

The DAWN

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GREECE: He Haravgi (The Dawn), Afxediou 81 Ano Ilisia, GR 15771 Athens

ITALY: Aurora, Via S. Leonardo 21, Ottaviano 80044, Napoli

NEW ZEALAND: B. Hanley, RD 2, Takapau, Central Hawks Bay

SOUTH AMERICA: El Alba, Calle Almirante Brown 674, Monte Grande 1842, Buenos Aires, Argentina

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SPAIN: El Alba, Via S. Leonardo 21, Ottaviano 80044 Napoli, Italy

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ZIONISM IN PROPHECY

“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them.”—Jeremiah 16:14-16

AS THE YEAR 1998 comes to a close, we are reminded that the nation of Israel observed its 50th anniversary in May. There is no doubt that the creation of Israel’s state was a great miracle and is so described in an earlier writing in the “Jerusalem Report” from which we quote:

“One hundred years ago, there were approximately 11 million Jews in the world, three-quarters of them in Eastern Europe. For the most part poverty-stricken, many left for Western countries. Few went to Palestine. Expression of Jewish creative

and intellectual genius was found almost exclusively in the religious study halls, but most yeshivot distanced themselves from Zionism. Yiddish was the dominant language of European Jews, Tel Aviv didn't exist and Palestine was a barren backwater of the Ottoman Empire.

“Today, with 4.5 million Jews, Israel boasts the world's second-largest Jewish population, after the U.S. Already half of the world's 3 million Jewish children and youth live there. The country's standard of living is on a par with that of any Western state, and it is a high-tech and agricultural superpower. Ancient Hebrew has been transformed into a modern vernacular. Students in many of Israel's yeshivot are fiercely and unabashedly patriotic. Tel Aviv is a thriving metropolis that “never sleeps.” Many of Israel's deserts are green.”

GOD'S MIRACLES

Few of those who were involved in this miracle realized that they were witnessing a miracle directed by God's power, the Jehovah of the Old Testament. The first such miracle performed by God for Israel was in delivering them out of slavery in Egypt. He also led them to the land which he had promised to Abraham. (Num. 32:11) There were many glorious years that followed, but time and again Israel fell into idolatry and had to be punished. Their captivity in Babylon lasted 70 years. When the opportunity arose to return to their land, all did not go. Those that did return became reestablished in this land but they were under Gentile domination. When Rome was the universal empire in a succession of three preceding kingdoms (Dan. 2:38-44), the Jewish nation caused so much trouble in trying to throw off the Roman yoke that the

Roman General Titus was sent to Judea to suppress them. His campaign was so devastating that they were scattered all over the world.

Any other nation in being dispersed among Gentile kingdoms would have lost its identity. However, the people of Israel had to fight constantly against assimilation which was described by the new chairman of the World Zionist Organization as an enemy, saying, "an enemy with no face, no leadership, no ideology, no organization, and no resources, is claiming a large number of our brothers and sisters throughout the world." Therefore, the return of such a large number of people who had not lost their identity is a miracle that could only be accomplished by the power of God.

ISRAEL TODAY

Today, as a nation, Israel is trying to establish peace with the Palestinians of the PLO. Outside pressures are being brought to bear on Israel to return lands acquired when they were victors in various wars initiated by Arab nations. There is a strong sentiment in Israel not to do this. Peace talks that were started five years ago in Oslo, Norway, known as the Oslo Accords, have stalled. The agreement arising from the Oslo Accords for Palestinian autonomy was signed by both parties September 13, 1993 in Washington. After Netanyahu became prime minister, West Bank talks have not been held since March, 1997.

Meanwhile, the PLO is having its own internal problems. A prominent and capable female minister of Arafat's cabinet, Haman Ashrawl, who has been active in the peace process since the Madrid talks in 1991, resigned because Yasir Arafat failed

to tackle much needed reforms. These reforms were to deal with allegations of government corruption by ministers in the cabinet. These ministers were not removed. Instead they were reassigned. Many ministers who were not touched by the legislative probe of corruption were transferred to lesser posts and some resigned. The peace process in Israel is going nowhere.

ANNIVERSARY OF ZIONISM

The year before, 1997, Israel observed the 100th anniversary of Zionism. Normally when Zionism is mentioned we tend to think of Theodore Herzl who invited nations with large Jewish populations to send representatives to the first Zionist Congress held in 1897 in Basel, Switzerland. There the World Zionist Organization was founded. This, however, was not the beginning of the Zionist movement and the work that the 'fishers' were to do. Bible Student chronology interprets the wonderful prophecy of Isaiah 40:2, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins," as applying before the work done by Herzl in setting up an official worldwide Zionist organization. The Hebrew word, *Kephel*, rendered "double" in this text refers to folding in two (like a sheet of paper), to make a duplicate. The first half was when Israel had more blessings than punishments, and the latter half is when she suffered for her sins and had more punishments than blessings. The first period was from Jacob's death in 1812 BC to AD 33, when they were rejected by Jesus. The second period dates from our Lord's death in AD 33 to 1878 (1845 years later). The year 1878 marked the time

when the Berlin Congress of Nations was held to revise the treaty of San Stefano. Among the many revisions, there was a provision made for minority groups respecting their rights. Both Armenians living in Turkey and Jews in Palestine under the Ottoman Empire benefited.

In celebrating 100 years of Zionism, the Jerusalem Report journal had a section on those who set the stage for Israel's rebirth. Brief biographies and accomplishments were presented of several Jews. These were:

MOSES HESS (1812-1875)

In 1872 Hess published, "Rome and Jerusalem, the Last National Problem," in which he recognized that Jews are not only a religion but a nation. He argued that this entitled them to self-determination. He proposed the establishment of a Jewish socialist commonwealth in Palestine. He also called for the creation of two Arab national states in Syria and Egypt, alongside the Jewish national home. His ideas inspired the socialist wing of the Zionist movement.

LEO PINSKER (1821-1891)

As a medical doctor and Russian Jew, who was in favor of assimilation, he became an ardent Zionist because of the Russian pogroms in 1881. He wrote a pamphlet entitled, "Auto-emancipation—A Warning of a Russian Jew to His Brethren" in 1882. He toured the capitals of Europe, urging prominent Jewish leaders to provide practical assistance in the resettlement of the Jews. After meeting with Baron Edmond de Rothschild, Pinsker obtained financial assistance for the establishment of six Jewish colonies in Palestine. (Editor's Note: This was the beginning of a remarkable fulfillment of Jeremiah

32:15 and 44. Jeremiah was told by God to buy his uncle's son's land, pay the money, and file the deed away when invasion to take the land by the Babylonians was imminent. These prophecies refer to our day and say, "For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land. . . . Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.")

TZVI HIRSCH KALISCHER (1795-1874)

A rabbi, he believed that the land of Palestine should be prepared to receive the Messiah, and urged many Jews to start the process. He based his conclusions on readings of the Torah. He approached philanthropists to back agricultural projects in Palestine, ultimately convincing the French Jewish Alliance Israelite Universelle to lease 60 acres of land outside of Jaffa. There he initiated the establishment of the first agricultural school in Israel and inspired the founding of several settlement societies.

JUDAH SOLOMON HAI ALKAIAL (1798-1878)

Judah was another rabbi who believed that 1840 would usher in Messianic redemption. He called upon fellow Jews to give assistance to residents of the land of Israel, and urged Diaspora Jews to move there, as he had done in 1874.

ELIEZER BEN-YEHUDA (1857-1922)

The dispersed Jews had adopted many languages such as Yiddish, Arabic, Ladino, German,

and Russian, and others throughout the world. Ben-Yehuda felt that nationalism was impossible without a national language, and set out to transform ancient Hebrew from a language of prayer into a modern vernacular and to make it a national language. He came to Palestine with his family in 1881 promoting the use of Hebrew in daily life. He labored long to complete a comprehensive dictionary of the Hebrew language.

ASHER TZVI GINSBERG (1856-1927)

Asher Ginsberg is better known by his pen name, Ahad Ha'am. He was interested in the proper approach to promote Zionism and preached that national revival would be undermined if it severed itself from the past and from traditional values, and that this revival had to be preceded by the spiritual and cultural regeneration of the Jewish people. He moved to Israel 5 years before he died.

