

The Dawn

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The Bible VS Tradition, Part 4

Paradise

*"Verily I say unto thee this day;
with Me shalt thou be in paradise."*

—Luke 23:43, Rotherham

IT IS generally supposed by most professed Christians that the words 'paradise' and 'heaven' are essentially synonymous, and that in the Bible they are both used to describe the eternal home of the saved. There is one tradition, however, which makes paradise an intermediate state into which the righteous go, there to await the time of the resurrection at the end of the world, when they will be transferred to their permanent home in heaven.

Doubtless many suppose that the word paradise appears many times in the Bible, but actually it does not. It is not used in the Old Testament at all, and occurs only three times in the New Testament, one being in Jesus' promise to the thief on the cross, "Thou shalt be with me in paradise." It translates the Greek word *paradeisos*, which, according to Professor Strong, is of Oriental origin, the literal meaning of which is 'park', or 'garden', and by implication, 'Eden'.

The Bible tells us that God "planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." (Gen. 2:8) Since there is no suggestion of a heavenly, or spiritual park, or garden, in the word paradise itself, it seems obvious that its uses in the New Testament are directly or indirectly related to the divine purpose in the creation of man, and to God's provision of the garden home for him "eastward in Eden." Certainly the Garden of Eden was a paradise.

However, because of sin, man was driven out of Eden, out into the unsubdued earth to eke out an existence by the sweat of his face, until he returned to the dust from whence he was taken. (Gen. 3:17-21) Paradise was lost, but not forever, for the Bible clearly reveals that the divine plan of redemption through Christ, the Redeemer and Savior of the human race, is designed to restore man to life and to his lost paradise.

Although the word paradise simply means a park, or garden, we believe that we are within the larger meaning of the word paradise as used in the Bible when we say that it denotes man's earthly home, and the blessings of everlasting life which all the willing and obedient will ultimately enjoy in that home. The restoration of paradise, then, would involve much more than planting beautiful fruit trees and flowers in the ancient land of Mesopotamia, where it is believed the original Garden of Eden was situated. The Apostle Peter speaks of the period of Christ's second presence as "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21

The 'all things' to be restored are the all things which were lost. And when these all things are restored, paradise will be restored. The work of restoring paradise is to be accomplished by the reign of Christ, when those who, during the Gospel Age, have suffered and died following in the footsteps of Christ, will live and reign with him.

The Messiah

The coming of the Messiah and the establishment of his kingdom was the hope of Israel. Promise after promise in the Old Testament gave them the assurance that this was the divine plan for Israel and for the whole world of mankind. They believed not only that the Messiah, the great king of promise, would deliver them from bondage to the Gentiles, but also from bondage to sin and death. "In this mountain," or kingdom, the LORD had prom-

ised, there would be a “feast of fat things,” and death would be “swallowed up in victory.”—Isa. 25:6-9

Jesus came to be the king in this long-promised kingdom. His disciples had accepted him as the Messiah, and had given up all to follow him. Together with Jesus and the assistance of seventy evangelists selected and appointed by Jesus, the original twelve preached the Gospel of the kingdom throughout Judea for more than three years. It was not a large country, and we may safely assume that essentially all of the nation had learned more or less about Jesus, although but few had a clear understanding of just who he was.

When Jesus was arrested by his enemies with the intent of having him put to death, one of the charges brought against him was that he claimed to be a king. Ordinarily, if a charge like this were true, it would mean treason to the Roman government to which the Jewish nation was at that time subject. Jesus did not deny the charge, but acknowledged that it was to this end he was born.

An inscription over the cross on which Jesus was crucified proclaimed him to be “the king of the Jews.” So it was general knowledge in Israel that Jesus and his followers expected the establishment of the messianic kingdom with Jesus as its head.

The two malefactors, or thieves, being crucified with Jesus could not have been unaware of these circumstances. While the prejudice and hatred of the people against Jesus influenced one of the thieves to rail against the Master, the other thief took a more realistic view. Inasmuch as they were dying, and the situation seemed hopeless, it could do no harm, the thief apparently reasoned, to ask a favor of this man who was supposed to be a king. So, turning to Jesus he said, “Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.”—Luke 23:42

Not a Christian

In an effort to find something in the Bible to support the tradition that the righteous go immediately to heaven when they

die, this account of the thief on the cross has been seized upon. Actually, however, there is nothing in the record to indicate that this thief was righteous, or that he even repented of his sin. Certainly there is nothing in the narrative to indicate that he accepted Jesus as his Redeemer and Savior.

Stripped of its traditional coloring, all this account shows is that the dying thief, knowing that in some way Jesus was supposed to be a king, asked to be remembered when he came into his kingdom. As one dying man to another, the thief was sympathetic toward Jesus, and hoped that in return this unusual 'criminal' would do something for him, if and when he could. And what else could he ask than to be remembered when Jesus came into his kingdom?

While the thief was grasping at a straw in a situation in which there apparently was no basis for hope, it was different with Jesus. He knew that his death on the cross would not destroy God's kingdom plan, but was a necessary part of it. Unlike the rulership of other kings, the divine plan for Jesus was that he would reign, not over dying subjects, but over subjects redeemed from death with an opportunity of proving their worthiness of everlasting life. And Jesus knew that he was even then dying for his subjects, dying that they might live.

Jesus also knew that, in the divine plan of salvation, provision had not only been made for redemption through the shedding of his own blood, but also for the restoration of those redeemed; and he knew that the restoration of the redeemed world would be the work of his coming kingdom. He knew that when the work of his kingdom was complete, the lost paradise would be restored. Knowing this, and having absolute confidence in the outworking of his Father's purposes, he gave the reassuring reply to the thief, "Thou shalt be with me in paradise."

It is doubtful if the thief understood the full significance of the reply to his request to be remembered in Jesus' kingdom. It was not necessary that he should. To Jesus it was an opportunity

to express his confidence in his Heavenly Father's promises, and to bear testimony once more to the truth, and to do it in an hour of darkness and great trial.

"Verily I say unto you today," said Jesus, "shalt thou be with me in paradise." Who but Jesus could have made such a promise on such a day! The misplacement of the comma in the **King James Version** has hidden the true meaning of what Jesus said to the thief, and has caused many to believe that Jesus and the thief both went to paradise that day, which is contrary to the teachings of God's Word.

Died for Sin

The Bible teaches that Jesus died, that he "poured out his soul unto death." (Isa. 53:12) From Psalm 16:10 we learn that Jesus' soul was in *sheol*, the Bible hell, which is the state of death, from the time of his crucifixion until he was raised from the dead on the third day. After his resurrection, Jesus said to Mary, "I am not yet ascended to my Father." (John 20:17) From these texts of Scripture we know positively that Jesus did not go anywhere at the time he died except into death. The same was true of the thief.

But on that memorable day, when his enemies had seemingly gained a complete victory over him; when he was being put to death, and from the human standpoint it appeared that there was no hope that he would ever have a kingdom, his faith enabled him to say to the thief that he would be remembered in the kingdom, remembered in paradise. This not only meant that the messianic kingdom would be established in God's due time, but that it would be completely victorious over all the enemies of God and of righteousness, and that through its administration the lost earthly paradise would be restored.

We make no apology for changing the position of the comma as it appears in the **King James Version**, for the punctuation of the Bible is not inspired. It did not come into use until

several centuries after the Bible was written. Dr. Rotherham, an eminent scholar, recognized the intent of Jesus' reply to the thief, and in his translation, as will be noted at the head of this article, punctuates the sentence as it should be punctuated.

In using this mannerism of speech, Jesus was simply following a much-used pattern in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 4:39 reads, "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else." How wrong it would be to punctuate this text to mean that the LORD is God of heaven and earth this day. It could imply that someone else was god on other days. Deuteronomy 6:6 reads, "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." Simply by changing the position of the second comma, this text would read: "These words, which I command thee, this day shall be in thine heart," leaving a possible implication that on future days these words need not be in their hearts.

But in the case of Jesus' statement to the thief on the cross, those who were looking for every possible opportunity to bolster traditional theology that the dead are not dead, did not hesitate to place the comma to give this thought. But as we have seen, both reason and the Scriptures dictate that the text should be punctuated as Dr. Rotherham has done, thus placing the emphasis on the day in which the Master, in demonstration of his faith, made this remarkable promise to the thief regarding the coming messianic kingdom and the blessings to be dispensed to the dying world at that time.

Caught Up to Paradise

The second use of the word *paradise* in the Bible is in II Corinthians 12:2-4, which we quote: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man,

(whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which is not lawful for a man to utter."

Without doubt the man here referred to was Paul himself. His statement that he could not tell whether he was in the body or out of the body, is simply his way of emphasizing the great reality of this vision, and the vivid manner in which it portrayed truths to him concerning the *third heaven* and *paradise*. Paul's account of this vision has been used by many in an effort to prove that heaven and paradise are one and the same place. A casual reading of the passage could give this impression.

But if we were to use the passage for this purpose, we would have to conclude that paradise and the third heaven are the same, which, of course, presents the necessity of explaining the difference between the *third* heaven, and the *regular* heaven. Indeed, in order to understand the meaning of this vision with any degree of clarity it is essential to determine, if possible, just what Paul means by the *third* heaven.

