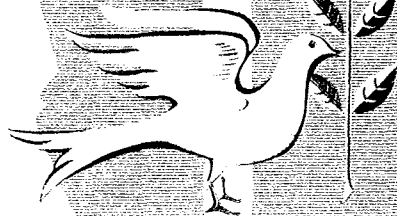


The DAWN

The mountains
shall bring peace
to the people,
and the
little hills,
by righteousness."

PSALM 72:3



A HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

JANUARY 1951



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THE DAWN

East Rutherford

NEW JERSEY



A HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

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Outlook for Peace

"The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness."—PSALM 72: 3

THE struggle for peace was not won during the year 1950. Instead, the uneasy truce which began at the close of the second global war almost ceased with the outbreak of hostilities in Korea, and the subsequent invasion of Korea by troops of the Chinese Communist army. Many still believe that the Korean hostilities in reality marked the beginning of the third world war. But be that as it may, certainly from the human standpoint there is no bright prospect for lasting peace as we enter 1951. International diplomacy is still failing to solve the problems of human selfishness.

And, regardless of every other consideration, selfishness is the basic cause of all the world's national, political, and economic problems. Whether we think of the tension which exists between nations as due to ideological differences, or to economic inequalities, it is selfishness that fans the flames of mistrust and animosity, and selfishness influences both the rich and the poor, the "haves" and the "have nots." It is not the exclusive possession of any particular stratum of human society.

Viewing the world situation from one standpoint, we might say that a great deal of the unrest is caused by the fact that the backward nations of the earth are endeavoring to assert themselves to secure a more equitable share of earth's bounties. Because of this, many are inclined to think of them as unreasonable and aggressive. Most of those who live in the more favored countries, where the standard of living is considerably above the world average, are not willing to share their bounties and advantages with other nations sufficiently to equalize living standards, so selfishness meets selfishness on a global scale, and the hearts of millions are filled with fear at what the outcome might be.

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

We can perhaps understand better the world situation by thinking of it in relation to conditions within a single nation. Even in these favored United States, we know there are millions who are barely existing, who experience nothing but the depth of poverty from the beginning of their lives to the end. If we could imagine these millions being well organized and armed, determined to seize by fair means or foul what they considered to be their share of the nation's bounties, we would know that civil war was inevitable.

It is this situation that we now have on a global scale. Whole nations—indeed, half the world—are in the “have not” class, and they are organized and armed, determined to wrest from the remainder of the world that which they consider their due. With a situation of this kind confronting the nations, it is plain to be seen that the temporary settlement of a local dispute here or there will not solve the major problem, for no longer will the underprivileged nations of earth be satisfied with their lot. The widespread and increasing knowledge of the “time of the end” has awakened them, and they are on the march—unreasonably so, perhaps, but this makes the threat of world destruction even more ominous.

Russian communism enters into the picture simply because it purports to give relief for the underprivileged of the world. The nations which grasp this false hope do not realize that human selfishness dominates the communists as it does all the rest of the world, and that regardless of what may be promised, they will continue to suffer. Communism cannot root out human selfishness from the heart. Nor can this be done by the ideology of democracy, so there is little likelihood that there will be a great deal of progress toward peace during 1951; indeed, it is probable that the world will edge a little closer toward that general conflict which nearly everybody fears is coming.

The outlook for peace eventually, nevertheless, is bright, because the prophecies point out to us that when the nations reach their final extremity, nearing which we now see them, it will mean that the time is near for the kingdom of Christ to manifest itself in power and great glory, and that “of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.” (Isa. 9:7) Today the nations are angry, but if we believe the promises of God this will not disturb us; for it is merely a token that the time has come when “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of God and of his Christ.”—Rev. 11:15, 18

THE DAWN

The "kingdoms of this world" are referred to symbolically in the prophecies as mountains, and Micah informs us that in "the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains." (Micah 4:1-4) Thus, in symbol, we are told that the kingdoms (mountains) of this world are to become subject to the Lord's kingdom, and this surrender of their sovereignty to the King of kings will be demonstrated by their desire to obey the laws of the new kingdom. They will say to one another concerning the Lord, "He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."

We are not to suppose that governments as at present constituted, or which may in the future be set up, will, as such, bow to the kingdom authority of Christ. Jesus will not rule the world through humanly constituted governments. He will have his own governmental arrangements and his own representatives. Nevertheless, the assertion that many nations shall say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord," indicates that in following his representatives there will be more than merely the turning of individuals to the Lord and declaring their allegiance to his kingdom, although only individual allegiance will result in everlasting life.

The increase of Christ's kingdom from the standpoint of whole nations or nationalities, coming under its sovereign rule is again indicated in the prophecy which reads, "It shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain." (Zech. 14:17) Verse 18 of this chapter speaks of the "family of Egypt," indicating that the word "family" as here used denotes a nation. Thus it will be that a whole nation may be deprived of God's blessing through a failure to recognize the laws of the new kingdom.

In Micah's prophecy, after relating the fact that the nations shall seek to be taught the Lord's ways, and walk in his paths, we are further informed that the Lord will "rebuke strong nations afar off," indicating that even then some of the nations will want to continue governing themselves upon the basis of selfishness. Perhaps, as Zechariah's prophecy tells us, one of the ways the Lord will rebuke these "strong nations afar off" will be by withholding such needed blessings as rain.

Just how the turning of whole nations to the Lord may be ac-

complished we cannot be sure. Evidently, though, it will be by means of representatives who will be empowered to speak for the nation. These representatives will of necessity themselves be righteous men whose influence among their people will be toward righteousness, men who will be respected and whose leadership into the kingdom of Christ will be quite generally followed. And when it is followed, peace will result. See Zechariah 8:20-23.

This is quite clearly the thought of the prophecy which reads, "The mountains [kingdoms] shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills [smaller nations], by righteousness." (Ps. 72:3) The translation of this prophecy is a little vague, but the thought is that by following a course of righteousness, the nations of earth, great and small, will secure peace. This righteous course will be made plain to them when they say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain [kingdom] of the Lord, . . . and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."—Micah 4:2

The Apostle Peter, referring to the promise of God concerning a new heavens and a new earth as recorded by the Prophet Isaiah, wrote that righteousness will be one of the characteristics of this new social order. According to God's promise, declares Peter, we "look for a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. (Isa. 65:17; II Pet. 3:13) Just as the rulership of unrighteousness has brought the human race to the very brink of complete ruin, when no one knows from one day to another when atom bombs may begin to drop, destroying half the cities of the world; so the rule of righteousness will correct this terrible situation, bring peace, and quietness and assurance to all people who "learn the Lord's ways and walk in his paths."

David's prophecy further states concerning Christ, the new King of earth, that "he shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth." (Ps. 72:6) How meaningful this is in the light of world conditions today. The human race is as the grass that withereth and is cut down. There is desolation on every hand, but soon the new King of earth shall "come down like rain," and "as showers that water the earth." Then the dying hopes of the people will be revived, and they will rejoice in the God of their salvation.

"In his days," continues the prophet, "shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." (Ps. 72:7) The righteous shall flourish! What a tremendous change

this will make in the outlook of the people. Then it will become literally true that "righteousness exalteth a nation." (Prov. 14:34) Today, and throughout all the past, nations have endeavored to exalt themselves by almost any means they could, and seldom have any of them hesitated to depart from the course of righteousness in order to attain their ends. But this will be changed when Christ becomes the recognized King of earth.

And when the righteous flourish, it seems obvious that nearly all will want to follow the course of righteousness. For a time, and on the part of many, righteousness will be looked upon merely as the best policy to follow under the circumstances. But as the kingdom rule continues, the vast majority will learn to love righteousness, and will delight to make it a governing principle of their lives. Thus they will bring lasting peace and joy into their own lives, and their example will help others to follow the same course.

Yes, the outlook for peace is bright, very bright indeed—as bright as the promises of God. It will not come through the United Nations, but through the kingdom of Christ. He is to be the true Liberator, not of one nation, not of one group of nations, but of all nations. He will liberate them not merely from selfish oppression and from war, but from sin, sickness, and death.

He will bring deliverance to all people and to all nations, for he "shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight."—Ps. 72:8; 11-14

What a glorious outlook for peace! Christ's kingdom of righteousness will not manifest itself in 1951, for there are other prophecies pertaining to the present transition period which must first be fulfilled. But his kingdom is near, so near that it is of vital concern to all who are living today, for "this generation" shall not pass away until the sovereign rule of Christ will manifest itself in power and great glory throughout all the earth.

May this hope make glad our hearts as we face the uncertain experiences of 1951! And on every suitable occasion, let us proclaim the good news of the kingdom in order that other hearts may be refreshed and made glad.

What the Bible Says About Mary

THE year 1950 will go down in history as one during which the professed churches of Christ, both Catholic and Protestant, made a tremendous effort to turn back the rising tide of irreligion that is sweeping the world, and arouse in the hearts of the masses a more earnest desire to know and serve God. It was "Holy Year" for the Catholic Church, a year that was ushered in with a great deal of pomp and ceremony in Rome, with the Pope personally taking the lead. Various Protestant groups, not wishing to be outdone, staged impressive campaigns of one sort or another in an effort to direct the attention of the confused public in their direction. The net results of these efforts are difficult to evaluate.* Certainly they are not outstanding enough to be readily discernible. It is doubtful if the world is any nearer to God now than it was at the beginning of 1950.

However the Catholic Church used the occasion of "Holy Year" to proclaim a new dogma for its people to believe, the bodily "assumption" of Mary. In plain words, this means that it is now necessary for all Catholics to profess their belief that Mary ascended to heaven as a human being, and is now there in the flesh to intercede for those who pray to Christ through her. This had been taught and believed by some in the church for a long time, but it was not mandatory that all should accept it. Now, however, all Catholics must believe it in order to remain in favor with the church. Here, then, is at least one item which "Holy Year" brought to the Catholic world which Catholics will not be able to ignore.

What Say the Scriptures?

Whether Catholics or Protestants, it is fitting, when a certain viewpoint is made so important a part of alleged Christian belief, to re-examine the Word of God to determine what authority, if any, it might contain for such a dogma. Just what does the Bible say about Mary? Was she venerated in the Early Church? Were the early disciples taught by Jesus, or by others, to use her name in their prayers? Is she ever referred to as the "mother of God"? Is there any hint that when she died she was taken directly to heaven in the flesh, or in any other manner?

The first mention of Mary in the Bible is in connection with the circumstances which led up to the birth of Jesus. She is referred to for the last time in Acts 1: 14. Here we are told of a little gathering of Jesus' disciples who were waiting in an upper room in Jerusalem for the fulfilment of his promise to send them the Holy Spirit. "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," we are told. In this group were "the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus."—Acts 1: 14

This was just before Pentecost, and while the Book of Acts and the various epistles written by the apostles of Jesus reveal much concerning the viewpoints and activities of the Early Church over a period of many years after Pentecost, not a single other reference is made to Mary in any of these writings. Even the Apostle Peter, who is claimed to have been the first Pope of the Catholic Church, does not mention Mary's name, although he wrote two important epistles setting forth many vital points of faith and practice.

The apostles' complete silence concerning any special position occupied in the church by Mary is quite understandable when we take into consideration the fact that Jesus himself likewise failed to indicate that his followers should in any way ascribe special honor to his mother. On one occasion there seemed to be an excellent opportunity to impress upon the minds of his disciples the importance of honoring his mother, but instead of doing this, he used the circumstance to impress a contrary lesson upon their hearts and minds.

This incident is recorded in Matthew 12: 46-50. While discursing to the people, Jesus' mother and brethren—that is, the younger children of Mary—"stood without," and indicated that they would like to speak to him. One of the listeners told Jesus about this, saying, "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee." What did Jesus answer? He raised the question, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?"

Jesus then answered his own question. The account reads that "he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." No other meaning can be given to these words than the fact that Jesus did not want his disciples to hold his mother in higher esteem than any others who believed on him and became his footstep followers. The fact that she was his mother did not,

in Jesus' mind, entitle her to receive special honor and veneration from his other disciples.

Jesus did respect and love his mother, and as a son felt a due responsibility toward her welfare. This is evidenced by the command he gave to the Apostle John while dying on the cross. His mother was standing there, near enough, apparently, to hear what the Master said. John was also nearby. Addressing the apostle, Jesus said, "Behold thy mother!" and to Mary he said concerning John, "Behold thy son!" (John 19:26, 27) This has been seized upon by some Catholic teachers as proof that all the followers of Jesus should venerate Mary as "mother." But there is nothing in the account to indicate that Jesus had anything of the kind in mind. It was simply a beautiful way of impressing upon John the fact that he was giving him the responsibility of caring for his mother, and indicating to her that she was to look to John for such care as she might need, that in this respect John would take his place in her life.

These are the only instances recorded in the Bible in which Mary's association with Jesus and his disciples are definitely mentioned, and instead of revealing that the Master wants his people to venerate her as is done in the Catholic Church, the very opposite is true. This, we think, is very significant. But sometimes even greater importance can be attached to what is not said on a certain subject, and this is especially true of Mary's position in the church.

When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he instructed them to open their prayers by saying, "Our Father which art in heaven." Note that nothing is said about petitioning God through the sacred heart of Mary. On another occasion Jesus instructed his disciples to use his own name when approaching God in prayer, but he said nothing about using the name of Mary for such a purpose. Must we conclude from this that Jesus was unfamiliar with the true art of praying, and that he failed to give his disciples proper instructions on the subject? We think not!

With this in mind, it is most revealing to note the many prayers referred to and sometimes quoted in the Book of Acts, and in the various epistles of the New Testament. The apostles and others prayed while in prison, and on other occasions, yet the name of Mary is never mentioned. In several of the epistles, the writers urge Christians to be "instant in prayer," and to pray fervently, but they never say that Mary's name should be used in prayer.

The Apostle John—the apostle to whom Jesus entrusted his mother for her physical care—wrote that if any man sin he has an Advocate with the Father, and he tells us that this Advocate is Jesus, not Mary. (I John 2:1, 2) This was not an oversight on his part, for his care of Mary would keep him reminded of any special place she might have occupied in God's arrangements.