ABRAHAM ISAAC HACOCHAN KOOK (1864-1935)

Abraham Kook was a well-respected rabbi. He was unabashedly Zionist and outspoken about the right of the Jewish people to Palestine. All rabbis in Israel, even though orthodox, were not Zionists, but Rabbi Kook was. In 1921 he became the chief rabbi of Israel. He believed that the return of Jews to the land of Israel was the beginning of Redemption.

IMPORTANT EVENTS

These examples show how 'fishers' were used by the LORD before the Zionist movement was started in 1897. The important events spanning this 100 years of Zionism were listed by the Jerusalem Report publication as follows:

1897 First Zionist Congress: World Zionist Organization founded.

1898 Jewish Colonial Trust (Anglo-Israel Bank) founded to finance settlements.

1901 Jewish National Fund established.

1903 Kishnev pogroms. Uganda plan turned down.

1904 Herzl dies. Hebrew language council formed. Second Allyah (Russia and Poland).

1909 Tel Aviv founded. Also first Kibbutz.

1914 World War I begins.

1915 Trumpeldor establishes Zion Mule Corps.

1917 Balfour declaration.

1918 War ends. British mandate for Palestine begins.

1919 Start of third Allyah (Russian).

1920 Death of Trumpeldor.

1924 Start of fourth Allyah (Polish).

1925 Hebrew University established in Jerusalem.

1929 Jewish Agency established. Arab riots. British limit immigration.

1933 Hitler becomes German chancellor. Fifth Allyah (German).

1936 Start of instant settlement movement.

1937 Peel Commission recommends partition of Palestine. Jews accept and Arabs reject the proposal.

1939 Outbreak of World War II. British limit immigration more.

1941 Jewish commando unit formed.

1945 War ends with one-third of world Jewry destroyed.

1946 Irgun bombs British HQ in King David Hotel. Zionist leaders rounded up.

1947 UN votes to partition Palestine.

1948 British mandate ends on May 15. Jerusalem is divided. Five Arab states attack.

1949 Armistice reached in January. Ben Gurion declares Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Knesset established. Yemenite Jews arrive.

1950 Law of Return passed by Knesset.

1951 Iraqi Jews arrive.

1956 Sinai campaign.

1964 PLO formed.

1966 Nobel prize in literature to S. Y. Agnon.

1967 Six-day war. Jerusalem reunited.

1969 Golda Meir becomes prime minister. War of Attrition through 1971.

1973 Yom Kippur war. 1700 Israelis die.

1975 UN General Assembly debates value of Zionism and calls it racism.

1977 Menachem Begin becomes premier and meets with Anwar-as Sadat in Jerusalem.

1978 Begin and Sadat share Nobel peace prize.

1979 Israel-Egypt peace treaty signed.

1982 Israel completes pullout from Sinai, invades Lebanon.

1985 End of Ethiopian rescue.

1989 Wave of immigration from Soviet Union begins.

1991 Gulf War. More Ethiopian Jews to Israel. Madrid Peace Conference.

1992 Rabin becomes prime minister second time.

1993 Signing of Israel-Palestinian Declaration of Principles.

1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty signed.

1995 Assassination of Rabin.

1996 Benjamin Netanyahu elected prime minister. Arabs initiate suicide bombings in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED

There are many prophecies in God's Word that foretold Israel's development as a nation again, notably Ezekiel, chapter 37. The gradual development of various stages in this restoration are illustrated by bones coming together, followed by sinews and flesh, skin, and finally breath. As Ezekiel says, "these bones are the whole house of Israel."—Ezek. 37:11

In the prior chapter God says, "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land." (Ezek. 36:24) Also mentioned in this prophecy is the complete renovation of the desolate land that will be a witness to all other nations and they "shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it." (vs. 36) In Jeremiah, chapter 16, preceding the words of our text, God says, "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them:

and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.”—Jer. 16:14,15

There is no doubt that the nation of Israel is here to stay. In this restoration that has been progressing in our time the words of the prophet Amos describe what is happening very well when he said, “I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, said the LORD thy God.”—Amos 9:14,15 ■

PRAYER CHANGES THINGS

It is true that prayer changes our heart attitude toward God and toward the experiences which he permits to come into our lives. This, indeed, is one of the great blessings of prayer. However, prayer does not change the will of God for his people. This is the reason that sometimes our prayers go unanswered. James wrote, “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts”—or pleasures.—James 4:3

Jesus said, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” (John 15:7) Some have taken this promise to indicate that we are at liberty to pray for anything our hearts may desire, but this is true only if we abide in Christ and his words abide in us. This makes a big difference, for if we meet these conditions the things we ask for will be limited to what we have learned the LORD wants us to have, for if his words are abiding in us, we will be guided by them, even in our praying.

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

DECEMBER 3—"Because thou hast kept the Word of my [the risen Lord's] patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."—Revelation 3:10 (Z.'01-118 Hymn 310)

DECEMBER 10—"Them that honor me [Jehovah], I will honor."—I Samuel 2:30 (Z.'01-318 Hymn 210)

DECEMBER 17—"Beloved, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Philippians 2:12,13 (Z.'97-147 Hymn 114)

DECEMBER 24—"Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matthew 1:21 (Z.'00-8 Hymn 16)

DECEMBER 31—"What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD, now, in the presence of all his people."—Psalm 116:12-14 (Z.'99-286 Hymn 336)

For 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, Counsellor, 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 for ever.—Isaiah 9:6,7

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS
LESSON FOR DECEMBER 6

WHO IS JESUS TO YOU?

KEY VERSE: *“Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*
—*Matthew 16:16*

SELECTED SCRIPTURES: *Hebrews 1:1-4; Matthew 16:13-23*

THE EARLY DISCIPLES believed that Jesus was the Messiah and a very good man. Therefore, God would not allow any disaster to befall him. It seemed contradictory that Jesus had predicted death for himself.

When asked by Jesus, “Whom say ye that I am?” the Apostle Peter said, “Thou art the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the Living God!” (Matt. 16:15,16) Peter and the others thought, How could God allow any harm to come to him? They concluded that those things he had said must be figures of speech, such as when he said, You must eat my flesh and drink my

blood. (John 6:53) When he said that the Son of Man would be crucified, they thought it was one of his peculiar sayings that they could not understand.

Hence they were quite perturbed and astonished when he was arrested and taken before the Jewish Sanhedrin. Instead of using his powers and his eloquence, he was “led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth.”—Acts 8:32; Isa. 53:7

Later he was taken before Pilate. Anyone who knew Jesus expected him to speak in defense of himself “and

he answered him to never a word.”—Matt. 27:14

The disciples were puzzled by these contrary events. But such a course on our Lord’s part was necessary in the Heavenly Father’s plan, not merely that the Lord Jesus must suffer and then enter into his glory, but necessary for the redemption price to be given for his disciples and all the world, and be placed in the hands of Divine justice.

We see by our Lord’s example that the followers of Jesus are not to be especially protected along fleshly lines; and, if in God’s wisdom it is for our good to bruise and shame us as in the example of our Master, we are to be of good courage. God will strengthen our hearts because we trust and have confidence in him. We also know that he is too wise to err and that there must be a good reason for the permission of trials. We know assuredly that Jesus said, “If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?”—Matt. 10:25

Who is Jesus to us? He is our Redeemer or, as the Scriptures say, “In whom we have redemption through his blood,” (Eph. 1:5-7) and also “the propitiation for our sins.” (I John 2:2) He’s our Master or, as Jesus said, “One is your Master, even Christ.” (Matt. 23:8) He is the ideal we strive for because we are “to be conformed to the image of his Son.” (Rom. 8:29) He is our merciful High Priest, “We have a great high priest, . . . Jesus the Son of God.” (Heb. 4:14,15) He is our King, “I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion” (Ps. 2:6) said God, and in the Book of Revelation, he is described having “on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.” (Rev.19:16) He serves as our Advocate, “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (I John 2:1) and as our Head, “the head of every man is Christ.”—I Cor. 11:3

May we pass our trials as successfully as he did and be considered worthy of sharing his glory. ■

REPORTING THE GOOD NEWS

KEY VERSE: *“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”—I John 1:3*

SELECTED SCRIPTURES: *Luke 1:1-4; I Cor. 15:1-4; I John 1:1-4*

LUKE, THE WRITER of the third Gospel, is called by Paul “the beloved physician” (Col. 4:14) and was Paul’s faithful companion. He relates many things concerning Jesus, tracing his genealogy to Adam and giving us the most detailed account available of his infancy and childhood.