The word heaven is used in the Bible with a number of different connotations. In some instances it simply denotes the atmosphere above the earth which we call the sky; or, as included in this context, the sun, moon, and stars, located in the heavens. In other instances the word heaven describes a plane of life higher than the human, and, of course, the place where these spirit beings abide. Thus we speak of the angels of heaven. The Bible speaks of the "heavenly calling" which is extended to the followers of Jesus in this age.—Heb. 3:1

The highest form of life in heaven is the divine, which means that God dwells in heaven. Jesus was exalted to the divine nature when he was raised from the dead. His footstep followers are promised the same exaltation. So we properly say that the Christian has a heavenly hope.—II Pet. 1:4

The LORD said, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." (Isa. 66:1) This suggests that heaven is not only

the abode of the Creator, and of those whom he has created on the spirit plane of life, but also that it is the divine seat of government over the affairs of the earth and, without doubt, the entire universe.

Angels

Narrowing this down to God's relationship to his human creatures, the Scriptures indicate that he works through his spirit creatures, one order of which is referred to in the Bible as angels. In this connection a study of the Bible's accounts of the various ways in which God used the holy angels to guide and protect his servants on earth is very revealing.

The Bible shows that many of the holy angels, including the mighty Lucifer, rebelled against God and his laws and, throughout the centuries from Eden until now, have sought, by deception and otherwise, to lead the human race away from God. A large measure of success has attended their efforts. This, of course, has been by divine permission in order that both men and angels might learn that it is impossible to disobey God's law and enjoy everlasting life.

The point we wish especially to emphasize is that beings in the spiritual world exercise a potent influence in the affairs of men. It is also true that the material heavens above—the sun, moon, stars, and even clouds, and atmosphere—are vitally related to life on the earth. Because this is true of the spiritual world and also of the firmament above, the Lord used the term heavens to symbolize spiritual ruling power in the affairs of men.

It is in this sense that Paul uses the expression, *the third heavens*. The Apostle Peter identifies all three of these heavens. First, he speaks of a heavens that existed before the Flood. Then he mentions the heavens which now are. And then he explains that we, according to God's promise, "look for new heavens . . . wherein dwelleth righteousness."—II Peter 3:5,6,10,13

The first two of these symbolic heavens are not righteous, for they embrace the period of human history when Satan and his

fallen angels are the dominant unseen power which rule in the affairs of men. But righteousness will dwell in the third heaven, as Peter explained. The exalted Jesus, and with him those who have proved worthy to live and reign with him, will be the spiritual, invisible rulers in the third or new heavens, while Satan will be bound and ultimately destroyed.

So Paul was given a wonderful vision in which he was carried down the stream of time to the period when Christ's kingdom would be ruling the world. Instead of speaking of what he saw as being the conditions which would exist in the messianic kingdom, he used the scriptural symbolisms for the spiritual and material aspects of the kingdom, heaven and paradise, the latter being but a synonym for what Peter described as the "new earth."

The kingdom of Christ will have its spiritual and earthly phases right from the beginning. But we would suppose that it will be some time before the earthly phase of the kingdom has expanded to the point where conditions as a whole throughout the earth could very well be symbolized by the thought of paradise. (Ezek. 36:35) Probably what Paul saw in his vision, which he says—according to the marginal translation—was not "possible" for him to utter, were conditions in the earth well on toward the end of Christ's thousand-year reign, hence his use of the word *paradise* as a symbol rather than the more common one, *new earth*.

The Paradise of God

There is only one more use of the word *paradise* in the Bible, and that is in Revelation 2:7, where we read, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." This is a promise to the church—that class called out from the world—who are promised a heavenly reward with Jesus.

A casual reading of the text suggests that these overcomers will enjoy the blessings of the restored paradise, as symbolized

by the original Garden of Eden. But a more careful study reveals a deeper meaning to this promise, and a meaning that is harmonious with the general testimony of the Scriptures which assure the church, not life in an earthly paradise, but in a heavenly home—indeed, in a place which Jesus went away to prepare.—John 14:2,3

Practically all the important lessons in the Book of Revelation are taught by symbols. The symbols used in Revelation, and in fact throughout the entire Bible, are things and circumstances concerning which we, as humans, have at least some knowledge, otherwise the symbolic language of the Bible would have no meaning to us. There are facts we know about the sun, the moon, the stars; and about sheep and goats; wheat and tares; rivers and trees; storms and earthquakes. So when the Bible uses these as symbols, certain lessons are conveyed to us.

In the second and third chapters of Revelation, seven wonderful promises are made to the faithful footstep followers of Jesus, the overcomers of the Gospel Age. All of these promises are illustrated by things with which we have at least some acquaintance. Verse ten of the second chapter reads, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” No Christian in reading this supposes that he will be wearing a literal crown in heaven. A crown suggests rulership, and the overcomers will be exalted to the highest form of life, the divine, to be associated with Jesus in his kingdom.

In verse seventeen of this chapter, the promise is given, “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” The expression, *hidden manna*, takes our minds back to the Tabernacle in the wilderness. In the Most Holy of this Tabernacle, representing heaven, was the ark of the covenant. (Heb. 9:4) In this was placed a golden bowl of manna. While the manna collected daily by the Israelites corrupted, that which they placed in this

gold bowl did not. This, then, conveys the thought of incorruptibility.

No one supposes, however, that when the overcomers reach heaven they will eat literal manna from a golden bowl. But all true Christians do rejoice in the hope of immortality which the hidden manna symbolized.—I Cor. 15:54

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.” (Rev. 3:12) No overcomer will be transformed literally into a pillar to be placed in an actual temple in heaven. This is a symbol of the sure, supportive, fixed position to be enjoyed by those who prove faithful. Now we are being tried and tested. There is a possibility of failing. But over there, the testing will have been finished, and those who have overcome will be as pillars, fixed and secure, in that glorious spiritual temple which will be the meeting place between God and men.

So we should view the promise relating to paradise in the same manner. (Rev. 2:7) We know the story of the original paradise, and its tree of life in the midst of the Garden. We know that because of disobedience our first parents were driven out of Eden to die. Flaming swords were put up to prevent their return to the garden and partaking of the tree of life, and living forever.

Knowing these circumstances, the LORD uses them symbolically to assure the overcomers who follow Jesus faithfully into death, that it will not be thus with them. Continuous access to the tree of life in the original paradise would have meant eternal life for our first parents, so the LORD used this fact to assure us that if we are overcomers we will be rewarded with everlasting life.

This does not mean that the overcomers of the present age will live in an earthly paradise, any more than the other promises mean that they will wear literal crowns, eat manna from a golden bowl, or become marble pillars in a literal temple. While this promise assures the overcomers of eternal life, which, in reality, will be immortality, the one in the tenth verse reveals that with

this life will also be given ruling authority, as symbolized by the crown. By the use of all the various symbols in these promises to the overcomers, we get a comprehensive understanding of the great "prize of the high calling" for which every follower of the Master is striving.—Phil. 3:14

Paradise, then, properly and scripturally speaking, is the home on earth, and the blessings of that earthly plane of life which will be enjoyed by the restored human race—a small sample of which was prepared for our first parents eastward in Eden. While, as we have seen, the word means a garden, or park, the original Garden of Eden which, in itself, was glorious and a marvelous provision for man, also foreshadowed all the blessings God designed for his earthly creature, man, including everlasting life and his dominion over earth.

All this will be restored during the times of restitution of all things. Truly this will be paradise restored. With that restoration will come the full answer to our Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. 6:10 □

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International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR JUNE 5

Moses: His Birth and Childhood

KEY VERSE: *"She called his name Moses, and she said, because I drew him out of the water.—Exodus 2:10*

SELECT SCRIPTURE: *Exodus 2:1-10*

GOD's hand in the life of Moses was manifested from the time of his birth. Joseph, and the entire generation of Israelites brought into Egypt to escape the famine, had died. (Exod. 1:6) Meanwhile "the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them."—vs. 7

The Pharaoh who exalted Joseph to such a high position in the government of Egypt had also died, and, as the record states, "There arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph." (vs. 8) This king became apprehensive and said to the Egyptians, "Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get

them up out of the land."—vss. 9,10

The Israelites had been made slave laborers, and as such were useful to the Egyptian government, but the king did not want them to become too numerous. So he set taskmasters over them with orders to increase their burden of work, thinking that this would prevent them from multiplying so rapidly. But it had the opposite effect. The next step taken by the king was to order the midwives to kill all the male babies as soon as they were born, but they disobeyed this order.—vss.15-20

Desperation filled the king's heart, and he gave orders that all male children of the Israelites were to be thrown into the river. This charge, or command, was given to all the Egyptians, and meant that it was legal for anyone to seize Hebrew male children at any time, and at any place, and to drown them in the river. (vs. 22) It

was under such circumstances that Moses was born.

Moses' mother and father were of the family of Levi—one of Jacob's twelve sons. His mother concealed Moses for three months after he was born. Then, realizing that she could not continue to do this very much longer, "she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him."—Exod. 2:3,4

In the New Testament Paul commented on this, saying, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." (Heb. 11:23) They evidently had faith that in some way their child would be used by God in the fulfillment of his purposes in connection with their people. They knew the promise to Joseph that the Israelites would be restored to their land, and they may have hoped that this goodly child of theirs might in some way be instrumental in this deliverance.

Their faith soon began to be rewarded. Pharaoh's daughter "came down to wash herself at the

river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and behold the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children."—Exod. 2:5,6

Moses' sister, Miriam, who stood by to watch what would happen to the baby, asked Pharaoh's daughter if she should get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the child. "Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother." (vs. 8) The mother gladly accepted the invitation to be the child's nurse, and wages were paid her. How marvelous are the providences of God!