James writes that we "ask, and receive not," because we ask "amiss." (James 4:3) This certainly would have been an excellent time to impress upon the minds of his readers that effective prayer can be offered only by using the name of Mary. But he did not. His only explanation of prayers that are not in harmony with God is that they are selfish prayers, requests for things which we want to "consume upon our lusts."

As we have already noted, no mention at all is made of Mary after Pentecost. She was with the disciples who waited in the upper room at Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit to endue them with authority to be the ambassadors of Christ in the world, but what happened to her after that, the Scriptures do not reveal. Nothing at all is said about her death. Several women are mentioned in the Early Church, and honorably so, but not Mary.

Dorcas is one of these. She is cited for her unselfish labors on behalf of others, and when she died, Peter awakened her from the sleep of death.—Acts 9: 36-41

Priscilla was another. She was the wife of Aquila, and together they labored in the Gospel; sometimes by themselves, and at other times in association with the Apostle Paul.—Acts 18: 2, 18, 26; Rom. 16: 3; I Cor. 16: 19

Lydia, the seller of purple, is most favorably referred to in the New Testament. She first came in contact with the Gospel through the ministry of the Apostle Paul, and was among the first in Philippi to become a disciple. For a time the Church at Philippi held their meetings in her home. (Acts 16: 14, 15, 40) Yes, sisters in Christ were loved and honored in the Early Church, but where was Mary?

When Mary received the announcement from the angel that she was to bear a Son who would "reign over the house of Jacob forever," and of whose kingdom there would be no end, she greatly rejoiced. She said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. [Jehovah, as the Author of the plan of salvation, is properly referred to as the Savior—he sent his

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

Son to accomplish the work of salvation.] For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."—Luke 1:33, 46-48

It is quite proper that all Christians appreciate the wonderful manner in which Mary was used in the divine plan, but what she said about all generations calling her blessed certainly cannot properly be construed as justification for the Catholic viewpoint concerning her. We are confident of this because of what the Master later said when on one occasion he was speaking: "A certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked." Whether or not this certain woman was Mary, or whether it was someone else endeavoring to honor Mary and sing her praises, we do not know. In either case Jesus' reply is significant, for he said, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it."—Luke 11:27, 28

It is clear from this that Jesus did not intend, nor was it his Heavenly Father's will, that Mary be given a special position of honor and power in the church. Certainly she is not to be worshiped.

Moved by the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth referred to Mary as the mother of her "Lord." (Luke 1:43) But this does not mean that Mary was the mother of God. In Psalm 110:1 we read, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Here Jehovah, the Creator, the Heavenly Father, is addressing his Son and calling him Lord. But the Hebrew word used simply denotes a mighty one, not Jehovah.

Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, is indeed a mighty One, and in fulfilment of this promise has, since his resurrection, been highly exalted to the right hand of God. So Elizabeth's prophetic reference to him as "Lord" was quite proper, but does not mean that he was God, or that Mary was the mother of God. Let us endeavor to give Mary her proper place in our respect, but let us worship God, in the name of Christ. Thus we will be worshiping him "in Spirit and in truth" as the Scriptures indicate we should.



Jesus Begins His Ministry

JANUARY 7

Mark 1:9-20

FOR the first three months of 1951 this series of lessons will be taken from the Book of Mark. This book has been styled by some, "the Gospel of action." In reality, however, any record of the life of Jesus would of necessity be filled with action, for his was a very busy life. Apparently he did not enjoy very much leisure time, as the demands for his service were numerous and constant. We know, of course, that Jesus did spend much time in prayer, and also in quiet fellowship with his disciples.

Jesus' ministry began at the time of his baptism. This was when he was thirty years of age. Being a Jew it was essential that he conform to the requirements of the Law, and one of these was that a person was not eligible to engage in the service of a priest until he was thirty years old. Jesus came to be the great antitypical Priest, through whose services the blessing of reconciliation to God was to be made available to all the families of the earth, but he could not enter upon this mission until he was thirty.

It was immediately following his baptism that Jesus received the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The outward manifestation of this was visible to Jesus and John the Baptist in the form of a dove. And besides, "There came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Whether others beside the Master and John saw the "dove" and heard the "voice" is not important, but it was of great value to Jesus thus to be assured of his divine appointment for service, and that up to this time he had been pleasing to his God.

Jesus was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness. We need not understand from this that he was literally forced to go into the wilderness. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Master undoubtedly resulted in a wonderful illumination of his mind pertaining to the plans and purposes of God, particularly as they related to him. We may assume that the vision was so marvelous in its implications that Jesus felt it necessary to seek the solitude of the wilderness that he might have an opportunity to meditate upon the great truths

revealed to him, and especially to ascertain definitely his own part in the divine plan of the ages.

Jesus was in the wilderness forty days. Mark's account gives the impression that during all this time he was "tempted of Satan," but Matthew indicates that it was not until after his forty days of fasting and when he was therefore hungry, that Satan began to tempt him, first by the suggestion that he use the divine power which had been given to him to turn stones into bread. (Matt. 4:2-4) We believe that this more detailed account of the temptations presented to Jesus by Satan gives us the proper sequence of events, that the entire forty days in the wilderness were spent in fasting and prayer. Of necessity this would also include meditation and study based upon the wonderful vision of truth given to the Master when the "heavens" were opened to him and he received the Holy Spirit.

"And the angels ministered unto him." This is without question a reference to the heavenly angels, although the Greek word here translated "angels" is also used in the Scriptures to denote messengers of other kinds, both animate and inanimate. Speaking of the spirit beings who are called angels, the Apostle Paul asked, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14) Jesus was not an heir of salvation in the sense that he was a member of the fallen and dying race, and therefore needed to be rescued from sin and death, but he was heir to the throne in that

glorious kingdom which shall bring the opportunity of salvation to all mankind. In order to attain to that honored position it was necessary that the Master's fidelity to truth and righteousness be put to the test. It was during these tests, both in the wilderness and afterward, that the heavenly "ministering spirits" succored him, supplying the necessary strength to endure.

"After that John was put in prison." This event seemed to mark a definite period in the plan of God which served to guide Jesus with respect to the appropriate time for him to begin his ministry in Galilee. John the Baptist had immersed Jesus and had announced his presence as the Messiah. From that time forward John's ministry was to decrease while that of the Master was to increase, but Jesus was careful that he did not encroach upon John's privileges of service. Doubtless by this carefulness a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding was avoided, as it always is when the Lord's people follow scrupulously every detail of the divine will.

When Jesus did enter Galilee preaching the Gospel it was with the announcement, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel." The expression, "kingdom of God" is a poor translation of the Greek text. The thought, rather, is, "God's Royal Majesty has approached," and the reference is to Jesus himself. (Mark 1:15, **Diaglott**) John had announced the coming of this great One, saying, "There cometh One

Jesus Begins His Ministry gal. 2 mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." (Mark 1:7) Now, Jesus, in keeping with this, announced that the One mentioned by John had come, for the time was fulfilled when this "Royal Majesty" should appear.

On this first missionary visit to Galilee Jesus selected four of his apostles; Simon, Andrew, James, and John. These were all fishermen, and very appropriately his invitation to them to become his followers was phrased in language which they could best appreciate. "I will make you to become fishers of men," he said. By this the Master revealed his ability to get right down to the level of his hearers and to talk to them in their own language, so to speak. This is a good example even for us today.

Those who have been in the narrow way for some time, and have earnestly studied the Word, often do not realize that to a degree they have learned a new language. If the Word of the Lord is dwelling richly within, it will be manifested in their speech. This is one reason that the Lord's consecrated people can enjoy such sweet fellowship with one another—they speak the same language.

However, that which enables the brethren to understand one another so well, can easily be a bar-

rier in our witnessing to others. While, for example, we rejoice in the divine provision of "the robe of Christ's righteousness," one who knows nothing about the truth would be quite at a loss to understand us if we used this expression in witnessing to him concerning the wonderful provision of God's love as represented in the blood of Christ.

Let us, then, so far as possible, follow the example of Jesus when we endeavor to tell others about the truth. We cannot be as apt as he was in drawing lessons from the everyday experiences of those to whom he ministered, but we should endeavor to make the truth as plain and understandable as possible when speaking to those who have not been initiated into the "deep things of God," avoiding the use of terms which are understood only by those who have become fairly well acquainted with the "mysteries of the kingdom."

QUESTIONS:

What is one reason the Book of Mark is properly called "the Gospel of action"?

Why was it not proper for Jesus to begin his ministry until he received the Holy Spirit?

In what way was Jesus led of the Spirit into the wilderness?

What means did the Heavenly Father use to sustain Jesus while he was being tempted by the devil?

Which of the apostles did Jesus choose during his first missionary visit to Galilee, and why did he promise to make them "fishers of men"?

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A Day of Activity

JANUARY 14

Mark 1:21, 22, 29-35

IN CAPERNAUM Jesus began his ministry in a synagogue on the sabbath day. He "straightway," that is, at once, entered the synagogue. This seems to imply that the Master took little or no time to rest. Having reached the city he went immediately to the synagogue and began to preach. The Master knew that the time allotted for his entire ministry was very brief—three and one-half years in all—and to him this meant that every moment should be wisely and faithfully used.

One marked difference noticed by those in the synagogue between Jesus' teachings and those of the scribes to whom they customarily listened, was the definiteness with which he presented his message. To his listeners it gave the impression that he spoke as one having authority, and this, apparently, the scribes did not do.

There is a lesson in this for us today. Jesus did speak with authority—the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures, as well as the authority of the Holy Spirit with which he had been anointed. We can, and should, likewise speak with authority. Ours is not an inspirational authority; nevertheless, we now have not only the Old Testament Scriptures, but the

teachings of Jesus and the apostles which explain the Old Testament. If we study these inspired Scriptures with a view of showing ourselves approved unto God, we should be able to give to every man a reason for the hope which is within us, not in an uncertain manner, but with an assurance that will lead to conviction in the hearts of those who are humbly seeking for truth and righteousness.

The spirit of the world today is one of vacillation. Expediency rather than principle governs the viewpoints and actions of nearly all. This is true in the political world, the business world, and also in religious circles. In the field of religion, very few indeed care to express themselves definitely on any matter of faith or doctrine. The modern trend is toward compromise, and those few who still insist that a Christian should know what he believes and be willing to defend the faith are branded as bigots and called sectarian. But these can take comfort out of the fact that Jesus, their Captain and Leader, spoke with authority, and that every text of Scripture bearing on the subject teaches that we, his followers, should do the same.

After Jesus and the four apostles he had recently selected left the synagogue, they entered into the home of two of them—Simon and

Andrew—and there they found Simon's [Peter's] mother-in-law sick with a fever. Yes, Peter had a wife, which is quite contrary to the teachings and practices of those who claim that he was the first head or pope of their church. This is an effective point to keep in mind when seeking to help those who have been ensnared by the false teachings of this religious system.

Jesus healed Peter's wife's mother, and then she ministered to their needs. But a miracle of this sort could not for long be concealed from the public. True, they had no telephones in those days, but by one means or another the news circulated, so that by the close of the day many were coming to the door of this home to seek blessings of healing from the Master.

And Jesus did not turn them away. It had been a strenuous day. Probably they had traveled some distance early that morning to reach Capernaum. They went "straightway" to the synagogue, where he taught the people. Then they went to the home of Andrew and Simon. It was now probably afternoon, but there was more work to be done. Peter's mother-in-law needed help, and the Master gave it to her. But still the day's work was not done, for in the evening the crowd began to gather, "and they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And

all the city was gathered together at the door."

What an evening that must have been in Capernaum! Jesus did not seclude himself within the home, but instead came out and "healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils." Not until all this had been accomplished, which no doubt was in the very late evening, was the work of the Master finished on this first sabbath day in Capernaum. It was a long, busy, and happy day for him, which resulted in blessings for many.

Although not included in today's lesson, the account reveals that Jesus arose very early the next morning—even before the break of day—and went to a "solitary place" to pray. The previous day had been a successful one. The messianic cause had been greatly advanced, and the Master realized that in triumph as well as in trials he needed to seek his Father's face for guidance and encouragement.

QUESTIONS:

What outstanding difference was there between Jesus' method of teaching and the method of the scribes?

Should the Lord's people today be definite in their presentation of the kingdom message?

How was Jesus' zeal manifested in connection with his service during his first day's visit to Capernaum?

Do we need to go to the Lord in prayer when things are going well, even as when we are being severely tried?



Jesus Meeting Growing Hostility

JANUARY 21

Mark 2:1-12

JESUS was hated by his enemies, persecuted, and finally crucified. This had been foretold by the prophets, who explained that it was a necessary experience for him ere he could enter into the promised glory of the kingdom. Commenting on this point, the Apostle Paul explained that in bringing many sons to glory it was the divine plan to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through suffering.—Heb. 2:10

However, it is well to observe in this connection that Jesus was not continuously persecuted from the beginning of his ministry. Instead, much of the time he rode on the crest of popularity, at least so far as the common people were concerned. The religious aristocracy of the time were jealous and suspicious of the Master from the first, but they were helpless to interfere materially with the effectiveness of his ministry until the due time in the divine plan came for him to be "cut off" in death for the sins of the world.—Dan. 9:26

It is well to keep this in mind when appraising the meaning of our own experiences as followers of the Master. The terms of discipleship are made very plain in the Bible. We are called to suffer and to die with Jesus, and told

that it will only be through much tribulation that we shall enter the kingdom to live and reign with him. Viewing the matter from this standpoint alone, we might well get the thought that we should be experiencing persecution all the time, and become discouraged if this is not the case.—Matt. 16:24, 25; I Cor. 15:50; Rev. 3:21; 20:4, 6

But this is the wrong viewpoint. Jesus did suffer and die, and if we are faithful to the terms of our calling we will also suffer and finally die—in the likeness of his death, a sacrificial death. But just as he was free to preach the truth to the people much of the time during the short period of his ministry, so we may expect it to be much the same with us. We need not be concerned as to whether or not we are being persecuted today, but let us live so close to the Lord that no matter when he may permit us to be tested by persecution, we will be ready by his grace to meet with fortitude and courage whatever experiences his wisdom may deem best.