Most of his gospel was obtained by Luke from the apostles and disciples, eyewitnesses of Jesus, or as he wrote “since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us. iust as

they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you.”—Luke 1:1-4 *New Revised Standard Version*

The Apostle Paul, writing to the church at Corinth regarding the resurrection of Christ, reminded them of the good news he had preached to them when he wrote, “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you.

which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." (I Cor. 15:1-4) This was indeed good news for the Corinthians and for us as well as all the world because as Paul wrote, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:22) This will be in God's due time when his kingdom comes as we pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. 6:10

The Apostle John was one who had firsthand experience with Jesus. When reporting to the church, he said: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

... that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."—I John 1:1,3-4

This experience was a great blessing to John, and likewise for us. Fellowship with the Father and his Son is a blessed privilege. It is a joy to be able to tell the good news to all, sharing the knowledge of the kingdom soon to come which will bring blessings to all the families of earth. These words "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." —Acts 3:21

The words are true and faithful, for as the LORD has promised, so shall it be. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isa. 55:11

What a great privilege it is to report his good news to all. ■

BEYOND CHRISTMAS WRAP

KEY VERSE: *"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."*—Luke 2:11

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Luke 2:1-17*

AS WE ENTER this holiday season, and particularly as it relates to the birth of the Savior, Christ the Lord, our minds turn back to that event so long ago in Bethlehem of Judea, to a stable where the babe Jesus had been laid on a bed of straw placed in a manger after birth. This one that had been sent by God to be the Savior of mankind was born in truly humble surroundings. How different this was from what Israel expected as foretold many years before by Isaiah when he prophesied, "For 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, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah 9:6

The Apostle Paul speaks of this newborn king as having been "rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. 8:9) He also tells us how Jesus left the glory which he had with the Father and humbling himself by being "made in the likeness of men" became the Savior of all mankind by being "obedient unto death."—Phil. 2:7,8

Surrounding nations had heard of Israel's hopes, that to them would come a great Savior and

Deliverer, one who would bless them and exalt them in the world. Thus it was that wise men in the east who studied astronomy and astrology saw his star in the east and came to see and to worship him that was born King of the Jews.

Looking beyond the tinsel, lights, gift-giving, and family gatherings of Christmas festivities, how meaningful today is the manger scene. The song which the angels sang at the birth of the Savior, "Glory to God in the highest," was an expression of God's good will, his good purpose, to bring all mankind back to the image and likeness of himself. (Luke 2:14) When in due time this will be accomplished and true peace comes to all the earth, man's disharmony and strife will end.

As the wonderful counselor and Prince of Peace, "he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; . . . nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Indeed, they will have true security. How sure is this promise,

"For the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it."—Micah 4:3-4

We cannot agree that December 25 is the correct date for celebrating the birth of our Lord because other civil events and the observances of Jewish Law requirements by Jesus indicate that it was most likely around early October. Jesus did not ask us to memorialize his birth, but rather, his death. Therefore, on this day so widely observed by the Christian world, we may properly join with all whose hearts are in the attitude of love and appreciation toward God and Jesus.

Let us rejoice at this joyful season of the year and have our hearts filled with appreciation of the Divine love and generosity, which gave us the great gift of Messiah, which shall bless all mankind. As we have freely received, let us freely give, and thus copy our Lord and the Heavenly Father. All of us have the privilege of offering to our fellows the gifts of God's love, by making known to them the riches of his grace. ■

PROMISE OF POWER

KEY VERSE: *“Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”—Luke 24:49*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Luke 24:36-53*

OUR LESSON BEGINS shortly after Jesus had been crucified and resurrected from the dead. Two of his disciples were on the road to Emmaus and were discussing the events of the past several weeks when a stranger approached and asked why they were so sad. Their reply was, “Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?”—Luke 24:18

After they had related to the ‘stranger’ those heart-rendering things that had transpired to their beloved Jesus, he said unto them, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the proph-

ets 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 himself.” (Luke 24:25-27) Later, Jesus appeared to his disciples in Jerusalem and “opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures,” and instructed them, “Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”—Luke 24:45,49

On the Day of Pentecost, this promise of power from on high was fulfilled as the disciples were all gathered in one place. When the evi-

dence of this power was given, "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."—Acts 2:3,4

Ever since that day, all those called and chosen of God receive the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit or 'power from on high'. This power guides them into the understanding of every truth due to be understood and to show them things to come.

When the glorified Jesus met with his disciples before leaving earth to go to heaven, he did not attempt any explanation to their question, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Instead he said, "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 ut-

termost part of the earth."—Acts 1:6-8

There are two different Greek words translated by the English word, 'power', in these verses. The first Greek word is *Exousia* and refers to the Father's authority and jurisdiction as 'power'. The second is *Dunamis* and refers to a force and ability as 'power' or that received by the disciples under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This promised power to know and to understand God's Plan, and all things pertaining to the proclaiming of the Gospel applies to the entire church. God has done this so that we may show forth his glory. As Jesus said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."—John 16:13

When Jesus presented the merit of his sacrifice before Justice, God was faithful in sending his Holy Spirit as a helper to the apostles and disciples and to all his people ever since, even to the end of the age. ■

OUT OF BETHLEHEM

THE GREATEST NEWS item of all time came out of Bethlehem. This item was the brightest of all news items that have ever pierced the darkness of the world's night of sin and death. It was the announcement of the birth of Jesus. No other single event has so changed the course of the world, nor given so many millions of people a ray of hope for the future. For Jesus' followers it has been a bright hope.

The circumstances associated with the birth of Jesus were strange. Destined to be "The Prince of Peace" and the King of the whole earth, yet, he was born under very humble circumstance in the proximity of a stable and laid in a manger. The world as a whole knew little or nothing of what was taking place, yet the coming to earth of the Son of God was announced by an angel, who said to the shepherds on the hills of Judea, "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 Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Then the angel together with a "multitude of the heavenly host," sang "Glory to God in the highest, and

on earth peace, good will toward men.”—Luke 2:10-14

What an introduction this was to the world, and with what authority it was given! It was full of hope, peace and life for all mankind and ‘good tidings of great joy’ because a Savior was born, one who had come to save mankind from sin and its penalty, death. No wonder the angels sang, ‘Glory to God in the highest!’

CONFRONTED WITH DIFFICULTIES

He who was born to be a king was soon confronted with difficulties. His parents were instructed to flee with the young child into Egypt to save him from the wrath of Herod. From the beginning of his short ministry, he was hated and persecuted by the religious leaders of his own people. Finally, he was put to death upon a cross. A few years later, the nation to which Jesus ministered, instead of entering an era of peace as a result of his coming, was destroyed, and the people scattered throughout the earth, and, subsequently, bitterly persecuted.

Meanwhile, many Gentile nations professed to accept Christ and to practice his teachings; but, as it turned out, this was in name only. Instead of promoting peace on earth under the banner of the Prince of Peace, they waged war upon each other in Christ’s name. The bloodiest wars of the Middle Ages were participated in by professed Christian nations; and some of them—such as the “Crusades”—under the banner of the cross.

There has hardly been a decade since the birth of the Prince of Peace that the world, or some part of the world, has not been plagued by war or the

fear of war. Nor has the advancement of so-called civilization in recent centuries materially changed this picture.

But this does not mean that the purpose of Jesus' coming to earth has failed, nor that the accomplishment of that purpose has in any way been delayed. The storm clouds of human passion hovering over the distraught and fear-filled world today are the result of human failure. This failure was foreknown by the LORD, and foretold; and he has permitted it in order that the human race might come to realize its need of looking to him for a way out of its confusion and perplexities.

ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

One of the basic teachings of the Bible is that the 'peace on earth' proclaimed by the angels when Jesus was born is to be realized through the establishment of Christ's kingdom. This great truth was almost completely lost sight of very early in the Christian era, and the view was adopted that Christ's kingdom was to be set up through human efforts. Men thought that whatever God had designed to do for the human race depended upon their efforts, those who would work and fight in the name of Christ. How shortsighted to suppose that the great God of the universe, the Creator of heaven and earth, would depend upon the feeble, imperfect, and misguided efforts of his human servants.

The professed Christian world has done the best it could to set up Christ's kingdom, and the result is what we see throughout the earth today. Failure is emblazoned upon all the monuments reared by human folly and selfishness. But for those who have faith in the promises and prophe-

cies of the Bible, the heart-cheering message is that God will do for the human race what it could not do for itself, and soon is our hope.