By this arrangement Moses was raised under the protection of the Egyptian government and became "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds." (Acts 7:22) But with his own mother caring for him, Moses also learned that he was not an Egyptian, and he was informed concerning the promises of God as they related to the Israelites, including those of deliverance from Egyptian bondage. □

Moses: His Search for Identity

KEY VERSE: *"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."*—Hebrews 11:24,25

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Exodus 2:11-22

IN THE New Testament, Stephen informs us that when Moses was "full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel." (Acts 7:23) Paul states the matter more dramatically in our text. The LORD had revealed to Moses before he presented himself to his brethren the first time that he was to be their deliverer from bondage. It was then that he slew one of the Egyptian taskmasters, because, "he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them; but they understood not."—Acts 7:25; Exod. 2:11,12

It was when Moses went out among his brethren, the Israelites, the next day, and intervened in a quarrel between two of them, that he learned that his slaying of the Egyptian slave master was known to others. Indeed, it soon became known to Pharaoh, and because of it Moses was obliged to flee from

Egypt. It had all come about because he had decided to cast in his lot with his brethren.

He had confidence in the promises of God, the God of his fathers. He believed that a great Deliverer, the Messiah, the promised seed, would eventually come. Because of this, as Paul explains, he esteemed "the reproach of Christ [the reproach, that is, associated with belief in the messianic promises] greater riches than the treasures in Egypt."

Moses believed the promises of God; he was determined to be loyal to them no matter what the cost. However he did not realize what a strange turn the providences of God would take. God had revealed to him that he would be the deliverer of his people; but because he went about to accomplish it in his own way he was forced to flee from the country, and he lived as a refugee in the land of Midian for forty years.

As a result of his kindness in assisting the daughters of Jethro, the priest (margin, prince) of Midian, Moses was taken into his home, and later married one of his daughters, Zipporah. To him was born a son, whom he named Gershon, which means, 'a stranger here'. Moses gave his son this name because, as he said, "I have been a stranger in a strange land."—Exod. 2:11-22; 3:1

During those forty years in Midian, doubtless many times Moses thought of his people in Egypt and perhaps wondered when and how God would fulfill his promise to them. They were not unprofitable years for Moses, because he was learning to wait on the LORD, and to realize that by his own strength, and in his own way, he could do nothing for his brethren.

"It came to pass in process of time," the record states, "that the king of Egypt died." (Exod 2:23) This was the king, or Pharaoh, whose daughter adopted Moses, and from whom Moses fled after killing the Egyptian overseer. His death is noted to indicate that the way was now open for Moses to return to accomplish the task which God had designed for him.

Meanwhile the burdens of the Israelites were being increased,

and they "sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them."—vss. 23-25

In Midian, Moses "kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, . . . and he had led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb." (Exod. 3:1) Here "the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt."—vss. 2,3

Then the LORD spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, saying, "Moses, Moses," and he answered, "Here am I." (vs. 4) Moses was instructed to remove his shoes, for the place whereon he stood was holy ground—made holy for the time being by the presence of the LORD, who, through the angel, was to give Moses his initial instructions regarding the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. □

Moses: His Call and Protest

KEY VERSE: *"Now therefore go and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."*—Exodus 4:12

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Exodus 3:1-12*

AT THE burning bush, the LORD explained to Moses that the time had come when he would deliver the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt and "bring them out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." (Exod. 3:7,8) To Moses the LORD also said, "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt."—vs. 10

Remembering, no doubt, his first attempt to help his people and how completely it had failed, it was logical for Moses to ask, "Who am I, that I . . . should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" Replying to this question, God said to Moses, "Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain."—vss. 11, 12

But Moses had still another question. Forty years prior to this, when he had attempted to help his people, he was asked, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?" (Exod. 2: 14) Now he wanted to know how he would answer questions of this sort from his own people. He knew that they would demand by what authority he had come to deliver them. True, he would tell them that the God of their fathers had sent him; but then, as he said, they would want to know more than this. "They shall say to me," Moses continued, "What is his name?" How was he to answer this question?—Exod. 3:13

Replying, the LORD said to Moses, "I AM that I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the

God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."—vss. 14,15

The LORD outlined a plan for Moses to follow. First he was to gather the elders of Israel together and explain to them that the LORD's time had come to deliver the Israelites, and, with the elders, he was to appear before Pharaoh and request that the Israelites be given the privilege of going three days' journey into the wilderness, where they might offer sacrifices. (vss. 16-18) The LORD warned that permission for this would not be granted and that consequently he would bring plagues upon Egypt until Pharaoh would be willing to release the Israelites.

All of this appeared startling to Moses, who, after forty years of tending flocks for his father-in-law, had little confidence in his ability to lead his people out of bondage, especially in view of the certain opposition of Pharaoh. So again he appealed to the LORD for assurance. "They will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice," he said to the LORD, "for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee."—Exod. 4:1

Then Jehovah gave Moses three signs, each of them a mir-

acle, by which he might know, and the people might be convinced, of his divine appointment and authority. He was told to cast his rod upon the ground, and when he did, it became a serpent. When he picked it up, it became a rod again. Then he was told to put his hand into his bosom, and when he did it became leprous, but returned to a normal, healthy condition when he put it into his bosom the second time. He was told also that if these two signs were not convincing then he was to take water from the river and pour it upon the ground and it would become blood.—vss. 2-9

Convinced that he would be able to establish the fact that God had sent him, Moses then hesitated for another reason. He said to the LORD, "O my LORD, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." (vs. 10) Replying to this, the LORD reminded Moses that he was the Creator of the tongue, implying that Moses need have no fear. God then informed him that his brother, Aaron, would accompany him on his mission and would serve as his mouthpiece: "He shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God."—vss. 11-17

Moses Confronts Pharaoh

KEY VERSE: *"The man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people."*—Exodus 11:3

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Exodus 5:1-7; 11:1-5

BEFORE Moses made his return to the land of Egypt, the LORD spoke to his brother, Aaron, and instructed him to go into the wilderness to meet Moses. They met "in the Mount of God and Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him. "Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: and Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshiped."—Exod. 4:27-31

With the elders of Israel agreeing to cooperate, Moses and Aaron then contacted Pharaoh, saying to him, "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the

wilderness." But Pharaoh did not take this kindly. He replied, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go."—Exod. 5:1,2

No amount of persuasion would change Pharaoh's mind. Instead of allowing the Israelites to go, even temporarily, he increased their burdens. Then the Israelites complained to Moses, and Moses went to Jehovah and said, "LORD, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? Why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people."—vss. 22,23

These words did not express a lack of faith on Moses's part in God's ability to deliver his people, but rather a request for a better understanding of God's providences. The LORD assured Moses that in due time Pharaoh would not only let the Israelites go, but

would even drive them out of the land. How God brought Pharaoh to this point is recorded in Exodus, chapters seven through twelve.

God brought plagues upon Egypt—ten in all. As each of these plagues fell upon the land, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh with God's message, "Let my people go." Each time Pharaoh declared that if the plague were lifted he would let the Israelites go, but each time he broke his word. "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." (Rom. 9:17) This suggests that God could have brought another prince to the throne of Egypt, but allowed this one for the time because his wickedness, self-will, and obstinacy suited God's purposes.

The Scriptures also declare that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. (Exod. 4:21) The explanation is that it was the goodness of God that hardened Pharaoh's heart. Divine goodness and generosity were shown in the removal of the various plagues as soon as Pharaoh promised to do right. This, instead of inciting him to love and obedience, led him to greater obstinacy. He determined, as he passed

through one plague after another, that others could not be worse; but ultimately he paid dearly for his defiance.

The tenth plague was the most severe. All the firstborn of Egypt died; but the firstborn of Israel, under the protection of the blood of the Passover lamb, were spared. By this plague, Pharaoh was brought to the point, as promised, where he expelled the Israelites from the land.



Christian Life and Doctrine

THE SEED, PART 3

II Samuel 7:4-29

The Sure Mercies of David

ZEDEKIAH was the last king of Judah, who, in 606 B.C., was dethroned by Nebuchadnezzar and taken captive to Babylon. Through the Prophet Ezekiel, the LORD said to Zedekiah: "Remove the diadem and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him."—Ezek. 21:26,27

Thus ended a long series of divinely overruled events which had begun many centuries before, specifically with King David of Israel, but in a related sense many centuries prior even to David's time. These events were related to the fulfillment of God's promises, the first of which was made in the Garden of Eden when God foretold the coming of a seed that would bruise the serpent's head. This was an assurance that ultimately evil, under the leadership of Satan, would be destroyed by one whom God would authorize and empower for the purpose. It was to this one that God referred in his promise to Abraham that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed.—Gen. 12:1;22:18

In the second generation from Abraham, the vital aspect of this promise was narrowed down to the descendants of Judah—one of the twelve sons of Jacob—who himself was the grandson of Abraham. In bestowing his parental blessing upon his sons, Jacob prophesied, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."—Gen. 49:10

At the time this prophecy was uttered, the descendants of Abraham were domiciled in Egypt, and subject to the Egyptian government. They had no ruler of their own, nor had they ever been an organized nation having their own government. God's promise to Abraham stated that through his 'seed' all the families of the earth would be blessed, and that his 'seed' would possess the gate of his enemies. Just how this promise was to be fulfilled was not revealed.

But as time went on, and promises relating to the seed continued to be made, bits of additional information were added. An example of this is Jacob's prophecy, which refers to the seed under the name, or title, Shiloh, meaning 'peaceful one'. And notice the other language of the prophecy, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet." This is suggestive of some sort of government which would administer law under a divine mandate.