The persecution against Jesus stemmed from the fact of his faithfulness in serving others as well as his love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity. In today's lesson, as the title indicates, we see the beginnings of opposition to the Master on the part of the scribes.

It was not because he had condemned them, but because he was able and willing to do something really worthwhile for those in need. They charged him with blasphemy because he announced to the palsied man that his sins were forgiven.

And, significantly enough, the final outburst of hatred against the Master, that which was the immediate cause of his arrest, was occasioned, not by a program of smiting on his part, but because he had raised Lazarus from the dead. (John 11:45-54) Let us follow his example. May we never, in our anxiety to be persecuted, embark upon a campaign of smiting others. Rather, let us proclaim the glorious Gospel of the love of God. Let us exalt the name of him who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

If we are thus faithful as ambassadors of Christ, it may seem for a time as though we were not having many privileges of suffering with him. Nevertheless, in the hearts of those who are enemies of the truth, the fires of hatred will be smouldering, and when the opportune time comes, they will strike out against us. Meanwhile, let us rejoice that the common people are having an opportunity to hear the glad tidings, and that their hearts and minds are being prepared to receive the kingdom blessings now so near.

The incident recorded in our lesson occurred on Jesus' second visit to Capernaum. His first visit started a wave of popularity which continued and increased until his return to the city. And now the

crowds following him became so great that it was impossible to bring a sick man near except by lowering him through the roof of the home where Jesus was staying. Great faith was manifested by this extraordinary effort to reach the Master.

Jesus could read the minds of those about him, and he knew that the scribes took exception to his statement to the palsied man that his sins were forgiven. This is an important consideration in following the example of Jesus. On occasions, when speaking directly to the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus called them hypocrites. He could read their hearts and know that this was true of them. But we cannot do this, so are not privileged to go to this length when addressing enemies of the truth.

There was only one answer to Jesus' question as to which was the more difficult, to say to a man that his sins were forgiven, or to command him to take up his bed and walk and have the command obeyed. But in addition to the point which Jesus thus impressed upon the minds of the scribes, there is another lesson, for it reminds us that all sickness is the result directly or indirectly of sin. The original sin of our first parents plunged the entire human race into a dying condition, and while all die regardless of their individual sins, many times the suffering involved in the original penalty of death is greatly increased in the case of those who wilfully flout the laws of God and of righteousness. We do not know whether this was the case with the palsied man of our

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lesson; but in any event he received forgiveness of sins by Jesus, and this was followed by his restoration to health.

QUESTIONS:

Was Jesus continuously persecuted from the very beginning of his ministry?

Should we, as followers of the Master, be discouraged when we are not persecuted?

What was one of the main causes of Jesus' persecution?

Should we seek to bring persecution upon ourselves by publicly condemning nominal churchianity?

Explain the manner in which disease and death are related to sin.

The Teacher Sent from God

JANUARY 28

Mark 4:1, 2, 26-34

JESUS, the greatest of all Teachers, the One sent by God to bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel, did all of his public teachings by parables—"without a parable spake he not unto them." The general public got little out of the Master's parables. Indeed, he taught in this manner in order that they might not understand. (Matt. 13:13-15) Jesus' disciples, however, the ones to whom it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, received rich blessings from these parables, for when they were alone with the Master he explained their meaning to them.

Practically all of the Master's parables are introduced by the expression, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto," or "The kingdom of God is likened unto." Some of the parables illustrate the manner in which the kingdom will function

when in full operation in the earth, but most of them pertain to the development of the kingdom, or the kingdom in its embryonic stage. Some illustrate the development of the true kingdom class, while others represent the development of the kingdom as seen by the world, that is, the nominal kingdom, which men call Christendom.

The first parable in today's lesson pertains to the growth of the true kingdom. In this parable the ones doing the original sowing of the Gospel seed of truth are Jesus and the apostles. In this illustration we have the thought of slow, gradual development, covering the entire period of the Gospel age. And how true is the expression, "He knoweth not how"!

The work of grace in the hearts of those whom the Lord calls by means of the Gospel message is farther beyond human comprehension than is man's understand-

ing of the germination of natural seed and the growth of plants therefrom. It is just as true of one as it is of the other that "God giveth the increase." We have the privilege with Jesus and the apostles of sowing seeds of truth, but there is nothing more that we can do about it, except, of course, to water the seed. If there is to be any increase it must be given by God. This is fully in keeping with Jesus' statement that no one can come unto him unless drawn by the Heavenly Father.—John 6:44

Thus the work was started by Jesus, and thus it has continued throughout the age. It has at all times been under the direction of the Heavenly Father. We should never lose sight of this fact, and should remember that at no time has the Lord let go his controlling hand in the affairs of his people.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed appears to represent the kingdom from the standpoint of the world—as the nominal church, developed from the original small seed of the true Gospel. From that little seed we have a great institution today, with many denominational branches. However, its thrifty development has invited into its branches the "fowls of the air," which the Lord elsewhere describes as representing the wicked one and his angels—Satan and his representatives. (Mark 4:4, 15) These, of course, should have no place in the church, and indeed they would have no place if the church were loyal and zealous enough to proclaim only the

true Gospel and the narrow way of self-sacrifice.

It is largely neglect to preach this true Gospel that has brought such prosperity to nominal churchianity, and to make it such a desirable place for the "fowls of the air" to lodge. And now these have become the real life of ecclesiasticism. This evidently is the same picture which is given to us in Revelation 18:2. Here the nominal systems of churchianity are spoken of symbolically as Babylon, which has become the "hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

Thus viewed, we see that the great and mighty tree which, in the parable grew from the little "mustard seed," is not the true kingdom of God, but its counterfeit. This is indeed an imposing system, and its grandeur appeals to the worldly. But now its greatness is beginning to fade. Its branches no longer afford the secure protection they once did for those who lodged in them. The stormy winds of the great "time of trouble" are already breaking some of its branches, and ere long the whole tree will be uprooted to make way for the true kingdom of God, that great "mountain of the Lord" which is to fill the whole earth.—Isa. 2:3; Dan. 2:35, 44, 45

QUESTIONS:

Why did Jesus teach the public in parables and dark sayings?

Who sowed the first seeds of the Gospel, and who gives the increase?

What is represented by The Parable of the Mustard Seed?

How will the mighty "mustard tree" be uprooted to make way for the "mountain of the Lord"?

Does God Answer Prayer?

HOW can we be sure that God will answer our prayers? It is not enough that we affirm our belief in prayer. Thousands of mothers, for example, have believed in prayer and have asked God to protect their sons on the battlefield, only to receive a message from the War Department that they had been killed. Nor does affirming our belief in prayer explain why, when a whole nation prays for peace, it often finds itself caught in a whirlpool of war.

On the other hand, there are thousands who are eager to testify that God has answered their prayers for the safety of their boys. Other thousands will testify of the wonderful manner in which God has given them other special blessings for which they asked. On the basis of experience alone, therefore, it may seem that God answers the prayers of some, yet does not answer the prayers of others.

But this is not in keeping with what the Scriptures tell us concerning God. The Bible testifies that he is "no respecter of persons." No, there must be, and is, some other reason why God answers some prayers, and does not answer others. If we can find that reason, it should help to restore the faith of some whose prayers have seemingly gone unanswered.

Prayer is a very important phase of Christian experience. Indeed, it is also practiced widely by adherents of all the various heathen religions. The desire to pray is an acknowledgment of our dependency upon a Higher Power, the expression of a realization that we need help from some source outside of and higher than ourselves. Doubtless God is pleased with the sincere desire of all who try to contact him in prayer, because to this extent at least it is a recognition of his sovereign power.

The almost universal urge to pray is due to the fact that originally man was created in the image of God. It is true that as a result of man's fall into sin and death the divine image in his character

has been much blurred, and in many instances, almost erased, yet remnants of it still remain, and one of its manifestations is the urge to pray. There are millions who perhaps actually never pray, yet often feel that they should, and have a sense of guilt because they do not.

Yes, God is pleased with the spirit of prayer on the part of his creatures, but why is it that he hears the prayers of some, while apparently other prayers go unheeded by the Creator? Jesus hints at the answer to this question in his observations concerning the prayers of the scribes and Pharisees. They prayed to be seen and heard of men, Jesus explained, and thought God would hear them for their much speaking. By this we are reminded that there are proper and improper attitudes of prayer, as well as correct and incorrect methods. The heathen who spin their prayer wheels may be sincere enough, but their conceptions of prayer does not conform to God's arrangements whereby his people may go to him in prayer with a reasonable expectation that they will be heard and blessed.

The Scriptures also indicate that there are proper and improper things for which to pray. St. James wrote: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss." (James 4:3) From this we can see that it is vitally important to ascertain just what we have the privilege of asking God to give us in the way of favors. It shows that we cannot expect to ask God for anything which our fancy dictates, and expect to have our prayers answered.

The Purpose of Prayer

There is a divine purpose in prayer, and it is highly important that we keep this in mind if we are to understand why some prayers go unanswered. God did not design prayer as a means of finding out how he should manage his affairs here on earth. He is not looking to us to tell him what he should do. He has his own fixed plans and purposes, and if we are to receive the riches of his blessing it is essential that we order our lives in keeping with his will; and this is true in connection with our prayers. To use the language of James, we ask "amiss" every time we petition God for blessings which he has not designed to give, or the giving of which would not be in keeping with his will and plan.

In the Scriptures we have various types of prayer brought to our attention. Foremost among these are prayers of thanksgiving. God is undoubtedly pleased when his creatures recognize him to be

the source of all their blessings, and because of this lift up their hearts and voices to him in thanksgiving for his bounties.

Then there are prayers of adoration, prayers which give recognition to the glorious attributes of the Creator's character—his wisdom, his justice, his love, and his power. The desire to glorify God should be the motive for much of our praying.

Prayers for God's mercy are also appropriate and essential. The Scriptures urge all Christians to seek divine forgiveness of their sins through the medium of prayer. Paul speaks of this as going "boldly to the throne of grace," there to obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.—Heb. 4:16

Then, of course, there are the prayers which are requests for certain blessings, or favors from the Lord. It is with these that we are particularly concerned at the moment. Some, we know, pray for health, either for themselves or for others. Some pray for wealth. Some pray for protection while on a journey. Millions pray for peace. It has often happened that citizens of countries who are opposing each other in war pray that their respective armies will be victorious. We will assume that all who go to God in prayer are sincere, and of course they ask him for the things which to them seem the most important at the time. But does the Bible justify us in the belief that all these prayers should be answered?

It might well be that God would answer a mother's prayer for the safety of her boy on the field of battle. Or it might be that prayers for the peace of a nation might be answered. But if and when such prayers are answered, it simply means that it was in harmony with his will to do so. God has a fixed plan, in keeping with which he is mindful of the human race. That plan was not made to satisfy the whims and wishes of his human creatures, nor will any amount of praying change his plans.

"Prayer changes things," they say, but it does not, however, change God's plans. God is not looking to us, nor to the nations—not even to the United Nations—to learn what changes he should make in order to better conditions for us or for the world in general. How little confidence we would have in a god whose opinions could be swayed or plans changed by the eloquence of his people's prayers!

"Thy Will Be Done"

No matter how much God may love one or another of his people, he does not change his plans in order to grant favorable answers

to their prayers. We have an outstanding example of this in the case of Jesus. In the Garden of Gethsemane, when the Master was facing arrest by his enemies, when he knew that Judas had plotted to betray him with a kiss, and when he knew his enemies intended to kill him, he prayed to his Heavenly Father that if it were possible, to let this "cup," this experience, pass from him. The Master added, nevertheless, that he wanted his Heavenly Father's will done.—Matt. 26: 39

It was God's will that Jesus suffer and die as the Redeemer and Savior of the world. This important feature of the divine plan had been foretold by the holy prophets of the Old Testament. There was no question about its being the divine will. So Jesus' request, "Let this cup pass from me," was not granted. But he did not lose confidence in God. He wanted above everything to have the divine will accomplished, regardless of what it meant to him. It was just that his flesh cringed at the thought of the suffering and shame which he was facing, and he wondered if it might not be possible for the "cup" to pass from him.

Since Jesus' prayer for escape from suffering was not favorably answered, certainly none of us should question the wisdom of God if he does not always grant us the blessings we ask. Jesus' experience in this connection, and his attitude toward it, should serve as a guiding example to us, particularly in the emphasis it places upon the importance of the divine will being recognized in connection with our prayers. "Not my will, but thine, be done," should be the heart attitude of all who seek the Father's face in prayer.—Luke 22: 42

Jesus enlarged upon this point when he said to his disciples that as long as they were abiding in him and his words were abiding in them, they could ask in prayer for whatever they desired, and it would be granted unto them. (John 15: 7) This might seem like an assurance that we are privileged to ask God for anything which we may happen to think of and desire, and it is sure to be given to us. But not so!

Note the condition attached to this statement by the Master—"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you." To abide in Christ means to be a member of his body, he then being our Head. This means that his thoughts have become our thoughts, and his plans our plans. If our wills have thus been wholly surrendered to God, through Christ, we will have no will of our own, hence our prayers

will not be requests for what we want, but for those things only which are in harmony with the will of our Head. By thus praying in harmony with the Lord's will, we can be assured of favorable answers.

This is in harmony with another statement made by Jesus to his disciples in which he informs us that the Heavenly Father will be pleased to give the "Holy Spirit to them that ask him." (Luke 11:13) To be filled with the Spirit of God means to have his thoughts dominate our thinking, and for our lives to be conformed to those thoughts. Then we will not be asking God for blessings except those which he has promised to give, and so there will never be any question about one's prayers being answered.

"Thy Kingdom Come"

In response to the disciples' request, "Lord, teach us to pray," Jesus gave them what is now familiarly known as "The Lord's Prayer." In this model prayer we are given a guide as to just what we may pray for with assurance that our requests will be granted. But important also is the fact that in this brief outline of prayer Jesus indicated the proper method of approach to God—"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."—Luke 11:1, 2

In the Scriptures, Adam is styled a "son of God." (Luke 3:23, 38) But when he sinned he lost his sonship, being alienated from God and sentenced to death. Adam's children, the entire human race, are likewise aliens and strangers to God, so cannot properly address him as "our Father which art in heaven." This is a privilege which belongs exclusively to those who have repented of their sins, accepted Jesus as their personal Savior, and devoted their lives to God in full consecration to do his will. Such are represented as having received God's Spirit of sonship, and thus have become his children.

