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Thy Kingdom Come

***"It came to pass,
that, . . . one of his
disciples said unto
him, Lord, teach us
to pray. . . . And he
said unto them,
When ye pray, say,
Our Father which
art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy
name. Thy
kingdom come. Thy
will be done, as in
heaven, so in
earth."***
—**Luke 11:1,2**

WE CANNOT OVERESTI-mate the importance of the kingdom and its place in the message of God's plan for the entire world. Not only is it given the prominent position in the model prayer, it occupied much of the preaching of Jesus and his disciples. (Matt. 9:35) Many of the parables of Jesus were given to explain features of the kingdom. It was the central feature of the preaching of Peter, Paul, and others when

they spoke to the people.

In Acts 2:40 (*Revised Standard Version*), we read, "[Peter] testified with many other words and exhorted them saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." Most Christian congregations of today would expect their pastor to say, "Save this crooked generation," failing to realize that due

to the evil results of sin it is past saving in its current state. Like the apostles of old, our concern is not to save this “present evil world” at all. (Gal. 1:4) Rather, our concern is for Christ and for his kingdom, which the Scriptures show is to be an entirely new arrangement, ordered by God, for the purpose of bringing about man’s salvation to its full completion.

Concerning this subject, it is needful that we explore the “what,” “when,” “who,” “where,” and “how” of the kingdom and its operation. To do so properly, and if we have faith in the promise of the model prayer, “Thy kingdom come,” we must first put aside human creeds, traditions, and philosophies. Only by examining the scriptural testimony concerning the kingdom can we explore this subject with the certainty contained in God’s Word.

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM AND ITS PURPOSE?

Briefly stated, the kingdom is the arrangement of God that will permit disobedient mankind to return to his favor, to perfection of being, and to everlasting life. The dictionary defines “kingdom” as a state or government having a king or queen as its head. In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, we have described a kingdom designed for the benefit of man, and also the events which show how that arrangement was withdrawn. In Revelation, the last book of the Bible, we have described the restoration of God’s kingdom and how mankind will be blessed.

The disobedience of our first parents not only meant no more blessings, it meant death—“For as in Adam all die.” (I Cor. 15:22) The Bible promises

that not only will blessings flow to all under the new kingdom arrangement, even the curse of death itself will disappear—"For he [the king] must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—vss. 25,26

Although it was the disobedience of Adam and Eve which brought to an end that first kingdom established by God, the progeny of our first parents have been no less disobedient. Paul tells us, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) This clearly refers to all human beings. There are others, too, who the Bible says have been disobedient. "God did not spare angels when they had sinned, but hurling them down to Tartarus ["incarcerated," *Strong's* definition] consigned them to caves of darkness, keeping them in readiness for judgment." (II Pet. 2:4, *Weymouth Translation*) The kingdom is designed specifically to bring all intelligent creation in the universe back into harmony with God.

WHEN WILL "THY KINGDOM COME"?

The kingdom of God will arrive after the present kingdom of Satan is destroyed. There should be no mistaking that the present kingdom is not of God. Consider the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness: "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt

thou serve.” (Matt. 4:8-10) Note that Jesus did not deny Satan’s claim to rulership over the kingdoms of the world. Jesus knew, in fact, that Satan was “the prince of this world.”—John 14:30

The question remains: when will God set up his kingdom? Daniel, in the second chapter of his prophecy, interpreted a dream for King Nebuchadnezzar. In the dream, the king had seen a great image consisting of various metals. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom was represented by the golden head, and that other kingdoms would subsequently rise up. Daniel further said that after the end of these kingdoms, God’s kingdom would be set up. “In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” (Dan. 2:44) We have seen all the kingdoms represented by this great image come and go. Their days of glory are over, and their fragmentation to the point of eventual destruction is going on before our vision. God’s kingdom is next to arrive on the scene, and it, Daniel says, will never be destroyed.

In Zephaniah 3:8,9, we read, “Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.” The gathering of the nations, spoken

here by the prophet, is going on before our eyes. It will not be long until the “fire” of earth’s last great world conflict will destroy all of man’s arrangements and the present kingdom of Satan. It is critical to note here, however, that the earth itself is not to be destroyed. After this final battle is over, the prophet says, the people will begin to taste the benefits of God’s kingdom.

WHO WILL ADMINISTER GOD’S KINGDOM?

It is God’s arrangement that his kingdom will be administered by his son, Christ Jesus, and the glorified church. The work of the kingdom, and specifically the role of a chief administrator, is described by the psalmist, “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. . . . All kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. . . . Men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.” (Ps. 72:8,11,17) As beautiful as the words of the psalmist are, the “He” is not named. It is no mystery, however, for as we turn to the New Testament, we find these words, “At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”—Phil. 2:10,11

The administration of God’s kingdom is not just through Jesus Christ alone, although he is the one specifically named. The Scriptures show that additionally his true church is so closely associated with him that we are given the picture of Jesus Christ as the head of the church, which is his body. This picture is beautifully recorded by Paul at the end of

the fifth chapter of Ephesians, when he writes about the love that should exist between a husband and a wife. “Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. . . . Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. For we are members of his body. . . . This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” (Eph. 5:23,25,30,32) These verses explain that Christ shares the kingdom administration with his church, as a husband shares with his wife. By being a part of Christ, the church inherits what is his—”If ye be Christ’s [belong to Christ], then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—Gal. 3:29

WHERE WILL THE KINGDOM BE?