In the preceding verse of this prophecy, Judah is referred to as a "couched" lion. In Egypt, at the time, a couched lion was the symbol of the regal right of the pharaohs to rule, so in this also we have the suggestion that in some way, and at some time, the promise to bless all the families of the earth would be fulfilled through the agencies of a government over which the seed in this prophecy, or Shiloh, would be the head.

Later, God appointed Moses to deliver his people from Egypt. He also became their lawgiver. While Moses lived he was the recognized head of the nation, but Moses himself knew that he was not the 'seed' of promise. Through Moses the LORD said of the Israelites, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."—Deut. 18:18

In this we have another promise of the coming 'seed', referred to as the great Prophet. There is an interesting aspect to this promise, which is that the promised Prophet was not to be

raised up to the generation of Israelites which Moses served, but from among their brethren of a later generation. This implies that the Israelites whom Moses led out of Egypt will be raised from the dead, that they might be among all the families of the earth then to be blessed by the 'seed'.

Following the death of Moses, Joshua became the leader of Israel. Following him, they crossed over Jordan into the Promised Land. Under his direction the land was divided among the twelve tribes. After Joshua's death came the period of the judges, when the nation had no central government of any kind. Samuel was the last of Israel's judges during this period.

Toward the close of Samuel's tenure of office as a judge, the Israelites petitioned him to appoint a king to rule over them. God instructed Samuel to comply with the people's wishes, and Saul was anointed to be Israel's first king. Saul began well, but became disobedient to the LORD and was rejected, although he was allowed to rule until he died.

King David

David, a shepherd boy of Bethlehem, the son of Jesse, was anointed to succeed Saul as king of Israel; and in God's dealings with David, and his promises to him, the 'seed' theme of the Scriptures comes to the fore again, and further emphasis is given to the fact that it was to be through a powerful kingdom, or government, that the 'seed' would bless all the families of the earth. Indeed, the LORD used the kingdom of Israel, over which David and his successors ruled, to foreshadow a greater future kingdom over which the promised 'seed', the Shiloh of Jacob's prophecy, would reign.

David had fleshly weaknesses, but at heart he was loyal to the LORD. Because of this the LORD referred to him as a 'man after his own heart'. (I Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22) David's reverence for the LORD, and his great desire to honor and please him, gave him a great desire to build a house, or temple for the LORD. He told the Prophet Nathan of this desire, and Nathan approved.

But the LORD overruled in this, and instructed Nathan to inform David that he would not be permitted to carry out his project. David, of course, was greatly disappointed, but the LORD gave him a compensating blessing in the form of a special promise, or covenant, that the kingdom would be continued in his house, or lineage, forever. The covenant, as outlined by the LORD, reads:

"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 establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever."—II Samuel 7:12-16

This is an unusual covenant. David's son, Solomon, is specifically referred to in it, and the promise made that he would build a house for the LORD—a temple—which he did. There is also a hint of Solomon's later iniquity, with assurance that the LORD would show mercy and would not wrest the kingdom from him as he had from Saul, but that the ruling heads of the kingdom would continue to be the descendants of David.

It is this that suggests the name of the covenant, "The sure mercies of David." (Isa. 55:3) It was a covenant which would continue upon the basis of mercy being shown to those who, because of their lack of integrity, would not be qualified to sit upon the throne of the LORD, as the throne of Israel was regarded to be.—I Chron. 29:23

The Kingdom Divided

In the beginning of Solomon's reign, he was a true and humble servant of the LORD. But this did not continue. Under the influence of his heathen wives he permitted the worship of idols to flourish in the land, and following his death, when his son, Rehoboam, became king, there was a rebellion of ten of the tribes of the nation, and these set up a kingdom of their own under the leadership of a man named Jeroboam.

So far as Solomon and his son, Rehoboam, were concerned; their conduct did not warrant the saving of any of the kingdom, but the sure mercies of David operated, and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were saved for the Davidic line of kings. That Judah should be one of the loyal tribes was in keeping with Jacob's prophecy that the sceptre would not depart from Judah until the coming of Shiloh.

Throughout the centuries that followed, some of the royal line of David reigned in righteousness, but many of them were wicked, and time and again the people were led into idolatry. Nevertheless the sure mercies of David continued to prevail. Finally, however, a drastic change did occur, being brought about by the overriding power of Babylon under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar. It was then that the last of Judah's kings was overthrown.

But this did not imply that God's covenant with David had been broken. It was just that a change had taken place. When the covenant was first made, David sensed that there was something about it which went beyond his ability to grasp fully at that time, and he said to the LORD, "Who am I, O LORD God? And what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O LORD God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O LORD God?"—II Sam. 7:18,19

Surely the LORD had spoken of David's house for "a great while to come"—so great a while that it extended far beyond the

dethronement of Zedekiah in 606 B.C.! What happened there was merely the downfall of the typical house of David. Through Ezekiel, God said to Zedekiah, "Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same." No longer was the typical kingdom to function, and the antitypical was, in due time, to take its place.

In Captivity

With the dethronement of King Zedekiah, the people of Israel were taken captive to Babylon. Among the captives was Daniel, who became one of the LORD's outstanding prophets. Through him the LORD gave a prophecy establishing the date for the coming of Messiah the Prince. (Dan. 9:24-27) Thus was Daniel assured that although his people had lost their national independence, God's purpose, as centered in the promised Seed, the Messiah, was to be carried out exactly on time.

And Daniel was given this assurance in still another prophecy where the Messiah is referred to as Michael, the Prince who would stand for and deliver his people. (Dan. 12:1-4) In this prophecy we are assured that the deliverance to be wrought by the mighty Prince whom God would send was to be more than deliverance from the overlordship of heathen nations; that it was also to be a deliverance from death.

After this, many long centuries passed before there was any visible evidence that the messianic promises of God were to be fulfilled. And then it happened. The angel, Gabriel, appeared to Mary and announced that she was to have a son whose name would be called Jesus, and that he would be given "the throne of his father David." Luke 1:30-33 reads:

"The angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the LORD

God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Hundreds of years before this, the Prophet Isaiah had written concerning this great one which was to be born in Israel, and the announcement of Gabriel to Mary emphasized that the time had come for this prophecy to begin to be fulfilled. Isaiah wrote:

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9:6,7

Christ Is Born

In due time Jesus was born, and the angel, announcing his birth, said to the shepherds:

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. . . . And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and goodwill toward men."—Luke 2:10-14

Now the promises of God pertaining to the Seed began to have a definite fulfillment. And notice that down through the centuries the divine purpose had in no way become restricted. To Abraham God had said that all the families of the earth would be blessed, and now the announcement of the birth of the real seed

of promise was declared by God's angel to be good tidings which would be to all people!

Thirty years later Jesus began his ministry, a ministry which pertained to the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven. These expressions did not imply a rulership in heaven, but a rulership of the earth which the God of heaven had promised and would, through Jesus, one day establish. In proclaiming the good news concerning the coming kingdom, Jesus illustrated by his many miracles the manner in which all the families of the earth would be blessed by its rulership.

The common people listened to Jesus' reassuring message with joy. They believed that he was a prophet sent by God. His immediate followers, particularly those whom he chose to be his apostles, believed he was the promised Messiah. However, the religious rulers in Israel manifested enmity and hatred toward Jesus. They persecuted him, and sought to turn the people against him. In this they succeeded to a large degree, particularly toward the close of Jesus' ministry.

Jesus told these religious rulers of Israel that they were of their father the Devil, thus identifying in a definite way the seed of the serpent mentioned by God in the Garden of Eden, that seed which God said would be at enmity with the seed of the woman. And it was indeed a bitter enmity, a hatred which ultimately led to the death of Jesus on Calvary's cross.

The Heir Is Killed

Jesus came, as the angel, Gabriel, announced to Mary, to be the royal heir of the throne of David, the one referred to by the Prophet Ezekiel as having the right to that throne. But now his enemies had killed him. From the standpoint of human wisdom and ability this would mean that the divine purpose centered in the seed of promise had been defeated; that the throne of David had been overthrown.

But as the poet so truthfully wrote, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Actually the death of Jesus

was not a tragedy, but part of the divine plan for the redemption and recovery of the world of mankind from sin and death through the seed. In the crucifixion of Jesus, the seed of the serpent had, as it were, inflicted a painful 'heel' wound upon the seed of the woman, but it was not a deadly wound so far as the divine purpose was concerned, for God raised him from the dead.

Nevertheless the immediate disciples of Jesus, those who had accepted him as the Messiah and believed that he would restore again the kingdom to Israel, were puzzled and discouraged by their Master's death. They did not as yet understand the full purpose of God as it centered in Jesus, and to them it now seemed impossible that Jesus could ever be a king.—Acts 1:6-8

But their sorrow was turned into joy when they became convinced that Jesus actually had been raised from the dead! This comes to light particularly in connection with two disciples whom the resurrected Jesus met, and with whom he walked as they journeyed on their way to Emmaus. When joining the two, Jesus asked, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" One of them replied to Jesus, saying:

"Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" Jesus replied, "What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, today is the third day since these things were done."—Luke 24:13-21

This gave Jesus an opportunity to explain, so he replied, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning



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CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

(Continued on Page 37)

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BRITISH WEST INDIES

Grand Cayman Radio Cayman 9:30 a.m.

CEYLON

Columbo-Sat. Radio Sri Lanka 7:15 p.m.

FRANCE (French)

Lyon-Sat. Radio Ciel 6:30 a.m.

HONG KONG

Radio Villa Verde-Fri. 6:00 p.m.

ITALY (Italian)

Europa Radio Milano 83.9-FM 11:30 a.m.