As children of God, these will desire above all else to honor the name of their Father; so both by word and by action their attitude will always be, "Hallowed be thy name." To properly hallow our Heavenly Father's name implies that when we approach him in prayer we will do so in the manner outlined for us in the Scriptures by Jesus. He explained that our prayers should be offered in his name.—John 15:16

There is a reason for this. As members of the fallen and justly condemned race, we could actually have no standing at the divine

throne of grace except through Jesus, our Advocate; but in his name, and through the merit of the shed blood, we are privileged to go "boldly" to the throne of grace to seek forgiveness, and all the other blessings which our loving Heavenly Father has promised to give. (Heb. 4:16) If we properly hallow his name we will never presume to approach him except through Jesus.

When we follow the example of The Lord's Prayer, our requests will not be so much on our own behalf as they will be for the blessing of others. This is indicated in the opening petition, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) "Thy kingdom come"—the answer to this request will be an answer to much for which people have prayed throughout the centuries. That answer will satisfy the legitimate desires of all people. It will mean peace, and health, and everlasting life for all who conform themselves to the righteous laws of the Lord's kingdom.

The blessings which the human race craves, and for which millions pray, were all anticipated by God and provided for through the kingdom which he has promised by all his prophets. In these promises we find many details of the blessings which it will guarantee to the people, including the restoration of those who have died. No, God has not been unmindful of the suffering of the people, nor has he turned a deaf ear to their cries for help; and his answer to their prayers, when in his due time it comes, will be far beyond anything that they have ever dared to hope.

Take the case of a mother who prays for the safety of her boy on the battlefield. She loves that boy, and nothing could mean more to her than his safe return to the family home. But he does not return, and her first thought may be that God doesn't care, that he has no pity. How differently she would feel if she could believe that God has provided a homecoming far more satisfactory than ever entered her mind when she prayed!

How little does a mother sometimes know of the hardship and suffering her boy may be saved by falling asleep in death. After all, both the mother and the boy are members of a dying race, and the difference between dying on the battlefield and dying a few years later of old age is only a momentary one when compared with the endless stretch of eternity. And it is from this standpoint that we must learn to view the subject of prayer and the manner in which God answers our petitions.

The very fact that we pray to God is acknowledgment of our

belief that his wisdom and power and love far exceed our own, yet we often forget this, and feel that he has not honored our prayers because he has not answered them as we would have, through the exercise of our own puny abilities. The length of our condemned life is very short. We judge accomplishments upon the basis of whether or not they reach maturity within this short time of which we have knowledge. But we should not judge God's works from this standpoint.

The Scriptures speak of God as being "from everlasting to everlasting." (Ps. 41:13; 90:2) He is under no necessity to complete any particular phase of his plan within our short lifetime, not even if it has to do with our individual requests. If we prayed to God today for some special blessings which would be in keeping with his will, and the answer did not come until tomorrow, or even the day after tomorrow, we would not lose faith in him, but would rejoice when the answer did come. Well, God has his "tomorrows" also. His days are not measured by hours, for they are ages, and in his "tomorrow" age, the thousand-year period of Christ's kingdom, all those blessings which the world has legitimately craved, and for which millions have voiced requests to God, will be abundantly showered upon humanity. In recognition of this, the people will then respond, saying, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, . . . we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25:9

"As It Is in Heaven"

We have already learned that God will answer no prayer which is not in harmony with his will, not in keeping with that which he has already promised to do. Let us note that in the greatest of all prayers, The Lord's Prayer, this principle is clearly set forth. It requests God for blessings upon the people of earth—not any sort of supposedly good things which they may crave, but the things which are in harmony with his will—"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

What great latitude he has given us in connection with the things which are in harmony with his will! God's will is done in heaven, and it is his purpose that to the same degree it shall be done in earth. We do not know, of course, all the ways in which God's will is done in heaven, but we can be reasonably sure that the evils which now exist on earth do not plague the lives of those in the spirit realm we call heaven.

There is no war in heaven. War is an evil which is not in harmony with the divine will. Should we, then, pray for peace? Certainly! Indeed, we could not pray for God's will to be done in the earth as it is in heaven without praying for peace. But our prayers for peace should be in keeping with God's plan to establish peace, and that is his kingdom plan. He has promised to set up a kingdom, to establish a government. Jesus will be the King, the Ruler, in that government. "The government shall be upon his shoulder," wrote Isaiah, and "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."—Isa. 9: 6, 7

Doubtless God looks with sympathy upon the yearnings of mankind that war be abolished in the earth. When international tension is at a high pitch and war seems inevitable, devout people on both sides feel compelled to pray for peace. The differences which threaten to precipitate war may be resolved or they may not be, but we know that ultimately there shall be peace, universal and lasting peace. And this, not because the nations have at last found a workable formula for peace, but because "The Prince of Peace" has taken over the rulership of earth and the prayers of God's people, "Thy kingdom come," have been answered.

How many God-fearing people there are in the world today who would like to see the nations disarm! The nations themselves dare not disarm, for they have no assurance that aggressors would not take advantage of the situation and seek to impose a tyrannical dictatorship over the world. Nevertheless, many prayers ascend to God that a way may be shown the nations to cease preparing themselves for war. These prayers also will eventually be answered within the framework of the divine government plan.

Christ's government is symbolized in the Scriptures as the "mountain of the Lord," and in Micah 4:2-4 we read that the time will come when the people will say, "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 from 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 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."

What a wonderful program for disarmament! It is God's program, and when we pray for peace, and for the nations to disarm, let us do so with the assurance that God will hear, and that he will answer our prayers in harmony with his will, which will be the kingdom way. And we may have this assurance, for the Prophet David wrote that it is God's intention to make wars to cease unto the end of the earth, to break the battle bow in sunder, and to destroy the chariots—now the tanks—of war.—Psalm 46:9

"No More Death"

There is no death in heaven. Sickness and death have resulted from the sin of our first parents, and are among the evils which God has promised to destroy. Shall we, then, pray for health, and ask the Lord to save the lives of those near and dear to us who may have been stricken with serious illness? Yes, but always with the understanding that we want the Lord's will to be done, and with the knowledge that it may not be his will to grant health and life to those for whom we pray until these blessings are made available for all during the thousand years of Christ's kingdom.

And we know that all diseases will then be cured. "The inhabitant [in that day] shall not say, I am sick," wrote Isaiah. (Isa. 33:24) Describing some of the blessings of Christ's kingdom, Paul wrote that Christ will reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. (I Cor. 15: 25, 26) When in vision the Apostle John saw the kingdom of God established on the earth, he discerned that as a result there would be no more death, "neither shall there be any more pain."—Rev. 21:4

When, therefore, we pray for health and life, let us endeavor to grasp the meaning of this larger provision the Creator has made to grant these blessings, not merely to us and to our loved ones, but to all mankind; that is, to all who will seek them through humility and obedience during the thousand years of Christ's reign. And how much better that will be for all concerned! Selfish indeed is the satisfaction which may result from blessings we enjoy while they are denied to others. How much better it is to pray that God will heal all the sick, and keep all the people from dying, and thus we do when we pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. 6:10

"From the Land of the Enemy"

God's ways, and the provisions he has made for his creatures, are always much better and more far-reaching than those conceived by human wisdom. We pray for health, we pray for protection, we pray for peace, but who has ever thought of praying that their beloved dead be restored to them? None! But God, in his plan, has gone beyond what we have presumed to pray for. He has promised to bring back the dead!

How many mothers have been heartbroken over the loss of a precious little one. One of these is referred to by the Prophet Jeremiah. Her name was Rachel. Jeremiah wrote, "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted." The prophet continues, "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy."—Jer. 31:15, 16

"They shall come again from the land of the enemy." Death is man's greatest enemy, and it is God's plan to restore to life all who are in the "land" of death. This great favor to man, then, is also included in our petition, "Thy kingdom come," for it will be during the thousand years of Christ's kingdom that all who are in their graves, in the condition of death, shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth.—John 5:28, 29

The restoration of man to life is described by the Apostle Peter as "restitution," and he tells us that following the second coming of Christ there shall be "times of restitution of all things," and adds that this has been promised by all God's holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21) Surely that which God has caused all his holy prophets to promise is altogether in harmony with his will, a very definite part of his provision for the eternal blessing of all his human creatures, who were condemned to death through Adam but redeemed from death by Jesus.

Under Vine and Fig Tree

Many pray for wealth, or at least for economic security. There is a measure of fear, or uncertainty, on the part of nearly everybody as they face their declining years. Will we be financially secure when we reach the age when it is no longer possible for us to earn a living? It is quite understandable that anyone who believes in God and thinks of him as one who loves and cares, should look to

him in prayer in connection with his need of financial security.

We know, of course, that there are millions of people in the world today—and this has been true throughout the ages—who are not financially secure. There are millions who are literally starving and without proper food, clothing, and shelter. God loves all these, and while we would appreciate it if he blessed us with a more favorable situation in life, is it not better to rejoice in the loving provision he has made to care for all the poor and needy in his own due time and way? And this is what he has promised to do!

In God's promises the thought of economic security is symbolized by the idea of dwelling under one's own vine and fig tree. The prophet declares that "every man" shall thus be blessed, and God's provision for all will be so complete that fear will be removed because "none shall make them afraid."—Micah 4: 4

In the prophecy of Isaiah, a similar assurance is given us concerning God's blessings for the world in the age to come. This prophet of God tells us that at that time they shall not build houses for others to inhabit, and that they will not plant and another eat, but that the people then—those who through the acceptance of Christ and obedience to his kingdom become God's people—shall long enjoy the works of their hands. Yes, they shall enjoy the fruit of their labor forever, if they continue to obey the righteous laws of that kingdom which then will be ruling the world. See Isaiah 65:20-25.

In this chapter of Isaiah's prophecy, it is indicated that the blessings of God which in that kingdom age will become available to all, will be poured out upon the people in answer to their prayers. Concerning this the Lord says, "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." (verse 24) This has not been the experience of the vast majority of those who heretofore prayed earnestly to God for help, not because he has lacked interest in them, but because his time had not come to extend the favors for which they have asked, and because in his wisdom he has known that their experiences with adversity will enable them the more to appreciate the blessings he will provide for them throughout the eternal years.

But when the kingdom for which we pray is established and functioning, how different it will be. Many of the blessings for which the dying race has longed will then become available even before they think of praying for them. "Before they call, I will an-

swer," declares the Lord, and when they do learn to ask him for his bounties, the answers to their prayers will be so real and so immediate that it will seem as though they came before the petitioner had finished his prayer—"While they are yet speaking, I will hear."—Isa. 65:24

"Our Daily Bread"

In the answer to the prayer, "Thy kingdom come," are included the many material blessings for which devout people of the world customarily pray, but so often fail to receive. How we should rejoice that the time is coming in the divine plan when these legitimate material blessings will begin to flow to all the families of the earth in harmony with the promise made to Abraham! (Gen. 12:1-3) Meanwhile, it is well to consider the manner in which God answers the prayers of his consecrated people now, the prayers of those who have the privilege of addressing him as "our Father which art in heaven."

These, more earnestly, no doubt, than any others, have continued to pray for God's kingdom to come, and in thus praying have known that the kingdom will be God's channel of blessing to all mankind. But at the same time they have had the privilege of petitioning God for their own immediate daily needs, since Jesus taught them to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread."

This is a very moderate request, and when made in the proper spirit, is an acknowledgment that the Lord knows best what our daily needs may be, and that we will be satisfied with whatever provision he considers wise to make. Besides, for those who are walking in the sacrificial footsteps of Jesus, it is important to recognize that our spiritual needs are more important by far than the material. Bread is used in the Scriptures to symbolize truth, the truth of the Gospel, the truth of the Word, the truth of the divine plan. God has promised to feed us abundantly with this Bread of Life, so we can pray thus with full assurance, knowing that our petitions are primarily for the spiritual food which he has promised, and therefore in harmony with his will.

"As We Forgive"

"And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." This portion of The Lord's Prayer can be uttered sincerely only by those whose hearts are filled with the same spirit of love which prompted our Heavenly Father to send his Son into the

world to be the Redeemer and Savior. This was a love which made a provision for the forgiveness of sinners, those who had trespassed against God by disobeying his laws. He is willing to forgive us, but only on the condition that we are in the proper heart attitude toward those who have sinned against us. Certainly this is a heart-searching test of our sincerity in prayer.

God forgives the trespasses of his people because he considers that their imperfections are concealed by the covering merit of the redeeming blood of Christ. This means that the one who prays is a believer in Christ, a wholehearted believer, a believer whose acceptance of Christ is so unreserved that he has given up all else to follow in the footsteps of his Master. Such and such only can go to God in prayer, asking forgiveness in Christ's name.

"Deliver Us from Evil"

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." The first temptation mentioned in the Bible was that of mother Eve. She was tempted by the fallen Lucifer, through the serpent, to disobey the law of God. The transgression of God's law the Scriptures designate as sin, and the word temptation is used to describe any effort, allurements, or enticement to sin. The devil is the greatest of all tempters, and he uses many and various agencies by which to present his sinful appeals to those he endeavors to lure away from God and into the paths of unrighteousness.

"God tempteth no man," wrote James. (James 1:13) This means that we can depend upon it that God will not lead us into temptation; so in our prayers we claim this assurance. We do not pray for the kingdom because we have any misgiving as to whether or not it will come; nor do we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," because we are fearful that God may assume the role of the fallen Lucifer and seek to entice us into paths of unrighteousness. No, God will not do this, and we know it, so we express our confidence in his integrity by acknowledging his assurance that he "tempteth no man."

