schedule have been arranged by local ecclesias co-operating with the Dawn.

MICE BALKO		L. P. DAVIS, JR.		EDWARD E. FAY	
Pittsburgh, Pa.	Sept. 10	Fullerton, Calif.	Sept. 24	Fresno, Calif.	Sept. 10

JOSEPH FENCHAK, JR.
Duquesne, Pa. Sept. 17

RALPH GAUNT
Saginaw, Mich. Sept. 24

TUNIS GERY
San Francisco, Calif.
Sept. 12

STANLEY W. JEUCK
St. Petersburg, Fla.
Sept. 10

ARTHUR JEZUIT
LaSalle, Ill. Sept. 17

EDMUND JEZUIT
Saginaw, Mich. Sept. 17

GENE JEZUIT
Grand Rapids, Mich.
(Lafayette St.) Sept. 3

DANIEL KAZIAK
Pontiac, Mich. Sept. 10

EDWARD G. LORENZ
San Luis Obispo, Calif.
Sept. 17
Antioch, Calif. 24

FRANK NIEMCZAK
London, Ont. Sept. 0
Chatham, Ont. 17

OSCAR OLSON
Orlando, Fla. Sept. 17

G. R. POLLOCK
Antioch, Calif. Sept. 24

GILBERT L. RICE
Tehachapi, Calif. Sept. 10

NORMAN F. RICE
Covina, Calif. Sept. 24

WM. W. RYBA
Santa Ana, Calif. Sept. 10

THOS. T. RYDE
Riverside, Calif. Sept. 17
Ontario, Calif. 17

GEORGE TABAC
St. Louis, Mo. Sept. 17

JOHN TRZYNA
Beloit, Wis. Sept. 3

IRWIN WYSOCKI
Connellsville, Pa. Sept. 3

L. W. ZBIK
Adrian, Mich. Sept. 17
Pittsburgh, Pa. 23, 24



WHY GOD PERMITS EVIL

To be discussed by

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

KUEQ-740 kc.-8:30 A.M.

Sunday, September 17

Tune in this discussion, and send for a free copy of the booklet, "Why God Permits Evil." Address:

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

Box 60, Dept. N, General Post Office
New York, N. Y. 10001

For Your Newspaper

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

OCTOBER TOPIC: On Sunday, October 15, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss the topic, "Divine Intervention in the Affairs of Men." This is a timely topic, presenting the great hope of the kingdom. Attractive folders will be available for advertising this special program, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. They are furnished free. Address your request to, The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey 07073.

CONVENTIONS

JACKSON, MICH., Sept. 2-4—YMCA, 127 W. Wesley St. Mrs. Ralph Gaunt, 510 Golf Ave.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Sept. 2-4—I.O.G.T. Hall, 2922 Cedar Ave. Mrs. Edward Borowiec, 10410 Fifth Ave. Circle.

NEW YORK, N.Y., Sept. 2-4—Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, 50th St. and Park Ave. Mr. G. M. Jeuck, 81 Blauvelt Road, Nanuet, N. Y.

SAN DIEGO, CALIF., Sept. 2-4—Temple Beth Israel, 2512 Third Ave. Mrs. Gilbert L. Rice, 4005 Olympic St.

SEATTLE, WASH., Sept. 2-4—Norway Center, 300 Third Ave. W. Mrs. John Keith, 22515 95th Place W., Edmonds, Wash.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, Sept. 10—Southern Hotel, S. High and E. Main Sts. Mrs. Josephine Ewing, 273 S. Alganquin Ave.

PONTIAC, MICH., Sept. 10—YWCA, 269 W. Huron St. Mrs. Alice Mondo, 1948 Oakside Ct., Union Lake, Mich.

ANTIOCH, CALIF., Sept. 23, 24—I.D.E.S. Hall, Tenth St. by City Park. Mrs. Rose Knockaert, 3832 Larkspur Dr., Concord, Calif.

PITTSBURGH, PA., Sept. 23, 24—Bellevue YMCA, North Borough Branch, 629 Lincoln Ave. Mr. Carl S. Boughton, 126 Slater Drive.

CHICAGO, ILL., Sept. 24—Central Masonic Temple, 912 N. LaSalle St. Mr. Albert Sheppelbaum, 5739 S. Normandy Ave.

DETROIT, MICH., Sept. 24—McGregor Memorial Bldg., Second Blvd. and W. Ferry. Mr. Walter Blicharz, 19300 Braile.

BUFFALO, N. Y., Sept. 30, Oct. 1—Sweet-home Masonic Lodge, Sheridan Dr. & Sweethome Rd., Suburban Buffalo. Mr. Stanley Koszka, 670 Union Rd.

AGAWAM, MASS., Oct. 1—Benjamin Phelps School, Corner Main and School Sts. Mrs. L. Kwiat, 511 Shoemaker Lane.

PIQUA, OHIO, Oct. 1—Mrs. I. J. Peddemors, 222 Walker St.

ST. LOUIS, MO., Oct. 7, 8—St. Louis Gateway Hotel (formerly Statler Hilton), 9th & Washington Ave. Mrs. John H. Farsythe, 4840 Towne South Rd.

CATAWISSA, PA., Oct. 8—Berwick Hotel, Third & Market Sts., Berwick, Pa. Mrs. Luther Letterman, 136 W. Main St., Catawissa, Pa.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Oct. 14, 15—Masonic Temple (Social Room 3), 317 E. Fifth St. Mrs. W. N. Poe, One W. Ridge Place, Newport, Ky.

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIF., Oct. 14, 15—Odd Fellows Hall, 520 Dana St. Mrs. Elmer Nord, 2467 Parkland Terrace.

CLEVELAND, OHIO, Oct. 15

NEW LONDON, CONN. Oct. 15

PHOENIXVILLE, PA., Oct. 29

"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."—I Corinthians 4:1, 2

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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 wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35