Euro Tele Radio Calabria-Fri.

MHZ 102

5:30 p.m.

Radio Corleone Centrale

FM-88-500 FM-92

11:00 a.m.

MEXICO (Spanish)

Cullacán Ranchera XECQ 8:30 a.m.

NEW ZEALAND

Dunedin 4XD 11:15 a.m.

Whakatane IXX 6:45 a.m.

NIGERIA

Radio Africa-Wed. 8:00 p.m.

PANAMA

Panama City HOQ 1250 10:30 a.m.

PERU

Lima-Sat. Radio Unión 880 AM 2:00 p.m.

PHILIPPINES

Manila-Sat. DZAM 1026 KHz 7:15 p.m.

SOUTH AFRICA

Joubert Park-Thurs. SWAZI Music
Radio 1400 & shortwave 49 & 60 9:00 p.m.

SPAIN (Spanish)

Radio Girona-Mon. 9:45 p.m.

TONGA

Nuku' Alofa-Mon. 10:15 a.m.

URUGUAY (Spanish)

Montevideo Radio El Espectador 810 9:15 a.m.

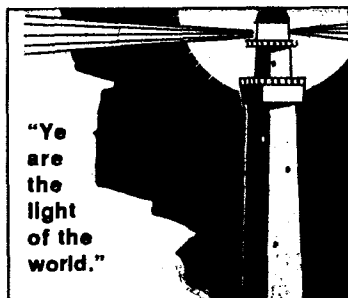
VIRGIN ISLANDS

St. Croix WSTX 970 9:00 a.m.

SHORTWAVE BROADCASTS

(Beamed to Africa, Europe, U.S.)

Eastern U.S. (Sat.) WRNO 15.20 12:45 p.m.



The Bible Answers

Regular Television Broadcasts

WE REGRET that we are unable to furnish the day and time of many of the broadcasts for the following stations. Where they are known, they have been noted:

FLORIDA				MISSISSIPPI			
Miami	WKID			Jackson	WAPT		
Jacksonville	Channel 17						
GEORGIA				MISSOURI			
Atlanta	WATL			Springfield	KOLR		
ILLINOIS				NEW MEXICO			
Champaign-Springfield	WBHW			Roswell	KSWB		
IOWA				NORTH CAROLINA			
Cedar Rapids	KTS-13			Hickory	WHKY		
Mt. Vernon-	WMVL Cable	7:00 a.m.		OHIO			
Lisbon (every weekday)				Dayton	WHIO		
MICHIGAN				TEXAS			
Ann Arbor-Sun.	WHT-31	12:00 noon		Lubbock	KCBD		
				WEST VIRGINIA			
				Logan-Mon.	Channel 12		

Satellite Cable Broadcasts

EVERY Sunday morning, over four hundred cable stations air **The Bible Answers** TV programs in forty-three states and Puerto Rico, at 9:00 a.m. EST; 8:00 a.m. CST; 7:00 a.m. MST; and 6:00 a.m. PST.

If you subscribe to cable TV, consult the listing in your local newspaper or guide, for the station in your area which shows these fine educational programs. In some cases, stations tape the programs and show them at a different time than that mentioned above. You may have to check the complete listings to locate **The Bible Answers** programs in your city. We are sure you and your family will find these programs inspiring and faith-strengthening—well worth watching. If you own a satellite dish, these programs can be seen on SATCOM F-3, TRANSPONDER-6, at the times listed above.

himself.”—Luke 24:25-27

After Jesus had left them, these disciples “said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?” (vs. 32) No wonder they rejoiced! Jesus had explained that it was necessary for him to suffer and to die in order to redeem mankind from death. Otherwise he could rule as king only over a race that was dying.

In this marvelous discourse, Jesus cited the prophetic testimony concerning the fact that it was necessary for him to die. Previous to this, Jesus’ disciples were so carried away with the thought of his being the Messiah, and a great king to sit on David’s throne, that they had not noticed what the prophets had said concerning his suffering and death.

The Prophet Isaiah had written that Jesus would be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he would not open his mouth in self-defense. This prophecy had been fulfilled in exact detail. (Isa. 53:7) However, the Prophet Isaiah also described Jesus as the “Arm” of Jehovah, and prophesied that this Arm would be made bare “in the eyes of all the nations,” and that “all the ends of the earth” would see him, see “the salvation of our God.”—Isa. 52:10; 53:1

But as Jesus explained to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, before this and the many other promises of kingly glory could be fulfilled, it was necessary that he suffer and die. These prophecies concerning him had now been fulfilled, and God had raised him from the dead. It was after his resurrection that Jesus said to his disciples, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”—Matt. 28:18

During the course of Jesus’ last appearance to his disciples, they made bold to ask him, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6) The disciples could not now see any reason why Jesus should not begin to exercise his ‘all power’ as king, and restore the kingdom of Israel which had

been overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C. They knew that he was the seed of promise, the Messiah, the great King of Glory foretold in the prophecies. And now that he had given his humanity for the sins of the world, why should he not proceed with the setting up of his kingdom?

But there were still other aspects of the divine plan which the disciples did not as yet comprehend. Jesus knew this, so he simply replied to them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."—Acts 1:7,8

From this it must have been apparent to the disciples that while the kingdom of promise was not then to be set up, the divine plan had not failed. They would understand also, that they were to be given an important assignment in the carrying out of that plan, the details of which were to be revealed to them later.

And then, after giving the disciples this partial explanation, Jesus was "taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts 1:9-11

While the realization of the disciples' hopes pertaining to the messianic kingdom were now postponed, they had not failed. After all, Jesus had been raised from the dead, and since the success of the plan of God was guaranteed by power capable of raising the dead, there was no reason why they should not continue to have full assurance of faith.

In the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul reviewed the providences of God in connection with David, and the promise

which God had made concerning David. Then he added, "Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." (Acts 13:23) Continuing his sermon, Paul explained that the religious rulers had put Jesus to death, "but God raised him from the dead."—vs. 30

Reaching the climax of his sermon, Paul said, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David."—vss. 32-34

When God made that wonderful promise to David that his seed would sit upon the throne forever, there was no way for the psalmist to visualize the fact that the real king envisioned by God in this promise would be put to death by his enemies, and that divine power would raise him from the dead in order that the promise might be fulfilled.

But in the light of God's purposes this is not surprising, for without the resurrection of the dead, the whole plan would come to naught. Just as in this plan the promised seed of blessing is put to death, and later raised from the dead to dispense the blessings, so all the families of the earth to whom the blessings are promised are, for the most part, in the tomb when the time comes to bless them; and God has promised that these will be awakened from the sleep of death in order to receive the promised blessing. What a blessed hope! □

*"LORD, thou hast been our
dwelling place [refuge]
in all generations."
—Psalm 90:1*

Talking Things Over

General Convention Bulletin

Children's Subsidy

We are pleased to announce that the children's subsidy has been extended to include 100% subsidizing for children **three and under**. Since this is made possible by the Convention Committee, you will be required when registering to pay to the University of Tennessee the \$60. charge for each child. The subsidy can be obtained in the same manner as the other subsidies described under that heading in the Convention Bulletins of May and June issues of The Dawn magazine. This year the convention will provide subsidy applications. They will be available at the convention. Simply fill out one copy and drop it in the box provided. Near the close of the convention you will receive from the Convention Treasurer the amount for which you qualify.

Tape Recording

This year it will not be possible to accommodate individual tape recorders at the convention. The Convention Committee is arranging to make three master recordings of each session, from which copies will be available at the convention at a cost of \$1.00 for each cassette.

Notice to Young Adults, Ages 13-17

Please write in as soon as possible requesting notebook of study outlines for the Young Adult classes. This will be mailed to you about the first of July. Send to the following address:

Mr. Robert Goodman
426 Sundown Trail
Casselberry, FL 32707

The following pages contain an outline of the General Convention Program for 1988. We hope to see you there!

Saturday, July 23

Chairman: Brother M.J. Balko
Orlando, FL

9:30	Morning Devotions	
9:45	Orientation by the University	
10:00	Welcome Address	Brother E. Kuenzli <i>Orlando, FL</i>
10:45	Intermission	
11:15	Discourse	Brother R. Suraci <i>New Haven, CT</i>
12:00	Close of Morning Session	
2:00	Discourse	Brother R. Gorecki <i>Detroit, MI</i>
2:45	Intermission	
3:15	Discourse	Brother B. Brown <i>Los Angeles, CA</i>
4:00	Intermission	
4:30	Discourse	Brother Jos. Panucci <i>Groton, CT</i>
5:15	Close of Afternoon Session	
7:00	Discourse	Brother L.B. Post <i>New York, NY</i>
7:45	Vesper Service	
8:15	Songs in the Night	

Sunday, July 24

Chairman: Brother H. Snyder
Portland, OR

- | | | |
|-------|----------------------------|---|
| 9:30 | Morning Devotions | |
| 9:45 | Welcome by the University | |
| 10:00 | Discourse | Brother H. Montague
<i>Brooklyn, NY</i> |
| 10:45 | Intermission | |
| 11:15 | Convention Theme Discourse | Brother E. Herrscher
<i>Phoenix, AZ</i> |
| 12:00 | Close of Morning Session | |
| 2:00 | Praise & Testimony Meeting | Bro. C. Zubowsky
<i>LaSalle, IL</i> |
| 2:45 | Intermission | |
| 3:15 | Discourse | Brother D. Holliday
<i>West Wickham, England</i> |
| 4:00 | Intermission | |
| 4:30 | Discourse | Brother R.J. Krupa
<i>Portland, OR</i> |
| 5:15 | Close of Afternoon Session | |
| 7:00 | Music | |
| 7:15 | Public Meeting | Brother R.J. Krupa, Chairman |
| | Film: | <i>"World without Death"</i> |
| 8:15 | Close of Evening Session | |