And how hope-inspiring is the contrast to this—"Deliver us from evil." The devil, the archdeceiver, has throughout the centuries been exerting his influence upon all mankind, and especially upon the people of God, in an effort to alienate them from their Creator and God. The result has been tragic—a world largely controlled by sin and selfishness—"this present evil world." (Gal. 1:4) But God has promised deliverance from "the snare of the fowler,"

and from the evil which the fowler has engendered in the world.—Ps. 91:3

God's promises of deliverance are of personal concern to all who are following in the footsteps of Jesus, for they assure such that Satan will not be able to ensnare nor entrap them. As individuals, God delivers us daily from Satan's pitfalls of error and sin. "The angel of the Lord," wrote the Psalmist, "encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Ps. 34:7) What a reassuring promise, and how glad we are to claim it as our own when we pray, "Deliver us from evil."

But there is a still larger deliverance for the people of God, a deliverance of the entire church of Christ in the "first resurrection" to live and reign with Christ. (Rev. 20:4, 6) Jesus said that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his true church, and in fulfilment of this promise, the gates of hell—the death condition—will be opened wide, and all who have suffered and died with Christ will be released from death, and will be exalted to glory to reign with him throughout the thousand years of his kingdom.

For this glorious deliverance the church has waited throughout all the centuries of this present Gospel age. The true disciples of Christ have known that this deliverance would not come until he returned. Paul knew this and wrote that a crown of righteousness had been laid up for him and that he would receive it at "that day," and added that all who love Christ's appearing would likewise then receive a "crown."—II Tim. 4:8

In Jesus' great prophecy concerning this end of the age—the prophecy in which he identifies so many of the conditions in the world today—he said to his disciples, "When ye see these things"—and his disciples living now are seeing them—"then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [Greek, deliverance] draweth nigh." (Luke 21:31, 28) The fact that "these things" foretold by the Master signaling the near approach of the church's deliverance from this present evil world, are now clearly discernible in the daily parade of news, gives us confidence that soon, very soon, the last remaining ones of Christ's true followers will be delivered from this present evil world, exalted to glory, honor, and immortality with him, and that then the blessings of his long-promised and much prayed for kingdom will begin to flow out to a suffering and dying humanity.

So we pray, "Deliver us from evil," not alone because we are longing to be free from a world that is evil, but also because we know that the answer to this petition—an answer which the Lord has promised—will mean, also, the answer to our other petition, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Thus viewed, even that part of a Christian's prayer which means most to him is at the same time unselfish in outlook, for it also contemplates rich blessings soon to come to all mankind.

And such are the prayers with which God is pleased; that is, unselfish prayers. While God is pleased when his people seek individual guidance, forgiveness, and spiritual strength from him, he also wants them to be interested in all whom he loves, and this, of course, is the entire world of mankind. And we show our interest in his plan for blessing the people when we pray, "Thy kingdom come," for it will be through the agencies of that kingdom that he will provide a "feast of fat things" for all people; and it will be in that kingdom that death will be swallowed up in victory, and tears wiped from all faces.—Isa. 25:6-8; Rev. 21:1-5

Above all, let us continuously thank God for his love that made provision for the eternal joy of all. Let us not only praise him individually in our prayers, but also tell the whole world about his love, tell them that through Christ provision has been made for them to live, and that soon his kingdom will provide peace and health, and everlasting life for all—peace through "The Prince of Peace," and health and life through the One divine love provided to be the Redeemer and Savior of the world.

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JANUARY 4—"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."—Psalm 27:14 (Z. '95-20. Hymn 313)

JANUARY 11—"His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."—Jeremiah 20:9 (Z. '01-151. Hymn 280)

JANUARY 18—"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."—Romans 12:11 (Z. '91-9. Hymn 20)

JANUARY 25—"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself."—Matthew 6:34 (Z. '08-44. Hymn 121)

Studies in the Book of Hebrews

CHAPTER I

IN THIS epistle of "deep things" God is speaking through the apostle to those who have become his people. Herein he gives insight into the hidden things, the plans and purposes which he talks over with those who love to dwell in his presence. This is some of the "latter rain," some of the "table talks" of him who comes to sup with those who, in the Laodicean stage of the church, have heard his knock and opened the door. (Rev. 3:20) How gracious and loving is our Creator to have had the tabernacle and other types enacted long ago, and then have raised up the Apostle Paul and given him visions and revelations by which he could write the epistle, to enable his people in the latter days to understand what the Lord has been doing, and how and why!

This is the epistle of "better" things. Paul writes of a better spokesman than the angels (1:4), also of better things (6:9; 11:40; 12:24), better promises (8:6), a better hope (7:19), a better testament (7:22) or covenant (8:6), a better mediator (9:12-15), and a better priesthood (7:23, 24). Upon the altar (13:10), and in the tabernacle (9:11) are offered better sacrifices (9:23). It is a better ministry, leading to a better country (11:16). Even as the fulfilment, the complete work, is better than the blueprints.

Verse 1—"At sundry times and in divers manners." Thus did the Lord speak to the fathers through the prophets. More literally, the thought is that the divine revelations of the past were given in many ways, and by fragments, or morsels—"Here a little, and there a little." These were scattered bits or pieces given in visions, types, prophecies, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the progenitors of the Jewish people; and also to Moses, Samuel, David, and all the prophets.

In Hosea 12:10 we read, "I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes [types], by the ministry of the prophets." And again, in Amos 3:7 we read, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."

Verse 2—"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Here the "last days" are the closing days of the Jewish age and the opening days of the Gospel age. The old methods which God had

employed in dealing with his people in the past were no longer to be used. His people were now to be a "new creation," and for these, all the messages and partial statements of the past were gathered into a complete whole and revealed through Christ.

Paul says that through Christ God has spoken unto "us." Here the emphasis is on the fact that God was speaking to the same Jewish people as in the past. And indeed, the Gospel was preached first to them, but because the vast majority of the nations received him not, the Lord turned to the Gentiles, giving them the opportunity to become a part of the "us" class. Now the oracles of God belong to all believers.—Rom. 2:6-10; 3:2; 9:4, 5

Yes, God now speaks through his Son! What loving condescension is here shown. All God's works speak volumes about him, but in his Son we have the most complete revelation. In him is a revelation of the brightness of God's glory—literally an "off-flash," as if in a burst of brilliance he had brought the Logos into being. Every glorious beauty of the Creator's character shines forth through his Son—his humility, meekness, loving-kindness, patience, endurance, self-denial—all those endearing qualities which draw us to him and delight our hearts—also the four cardinal attributes of his character, his wisdom, justice, love, and power.

Paul writes concerning Jesus that "all the promises of God in him are made yea, and in him Amen." (II Cor. 1:20) In him and through him will be the completion and fulfilment of all the Father's gracious promises and purposes. This wonderful Son was trained in the ways of his Father throughout all the eons since the time of his creation. He was brought up under the Father's care and instruction. (Prov. 8:30) He was there when all the angels were created, including Lucifer, for he did the work of creation.—John 1:3; I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2

"Whom he hath appointed [*tithemi*, placed, put, set] *heir of all things*"—the whole universe, and everything which is in it. Jesus thus obtained by submission and obedience and patient waiting (like David waiting for the throne), the very things which Lucifer tried to grasp for himself, and by his grasping showed that he was not worthy of them. What a lesson in humility there is here for all who are endeavoring to walk in the Master's footsteps. See Philippians 2:5-11.

"By whom also he made the worlds"—or, on account of whom the Father created the ages, or arranged the various ages in his

great divine plan, those ages in and through which he will accomplish all his good purposes.

Verse 3—“*Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.*” Here the Greek word is *charakter*, meaning the impression as of a stamp or die, or seal. This refers to Jesus’ condition since his resurrection, when he was raised up to the divine nature. “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” (Col. 1:19) He is therefore “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” (Col. 1:15) He is before all things, being the firstborn from the dead (at his resurrection), that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. “In him dwells all the fulness of the Deity bodily.” (Col. 2:9, *Diaglott*) What strong expressions are these! and how complete! By these we know that the Father has placed all things in the hands of his Son, that all the Son’s acts, words, thoughts, are just like those of the Father. As Pharaoh said unto Joseph—“Only in the throne will I be greater than thou.”—Gen. 41:40

How could two such beings exist separately and yet be one in thought, plan, and will? We remember that all through the ages of the past our Lord Jesus, as the agent of the Father, had watched him, studied his ways and their results, and found a supreme delight in their wonder, their wisdom, and their beauty. As stated in Proverbs 8:30, which applies to the Logos, he was as one brought up before Jehovah, trained and educated in his presence. When Lucifer endeavored to carry out his selfish ambition, Jesus was there and saw the rebellion. He witnessed also the disobedience and fall of man. When the angels fell and sinned, Jesus was there, and noted that abiding close to the Father, obeying him and practicing his ways, brought happiness and security and long life. Jesus loved righteousness and hated iniquity and disobedience.

“*Upholding all things by the word of his power.*” Upholding means sustaining (from *phero*—to bear or carry), as the provider of food and energy and life, distributing to each and all as needed. (Ps. 104:10-24) What a deep assurance that this great Provider will supply all our needs! “All things” here refers to the whole universe and to all the creatures in it. The “word of his power” is a reference to the authority of his utterance, the authority given to him by his Father. The expression also includes Jesus’ actual power, or energy, by which he is now able to accomplish the work of Jehovah: “All power is given unto me in heaven and in

earth," said Jesus subsequent to his resurrection.—Matt. 28:18

"When he had by himself purged our sins," or as the *Diaglott* translates it, "made a purification for sins." How clearly this shows that it was Jesus who was offered to effect the purification, the beginning of the great work of eradicating sin from the earth. The word "purification" is from a Greek word meaning a washing off, or cleansing, as of filth or dirt, and such is the character of sin as viewed by God. This is a reference to the typical purification of sins by the offerings and washings of the Law arrangements, as fulfilled antitypically through Christ. The use of the adverb "when" shows that the purification must first be accomplished before the blessing could come, and that the offering for sin by Jesus must be made before he could be glorified.

"Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Having placed the merit of his sacrifice in the hands of Justice, Jesus took his position to effect the salvation and deliverance of mankind. This was at the right hand of God, the exalted position promised to him as co-ruler with his Father—"Even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. 3:21) Again, "Sit thou at my right hand [the place of supreme favor and authority with the Father], until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Ps. 110:1) The expression, "Majesty on high," denotes the height of greatness, and such is the throne of God—the highest position of honor and trust.

Verse 4—"Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." Lucifer had sought this high position, endeavoring to exalt himself "above the stars of God." (Isa. 14:13) Jesus gained the position by obedience and self-denial. Through this training, he realized how great are the responsibilities, and how much care and patience and love must be exercised in carrying out the Heavenly Father's plans. The Son of God, before he came to earth, occupied a very high position in the divine plan but after his work of redemption he was still more highly exalted, being now the Head of the "new creation."

Verse 5—"For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?" This is a sweeping statement, showing that while all the angels are sons of God, none had the honor of being directly created, as had the Logos.

Paul here quoted scriptures to prove that these statements in the Psalm (2:1-7)—which were familiar to every Jew—could have reference to only One, and that was the anointed Son of God.—Ps. 89:20-27

"This day have I begotten thee"—This was spoken to a being already living, so apparently does not refer to Jesus' original begetting, or creation, but to his begetting to the divine nature at the time of his baptism.

Verse 6—*"And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him"*—or, as the *Diaglott* puts it, *"The Firstborn into the habitable."* This was Paul's crowning proof of Jesus' superiority, particularly that portion of the prophecy which refers to Jesus' second advent, when the proclamation is made that all, even the angels, shall worship him. Yes, all things are to be subdued unto him.—I Cor. 15:24-28

Verse 7—*"And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire."* The fact that Jesus was exalted above the angels bespeaks eloquently the height of his glory, for as Paul here shows, they occupied a very high position in God's arrangements. To them has been given the great honor and privilege of being God's special messengers, or agents. Thus did they serve Daniel, Moses, Abraham, and the prophets; and thus are they commissioned to serve us, who are heirs of the "great salvation."

Verse 8—*"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."* How great was the reward of being the trusted and chosen agent to dispense the favors and blessings of God to his creatures! Ultimately this will earn their undying love and loyalty and gratitude. None is so fit and suitable and able as Jesus for this exalted position. He earned it fairly by self-abnegation, and by perfect trust in and love for his Heavenly Father.—Rev. 5:9, 12, 13

The expression, "forever and ever," is, according to the *Diaglott*, "for the age." This perhaps is the millennial age, which will be the best of all ages up to that time. But it will lead to the still greater ages to come. In one sense, when all things are subdued under the Son, and he hands the kingdom over to the Father, to whom he himself will be subject, the kingdom will have accomplished its work of restoration and deliverance. That age is called the time of "regeneration" (Matt. 19:28), the "dispensation of the

fulness of times." (Eph. 1:10) But in a larger sense the kingdom of Christ will never end, because that which he establishes will continue throughout eternity. (Dan. 2:44; 7:18; Isa. 9:6, 7) When the messianic kingdom work is complete, there will be other works and other ages in which Jesus will share the throne of his Father.

The "sceptre" is Jesus' authority or right to rule. It is a sceptre of righteousness, that is, a sceptre granted to Jesus because of his righteousness and because the Heavenly Father knew that he would exercise it in harmony with righteousness.

Verse 9—"Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Jesus did not merely practice righteousness, he loved the right way. He also hated iniquity (Greek, lawlessness). God's ways when followed mean self-restraint, self-control, but the true children of God delight to be governed by his laws. In them they find the fullest and most enjoyable expression of all their faculties and powers.

Where God rules in the mind and heart there is liberty. That is what Jesus meant when he said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"—free from the twisting, morbid, paralyzing influence of disobedience and selfishness. Such freedom gives opportunity for the glorious expansion of every faculty and power of mind and body. Paul speaks of it as "the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Rom. 8:21

"Therefore." Yes, it was because Jesus thus loved the law of God and found delight in its every demand upon his being, that he could be trusted with "all power," and be given full authority over both men and angels; so he was "anointed" by God with the "oil of gladness" above his "fellows." Thus was he set apart and prepared in every particular to do a great work, a work that carries much responsibility.