THE PROMISES OF GOD

One of the promises of God is found in the prophecy of Isaiah and pertains to the birth of Jesus. "Unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, 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 for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9:6,7

There are two statements in this prophecy of Jesus' birth to which many fail to give proper heed. One is that the government here promised shall be upon 'his' shoulder; and the other, that the 'zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this'. Both of these statements emphasize that the LORD takes the responsibility for the fulfillment of this promise. Christ will 'shoulder' the responsibility for the successful establishment and functioning of his kingdom and the 'zeal' of Jehovah himself, operating through Christ, guarantees the results.

For centuries professed Christians have been trying to set up Christ's kingdom by their own zeal. In devious ways they have endeavored to shoulder the responsibility of Christ's kingdom themselves. In Europe, for example, they united with the State and called the union Christ's kingdom—"Christendom." But this arrangement did not bring peace on

earth. Instead, it fostered wars, cruel and bloody wars. Christianity, so-called, was spread by the sword, followed by the "Holy Inquisition" to force conformity. This was not the 'zeal of the LORD of hosts', but the work of ambitious, power-thirsty zealots whose zeal was contrary to the will and plan of God.

PROPHECIES OF THE KINGDOM

Another prophecy which assures us that the LORD, not man, establishes the messianic kingdom is found in Daniel 2:31-44, where Gentile rulership is depicted, beginning with Babylon, when the Jewish kingdom was overthrown. It concludes with the divisions of the Roman Empire as they existed in Europe prior to the First World War, and referred to in the prophecy as 'these kings'. The prophecy points to our day and says, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom."

Christ's kingdom is not set up by human intrigue and diplomacy. Nor will it function through balances of power brought about by the threat of destruction in the use of nuclear weapons. Instead, it is established by direct intervention in the affairs of men, and in spite of all the misguided efforts prompted by human selfishness.

In Micah's prophecy, we are given a similar assurance. We quote: "In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths:

for the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.”—Mic. 4:1-4

THE “ONE WHOSE RIGHT IT IS”

Beginning with David, the kings of Israel ruled as the representatives of God, with the headquarters of the government in mount Zion at Jerusalem. (I Chron. 29:23) To the people of Israel, therefore, the ‘mountain of the house of the LORD’ would readily be understood as meaning the kingdom of the LORD, functioning through a ruling house of Divine appointment. The ruling house of David was typical of this foretold ‘mountain of the house of the LORD’. God’s typical ruling house ceased to function with the overthrown of Judah’s last king, Zedekiah. A prophecy then given declared that it would be no more “until he come whose right it is.”—Ezek. 21:25-27

This one ‘whose right it is’ was found as a babe in a manger at Bethlehem. In the annunciation to Mary, the angel Gabriel said, “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 for

ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”—
Luke 1:30-33

This is in keeping with the prophecy of Isaiah, already quoted, in which we are told that Jesus would sit upon the throne of David, ‘to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever’. Thus it is that Jesus became the head of God’s antitypical ruling house. And then, beginning with his first advent, there began the selection and preparation of a company called from the world of mankind to be ‘joint-heirs’ with him in this ruling house. Through the begetting and birth of the Spirit, these are made members of the Divine family with Jesus.

THE ROYAL HOUSE OF SONS

For a time the opportunity of becoming a part of this royal house of sons was limited to the natural descendants of Abraham. These were the typical people of God to whom the promises had been made, and it was among these that Jesus conducted his ministry. “As many as received him,” we read, “to them gave he power to become the sons of God.” (John 1:11,12) But not a sufficient number of the Jewish nation responded to this call, so later, through the Gospel, the invitation was extended to Gentiles. The work of gathering and preparing these to live and reign with Christ has continued throughout the age. As each one, through trial, has proved worthy, he has fallen asleep in death to be awakened at the close of the age in the “first resurrection” to live and reign with Christ a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4,5) Just as Jesus was raised from the dead by the mighty power of God at the beginning of the age, so his joint-heirs are resurrected at

the close, or harvest of the age, joining him to make up the spiritual and all powerful 'mountain of the house of the LORD' which is established in the 'top of the mountains', that is, dominating all the affairs of men.

GOD'S MIGHTY POWER

One reason men have misunderstood God's plan is that they have failed to take into consideration his mighty power. Thinking that he has been limited to what impotent humans are able to accomplish in his name, it appears that the Divine plan has failed. But, on the contrary, God is abundantly able to accomplish his purposes despite the efforts of men and devils to hinder.

A good example of this is in the case of Jesus. He was born to be a king and to sit upon the throne of his father, David. The religious rulers of his day hated him, and finally succeeded in having him put to death, one of the charges against him being that he claimed to be a king. So they killed the King; but this did not thwart the Divine purpose centered in him. Indeed, it was necessary that Jesus die in order to redeem the world from death; and God raised him from the dead.

The significance of this, as it relates to God's promises pertaining to the ruling house of David, is brought to our attention by the Apostle Paul in a sermon preached at Antioch. We quote, "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 also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And 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.”—Acts 13:32-34; Isa. 55:3

Just as it was ‘good tidings’ that he who was to sit on the throne of David forever had been born, it was also glad tidings that, when his enemies put him to death thus serving as cohorts of Satan in his efforts to thwart the Divine plan, God raised this antitypical David from the dead. Can we doubt the triumph of the Divine plan for the salvation and peace of the human race when power like this can be utilized to assure its successful conclusion?

It is by the exercise of such almighty power that Divine authority is established in the earth. And when, in the LORD’s own way, the fact is made known to the nations that God’s kingdom has been established, the people will begin to “flow unto it.” “Many people shall go and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob.”—Isa. 2:2,3

THE KINGDOM A REALITY

When the people and nations of the world take this attitude, they will want to be taught the LORD’s ways; and when they do, they will no longer learn war nor practice the arts of war. All the time and resources now being devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war will be directed toward peaceful ends. And then there will be security for all, as symbolized by the thought of dwelling under the ‘vine’ and the ‘fig tree’.

Then none ‘shall make them afraid’. Today, the world is filled with fear. The nations are afraid of one another. There is fear of war with nuclear weapons, germ and chemical weapons, and ballistic mis-

siles. There is no genuine peace and security anywhere. It is as though the angels' message of 'peace on earth' had never been proclaimed. This is because we are living at the end of the age when, as foretold by the prophets, Satan's empire is being overthrown by a "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21,22

To those not enlightened by the prophecies of the Bible concerning the meaning of the present 'distress of nations', it appears as though the angelic message of "peace on earth" is composed of empty words. This has led to an incorrect translation of the angels' words. Instead of 'peace on earth, and good will toward men', as it is correctly rendered in the King James Version, it is now more frequently quoted as 'peace on earth among men of good will'. The reason that this translation is not correct is because it has always been God's intention and good will toward mankind to send his Son to be man's Redeemer. ■

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.

Brother Gunnar C. Johnson, Coloma, MI—Aug. 11. Age, 89.

Brother Harvey L. Cochran, New Orleans, LA—October 6. Age, 95

Sister Rose Owen, Chatham, Ontario, Canada—October 7. Age, 89.

Sister Estelle Hagensick, Portland, OR—October 18. Age, 94.

Sister Hazel Hicks, Orlando, FL—October 28. Age, 95.

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The listing of Dawn publications, five-cent booklets and ten-cent booklets, usually printed on pages 32 and 33 of *The Dawn* magazine, will be omitted every other month including this month.

Listing of the "*Frank and Ernest*" worldwide radio broadcasts, and of "*The Bible Answers*" TV programs, generally given on pages 34-36, likewise will be omitted every other month including this month.

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CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

THE PLAN OF GOD IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS— PART 18

JACOB PREPARES TO MEET ESAU

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

VERSES 1-5 “And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

“And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God’s host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

“And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

“And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:

“And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.”

Leaving Mount Gilead, Jacob and his company continued their journey toward Canaan, ‘and the angels of God met him’ (11:11). (11:11)

is God's host', the patriarch said. He then named the place of meeting, 'Mahanaim' which means 'two hosts', or 'two camps'. In Joshua 5:14 we read about the LORD's host, and the successor of Moses sees them as an army which the LORD had sent to fight for Israel. This may well be the meaning which Joshua attached to this appearance of heavenly messengers.

The record gives us no information as to the message, if any, that the angels of God delivered to Jacob. The fact that seemingly he at once dispatched messengers to confer with Esau, and to let his brother know of the rich manner in which the LORD had blessed him since he fled from home, might indicate that the LORD's hosts had given him instructions as to the proper method of seeking a reconciliation with his brother.