Monday, July 25

*Chairman: Brother E. Lamel
Los Angeles, CA*

9:30	Morning Devotions	
9:45	Discourse	Brother T. Krupa <i>Portland, OR</i>
10:30	Intermission	
11:15	Discourse	Brother G.M. Jeuck <i>New York, NY</i>
12:00	Close of Morning Session	
2:00	Praise & Testimony Meeting	Brother W. Harp <i>Cincinnati, OH</i>
3:00	Intermission	
3:45	<i>Thoughts on the Theme Text</i>	
	Things Learned	Brother C. Boughton
	Things Received	Brother G. Eldridge
	Things Heard	Brother R. Rawson
	Things Seen	Brother P. Pazucha
5:15	Close of Afternoon Session	
7:00	Discourse	Brother S. Suraci <i>New Haven, CT</i>
7:45	Vesper Service	
8:15	Songs in the Night	

Tuesday, July 26

*Chairman: Brother C. Martig
Pittsburgh, PA*

9:30	Morning Devotions	
9:45	Baptismal Discourse	Brother W. Blicharz <i>Detroit, MI</i>
10:45	Intermission	
11:15	Immersion Service at University Pool	
12:00	Close of Morning Session	
2:00	Praise & Testimony Meeting	Brother G. Baker <i>St. Louis, MO</i>
2:45	Intermission	
3:15	Discourse	Brother M. Blicharz <i>Palo Alto, CA</i>
4:00	Intermission	
4:30	Discourse	Brother F. Nemesh <i>Detroit, MI</i>
5:15	Close of Afternoon Session	
7:00	<i>Convention Meeting</i> Discussion of 1989 convention sites, and other related matters.	Brother E.K. Penrose <i>Columbus, OH</i>
8:30	Songs in the Night	

Wednesday, July 27

*Chairman: Brother S. Krystek
Los Angeles, CA*

9:00	Morning Devotions	
9:15	South American Report	Brother A. Olcese <i>Lima, Peru</i>
10:00	Intermission	
10:30	Convention Business Meeting	
12:00	Close of Morning Session	
2:00	Discourse	Brother S. Roskiewicz <i>Grand Rapids, MI</i>
2:45	Intermission	
3:15	Praise & Testimony Meeting	Bro. W. Vrooman <i>Orlando, FL</i>
4:00	Intermission	
4:30	Discourse	Brother D. Bruce <i>Seattle, WA</i>
5:15	Close of Afternoon Session	
7:00	Discourse	Brother E. Blicharz <i>Orlando, FL</i>
7:45	Vesper Service	
8:15	Songs in the Night	

Thursday, July 28

Chairman: Brother N. Kasperowicz
Paterson, NJ

9:30	Morning Devotions	
9:45	Discourse	Brother L. Gaddy <i>Phoenix, AZ</i>
10:30	Intermission	
11:00	<i>Question Meeting</i>	MODERATOR: E.K. Penrose PANEL—Brothers: G. M. Jeuck S. Roskiewicz L.B. Post
12:00	Close of Morning Session	
2:00	Praise & Testimony Meeting	Brother R. Mottie <i>Greenfield, OH</i>
2:45	Intermission	
3:15	Discourse	Brother M. Balko <i>West Newton, PA</i>
4:00	Intermission	
4:30	Discourse	Brother E.F. Lankford
5:15	Close of Afternoon Session	
7:00	Melodies of Praise	Brother T. Krupa
7:45	Closing Discourse	Brother S. R. Jeuck <i>Orlando, FL</i>
8:30	Love Feast	

Registration Form

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION
University of Tennessee • Chattanooga, Tennessee

July 23-28, 1988

Number staying for the whole week, attending all meals.

(If you have filled in above box, you need not complete the form below.)

Fr	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Lodging
Sa				
Su				
Mo				
Tu				
We				
Th				

Please indicate above which meals you wish to attend, and how many for each meal, if you are not staying the entire week, or do not wish to eat certain meals at the convention.

...

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

...

Please list names of **all** + **ages** of children, included in this reservation:

NAME

AGE of CHILD

(SEE OVER)

SEND RESERVATIONS TO:

Office of Conference Services
615 McCallie Avenue, Univ. of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Chattanooga, TN 37043

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Please indicate *how many* in each category:

WEEKLY RATES FOR LODGING AND MEALS

		<u>Number</u>	<u>Cost</u>
13 to adult	\$218.00	_____	_____
7-12	\$165.00	_____	_____
6 and under	\$ 60.00	_____	_____
		Total	_____

...

DAILY RATES FOR LODGING PER PERSON

(For Partial Week as Indicated on the Reverse Side of this Form.)

		<u>Number</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Ages 7 & over	\$ 20.00 daily	_____	_____
Ages 6 & under	\$ 10.00 daily	_____	_____
		Total	_____

...

DAILY RATES FOR MEALS PER PERSON

(For Partial Week as Indicated on the Reverse Side of this Form.)

	<u>Number/Cost for all Meals</u>
Ages 7 to adult: B-\$4.00 • L-\$6.00 • D-\$8.00	_____
Ages 6 & under: B-\$2.00 • L-\$3.00 • D-\$4.00	_____
	Total _____

...

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK FOR \$50.00

DEPOSIT, OR AMOUNT OF THE Grand Total _____

...

AIRPORT PICKUP INFORMATION:

<u>Airline</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Flight Number</u>	<u>No. of Persons</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Resist Steadfast in the Faith

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”—I Peter 5:8,9

IS THERE a personal Devil, an enemy of God and of man? If so, who created him, and why does an all-powerful God of righteousness and love permit such a being to exist? Throughout the ages these questions have been pondered by sincere, thoughtful persons. On the one hand, some have concluded that the Devil is a hideous looking creature with cloven hoofs and a spiked tail, whose chief business is to preside over the alleged torture of the unsaved dead. And, on the other hand, the claim is made that the Devil of the Bible is merely an evil principle, widespread and powerful in its opposition to God and to righteousness, but not a personality.

To us it seems obvious from the Scriptures that there is a *personal* Devil. He is, we believe, of a higher order of creation than man, invisible to man. This powerful being was created perfect. Under the title, “King of Babylon,” he is referred to as “Lucifer, son of the morning.” (Isa. 14:12) He fell from his perfection and from his loyalty to the Creator when pride and ambition developed in his heart. Isaiah wrote further concerning him: “Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend

above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.”—Isa. 14:13,14

Various names and titles have been given to the fallen Lucifer in the Bible. He is referred to as “that old serpent, the Devil and Satan.” (Rev. 20:1) In John 12:31 he is described as “the prince of this world,” and he is also thus depicted in John 14:30 and 16:11. In Ephesians 2:2, Satan is described as “the prince of the power of the air,” and in II Corinthians 4:4 as “the god of this world.”

Through the various references given to us in the Bible concerning him we are able to gain a fairly comprehensive understanding of his many methods of attack against the LORD’s people. The first activity of Satan described in the Bible is recorded in Genesis 3:1-5. This is the account of the manner in which he deceived mother Eve. He asked Eve if it were true that God had said she would die if she partook of the forbidden fruit. She affirmed that this was true, and Satan’s contradictory reply was: “Thou shalt *not* surely die.”

Satan Attacks God’s Word

Here was an attack on the integrity of God’s Word, and this has been one of Satan’s methods of attack against God and his people throughout the ages since. In this first instance Eve was deceived, although Adam was not; and so it has been since—many have been deceived by Satan’s lies, while a few in every age have remained steadfastly loyal to the Word of God. The importance of this on the part of God’s people is emphasized in Isaiah 8:20, which reads: “To the Law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word . . . there is no light in them.”

It was not until the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai that the word of God began to be made available in written form. Prior to that, God spoke to his people largely through his holy angels; and this, in fact, continued until the first advent of Jesus

when an angel announced the birth of Jesus and declared it to be "good tidings of great joy to all people." (Luke 2:10) Meanwhile, the prophetic writings of the Old Testament were added to the books of the Law, and these Spirit-inspired writings became a part of the written Word of God—that part which we now refer to as the Old Testament.

Throughout these books of the Old Testament rings the harmonious theme song of the Bible, the great kingdom plan of God to redeem and restore mankind to life—the life which was lost when our first parents disobeyed divine law in the Garden of Eden. In this melody of divine love there is presented the hope of a coming Messiah—the Christ—and it was this Christ whose birth was announced by the angel. By his birth the plan of God had taken a step forward in development.

The New Testament Born

Without much delay the teachings of Jesus were recorded in the four Gospels; and in due time there came the Book of Acts; the epistles of Paul, James, Peter, Jude, and John; and the Book of Revelation. Thus the New Testament was added to the Old Testament to give us the complete Word of God. It is this vast storehouse of truth which our Heavenly Father has used throughout the Gospel Age to nourish and strengthen his people as new creatures in Christ Jesus. And how wonderfully the precious truths of the divine plan do refresh us as day by day we feed upon them!