The "oil of gladness," that is, the Holy Spirit, was pictured by the holy anointing oil of the tabernacle and the temple, the oil that was used to anoint the prophets, priests, and kings. How wonderfully the effect of his anointing was described by the prophet, when he wrote:

"The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; . . . and he shall not

judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth."—Isa. 11:2-4

The apostle associates the thought of "gladness" with the anointing which Jesus received, and in the Greek the thought is of supreme happiness and rejoicing. Such could not help but be the result of having been so highly honored by Jehovah, the Heavenly Father, not because he was exalted above his "fellows," but because he was considered worthy to be exalted to such degree.

As already noted, Jesus was exalted above every other being in the universe except his Father, hence above the angels. And Jesus was also exalted above the fellow-members of his mystical body; for he is the Head over the church in all things, but up to this point in the epistle the church has not been introduced into the discussion. The main argument thus far seems to be to prove that Jesus has been highly exalted above all other spirit beings, although it applies equally well to the church. See "The New Creation," pp. 131, 132.

Verse 10—"*And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands.*" Here it is Jesus who is referred to as Lord. The "beginning" here mentioned seems to be a reference to the beginning of God's dealings with man, that is, when he was created and given a home "eastward in Eden." (Gen. 2:8) Evidently this passage refers not to the literal heavens and earth, but to the rules and regulations for human society as given to Adam in Eden. This arrangement between man and his Creator was one of perfection and peace, of sweet fellowship in beauty of thought and word and deed. Through these arrangements, doorways of ever deeper delights could open as Adam continued to heed and obey the instructions given to him.

The foundations of human society were also there laid; that is, of family and fraternal relationships. They were on the basis of justice and love, foundations upon which the human race could have built a social structure as wholesome and sweet as that of heaven; and the people could have delighted in the unfolding wonders with which their Creator had filled the earth.

But Solomon said: "This only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Eccles. 7:29) Selfishness and sin crept in; suggestions from the father of

lies, the prince of darkness, twisted and distorted every one of those gracious arrangements which the Lord had instituted, until all that is now left is a pitiful mockery of what might have been.

Verses 11, 12—*"They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."* The literal earth "abideth forever." (Eccles. 1:4) God "created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited."

(Isa. 45:18) The symbolic heavens and earth which came into being at the time of man's creation perished in a certain sense at the time of the flood, and subsequent to the flood were controlled largely by Satan, the prince of this "present evil world."—Gal. 1:4

But with the establishment of the "new heavens and the new earth," these present heavens and earth will be completely destroyed. (II Pet. 3:7; Rev. 21:1, *Diaglott*) They shall perish because unfit for the glorious things of the future; being full of unspeakable iniquity, they have no place in the pure and holy arrangements of the coming kingdom of Christ. Paul describes the corruption of human society—"the foundations of the earth"—in Romans 1:21-32. The illustration of a worn garment suggests that originally, when first created, these symbolic heavens and earth were useful, but now are only fit to be discarded and destroyed.

"But thou remainest." The Logos—now the exalted Son of God—has been continuously and consistently righteous throughout the ages, so there is no need that he be set aside as Jehovah's honored servant. Yes, Jesus is the "Alpha and the Omega," which indicates he is the first and the last. Regardless of how many other changes may be made in the divine arrangements, Jesus will ever remain the One closest to his Heavenly Father in trust, in honor, and in authority.

Verse 13, 14—*"But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"* Here the reference is unmistakably to angelic beings, those mysterious and powerful beings of a superior order to man, long known to the Hebrews as direct agents of God. To none of these had God ever extended the astounding invitation to sit at his right hand, but it had been addressed prophetically to his Son. (Ps. 110:1) Thus the Son's superiority to all other servants of God becomes obvious.

THE DAWN

However, the angels have a high and honorable service to perform. They are "ministering spirits," rendering special service to the "heirs of salvation," or, as the *Diaglott* puts it, "those about to inherit salvation." (Again we see a reference to the "fellows" of verse 9, those who are to share the inheritance and exalted office of the Son, and who are so important in the divine plan that the holy angels are sent forth to serve them.)

They will always be ministering angels, or persons in attendance, to aid and serve wherever the Almighty directs, but their chief mission now is to help in the great present work of developing the church. Glorious, wonderful, and beautiful spirit beings are these, who during the kingdom will earn the loving attachment, respect, and admiration of the entire race of mankind. Thus all God's created beings will be knit together in mutual love and service.

—CONTRIBUTED

Discipline

The hammer of thy discipline, O Lord,
Strikes fast and hard. Life's anvil rings again
To thy strong strokes. And yet we know 'tis then
That from the heart's hot iron all abroad
The rich glow spreads. Great Fashioner divine,
Who spareth not, in thy farseeing plan,
The blows that shape the character of man,
Or fire that makes him yield to touch of thine,
Strike on, then, if thou wilt! For thou alone
Canst rightly test the temper of our will,
Or tell how these base metals may fulfil
Thy purpose—making all our life thine own.
Only we do beseech thee, let the pain
Of fiery ordeals through which we go
Shed all around us such a warmth and glow,
Such cheerful showers of sparks in golden rain,
That hard hearts may be melted, cold hearts fired,
And callous hearts be taught to feel and see
That discipline is more to be desired
Than all the ease that keeps us back from thee.

A Personal Devil

I listened to your radio program today, and by no stretch of my imagination can I agree with your idea of a thing or a person called the devil. All things are created by God, and all that he created is good; therefore why do you teach that there is one who is completely wicked, such as a personal devil?

THE Word of God does not leave us in doubt as to the existence of a personal devil. In the Bible we find a comprehensive, full length description of his creation, and of his perfection at that time, his usurpation of authority, his fall from perfection, and his eventual destruction. From this description we learn that the devil is neither a hideous monster with horns, hoofs, and tail, holding in his hands a pitchfork—as creedal theology sometimes presents him—nor is he merely an abstract principle of evil or negation, as “modernism” sometimes presents him. The Bible tells us that he is “the god of this world” who “hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”—II Cor. 4:4

Jesus certainly believed that there exists a personal devil, and it is wise, in our search for truth, not to reject his teachings. Some

of the things which he said concerning the devil cannot properly be applied to a mere principle. For example, in John 8:44 his words read, “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” Only an intelligent being can be a murderer, or a liar.

The only rational solution to the problem of the existence of the devil, in the face of the assurance that all God’s work is perfect, is the scriptural assertion that originally Satan was not an evil being, but after he was created he made himself evil through becoming the enemy of God by his ambition to have a kingdom of his own.

At the time of his creation he was given the name Lucifer, and concerning him it is written in Isaiah 14:12-15, “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, . . . I will be like the most High.”

That the devil is to be destroyed

is also taught in the Bible. During the one thousand years of Christ's reign, when "that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan" (Rev. 20:2) will be bound and held in restraint, the sin and the greed that he has fostered, together with all his evil works, will be removed from humanity; for concerning Christ's reign it is written, "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—I Cor. 15:25, 26

At the close of the thousand years the devil will be loosed out of his prison and later destroyed, for the apostle in Hebrews 2:14 tells us, "For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Jesus] also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." The Bible is completely harmonious.

That Which Remains

Hebrews 12:27 reads: "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." In these trying days when so many things are being shaken, can you tell us what things shall remain, so that we will know upon what we can depend?

THE apostle is his own interpreter of this statement of Scripture. In verses 18-21 of the chapter he has mentioned the trouble that accompanied the Lord's descent upon Mount Sinai at the time he gave Israel the Ten Command-

ments, and other features of the Law Covenant. Then he uses this experience in the history of Israel as a picture of the trouble which exists now in the time which just precedes the giving of the laws of the kingdom of God. The prophecy referred to in verse 26 is the one recorded in Haggai 2:6, 7 which reads: "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts."

We believe that this prophecy is being fulfilled now, in the international conflicts which are shaking world society, which in this text is referred to as the "earth." The prophecy also says, "I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." (Heb. 12:26) This, of course, does not refer to the heaven which is the throne of God, for that can never be moved. This is a prophetic statement referring to the present "heavens," or powers of spiritual control, which have been built upon the foundation of error and satanic wisdom. These erroneous powers of spiritual concepts will pass away before the present time of trouble has run its course, so surely no one should depend on these for comfort.

The apostle tells us of that which cannot be shaken in this evil day. In the verse which follows that of our question, he writes, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God ac-

YOUR QUESTIONS

ceptably with reverence and godly fear." The works of man and the works of Satan are being shaken to their foundations in preparation for the kingdom "which cannot be moved," for his kingdom is built upon the "sure foundation." How thrilling to know that after the trouble is over, the desire of all nations will come in the establishment of a "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—II Pet. 3:13

In reply to the question, Upon what can we depend in these days of trouble? listen to the admonition of the Master, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."—Matt. 6:33, 34

No Scriptural Authority

Do you believe in infant baptism?

NO! WE can find no scriptural authority for doing so.

It is a sad commentary upon church leadership to find so many still believing that a child (or anyone else for that matter), dying without being sprinkled with water, is eternally damned. The idea that our Father in heaven will forever condemn an innocent babe because some one neglected to take it to church to have a few drops of water flicked on its face and head, is born of fear, and based upon false teachings, as practiced by churchianity during the Dark

Ages. Not only is the practice of infant baptism erroneous, but the method of sprinkling is not the proper manner of water baptism.

It is the privilege of parents to instruct the children entrusted to them by the miracle of birth, from the very dawn of their existence, to recognize that the blessing of life is a gift from God. It is also a parental obligation, it seems to us, for those who are Christians, to pray for wisdom to train their children in the truths of salvation through Jesus Christ. Every child born into a Christian home should learn at an early age to love and obey the One who gave his only begotten Son, so that all may enjoy the blessing of everlasting life. However, this responsibility has nothing to do with infant baptism.

True baptism is for those who have reached the age of accountability, and who, through consecration of themselves to do the will of God, have become true disciples of Jesus Christ.

God Is Love

I can see God's power and intelligence in the marvelous handicraft of our world, but I cannot see divine love anywhere in the cruel and purposeless destruction of humanity. Can you help me to renew my waning faith?

IN ANSWERING this question it would be easy for us to say that the Scriptures tell us "God is love" (I John 4:8), and the assurance of God's Word should be sufficient for anyone's faith. But we know that it is not easy for some to accept

this familiar affirmation of the Word, in view of the grim, terrifying facts of existence which confront distressed humanity today.

In times such as these, when hope of man's ability to establish decent, peaceful living conditions in the world is far from assured, when it seems that we have learned little from the misery and pain of countless wars, there is a temptation to believe that God has forgotten us, or else that although he undoubtedly has power and wisdom, as manifested in the works of creation, he lacks the love and compassion for us that would cause him to use his power for the benefit of his created humanity.

Sometimes we blame God when we should blame ourselves for the conditions which come because of our lack of love one toward another, for as Robert Burns has aptly expressed it, "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn." The Apostle John gives to us a message we will do well to remember always, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.—I John 4:8-11

It was Adam's wilful disobedience of God's law that closed the way to life, but "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever be-

lieveth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Those who have come back into fellowship with God through this "new and living way" opened through the ransom provided by God's love, have learned to appreciate his tender mercy and great compassion, and with the apostle we can say, "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us. . . . Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."—I John 4:12-16

The one who knows the divine plan of the ages has learned that God's love is not restricted to a few, a little flock, who are being chosen during this Gospel age to obtain a heavenly inheritance to live and reign with Christ, but that his love embraces "all the families of the earth." (Gen. 12:3) All the willing and obedient of earth's millions will be blessed with life through Jesus Christ in the establishment of his earthly kingdom, for which we have long prayed, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Even those who have died will not be left out from feeling the warmth of his love, for they shall be restored to life to enjoy his blessings.

The Lord's Doing

"Good Hopes" Report for Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 1950

IT IS with a deep degree of thankfulness that we have the privilege of submitting a report of the co-operative efforts of the brethren everywhere who have been praying and laboring together in the interests of the kingdom. Let us emphasize that this is a report of what has been accomplished by the mutual efforts of the brethren rather than merely by a few who have had the privilege of collaborating at The Dawn office. But even more important, it has been truly the Lord's doing, because it was the result of his Spirit working in the hearts and lives of his consecrated people.

These co-operative services which the brethren at The Dawn have the privilege of co-ordinating are tract, kingdom card, and consolation card distribution; pilgrim work; radio work; and assistance—materially and spiritually—to our brethren in foreign countries. The Lord's blessing has been manifested richly upon all these phases of the work, and in most instances the amount of service rendered has been in excess of the preceding year. This was due partly to the increasing number of brethren participating in the service, and partly because the brethren as a whole, recognizing the shortness of the time in which we have to serve, are becoming more zealous in the sacrifice of time, strength, and means in keeping with their covenant to lay down even life itself in the service of him to whom they have given their all.

The brethren have been especially zealous in the distribution of free literature in one form or another. In the minds of many of the friends, tracts continue to be a favorite form of free literature. It is the work of distributing these messengers of good news that is referred to in "The Vow Song" as scattering "golden gems like morning dew." Yes, we are in the early morning of earth's new day, and the "dew" of truth is gently falling and finding its way into the hearts and lives of one here and there as a refreshing blessing from the Lord. None of us can know when we hand a tract to a person,

or leave one where it can be picked up by some inquirer, the immeasurable joy this little act of service may bring to another.)

As the responses to tracts and other free literature come to The Dawn, those who write will say that they found the message in a bus, or in a railway station, etc., while frequently one will say that he picked the tract up from the street. A printed message of the truth continues to be a silent ambassador of the Gospel as long as it remains intact, for there is always the possibility that it will be seen by someone, and read. We know of some who, within the year, had their first contact with the truth by reading a tract, and today they are rejoicing in "like precious faith" with us, and fully consecrated to the Lord and to his service.

What can be said of tracts is also true of kingdom cards. These, too, are silent bearers of the kingdom message. So far as mail response is concerned, the kingdom cards seem to be more effective than tracts. Since now practically every section of the country is covered with the message over the radio, many are enjoying a blessing in distributing kingdom cards which bear a message of the truth on one side and an announcement of the radio programs on the other. These can be furnished listing the "Frank and Ernest" broadcasts in any state desired.