It had been twenty years since Jacob had fled from the wrath of Esau, yet he had no way of knowing whether or not his brother now felt any differently toward him. Some might reason that Esau's jealousy would be stirred the more upon learning that Jacob had become rich in material things. Either Jacob did not reason this way, or else he was following a strategy given to him by the angels. In any case, later events proved that it was the proper course. It was evidently very reassuring to Esau to learn that Jacob had all the possessions he needed, and that he was not returning to seize his wealth based on the claim that he had purchased the birthright.

VERSES 6-8 "And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men
with him

“Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

“And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.”

The messengers brought back rather an ambiguous report concerning Esau. They had apparently met him and he had told them that he would come and meet Jacob and that he would bring four hundred men with him. As the report was given to Jacob, he had no way of determining whether these men were to be used against him or whether it was Esau's idea of a royal welcome, so he was frightened.

As we have previously noted, Jacob was a timid man. Few of God's servants throughout all the ages have had more evidences of God's favor and protection than were given to him, yet when the least uncertainty arose he usually became fearful. Only a little while before, he had been fearful of Laban. He had just witnessed the wonderful manner in which the LORD rescued him from a precarious situation into which his fears had led him, yet now, although he had just communed with the angels of the LORD, he again became fearful.

Prompted by fear, and thinking to save at least a part of his possessions, he divided the people who were with him, and his flocks, into two companies; the idea being that if Esau attacked one of these, the other group could escape. There were apparently two companies of angels which appeared to Jacob, and they possibly suggested the idea of dividing his own strength in the manner noted

VERSES 9-12 “And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

“I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

“Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.

“And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.”

Jacob prayed earnestly to God, admitting that he feared his brother. His mind doubtless went back to the time when he had to flee from Esau to save his life. The LORD had cooperated with him in this; and in that wonderful ladder dream, assured Jacob that he would go with him and bless him. That promise had been faithfully kept. Now the LORD had indicated to Jacob that he wanted him to return to Canaan and to his brother, but all the intervening years of Divine protection and blessing were not sufficient to assure Jacob that the LORD would be with him in returning even as he had been with him in his flight.

We should not, however, chide Jacob in this. He did trust in the LORD, and this is why he prayed to him so earnestly. Perhaps his fear is impressed upon us simply because the Scriptures openly reveal it. A certain kind of fear is quite proper on the part of all the LORD's people. We should tremble when we think of self and perhaps Jacob's trembling was of

this nature. It is when the LORD's people look to the LORD and depend upon his strength that they are strong, and certainly Jacob earnestly looked to the LORD for guidance and strength.

Prayer, among other things, is the claiming of God's promises and this is what Jacob did. God had directed Jacob to return to his own country and to his own people and had promised that in doing this all would be well with him. And now the patriarch reminded the LORD of this, and laid claim to the promise. He recognized that he was not worthy of being so richly blessed by God, that everything which the LORD had done for him represented Divine mercy and grace, and he told the LORD so. This reveals a proper attitude of heart, and when a servant of God goes to the throne of grace in this attitude, and asks for the fulfillment of the promises God has made to him, he is certain to be heard.

The LORD had said to Jacob, 'I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude'. (vs. 12) This was a promise which Jacob especially appreciated, for it had to do not only with his personal safety, but also with the eternal purpose of God as centered in his covenant with Abraham. This was the main feature of the birthright which Jacob had purchased from Esau, and it was for the protection of his rights under that purchase that he was seeking Divine help.

VERSES 13-23 "And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother;

"Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes. and twenty rams.

“Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals.

“And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

“And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee?

“Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob’s; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us.

“And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him.

“And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me.

“So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company.

“And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok.

“And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.”

Jacob’s sending of presents ahead in order to appease his brother need not be construed as a lack of faith that God would hear and answer his prayer for protection. All of the LORD’s people should work as well as pray. If we pray for heavenly wisdom, we

should search the Scriptures to find it. If we pray for opportunities of service, we should look around us to see what there is that we can do. Jacob had asked the LORD to deliver him from the hand of his brother, so he used the best judgment he possessed in preparing the way for that deliverance.

VERSES 24-32 "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

"And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

"And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

"And he said unto him, What is thy name? and he said, Jacob.

"And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

"And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? and he blessed him there.

"And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

"And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

"Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank."

After making what he considered proper arrangements for appeasing his brother, Jacob, when alone for the night, resumed his communion with the LORD. The account says that a man wrestled with him. This same personality is referred to in Hosea 12:3,4 as an 'angel'. We are to assume then that an angel materialized and appeared to Jacob as a man, a man whom he recognized as being a direct representative of the LORD. This viewpoint was so real to Jacob that he declares he had seen the LORD 'face to face'.—vs. 30

The story of Jacob's wrestling all night with the LORD in prayer is a familiar one, and many false conclusions have been drawn from it as to the purpose and power of prayer. Prayer is the claiming of God's promises, and this is all that Jacob was doing. He was not trying to secure from the LORD something which had not been promised. Prayer is not designed to change the will of God concerning his people.

God had promised to deliver Jacob from the hand of Esau and to see that all went well with him in returning to his own country. Now he was simply seeking an assurance that it would be so. The LORD withheld this assurance from Jacob for a time in order that he might come to appreciate it more keenly when it was given.

Finally the much sought for blessing was given. The angel told Jacob that his name would be changed to Israel, meaning a 'prince with God', or one who had prevailed with God. Jacob understood this to mean that God had honored his request, and that he would be cared for when he went forth to meet Esau. There are other instances in the Scriptures when the names of individuals have been

changed to denote special Divine favor upon them. Simon's name was changed to Peter; and Saul's to Paul.—Mark 3:16; Acts 13:9

The angel that served as the LORD's mouthpiece in connection with Jacob's prayer manifested his humility in not divulging his name when requested by the patriarch. It was better that Jacob remember the experience as one in which he talked with the LORD, and to have learned the name of the angel whom the LORD used could have detracted from this viewpoint. While the LORD uses servants to speak for him, it is always best that they keep themselves out of sight as far as possible so that those served will have their minds and hearts fixed more closely upon the LORD rather than upon those whom he uses. ■



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RECEIVING GRACE IN VAIN

“We then, . . . beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.”—II Cor. 6:1

THE ADMONISHMENT OF the Apostle Paul to the brethren in Corinth was not only for them but for all who would be called to follow Christ during the Gospel Age. This age is a time of grace (favor) for those being called out of this world to follow Christ. The Apostle Paul says, explaining this grace and speaking of those called, “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 3:24) Later Paul emphasizes how we are justified by faith (in the blood of Jesus) and this has led to grace (favor) of having a “hope of the glory of God.” (Rom. 5:1,2) How can we demonstrate to God that we have not received his grace in vain?

“STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED”

There are certain things we must do to be acceptable servants of God. One important requirement is to study his Word in order that we might become increasingly familiar with the glorious simplicities of the truth. Others cannot study for us,

nor can we do their studying for them. We can help one another, but it is essential to prove all things individually, for this is one of the ways in which we work out our own salvation. We must also “study to shew thyself approved unto God.”—II Tim. 2:15

Even in our study of the Bible, it is essential to have the right viewpoint, to be governed by the proper motive. Why do we spend time studying the Bible? Is it merely for the personal satisfaction we obtain by knowing the truth? Is it in order that we might show others how we can dispute? If in any sense self or self-interest is our motive for Bible study, spiritual pride will be the result.

Our chief motive in Bible study should be to know God better through a clearer understanding of his plan. And if this motive is uppermost in our minds, our first thought will be to impart our increasing knowledge of God to others. The better we know God, the more we will want to show forth his praises. And the more of this spirit that rules in our lives, the closer we will be following in the footsteps of Jesus.

Prayer is another necessity in working out our own salvation, but our prayers will not be effective unless they are unselfish. Jesus gave us the example in this also. The first request in the inspired prayer which he gave to his church is one that is calculated to fix our minds on the needs of others, rather than on ourselves—“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10) When we pray for God’s kingdom to come, we are praying for the whole world of mankind. And how appropriate that we should thus pray. We are being trained as coworkers in the Divine plan for the express purpose of blessing the world, and the

LORD would have us keep this unselfish viewpoint in mind, even in our prayers.

WHAT IS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED?