But Satan has always been on the alert to disparage the Word of God and to render it ineffective in the hearts and lives of those who receive it. A reference is made to one aspect of this effort in Luke 8:11,12. This is part of the parable of the sower, in which we are told that the seed which is sown is the Word of God—not literally the Bible, of course, but the glorious Gospel message of Christ's kingdom, the main theme of the Bible. Concerning the seed sown by the wayside, we read, "Then cometh

the Devil, and taketh away the Word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."—vs. 12

Here we find Satan endeavoring to prevent the Word of God from taking root in the lives of those whom God is calling. Perhaps many of us have wondered why it is that so often, when we see someone beginning to take a keen interest in the truth of God's Word, that interest so quickly wanes. Jesus has given us the answer. In the case of Eve, Satan insisted that God's Word was not the truth, and in this parable we see him snatching the Word from the hearts of the newly interested.

But Satan was not satisfied with the harm he could do by snatching away the Word of God from the hearts of individuals who might be getting interested in it. As time went on, a much more ambitious scheme unfolded. Paul foretold that there would come a great falling away from the faith, and this did indeed occur. The most holy faith of the Scriptures was maintained throughout the days of the Early Church by the apostles' encouragement to adhere strictly to the Word of God. Paul complimented the Bereans, because they searched the Scriptures daily to see if what he was telling them was true. The insistence on a "thus saith the LORD" for every item of truth was one of the basic safeguards of the Early Church.

But following the death of the apostles this situation began to change. True, the Bible was available then only in manuscript form, and copies were scarce. Many believers were forced to depend upon the knowledge of a few favored ones who possessed Bibles. The idea was extant that loyalty to the Word of God really meant loyalty to someone else's understanding of the Word of God. This natural consequence of circumstances was taken advantage of, and as time went on the tradition developed that while the Bible was the supreme authority, it could be interpreted properly only by the church. And this viewpoint is widely held to this day.

Undoubtedly Satan had much to do with this subtle setting aside of the real authority of the Bible over the beliefs and lives of God's professed people. The result was that human traditions slowly began to replace the beautiful, inspiring doctrines of the Bible. The Bible declared that "the wages of sin is death," but the self-appointed interpreters of the Bible said, "No; the wages of sin is eternal torment." The Bible affirms there is but one God; but these same men declared there are three gods, and that these three are one god.

The Bible taught that the future thousand-year Judgment Day of the world would be a blessed opportunity to accept Christ, obey the laws of the millennial kingdom and live forever. But the interpreters of the Bible said the Judgment Day would be one of doom; that it would be twenty-four hours in length, and that then all who died in unbelief would be consigned to a place of eternal torture in a fiery hell.

And so we might go on and on, discovering that essentially every precious doctrine of the divine plan of God's Word became distorted by interpreters of the Bible. Yet it was accomplished so subtly that the majority of professed Christians suppose they are in harmony with the Word of God. This did not matter to Satan since his ruse had accomplished his purpose of plucking from the hearts of Christians the glorious kingdom hope set forth in the inspired Word of God.

The unmistakably clear teaching of the Bible is that the promised kingdom of the Messiah would not be established until after his return at his Second Advent. But Satan went to work on this beautiful truth also. Playing upon the ambitions of the human heart, he succeeded in causing nominal believers to accept the idea that the kingdom of Christ did not have to wait for Christ's return, but could be set up to function through a great church-state system.

Satan had used this same foil in one of the temptations he presented to Jesus. He told the Master that if he would fall down

and worship him, he would give him all the kingdoms of this world. (Matt.4:8-10) Jesus met this temptation in the proper manner, by quoting a Scripture: "It is written, Thou shalt worship the LORD thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."—Luke 4:10; Deut. 6:13

While Satan failed in this attempt to lure our Master, he did succeed later, with some of Jesus' professed followers. They saw the glamour of power and authority among men; and they sensed the enticement of high-sounding titles. So they gave up waiting for Christ to return to establish his kingdom, and undertook to do it themselves. What they reared up in their grasp for power, they called Christendom—Christ's kingdom.

The fact that in their version of Christ's kingdom there was almost continuous war, persecution, inquisitions, and thousands of tortures and murders, sickness and death, evidently did not seem strange or contrary to Christ's true kingdom as presented to us in the Word of God. It seemed to count for little or nothing in their claims to kingdom authority. While real evidences of Christ's true kingdom having been established were nonexistent, they chose to ignore the facts. They persisted in these errors, encouraged to do so by Satan himself.

However, there are some points which at least certain individuals seem to have difficulty accepting. In Revelation 20:4,6 the length of Christ's kingdom is given. It was to be a thousand years long. The claim was made that their Christendom was presently enjoying this millennial kingdom. This was puzzling to some. A few realized that according to the promises of the Bible, the millennium would accomplish the restoration of the dead to life, and no dead were being resurrected. By tampering with the Word of God and inducing a copyist to insert the interpolation, "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished," the matter was taken care of so no one would need to look for the resurrection at that time. This was, of course, another of Satan's ploys.

The substitution of Christendom for the true messianic kingdom, in addition to reflecting a flagrant disregard for the teachings of the Word of God, also destroyed the hope of God's people who were looking forward to the reality of the kingdom of promise. Once the church-state systems of Europe were established, the preaching of the Second Advent of Christ to establish the kingdom of heaven nearly ceased completely. Thus, with this one master stroke, Satan snatched from the hearts of believers the great kingdom theme of the Bible.

The Bible teaches, however, that the followers of the Master would look to each other for mutual help in their study of the Word. The LORD has placed various servants in his church such as pastors, teachers, and evangelists. (Eph. 4:11) And he expects all of us to help one another as much as we can to be faithful to the LORD and the truth. But in following this arrangement we should keep in mind that the Bible itself is the final word of authority. Even seemingly reasonable conclusions should be rejected unless they are in harmony with the plain statements of the inspired Word of God.

Satan's Useful Tool—Discouragement

One of Satan's favorite tools is discouragement. All Christians face discouragement at times in their life. Even the Apostle Paul had battles against despondency. He spoke of one of his infirmities, labeling it "messenger of Satan to buffet" him. (II Cor. 12:7) Just what his problem might have been is not absolutely certain, but the important thing is that Paul recognized it was Satan who was making use of it to discourage him. Three times the apostle asked the LORD to remove this "thorn in the flesh." The LORD replied, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."—vs. 9

Satan was not successful in discouraging Paul. The apostle testified, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take

pleasures in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."—vs. 9

Our theme text, I Peter 5:8,9, is related to this method of attack by Satan. Peter said, he goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. We are urged to resist him steadfastly in the faith, knowing that the LORD tests all his people in the same manner as he tested his only begotten Son. Every one of the LORD's children has afflictions of one sort or another. They take many different forms: illness, death in the family, economic reverses, misunderstandings, and suffering for preaching the truth. Often Satan endeavors to convince us that if we were truly the LORD's people we would not have these trials. By this insidious method he hopes to instill a fear that perhaps we are not sufficiently faithful to the LORD—that, because of this, he has withdrawn his favor and protection from us.

Many scriptures reveal the fact that the followers of the Master would be a sacrificing and suffering people. Our defense against this sort of attack on the part of Satan is reinforced by reminding ourselves of the countless assurances that the LORD will protect us from the trials and difficulties which are too difficult for us to bear, while we continue to endure the same trials as experienced by mankind in general. The proper Christian attitude as we endure, is to cast all our care upon the LORD, knowing that he does care for us, not according to the flesh, but as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Other Tools of Satan

James wrote, "Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you." (James 4:5-7) Here James indicates that another of Satan's methods of attack is to

engender pride or ambition in the hearts of the LORD's people. We are to resist these temptations by humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God, knowing that our promised exaltation will come in due time. Genuine promotion that is in harmony with the divine will comes from God, and is not self-planned or initiated. When we realize how little we are, and how our strength is only from the LORD, it is easy to remain humble, and to thwart Satan's assault.

We could properly say that Satan is directly or indirectly associated with all influences which tend to divert the LORD's people from their course of true faithfulness in serving him. We often speak of our enemies as being the world, the flesh, and the Devil, but Satan is at the head of this list! He works to our disadvantage as new creatures *through* the world and *through* our fallen flesh. How important it is, therefore, that we keep alert in order to detect his every approach, and be prepared to resist him through following the instructions and examples given in the Word of God. And we will receive strength, through prayer, to follow in the footsteps of our Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, the righteous.

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Shortly after the fall, God said to Satan: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Gen. 3:15) Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees of his day, "Ye are of your father the Devil." (John 8:44) Jesus could read their hearts, and recognize that they were part of the 'serpent's seed'. The 'seed of the woman' is Christ and his faithful followers. The foretold enmity of the 'seed of the serpent' against the 'seed of the woman' was manifested in the bitter persecution inflicted upon Jesus by the religious rulers of his day, and this enmity has continued against his followers with varying degrees of intensity ever since.

However, we know that through it all, the seed of promise will be victorious; it shall destroy the serpent by crushing its head. We are not ignorant of his devices. (II Cor. 2:11) We know that if we follow the LORD's instructions in our good fight of faith, relying always on him to guide and strengthen us, we will neither be overcome nor foiled by the wiles of the Devil. We have the promise of ultimate victory! Paul encouraged us with these words: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."—Rom. 16:20

When this occurs, it will be the promised bruising of the head of the serpent. Although Paul used the word 'shortly' nearly two thousand years ago, the serpent's head has not yet been bruised. Satan still goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour! He continues to appear as an angel of light to deceive and mislead! To resist him we must still have on the whole armor of God—all the great fundamental doctrines of the divine plan of the ages. But God is one who plans for the everlasting ages, and these years, though many by our measure, are 'short' as compared to the eternity of Satan's demise.

We have the plain, understandable teachings of the Gospel of Christ which are "the power of God unto salvation." (Rom. 1:16) Let us study these guides, binding them upon our hearts.