The code kingdom cards are also still available in lots of 1,000. These bear a coded address to be used by those who request the booklet announced on the card. A record is kept of these code numbers, and this enables us, after the request has been filled, to return it to the one who originally distributed the card. Thus great encouragement has come to many who have participated in this work.

The consolation cards continue to be widely used. For the benefit of new readers we might explain that these are cards especially designed to be sent to friends and relatives of those who have died. The addresses for this purpose are usually obtained from the obituary columns of local newspapers. These cards bear a brief message of condolence, and in addition, offer to send free a booklet entitled "Hope." There are some rejoicing in the truth today whose first contact with the kingdom message was by means of a consolation card.

The average number of full-time pilgrims remained about the same throughout this last year. Some were obliged to give up the service because of illness or other reasons; but others found it possible to devote considerable time to this branch of the work, so that

on the whole the classes throughout the country have been served about as frequently as in the past, and in many cases, more often. As a direct result of the radio work, a number of new groups were formed which desired the traveling brethren to visit them. This, naturally, has been a great encouragement.

In addition to the pilgrim service rendered by those who have been able to make extended trips, much has been done by brethren serving locally over the week-ends, and during their vacation periods. A number of the larger ecclesias, through their elders, have rendered much valuable service to ecclesias in their districts. We feel that this phase of the pilgrim service could and should be greatly enlarged.

Nor has the pilgrim service been limited to the United States and Canada. Brother Russell Pollock visited ecclesias in Great Britain, Switzerland, and Germany, while brethren in these countries, and also in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and France, have themselves arranged a great deal of pilgrim service. This has been particularly true in Great Britain, where many of the classes are receiving regular pilgrim service rendered by brethren who are able to devote some of their week-ends to this work.

There are probably many other small groups, not only in this country, but also in Great Britain and in Continental Europe that would be glad to receive this service if they knew about it. Perhaps representatives of some of these will read this report. If so, you are invited to send in your request for pilgrim service. In this country, write to The Dawn, Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, New Jersey. In Great Britain, write to The Dawn, 98 Seel Street, Liverpool 1, England. This service is free, and even if you are alone, or are associated with a very small group, do not hesitate to request that the pilgrim brethren stop and visit you.

The traveling brethren are prepared to address groups of the consecrated, and also gatherings of the public. Public meetings afford excellent opportunities for inviting those interested through the "Frank and Ernest" broadcasts to hear a lecture on the truth. We are prepared, where desired, to supply suitable advertising matter for public meetings. You are invited to write for further information.

The Radio Service

The proclamation of the kingdom message by means of the "Frank and Ernest" radio programs has been the most widespread

activity of the year. It was shortly after the beginning of the fiscal year which we are reporting, that broadcasting of the message over the ABC Network began. The year's contract with ABC, to all practical purposes so far as this report is concerned, coincided with our fiscal year which began October 1, 1949. It was surely a blessed year for making known the glad tidings of the kingdom!

There is really no way of reporting all the results of a year's broadcasting over approximately 175 radio stations. There are many encouraging results we do know about, any one of which would well be worth the cost and the labor of the entire effort. But probably the greatest results are those of which we have no definite knowledge. The experiences of the brethren in meeting the public and talking with them constitute abundant proof that thousands are listening to the message regularly each week, gradually learning the truth, but do not write for literature. But are we not glad that these thousands are thus learning about the great God of love whom we worship and serve? How they will rejoice when, in the day of their visitation, they give themselves to the Lord, and together with others of the restitution class, walk up the "highway" that leads to holiness!)

Those who respond to the broadcasts are learning even more about the truth, and for this we are also glad. The number of free booklets sent out during the year, including those requested as a result of tract and kingdom card distribution, is shown in the statistical section of this report. We might say here, however, that the radio programs alone brought requests for booklets in excess of 100,000. This number was sent out direct from The Dawn office. We have no way of computing how many additional books and booklets were distributed to interested radio listeners by brethren in the field. We are confident, however, that these figures total many thousands. We know that there were at least 10,000 First Volumes alone, either sold or loaned to radio listeners.

It was a blessed year of intense activity for many brethren who were furnished opportunities of service by the enlarged radio witness. These are unanimous in their testimony that the joys received as a result of this service made it one of the happiest years of their lives. This is always the experience of those who, even in a small way, participate in the service of the Lord and of his truth. And this joy in turn gives strength to render even greater service as opportunities offer.

TALKING THINGS OVER

The first year of network broadcasting was a great faith-testing one for the brethren, particularly from the standpoint of the financial costs involved. It was a large undertaking, yet the Lord indicated clearly that it was his will that it be done. There was no wide margin of safety at any time, and on several occasions it was just barely possible to keep broadcasting the message from week to week. But the programs continued on the air until the full end of the contract year. Now we are well into the second year, having changed from the ABC to the Mutual Network, and we are confident that again the Spirit of the Lord working in the hearts of his people, will make possible the continuance of the radio witness as long as it is his will.

Since May the "Frank and Ernest" programs have been broadcast each Monday evening over Radio Luxembourg. These broadcasts are in the English language and designed particularly to reach the people of Great Britain. While the time of the broadcasts has not been too favorable—although the best we have been able to arrange thus far—nevertheless the response has been encouraging. These broadcasts have been a blessing to many of the brethren in Great Britain, for it has been the first witness of its kind to be given in their country. A letter from England states, "The work here has increased in interest since the commencement of the broadcasts in Europe."

It is our hope that during the present fiscal year the broadcasting of the truth in foreign countries will be increased. Already the message is going out every Sunday night over much of Asia, and we hope it will soon be beamed into Italy in the Italian language from Radio Monte Carlo. We expect that later the same station will be carrying the message in the French language.

Greatly to our surprise and joy, we have learned that the "Frank and Ernest" programs have been approved for use on Radio Athens, in Greece. A letter from Pan American Broadcasting Company, which represents this station, writes:

"We are happy to tell you that our local people in Greece have accomplished the quite difficult task of obtaining time for your program over Radio Athens. Since from time to time we have attempted to place various programs on this station, usually with poor success, you can appreciate the fact that your program must have met with particularly good approval on the part of the government authorities."

There are still other opportunities for broadcasting the truth in foreign countries, but we are waiting on the Lord to see just how much further available funds will permit us to extend the witness. We are leaving it all in his hands.

The Overseas Service

The service the brethren in this country have been able to render to those in less favored parts of the world during the year was again marked by the Lord's blessing. The amount of food and clothing sent overseas was much less than the year before. This was partly because the needs were not quite so acute. And it also became increasingly difficult to send food and clothing to the brethren in the Eastern Zone of Germany with any degree of assurance that it would reach its destination. However, a great deal was sent and received, much to the advantage of the brethren who were in need of it.

The amount of literature sent to foreign countries was greater than in former years. Besides, we were able to render some financial assistance to brethren, which enabled them to publish much needed books and booklets.

A great deal of literature was sent to the brethren in India, where several are spending much of their time in placing it in the hands of those who are able to read the English language. The work in India is conducted mostly among those who have already renounced their heathen gods and have accepted one or another version of nominal Christianity. Considering the limited amount of effort that is made, quite a number of these are embracing the truth and rejoicing in the hope of the kingdom.

Arrangements are about complete for a more concerted effort to proclaim the kingdom message in Germany, and to serve the brethren there. Brother Pollock visited several of the classes in Germany and found the brethren there rejoicing in the truth and desirous of co-operating in a more general effort to serve the brethren and to make known the glad tidings of the kingdom. An office of The Dawn has been opened in West Berlin, and it is expected that The Dawn Magazine will be published monthly in the German language from now on. German-speaking brethren in this country may send their subscriptions to the German Dawn direct to the Berlin office. The address and price will be found on page one of this Dawn. Let us earnestly pray for the work in Germany, and

TALKING THINGS OVER

throughout all the foreign lands, for the brethren in these countries have many difficulties with which to contend.

The Dawn is also now published in the French, Dano-Norwegian, Swedish, German, and Greek languages. With the exception of the Greek edition, these are all published by the brethren in these respective countries. We believe it will be an encouragement to these to receive subscriptions from the United States and Canada, and these may be sent direct to the various foreign branches, the addresses of which will be found on page one.

To many readers of The Dawn, the expression, "Good Hopes," is a very familiar one. For the benefit of our new readers, however, we might explain that it signifies that over a period of a year one has reasonable hopes of being able to contribute a certain amount in support of the work being conducted by the Dawn Bible Students Association. This information, enables us to plan the work upon the basis of a fairly accurate knowledge of how much money will be available to meet our obligations.

Ordinarily these "Good Hopes" indications are sent to us by the friends following the appearance of our published report. However, because of the possibility of network broadcasting which presented itself in the late summer of 1949 and again in 1950, opportunity was given for The Dawn readers, and others who were interested, to send their expressions of "Good Hopes" in connection with this enlarged radio witness. But in reality there is no specific time when these have to be received. It is always a help to know as nearly as possible the amount of funds which will be available. We endeavor to use faithfully all that is entrusted to us for the work, and the statistical report which appears on the following page will, we hope, be encouraging to all.

*Roll on, O day of joy sublime
Thou consummating hour of time,
When the long years of evil's sway
Shall end in God's eternal day;
When sin and sorrow shall be past,
And joy and peace shall come at last,
And 'neath the circuit of the sun,
God's will shall as in heaven be done.*

STATISTICAL "GOOD HOPES" REPORT

October 1, 1949–September 30, 1950

| | Received | Transferred | Expended |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| General Fund | \$ 16,766.75 | -\$18,537.78 | |
| Radio Fund | 155,701.02 | 14,657.51 | \$170,358.53 |
| Traveling Speakers' Fund | 3,248.27 | 2,676.85 | 5,925.12 |
| Free Literature Fund | 1,020.29 | 13,039.76 | 14,060.05 |
| Free Subscription Fund | 158.50 | | 158.50 |
| Overseas Fund | 998.71 | 2,884.87 | 3,883.58 |
| D a w n Publications, Subscriptions, Be- quests, etc. | <u>42,305.44</u> | <u>- 14,721.21</u> | <u>27,584.23</u> |
| Total Receipts and Expenditures | <u>\$220,198.98</u> | | <u>\$221,970.01</u> |

GENERAL FUND: \$16,766.75 was contributed to this fund during the year, and \$18,537.78 was allocated to other funds as required.

RADIO FUND: \$170,358.53 was spent to cover the cost of "Frank and Ernest" broadcasts on the ABC Network, and on other stations in Canada, Europe, and the United States, totaling approximately 10,000 individual broadcasts. This expenditure also includes the cost of preparing electrical transcriptions, and other items incidental to the radio work.

TRAVELING SPEAKERS' FUND: Pilgrim service was supplied to 1,686 class meetings, with a total attendance of 70,093; and to 84 public meetings, with a total attendance of 7,180.

IN GREAT BRITAIN: Number of class meetings served in Great Britain during the year covered in this report, 150. Total attendance 1,829. These figures are exclusive of meetings served by Brothers Herrscher and Pollock.

FREE LITERATURE FUND: Free booklets and Dawns supplied in response to radio, kingdom card, and Consolation card requests, 104,733; and 6,450,810 tract pages of other free literature. These figures include free literature distributed in Great Britain.

OVERSEAS FUND: \$998.71 was donated to this fund, and expenditures amounted to \$3,883.58. In addition, much overseas service has been rendered by the brethren individually. This figure includes cost of food and clothing sent by The Dawn, and also foreign literature. Some of this was published abroad, and we do not have the exact figures available. Included, however, are an edition of French Manna Books, and other literature in the German, Dano-Norwegian, Swedish, and Greek languages. The First Volume in German has been finished since the end of our fiscal year, so the cost is not included here.

A Shelter For God's People

"Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy."—Psalm 61:3

BECAUSE of the uncertainties of human life, its trials and tribulations, sorrows and troubles, experienced under the reign of sin and death, mankind realise that above all things they need shelter. Hence, all seek such shelter as may be available, or such as they can contrive. For instance, in addition to a roof over their heads, men need shelter from financial worries, generally secured by money or real estate. They need protection from law breakers, hence the police forces of civilised lands; shelter from the forces of hostile governments, provided for in armies and navies. Such arrangements as insurance companies do a great deal toward bridging over the uncertainties of life. These, as well as many other things, secure for the human animal a measure of peace and safety. The provision of tens of thousands of air raid shelters brings home the point here emphasised.

However, when the Psalmist says, "Thou hast been a shelter for me," he is the spokesman for the consecrated people of God, the

Christian church of the Gospel age. Whatever shelter we may enjoy along natural lines, resulting from some of the foregoing human ordinances and arrangements, is attributed by Christians not to chance or good fortune, but to God's providences for his people; for it is largely through these means that God fulfils the apostle's assurance, "We have the promise of the life that now is"; and again, the words of the Apostle Peter: "His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life"—all things which are necessary so far as the present life is concerned. Peter also adds, "and godliness"; that is, all we need in order to develop that godlike character as seen in our Lord and Exemplar, Christ Jesus.—I Tim. 4:8; II Pet. 1:3

While thankful for whatever shelter we may enjoy along natural lines, we realise that the special needs of the Christian are spiritual ones, and that the Lord's people specially need shelter as new creatures in Christ Jesus. This is doubtless what the Psalmist had in mind when, reviewing past experiences, he said, "Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy."

Many illustrations of this shelter of the saints are brought to our attention in Holy Writ. For instance, as a shelter from the great catastrophe of the flood which de-

stroyed "the world of the ungodly," God provided an ark for Noah and his family—a type of Christ, and specially the protection provided in Christ from the great antitypical flood which is to cause the present evil world to pass away.—I Pet. 3:20-22; II Pet. 2:5

As a shelter for Israel's firstborn from the destruction of the tenth plague, God provided the blood of the passover lamb: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exod. 12:13): a beautiful picture of the shelter from condemnation provided for the firstborn of the Gospel age, the church of the first-born, through the blood of Christ, our Passover Lamb.

Again, if a man had accidentally killed his fellow and was in danger of his life being taken by the next of kin (the divine arrangement under the Mosaic Law), God provided six cities of refuge, to one of which the man slayer might flee for shelter until his case could be investigated. (Num. 35:9-29) This was a fitting picture of the refuge provided in Christ for all but wilful sin against light and knowledge.—Heb. 10:26

"Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee."