The great present objective of the Christian life is to be made ready for joint-heirship with Jesus in his millennial kingdom. This objective can be realized only through faithfulness in being 'co-workers' in the Divine plan. The principal result, therefore, of all that we do in the service of the LORD is the making of our own calling and election sure. That will be a glorious result, for it will mean glory, honor, and immortality for every individual who thus is victorious in running for the prize.

But there are other results also. The Revelator uses the expression, "His wife hath made herself ready." (Rev. 19:7) No individual Christian will be the bride of Christ. This is a term that applies to the church as a whole. Thus, the expression that the 'wife' or bride has made herself ready suggests the collective service all the members of the "little flock" render for one another. (Luke 12:32) This recalls many scriptures which admonish us to faithfulness in laying down our lives for the brethren. We are to "bear one another's burdens," writes the apostle, "and so fulfil the law of Christ."—Gal. 6:2

We are to serve one another in various ways—by encouraging others with the promises of God; by helping them to a better understanding of the truth; by provoking them to love and to good works; by comforting them in their afflictions; and by our own example of faithfulness in sacrifice. Many of our brethren we do not even know, nor will we ever see them in the flesh, but we can serve these also by our prayers.

THE NEW CREATION

The most stupendous work ever to be accomplished in the whole universe is brought to completion during the Gospel Age, and it is our privilege to participate in it. It is the bringing into being of the New Creation, the church of Christ, Head and body. This work is not accomplished by any one individual alone, not even by Jesus; but every Christian who eventually will be a part of the New Creation will have had a part in it, a part that was rendered faithfully and self-sacrificingly even unto death. With most of us it is difficult to recognize anything that is being accomplished directly as a result of our feeble efforts, but as God views the work as a whole, he sees the need for our part, and blesses us as we perform it faithfully. When the Christian journey ends and we look back upon the Divine work of bringing forth the New Creation, we will be able to see for ourselves how important our meagre efforts in sacrificing were to God.

WHETHER THEY HEAR OR FORBEAR

When Jehovah commissioned the Prophet Ezekiel to deliver a certain message to Israel, he told him that he was to give this message regardless of whether or not they received it—"Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." (Ezek. 2:7) This principle holds true with all of the LORD's people to whom he has given a message to proclaim. It is important to recognize this, else human reasoning may induce us to keep our light under a 'bushel'.

Occasionally we hear of these who undertake to proclaim the kingdom message by the many means available today. If they find little response.

they should not conclude that the time is past for witnessing.

If the LORD's people throughout the age had been influenced by low responses, there would have been very little preaching of the truth; for in most cases the LORD has not rewarded individual faithfulness by granting the privilege of seeing immediate results of sacrifices made in his service. It is a privilege of those who follow in the footsteps of the Master to toil and suffer without knowing that their efforts have accomplished anything except to increase their own joy in the LORD. Each time they tell the wonderful story of God's love it becomes more wonderfully sweet to them. This result is certain to accrue from our faithfulness in bearing witness to the truth, and is one that we need in order to make our own calling and election sure. The efforts in the lives of others are incidental to this main work of grace in our own hearts.

"RECEIVE NOT THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN"

The grace of God to all his people of the Gospel Age is represented principally in the loving provision of justification he has made through Christ and this makes us acceptable coworkers with the Lord. (Rom. 5:18) It is marvelous grace. It means that imperfect, dying creatures such as we were before God called us, are being qualified to be partners with the God of the universe in the great work of bringing forth a New Creation, and also in reconciling the lost world and giving all an opportunity to enjoy everlasting life.

Such grace is beyond our comprehension. It is too wonderful to be adequately explained by mere words. If we say that such grace is as boundless as

the sea, the illustration comes far short of depicting what is involved. The grace of God through Christ is what comes to us through his blood. The blood that justifies and makes our imperfect works acceptable to our Heavenly Father does more than this. His grace makes our imperfect works become his works, and we find ourselves in partnership with the Creator.

No wonder the apostle beseeches us not to receive this grace in vain! But how could this grace of God be received in vain? One word 'unfaithfulness' answers this question. Unfaithfulness may be manifested in any of a number of ways. After entering into a covenant with the LORD by sacrifice and the blood of Christ being applied for us, we may fail to go on and participate in the work of the LORD. We need also to be watchful lest we become presumptuous and endeavor to serve the LORD in our own way, and according to our own imperfect standards.

We may labor faithfully for a while, even for many years, and then become "weary in well doing." (Gal. 6:9) Because of the cunning sophistries of Satan, we might not at first recognize that his erroneous arguments are trying to show that it is no longer appropriate to labor in the LORD's vineyard. These arguments might appeal to us because we have become weary and are looking for excuses to be idle. Let us be on guard along this line, for the wonderful grace of God that has been our portion up to this time might easily have been bestowed upon us in vain, if we fail to go on in the way of sacrifice. But on the other hand, by continuing to be zealous of good works, we prove our faithfulness even unto death.

The grace of God has been bestowed upon us in vain if, in any way, regardless of how zealous we may be to work for the LORD, we do not follow his instructions, or if we fail to avail ourselves of all God's provisions to perform his work in a way that will bring glory to his name. Paul writes, "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed."—II Cor. 6:3

Instead of giving offense, we should endeavor to approve ourselves as the ministers of God—"In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfeigned, by the Word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."—II Cor. 6:4-10

If we are "faithful unto death," we will receive the crown of life (Rev. 2:10), and rejoice forevermore that we had not received the grace of God in vain. ■

"She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. 1:21

BUILT UPON A ROCK

*“Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.”—
Matthew 7:24,25*

THE WORDS OF our text are among the concluding remarks Jesus made in his Sermon on the Mount. Some Christians say that in order to be saved all one needs to know is in the 5th chapter of Matthew, but this is not how Jesus concluded his sermon. He said, rather, ‘Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them’, encouraging all to apply his teachings concerning salvation. The illustration used by Jesus on this occasion is impressive. It is the obeying of his teachings and doing them that he likened to a man building a house upon a rock.

THE SAYINGS OF JESUS

Our Lord’s expression, ‘these sayings of mine’ to which obedience is required in order to succeed

in our Christian walk, start at the beginning of his sermon with the Beatitudes. (Matt. 5:3-12) These emphasize the need for humility of heart, referring to those who are "poor in spirit," who have heartfelt sympathy for the groaning creation. They are directed to those who "mourn" and are teachable, the "meek," who have a desire to know God and be pleasing to him, "hungering and thirsting" after righteousness.

These words are for those who seek Divine mercy and love and are "merciful," who are sincere, the "pure in heart," and who are training to be ministers of reconciliation, "peacemakers." Such will be faithful in light-bearing which can result in persecution, and in so doing they become those which are "persecuted."

Continuing, Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and warned against losing our "savour." We have nothing of ourselves that could be called 'savour', so it is evident that the reference is to that which the LORD has given us; namely, his truth and the Spirit of truth. Although we may be very zealous, it is possible to lose the truth and its spirit. The LORD would look upon us as workers of iniquity, rather than as co-laborers with him.

LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Jesus also said, "Ye are the light of the world," and then bids us to let our light "shine before men" that they, seeing our "good works," may glorify our Father who "is in heaven." We have no good works of our own, and our best efforts are as "filthy rags" in God's sight. (Isa. 64:6) These good works, as the Master indicates, are the letting of our light shine. And while Jesus refers to the

light as though it is ours, in reality it is the light of Divine truth which the LORD has caused to shine into our hearts, and which he here bids us to make known to others.—II Cor. 4:6; II Pet. 1:19; I Pet. 2:9

How wonderfully this 'light' glorifies our God! It is the truth of his plan, and in it is revealed his infinite wisdom, almighty power, exact justice, and boundless love. These attributes of the Divine character harmoniously working together reveal his glory, and those who appreciate the truth behold this glory. Holding forth the Word of life is therefore one of 'these sayings' of Jesus which we are obligated as his followers to obey if we are to be true builders of righteousness.

LEAST OF THE COMMANDMENTS

Continuing, Jesus not only spoke against breaking even the least of his commandments—those commandments which magnified the Law and made it honorable—but also against teaching others to do so. (Matt. 5:19) This is an admonition against compromise in connection with any part of the Word of God. Since there is no part of the truth of the Divine plan which does not have a bearing on how we serve the LORD, the principle underlying this 'saying' of Jesus is loyalty to the whole truth, not only in our own lives, but also, and especially, in teaching it to others. It is a grave sin to teach error or to cooperate with those who do.