And first, let us make sure that our understanding of these truths is in harmony with the Bible, God's Word, and in agreement with the facts with which we are surrounded. Let us not be deluded like those in the Dark Ages who accepted the union of church and state as the established kingdom of Christ. They forgot the promise that in the kingdom of Christ, war, sickness, evil, pain, tears, and death, will be completely eradicated. They forgot that inquisitions, or bitter persecutions of fellow Christians were incompatible with God's portrait of the messianic kingdom. The wonderful kingdom described in the Scriptures still lies in the future.—Rev. 21:1-7; Isa. 2:2-4

If we continue to prove faithful even unto death as did our Master and Lord Jesus—by the power of our Heavenly Father—we, too, will have the privilege of bruising Satan 'shortly' under our feet. We will have the privilege of putting the great adversary of our Heavenly Father—of our Lord Jesus, of the church, of the angels, and of the entire world of mankind—out of existence forever!—Eph. 1:10 □

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

June 2—"I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified."—1 Corinthians 2:2 (Z. '95-116 Hymn 281)

June 9—"In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—John 16:33 (Z. '95-207 Hymn 313)

June 16—"No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."—Hebrews 12:11 (Z. '96-44 Hymn 291)

June 23—"He that receiveth seed into the good ground is he that heareth the Word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."—Matthew 13:23 (Z. '96-99 Hymn 87)

June 30—"In the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers, . . . Gather the wheat into my barn."—Matthew 13:30 (Z. '00-234 Hymn 261)

Encouraging Letters

Helped by Our Program

Dear Sir: I watch your television program every Sunday. I lost a sister who was younger than I, and I just can't get over it. Your program helped me a lot, but I wish the program was on for an hour. Please send me

the booklet, "Life after Death."

I would appreciate all the information I can get on this subject. Thank you very much. God bless you all.—PA

"Hope" Came in the Mail

Dear Sir or Madam: Could you please send me a little booklet

Have you
heard?

**Frank
and
Ernest**

discuss these interesting
subjects, Sundays, on

WSHF-1290

1:30 p.m.

JUNE:

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Kingdom**

12-Judgment Day

Favors for Sinners

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JUNE SPECIAL

On Sunday, June 19th, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss a topic of interest to many. Attractive circulars are available for announcing this program, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. They are free. Address your request to:

The Dawn

East Rutherford, NJ 07073

called "God and Reason." I have just lost my husband a month ago and read a booklet I received through the mail called "Hope," and I loved reading it. Thank you very much. Sincerely.—*Canada*

Needs Help to Understand

Dawn Bible Students : I would like to request your booklet, "God and Reason" I received the booklet "Hope," and it did help me understand a little. You see, I just lost my nineteen-year-old son, and this has been a very hard time for me. I am really having trouble understanding and accepting why this happened to a child so young. His death was sudden, and due to illness. Maybe your booklet can help me. Thank you. Sincerely.—*OH*

Intrigued by Booklet

The Dawn: Today I received the booklet I sent for, "Armageddon, then World Peace." I started to read and was intrigued. I finished it and felt a great peace and happiness. Please send me the booklets listed and please enclose a new order blank. I want to learn more. Thank you.—*CA*

Program Is "Great!"

Dear Friends: Will you please send me your booklet, "God and Reason." Your program is great. I have been watching this program on Sunday mornings. I read the Bible, and your words are exactly as they are in the Bible. I thank you.—*MA*

Clearer Spiritual Vision

Dear Christian Friends: Grace, peace, and love to all of you in Jesus' precious name! For some time now I have received The Dawn magazine, and among all the publications I receive it is the one I wait for each month with anxiety. It has given me a clear picture of true Christianity—something, you'll have to agree, that is extremely rare today.

Reading The Dawn and the Studies in the Scriptures series along with the Scriptures themselves, has enabled me to understand and appreciate the love and blessings and opportunities showered upon us daily by our Heavenly Father through the merits of his beloved Son.

Day by day my spiritual vi-

sion becomes clearer, and I pray: "Our Holy Heavenly Father, great, great LORD God Jehovah, whose home is in heaven, holy is your precious name! When you establish your kingdom here on earth, then your will will be done here on earth just as it is now in your home in heaven. Please give us this day our daily bread, both spiritual bread and material bread, as much as you think we need. Please forgive all our debts and trespasses, as we forgive all those who trespass against us, and who owe us. And please lead us not into any temptation, but deliver us from all evil. For thine only is the kingdom, thine only is all power, thine only is all glory and honor and praise and excellence and majesty, now and forever. Amen."

I pray the LORD's full blessing will continue to prosper your work, and I am so glad to have a small part in it. Respectfully, the least of his servants.—*WI*

"Commends" the Work

Dawn Bible Students: Since

the time I ordered your information through **Parade** magazine, I have accepted Jesus Christ into my life. This is the reason I am now ordering all the publications you offer. I would like to commend you for your work, and I don't see how you charge so little. Keep up the good work. I am really looking forward to receiving the literature and books you offer. Thank you so much.—*TN*

Programs Inspirational

Gentlemen: Pursuant to your offer in recent TV programs, please send me the booklets, "Jesus, the World's Savior," and "Hope beyond the Grave." Your presentations are inspirational and thought-provoking. Keep up the good work. God bless you. Respectfully.—*GA*

Knew Brother Russell

Dear Friends: I am almost 92 years old, and served with Brother Russell in 1916 when he finished his earthly journey. I was a young printer, and set in type and printed his weekly sermons which were sent out to various publications. May God's love keep you all faithful to the end.—*MD* □

Speakers' Appointments

These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn or by classes associated with the pilgrim services. Their visits are furnished free upon request whenever possible. Write to Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, NJ 07073

M. Balko, Sr.		E.K. Penrose, Cont'd	
Portland, OR	June 1	Kansas City, MO	14
Vancouver, B.C.	3	Tyler, TX	16
Seattle, WA	5	Victorville, CA	20
Spokane, WA	7	Upper Lake, CA	22
Kalispell, MT	8	San Francisco, CA	24
Sturgis, Sask., Conv.	11,12	Sacramento, CA	26
Winnipeg, Man.	15	Victorville, CA	28
Moorhead, MN	16		
Minneapolis, MN	17	L.B. Post	
Milwaukee, WI	19	New London, CT	June 19
Gary, IN	20	Sacramento, CA	28
Grand Rapids, MI	21	Chico, CA	29
Detroit, MI	22	Upper Lake, CA	30
W. Bilcharz		J. Wozniak	
Portland, OR, Conv.	June 24-27	Chicago, IL	June 1-3
F. Nemesh		Winnipeg, Man.	4-6
Portland, OR, Conv.	June 24-27	Broadview, Sask.	7
G. Passios		Porcupine Plains, Sask.	8
Middletown, NY	June 25	Prince Albert, Sask.	9
T. Passios		Sturgis, Sask., Conv.	10-13
London, Ont.	June 12	Vancouver, B.C.	14-16
E.K. Penrose		Seattle, WA	17-19
St. Louis, MO	June 13	Portland, OR	20-27

Obituaries

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

Sister Deelight Caudle, Modesto, CA—April 10. Age, 75.

Sister Jean Livermore, Arad, Israel—April 13. Age, 71.

Brother Henry DeKoyer, Marmora, NJ—April 17. Age, 84.

Conventions

These conventions are listed at the request of the individual classes who are sponsoring the gatherings.

WATERBURY, CT, June 5—
YWCA Building, 80 Prospect St.
Contact: Venice Tsimonis, P.O. Box
1494, Waterbury 06720

ALLENTOWN, PA—June 10-12—
Moravian College, Bethlehem.
Contact: Margaret Young, P.O. Box
1672, Allentown 18105

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN, June 10-12—
Echo Grove Conference Center, Lakeville. Contact: Norm Zendler, 20 Devonshire, Pleasant Ridge 48069 by May 1st.
Phone: (313) 399-8843

STURGIS, SASK., June 11, 12—
Sturgis Legion Hall. Contact: Connie Jakubowski, Box 157, Stenen SOA 3XO or Doris Karutsky, Box 625 Sturgis SOA 4AO
Phones: (306) 548-4665; 548-2872

MARSHFIELD, WI, June 18, 19—
Agricultural Research Station, 8396 Yellowstone Drive. Contact: Sister Maria Kuehmichel, or Sister Starr Carpenter, 8775 Wolff Lane, 54449
Phones: (715) 387-8004 or 676-2298 after 5 p.m.

CINCINNATI, OH, June 19—
At the Harp's Home, 2609 Merrittview Lane. Phone: (513) 825-4112

PORTLAND, OR, June 24-27—
Collins Retreat Center, Route #211 (between Sandy and Eagle Creek). Contact: Dawn Krupa, P.O. Box 204, Gresham 97030

CHICAGO, IL, June 26—
Elmhurst Masonic Temple, York and Arthur Streets, Elmhurst. Contact: Tom Ruggirello, 720 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Roselle, IL 60172
Phone: (312) 351-5606

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, Dalfsen, Holland, July 9-15—
DeBron Conference Center. Write: International Convention of Bible Students, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272
Phone: (213) 454-5248

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, Chattanooga, Tennessee, July 23-28. Please note new location and new dates. Convention program in this issue.

DENVER, CO, August 12-14—
Viscount Hotel, 200 W. 48th Avenue, Denver. Contact: Mrs. Marcia Kuehmichel, 10201 Riverdale Rd, #53, Thornton, CO 80229. Cutoff date for special room rates, July 20th.

Phone: (303) 450-0582

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in!
—Psalm 24:7