Another typical shelter was that provided for Elijah in the cleft of the rock at Horeb. The account tells us that after being awakened and provided with some special food by the messenger of Jehovah, Elijah went in the strength of that meat forty days until he reached the mount of God. (I Kings 19:7, 8) The true church, as the antitype of Elijah, reached the anti-

typical mount of God by the close of the times of the Gentiles, A. D. 1914, when Michael began to stand up—assume control; the result being the beginning of the "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1) In other words, at that time earth's rightful King took to himself his great power and began to reign, with the resultant work of overturning the old order of things of this present evil world.—Rev. 11:17, 18

The three stages of this great time of trouble seem to be pictured by the three exhibitions witnessed by Elijah while sheltering in the cave; the strong winds breaking in pieces the rocks; the earthquake; the fire, followed by the still, small voice. In the antitype, we see how the winds of war have been followed by the symbolical earthquake, the great social revolution; this phase of the tribulation being helped forward by a second world war, even more destructive than the first. This, according to Bible prophecy, leads on to a period of general lawlessness ("fire") which completes the destruction of the present order of things in church and state; to be followed by the still small voice of truth, eventually to be heard by all during the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom.

In the midst of these experiences, God's consecrated people are specially sheltered and protected by the truth and by God's providential care. The prophet intimates this, saying, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide

THE BRITISH SECTION

thysself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."—Isa. 26:20

Thus, in this dark nighttime which is settling down upon the world, when the stormy winds of strife as well as of false doctrine are becoming more and more violent, our Heavenly Father has made ample provision for his people, providing us with the whole armour of God, bringing us into the secret place of the Most High,

and under the shadow of the Almighty.—Ps. 91:1

May past experiences of God's faithfulness and care for his own give us strong consolation, and good hope for future days; for he is the same, he changes not. (Mal. 3:6) Our Redeemer, too, is similarly unchangeable, as we are exhorted to remember "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."—Heb. 13:7, 8

"The Good Fight of Faith"

I came and saw, and hoped to conquer,
As the great Roman once had done;
His was the one hour's torrent shock of battle,
My field was harder to be won.
I came and saw, but did not conquer,
The foes were fierce, their weapons strong;
I came and saw, but yet I did not conquer,
For me the fight was sore and long.
They said the war was brief and easy,
A word, a look, would crush the throng;
To some it may have been a moment's conflict,
To me it has been sore and long.
They said the threats were coward bluster,
To brave men they could work no wrong;
So some may boast of swift and easy battle,
To me it has been sore and long.
And yet I know that I shall conquer,
Though sore and hard the fight may be;
I know, I know I shall be more than victor
Through Him who won the fight for me.
I fight, not fearful of the issue,
My victory is sure and near;
Yet not the less with hand and eye all watchful,
Grasp I my buckler and my spear.
For I must fight, if I would conquer,
'Tis not by flight that fields are won;
And I must conquer, if I would inherit
The victor's joy and crown and throne.

THE DAWN

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

| | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|----|--|
| W. CLARKE | | | |
| Anerley | January | 28 | |
| C. A. CORNELL | | | |
| Leigh | January | 14 | |
| Warrington | | 14 | |
| Luton | February | 18 | |
| J. E. HUMPHREY | | | |
| Ipswich | January | 21 | |
| J. H. MURRAY | | | |
| Dewsbury | January | 28 | |
| Pontypool | February | 11 | |
| Anerley | | 25 | |
| F. LINTER | | | |
| Liverpool (Evening) | January | 14 | |

W. E. PAMPLING

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------|----|
| Liverpool (Afternoon) .. | January | 14 |
| Yeovil | | 28 |
| Eastleigh | February | 18 |

A. SPAIN

| | | |
|-----------------|---------|----|
| Maidstone | January | 14 |
|-----------------|---------|----|

C. W. SCHOLEFIELD

| | | |
|------------------|----------|----|
| Oxford | January | 21 |
| Leigh | February | 11 |
| Warrington | | 11 |

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THE DAWN

98 Seel Street

Liverpool 1

Encouraging Letters

A Year's Rejoicing

Dear Friends: I am enclosing a check for renewal of my subscription to *The Dawn*, and apologize for having delayed doing this. I should never have forgotten the anniversary of my first receipt of *The Dawn*, for it was (together with the "Frank and Ernest" programs and the Volumes ordered from them) the beginning of my contact with God's church. I have missed very few of the study classes since contacting the friends here, and I just recently symbolized my consecration. I can never express in words my deep appreciation to "Frank and Ernest" and to all of *The Dawn* workers for the part they had in finding this lost sheep. May our dear Shepherd reward you according to the great love he feels for all his wandering ones. We consider it a privilege to have a part in the "Frank and Ernest" programs as a class, and are constantly praying for them, and for all of you. We wish you could be with us at our convention on New Year's. L. B., Ariz.

From a Pastor

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I have been listening to your program over the Mutual Network for several Sundays, and both my wife and I enjoy your discussions very much. We are thankful that you

are willing to present the fundamental truths of the Bible to the world without any apology and without weakening it to the extent that its original meaning is obscure. It is my firm conviction that the Lord will bless your program and efforts in this way. I would like to have a copy of the book you have mentioned, "God and Reason." It sounds like an excellent book. I will be very grateful to you for this. Sincerely yours, J. M. C., Georgia

"Death Is So Rude"

Dear Sirs: I received your wonderful book, "Hope." I read every word and then passed it on to a neighbor, so would be glad to have another one. This street is one of sorrow. There are ten widows within three blocks. I lost my husband one year ago, and I can say that we grasp at anything that will give us a little comfort. We listen to your program every Sunday. Death is so rude to tear us apart without notice. I am seventy-five years old. We were married forty-five years. Please send us anything that we can read. Yours truly, M. B., Wash.

"Pitiful"

Dear Sirs: Please mail me the book advertised on the radio, "Creation." My boy is now in the

(Continued on page 64)

Speakers Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

WILLIAM A. BAKER
Salem, Ore. January 21

JULIUS BEDNARZ
Philadelphia, Pa. . . Dec. 30-Jan. 1
Baltimore, Md. (Morning) 14
Wilmington, Del. (Afternoon) ... 14
Pottstown, Pa. 21

FRED A. BRIGHT
Albany, N. Y. January 14
Wallingford, Conn. 21

ORLANDO D. DEIFER
Philadelphia, Pa. Dec. 30-Jan. 1
Lehighton, Pa. 21

IRVING C. FOSS
Whittier, Calif. January 14

EARL L. FOWLER
Oakland, Calif. January 7

WILLIAM J. HOLLISTER
Paterson, N. J. January 14
Philadelphia, Pa. Dec. 30-Jan. 1

JOHN G. HULL
Riverside, Calif. (Morn.) January 14
Pomona, Calif. (Afternoon) 14

LEVI JACOBS
Philadelphia, Pa. Dec. 30-Jan. 1

PETER KOLLIMAN
Philadelphia, Pa. Dec. 30-Jan. 1
Lancaster, Pa. 21

ARTHUR H. KRUMPOLT
Easton, Pa. January 14

RAYMOND J. KRUPA
Philadelphia, Pa. Dec. 30-Jan. 1
New Haven, Conn. (Morning) ... 7
Waterbury, Conn. (Afternoon) .. 7
Groton, Conn. (Evening) 20
Groton, Conn. (Morning) 21
New London, Conn. (Afternoon) 21

LUDLOW P. LOOMIS
Mahanoy City, Pa. January 14

J. Y. MAC AULAY
Orlando, Fla. Dec. 31, Jan. 1
St. Petersburg, Fla. 3, 9
Miami, Fla. 5-8
Orlando, Fla. 10
Melbourne, Fla. 11
Riverhills, Fla. 12, 13
Jacksonville, Fla. 14
Clio, Ala. 16-21
Atlanta, Ga. 23
Augusta, Ga. 25, 26
Hendersonville, N. C. 27, 28
Dana, N. C. 29, 30
Knoxville, Tenn. Jan. 31-Feb. 1

NICHOLAS MOLENAAR
Santa Ana, Calif. January 21

LEON H. NORBY
Orlando, Fla. Dec. 31-Jan. 1
Jacksonville, Fla. 3
Riverhills, Fla. 4
Augusta, Ga. 5
Atlanta, Ga. 6, 7
Knoxville, Tenn. 8
Hendersonville, N. C. 9, 10
Dana, N. C. 11, 12
Greensboro, N. C. 13, 14
Washington, D. C. 15
Allentown, Pa. 28

ADOLPH OBENLAND
Orlando, Fla. Dec. 31-Jan. 1

HARRY PASSIOS
Chicago, Ill. Dec. 31-Jan. 1
Washington, Pa. 21

E. K. PENROSE
Chicago, Ill. Dec. 30-Jan. 1

WILBUR N. POE
Chicago, Ill. Dec. 31-Jan. 1

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| J. H. L. TRAUTFELTER | | W. NORMAN WOODWORTH | |
| Washington, D. C. | January 21 | Philadelphia, Pa. .. | Dec. 30-Jan. 1, 7, 14 |
| J. I. VAN HORNE | | CHRISTIAN W. ZAHNOW | |
| Duquesne, Pa. | January 7 | Phoenix, Ariz. | Dec. 30-Jan. 1 |
| East Liverpool, Ohio | 14 | Tucson, Ariz. | 2-4 |
| FELIX S. WASSMANN | | Hollywood, New Mexico | 6, 7 |
| Philadelphia, Pa. | Dec. 30-Jan. 1 | Lubbock, Tex. | 14 |
| Paterson, N. J. | 7 | San Angelo, Tex. | 15, 16 |
| CLAUDE R. WEIDA | | Austin, Tex. | 17, 18 |
| Philadelphia, Pa. | Dec. 30-Jan. 1 | San Antonio, Tex. | 19-21 |
| Reading, Pa. | 7 | Corpus Christi, Tex. | 22, 23 |
| Wilkes Barre, Pa. | 28 | Kingsville, Tex. | 24 |
| | | Taft, Tex. | 25, 26 |
| | | Galveston, Tex. | 28 |
| | | Houston, Tex. | 29 |
| | | Ft. Worth, Tex. | 30, 31 |

CONVENTIONS

CHICAGO, ILL., December 30-January 1—Secretary, Mr. E. M. Jezuit, 4327 S. Christiana Avenue, Chicago 32, Illinois.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., December 30-January 1—Y. W. C. A. Building, 2027 Chestnut Street. Secretary, Miss Alice K. Siddons, 1648 Dyre Street, Philadelphia 24, Pa.

PHOENIX, ARIZ., December 30-January 1—Osborn School Auditorium, 3415 North Central Avenue, Phoenix. Secretary, Mr. Stuart Sowers, 1730 E. Roma, Phoenix, Arizona.

ORLANDO, FLA., December 31-January 1—Opens Sunday at 9:30 a. m., 1910 Hillcrest, Orlando. The remaining sessions will be held in the Florida Realtors' Building, 108 S. Lake Ivanhoe Boulevard, Orlando. Secretary, Mrs. Stanley Jeuck, 1910 Hillcrest, Orlando, Fla.

ALBANY, N. Y., January 14—5 Lodge Street.

SAGINAW, MICH., January 14—Woman's Club, 311 N. Jefferson St.

BOWIE, TEXAS, January 21—For details write, Mr. J. Frank Whitaker, R. F. D., 1, Sunset, Texas.

CHICAGO, ILL., January 28—910 North LaSalle St.

DETROIT, MICH., January 28—Macca-bees Building, Woodward at Putnam.

MIAMI, FLA., February 23-25—Simpson Memorial Hall, 55 S. W. 17th Road. For details write the secretary, Mrs. F. M. Castleberry, 2028 S. W. 2nd Street, Miami 35, Florida.

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(Continued from page 61)
seventh grade, and he is being taught evolution. My answers seem to impress him very little. It really is pitiful to send our children to school to be taught such untruths. I trust your book may be of help to my boy. Mrs. R. S. J., Calif.

Made Him Wonder

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I came home Sunday night and was lying in bed resting. I turned on the radio for some music to put me to sleep, as I always do, but instead of music I heard you talking, and it struck me so I could not turn from it. It really made me think! Did you say you would mail one of your books, free, that is, "When a Man Dies"? Now please forgive me for taking up so much of your time, but your discussion really put me to wondering. Thank you gentlemen, and if I may ask, please pray for me. Yours truly, Mr. R. J. P., Ariz.

Letting the Light Shine

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Recently Rev. Ludwick visited me and I loaned him several of my booklets. He particularly liked "Our Lord's Return," and is now reading "Behold Your King." So, at his request, I am writing you for more literature, for he is very much interested. I just want to say that I have found real satisfaction in reading your literature; and much as I hate to part with my booklets, I give them all out to friends, and they in turn lend them, until now my library is completely exhausted. I thank God daily that I am awakening to his wonderful

plan, and I am overjoyed as I see the Scriptures being fulfilled. I live only in the hope of seeing the completion of the kingdom. May God bless you, and continue to use you to spread the Gospel news. With Christian love, Mrs. M. F. M., Kentucky

Can Hardly Wait

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I can hardly wait from one Sunday to another to hear the Word of God explained in a way that even a small child can understand. We think this is the way our Lord would like the people to do—that is, discuss his Word with one another, that they might all understand. Please send me the book, "The Divine Plan of the Ages." Sincerely, Mr. C. G. W., Texas

Now Understands

Gentlemen: I want to let you know how grateful I am for having been led to listen to your Sunday broadcasting, and having thereby found the real meaning of the Bible, the Word of God. For many years I have studied different religions, but still could not feel entirely satisfied. But with your talks over the radio, and having read the literature you have so kindly sent to me, I feel that I have now reached an understanding of the spiritual truth for which I have been seeking and praying. May God continue to lead you on and on, and bless and prosper you and all those who are associated in spreading this marvelous truth. Very sincerely, Mrs. M. F. S., Wash., D. C.

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THE DAWN

East Rutherford

NEW JERSEY

To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach

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

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

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

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

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

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35