Every true disciple of the Master is hopeful of reigning with him in his kingdom, but Jesus said that we would "in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" unless our righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees. (Matt. 5:20) The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was largely o

matter of outward show. They made a great display of piety to be seen of men, but inwardly they were "full of dead men's bones." (Matt. 23:27) The righteousness which exceeds this is heart purity and a zeal for God and for his work which does not cater to the plaudits of men.

THE LAW MAGNIFIED

Jesus explained that he did not come to destroy the Law but to fulfill it. He also magnified the Law and made it honorable. (Matt. 5:17; Isa. 42:21) We have examples of this in his Sermon on the Mount, in which he said that hatred of one's brother is murder; that looking upon a woman to lust after her is fornication; and that a voluntary going to those whom we have wronged with a sincere desire to make amends is a sign of true repentance.—Matt. 5:21-28

'These sayings' of the Master also include his admonition to sacrifice every precious thing in the interest of righteousness, even those things as dear to us as our right eye, right hand, or right foot. (Matt. 5:29,30; 18:8,9) It takes those who truly have "a mind to work" (Neh. 4:6) at character building to obey injunctions of this kind. The flesh urges moderation, explaining that Jesus didn't mean that we should be quite as radical as his words appear to be. But we should not listen to the reasonings of the flesh, those reasonings which exalt themselves above the knowledge of Christ.—II Cor. 10:5

Continuing his sermon, Jesus follows with one 'saying' after another, such as the Divine rule on divorce; the injunction against the taking of oaths contrary to God's will: how the law of love operates

toward those who smite us; and that we should love even our enemies. Jesus explains that by this exercise of love in the blessing of our enemies, we will be like our Heavenly Father, for he causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall upon the just and the unjust. To this he adds that if we love only those who love us we are no better than the 'publicans', but if we do display that comprehensive love which reaches out to bless all mankind we will be "perfect" even as our "Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matt. 5:31-48

THE MODEL PRAYER

Amongst 'these sayings' of the Master is also the model prayer which his followers have been using throughout the entire Gospel Age. Those who 'have a mind to work' as God wants them to work, and are faithful in watching and praying, will be guided by this outline of the fundamental principles of Christian prayer. We will delight to pray to "our Father," and we will recognize the sacredness of his name. Prominent in our prayers will be the desire to see the world blessed by the setting up of the kingdom—"Thy kingdom come." We will not make elaborate requests for ourselves but ask only for the needful things, both temporal and spiritual—"Give us this day our daily bread."—Matt. 6:9-11

Realizing how far short we come of the glory of God, and our great need for Divine forgiveness, we will petition God for his mercy, knowing meanwhile that we cannot expect his forgiveness unless we forgive those who trespass against us.

Because we have the assurance that God does not tempt his people—that he tempteth no man

(James 1:13)—we will claim this promise and ask God also to “deliver us from evil” (vs. 13), knowing how liable we are to stumble into the many pitfalls set for us by the Adversary.

HEAVENLY TREASURES

We are not to lay up treasures on earth, but in heaven. This ‘saying’ of the Master is perhaps one of the most exacting. Earthly treasures are the source of man’s security, and it requires great faith to realize that our real security is to be found in the promises of God. Other scriptures indicate that reasonable provision is to be made for those dependent upon us; but our interpretation of what is reasonable might make the difference between faithfulness and unfaithfulness in God’s sight.

The light of the body, Jesus explained, is the eye, and then adds, “If . . . thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.” (Matt. 6:22,23) This immediately follows Jesus’ admonition to lay up treasure in heaven, and his explanation that where our treasure is there shall our hearts be also. The ‘single’ eye is a symbolic reference to a wholehearted setting of our affections on things above, rather than a compromising attitude between earthly and heavenly treasures. A ‘single’ eye suggests seeking “first the kingdom of God,” in the assurance that all our legitimate material needs will be furnished. We cannot serve God and mammon.—Matt. 6:19-34

JUDGE NOT

We are not to sit in judgment upon others. We are not qualified to do that, and Jesus in another ‘saying’ indicates that the urge to criticize and

judge others represents a hypocritical attitude on our part because it is likely there is more wrong with ourselves than with those we attempt to judge. We are to seek work but not to “cast out the mote” from our brother’s eye, when we have a “beam” in our own eye. This ‘beam’ may be a ‘holier than thou’ attitude toward our brethren. The sin of spiritual pride is a flagrant one in God’s sight. It seems especially to fasten itself upon some who have had long service in the truth, causing them to take pride in their ‘development’ and in their ‘mature judgment’.—Matt. 7:1-5

We are to be zealous in dispensing the holy things of the Word of God, but are to use wisdom and not cast our “pearls before swine.”—Matt. 7:6

Jesus gave us a model prayer as a guide to our petitions at the throne of heavenly grace. He also urged us to “ask,” “seek,” and to “knock,” with the assurance that our Heavenly Father will reward us if we ask for that which he has promised to give. In Luke 11:13, Jesus indicates that the chief burden of our petitions should be for a greater infilling of the Holy Spirit. If we are filled with the Holy Spirit, all our spiritual needs are supplied; for the Holy Spirit cleanses, leads, strengthens, quickens, and fashions us into the Divine image. And how blessed the promise that our Heavenly Father is more willing to give us these ‘good things’ than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children.

THE STRAIT GATE

Those who desire to work will not be seeking an easy way to serve the LORD, but instead they will “strive to enter in at the strait gate.” (Luke 13:24) To keep ‘these sayings’ of Jesus is not an easy task.

It requires much effort and many difficulties are encountered. Not many 'find' the true way—the way of sacrifice and suffering—to glory, honor, and immortality. It is found only by those who 'have a mind to work' at the cost of weariness, sacrifice, and finally of life itself.

We are to be aware of false prophets—wolves in sheep's clothing—using the test suggested by the Master in another of 'these sayings', which is "By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:20) Love is the principal 'fruit' of the Spirit, and it is usually not difficult to detect whether would-be leaders are selfishly seeking their own interests, or are sincerely concerned over the welfare of the flock. A true sheep of the Master's fold, one who is keeping 'these sayings', should be easily recognized in contrast with the self-seeking exploiters of the LORD's people.

NOT ALL WHO SAY, "LORD, LORD"

In the last of 'these sayings', Jesus warns that a mere profession of love for him and for his people is not necessarily proof that one is a genuine 'sheep'. This is a heart-searching 'saying' for all of us. Only those who do the will of the Heavenly Father shall enter into the kingdom. Throughout the entire Sermon on the Mount Jesus outlines one detail after another of the Divine will, and finishes the sermon by saying that those who keep 'these sayings' will enter into the kingdom. His work, zealously wrought, will stand because he has built upon a rock.

After Pentecost, the apostles filled in many details of the Divine will, but in 'these sayings' of Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount, all the great

principles of the Divine will for Christians are to be found. This is the blueprint by which we build the superstructure of Christian character, and blessed are all those who follow implicitly these instructions. In this sermon, we are commanded to let our light shine, to be filled and controlled by love, to be faithful in prayer, to refrain from judging others, but to take ourselves in hand and make sure of our own standing before God.

“OUR OWN SALVATION”

We need to be diligent in the application of these principles of Divine righteousness in our daily lives, and thus will be transformed into that image by the “renewing” of our minds. This is referred to by the Apostle Paul as ‘working out’ our own salvation. (Rom. 12:2, Phil. 2:12) In doing this, however, Paul assures us that God is also working in us “to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Phil. 2:13) The task is too great for us to accomplish alone, so we are glad to be assured that God does work with us.

The LORD directs how the work is to be done, and by the infilling of his Spirit gives us zeal and courage to do the work. If we carefully follow his instructions, we will not ‘quench’ God’s Spirit, but will allow its stimulating power to keep us ‘alive’ and zealous regardless of how difficult the task may be.

The apostle speaks of girding up the loins of our minds, thus suggesting a long and arduous undertaking. (I Pet. 1:13) When Nehemiah and his co-laborers were rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, they did not so much as take off their clothes at night. (Neh. 4:23) They had to be ready always to meet the enemy, and at the same time carry on with

the work. Such is our position today. Our Adversary, the Devil, is seeking to devour us, and while we resist him by being steadfast in the faith, we must continue the work of building upon the 'rock'.

It is important to remember that 'these sayings' which we are to keep, and by keeping them build our house upon the rock, include the necessity that is laid upon us to be "ambassadors for Christ" by faithfully proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom. (II Cor. 5:20) This is not merely a suggestion from the LORD but a command. It is a part of the "holy conversation and godliness" of every Christian's life. (I Pet. 1:15; II Pet. 3:11) Faithfulness in proclaiming the truth does not interfere with the work of applying the other 'sayings' of Jesus, but augments that work; for the more we tell the truth to others, the greater will be its power in our own lives. We are promised that the storms of life will have little effect upon our house if it is built upon a rock. Let us seek not only to hear his sayings but to do them faithfully. ■

PRAYER OF THE CONSECRATED

AS WITH GLADNESS men of old did the guiding star behold
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious LORD, may we evermore be led to thee.

AS THEY OFFERED gifts most rare at the manger rude and bare;
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our glorious King.

—*Hymns of Dawn*, #16

IS SATAN BOUND?

QUESTION: Dear Dawn: The Bible says, "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house." (Mark 3:27) From this statement of Scripture, do you believe that Satan has, as yet, been bound?

ANSWER: Dear Friend: No, we do not believe Satan is bound. The enlightenment of our day is gradually exposing Satan's systems of error and will continue to do so. Satan, himself, is still as active as ever in opposing all that is truth, and will be bound during the time of Christ's millennial reign.

After being bound for this thousand years, earth's social order will have changed. The truth or knowledge of God will then be everywhere as prophesied, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9) Satan will then be loosed for a little season to provide a final test for mankind.—Rev. 20:7,8

It would appear from a study of the Book of Revelation that the binding of Satan will not be accomplished by the enlightenment of truth, but that he will be bound by a definite exercise of Divine power at the appropriate time. This is represented by a chain which binds him, and then he will be cast into the bottomless pit in the dawn of the Millennial Age.—Rev. 20:1-3

Another reason for not believing that Satan is bound is that those who have been called to reign with Christ have not yet finished their earthly course. The Apostle Peter admonishes these to "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." (I Pet. 5:8,9) Satan is not seeking to devour the world of mankind because they are already under his control. The Apostle Peter writing to his brethren tells them to resist their adversary, Satan. The Apostle James does likewise, saying, "Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7) This advice is for all true Christians who are being trained to be joint-heirs with Christ. If Satan was bound now, the trial of faith for the last members of those being called to reign with Christ would not be the same as for those preceding them.

There is nothing in the text of your question to imply that Satan is bound. All about us, in the experiences of the church and the world alike, there is much evidence that he is active as a roaring lion. Satan is also spoken of as the "god of this world" and "prince of this world." (2 Cor. 4:4, John 14:30) But we know that he will not always exercise his power. The time is near when his house will be spoiled, and the sin, sickness, and death that have marked his reign—as the 'goods' he bestows upon his subjects—will give way to the righteousness and blessings of Christ's kingdom. Life, peace, security and happiness will be the new 'goods' which will mark the reign of earth's new king, "The Prince of Peace."—Isa. 9:6

PROVE ALL THINGS

QUESTION: Dear Dawn: Is it wrong to question what we are being taught?

ANSWER: Dear Friend: It would be wrong if we did not examine the Scriptures carefully in order to

ascertain whether or not what we are being taught was supported by the inspired Word of God. If we did not do this, we would be shirking our responsibility before the LORD. We should appreciate those who help us to understand the Bible, but we should not accept their teachings without proving them by the inspired Word of God.

Paul was one of the inspired servants of God. He spoke and wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, yet he did not expect anyone to accept his teachings without proving them by the Word of God. He wrote to the brethren in Thessalonica, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (I Thess. 5:21) In connection with Paul's ministry with the Jews in Berea, we read, "These (Jews) were more noble than those (Jews) in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11) This is the only proper attitude to take if we would be truly taught by God. ■



"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 Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."—Luke 2:10-12

THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN

Luke, according to tradition, was born at Antioch, in Syria, and was there taught the science of medicine. He is referred to by Paul as "the beloved physician." (Col. 4:14) The time of his conversion is not known. It could have occurred during the period when Barnabas and Paul were in Antioch, his home city. In writing his Gospel account of Jesus' life and work, he makes no claim of being an eyewitness of the events concerning which he writes.

He addresses his record of Jesus' ministry and also the Book of The Acts to a disciple named Theophilus. Not much is known of this disciple, although it is believed that he was a Gentile of high rank, living in Antioch and taught by Paul and Luke.

Luke's Gospel resembles Matthew's more than it does either of the other two Gospels, although there are important differences. Luke is the only evangelist to record the announcement of Jesus' birth to the shepherds by the angels; while Matthew records the visit of the wise men, which occurred within two years after his birth.

Luke must have been a humble man, for he succeeded admirably in keeping his name out of his historical records of the Early Church. He joined Paul and Silas at Troas during Paul's second journey. This is indicated in the record by a sudden change in style to the first person plural. Luke writes that after "they"—Paul and Silas—had seen this vision, "we" (Luke is now including himself) endeavored to "go into Macedonia."—Acts 16:10

Apparently, however, he went with Paul on this journey only as far as Philippi, for when he records the apostle's departure from the city the pronoun "they" appears again. (Acts 17:1) On a later journey, however, when Paul was passing through Philippi on his way to Jerusalem, Luke joined him again. (Acts 20:5,6) As nearly as the record can be traced, Luke appears to have remained with Paul until Paul's arrest in Jerusalem and while Paul was held under house arrest in Caesarea for

two years, Luke, along with others, visited with him. (Acts 24:23) Luke also saw the apostles and others who were eyewitnesses of events concerning Jesus, enabling him to write his Gospel.

When Paul as a Roman citizen appealed to Caesar and was sent to Rome, Luke boarded the ship with him. (Acts 27:1,2) The personal pronoun "we" is used again and all through the remainder of the Book of Acts indicating that Luke stayed with Paul to the very end of his life. In Rome, Paul wrote to various churches mentioning Luke. (Col. 4:14) As Paul approached his end he said in a letter to Timothy, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." (II Tim. 4:6) He also wrote "Only Luke is with me." (vs. 11) Luke was a faithful coworker with Paul probably serving as a secretary for him. From what little is known about Luke, we see him as a faithful disciple of Christ and historian used by the LORD for edification of the church. ■

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible:

M. Balko		J. Panucci	
Pittsburgh, PA	December 6	Montevideo, Uruguay	Dec. 1-3
		Curitiba, Brasil	4-7
F. Binns		Phoenix, AZ	31-Jan. 3
Phoenix, AZ	Dec. 31-Jan. 3		

The speakers listed below, in cooperation with the Dawn, are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

B. Brown		E. F. Lankford	
Phoenix, AZ	Dec. 31-Jan. 3	Phoenix, AZ	Dec. 31-Jan. 3
R. Gorecki		L. Post	
Middletown, NY	December 6	Claymont, DE	December 6
W. Harp			
Clav Cfv. IN	December 5		

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So that your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to: Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073

PHOENIX BIBLE STUDENTS NEW YEAR'S CONVENTION, December 31, 1998-January 3, 1999—Embassy Hotel, 2577 Greenway Rd. & I-17. For information contact: Mrs. Esther Bachorski.
Phone: (602) 546-0430

CHICAGO BIBLE STUDENTS NEW YEAR'S CONVENTION, January 1-2, 1999—Elk Grove High School, 500 W. Elk Grove Blvd., Elk Grove Village, IL Contact: Mr. Darek Siwek
Phone: (630) 372-4833
or Mrs. Joy Kandel
Phone: (847) 298-6579

SACRAMENTO BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, February 12-14—Beverly Garland-Heritage Hotel, 1780 Tribute Road. Reservations should be made directly with the hotel at (800) 972-3976. Mention Sacramento Bible Students for special rates. Contact:

Donna Burke, 10771 Wood Reed Ct., Nevada City, CA 95959
Phone: (530) 265-8252

ROCKLAND BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, February 21—Comfort Inn, Nanuet, NY. Contact: Mrs. Russell Shallieu, 1041 Johnston Drive, Watchung, NJ 07060
Phone: (908) 756-4954

FLORIDA BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, March 6, 7, 8—Sheraton Four Points Hotel, Orlando International Airport, 3835 McCoy Road, Orlando, FL. Phone: (888) 266-2711 and specify FL Bible Students for group rate of \$69. Contact: Michael Balko, 321 Kentia Road, Casselberry, FL 32707
Phone: (407) 339-7580

1999 GENERAL CONVENTION, July 24-29—Johnstown, PA.