God’s kingdom will be on earth and in heaven. Sincere students of the Bible many times use the phrase “two phases of the kingdom,” meaning that the kingdom consists of two parts, a heavenly and an earthly. This truth is alluded to by Jesus in the closing words of our theme scripture. Yet, many of our Christian friends believe only in a heavenly kingdom, and they hope that is where they will be when they die.

There are heavenly promises, to be sure, but there are also earthly blessings promised to mankind. The dual aspects of God’s kingdom are well-described in these words of Paul: “This is in harmony with God’s merciful purpose for the government of the world when the times are ripe for it—the purpose which He has cherished in His own mind of restoring the whole creation to find its one Head in Christ; yes, things in Heaven and things

on earth, to find their one Head in Him.” (Eph. 1:9,10 WT) Note that Paul specifically mentions creation in both heaven and earth as being purposed by God to be restored under the headship of Christ.

Let us look more closely, however, at the earthly phase of the kingdom. Doing so, we see that the Scriptures contain promises to the world of an earthly nature, which will be fulfilled during the operation of the kingdom. Among these are the prophetic words of the psalmist and of the Prophet Isaiah: “The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.” “When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Ps. 37:11,29; Isa. 26:9) Who are “the inhabitants of the world”? Are they only those fortunate enough to be alive when Christ sets up the kingdom? Such cannot be the case, as it would be a travesty of God’s attributes of justice and love. The inhabitants of the earth spoken of by the prophet are, in fact, all who have ever lived. This means that all the dead will need to be resurrected.

If some find it hard to believe that there will be a resurrection of all the dead, they are not alone. Paul questioned the rulers of his day, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you [King Agrippa], that God should raise the dead?” (Acts 26:8) Down through the ages, due to the deception of the Adversary, mankind has generally found it far easier to believe that those who die really go on living elsewhere instead of believing that they are truly dead, to be someday made alive by the power of God. Earlier in the Book of Acts, Paul makes it

clear that he believed in an all-encompassing resurrection, and that this was prophetically spoken of in the Law and by the prophets. “This I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God . . . that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”—Acts 24:14,15

Indeed, if there is no resurrection of the dead, we have many problems harmonizing such a thought with the Scriptures. A case in point is the statement made by Stephen regarding Abraham: “He [God] gave him [Abraham] none inheritance in it [the land of promise], no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him.” (Acts 7:5) Since we know that God’s promises are sure, we must conclude that Abraham is coming back from the dead—else how will he ever receive the land as a “possession.”

Similar reasoning was employed by Jesus when he showed the Sadducees that there was a resurrection. “Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.” (Luke 20:37,38) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were long since dead when God spoke to Moses at the burning bush. If, as this passage says, the Lord was still their God in Moses’ day, the conclusion must be that they will someday be made alive through a resurrection from death.

One reason that the concept of a resurrection of the dead is hard for people to understand is that many believe the earth is not big enough to hold everybody. We have often heard the term “population explosion,” and indeed the total population of the earth reached 7 billion for the first time in late 2011. This being the case, how could the earth handle the resurrection of everyone who has ever lived, and how many might that be? The *Population Reference Bureau* (prb.org) says this is one of the most frequently asked questions they receive. In a paper first published in 1995, they explain how difficult it is to estimate such a number. However, they make educated guesses based on many factors, and recently came up with this total: 108 billion births as of 2011.

Today the earth is home to just over 7 billion people. This means that approximately 6.5% of all the people who have ever lived on this planet are alive today. Thus if God were to resurrect all those of mankind who have ever died, we would have over fifteen times more people than currently live on the earth. Can the earth possibly hold that many?

The United States contains over 3.5 million square miles of land. In the New York borough of Manhattan, people have an average of 41 square yards each of living space, assuming they all lived at ground level. At that density, it would require less than half the land area of the United States to hold 108 billion people. While such density is typically not desirable to most, it should be helpful to remember that, in this example, we are talking about putting all these people in less than one half of the land area of the United States. This amounts

to less than 1% of the planet's total land area. Those who have flown extensively know that there are vast areas of the earth which are deserted, not populated by anyone. The Scriptures assure us that God's plan is designed to bless all mankind, and although some may doubt, there will be no mistake in God's kingdom regarding people having enough space to live comfortably.

Having food to feed this many may also sound like an insurmountable problem to bringing everyone back to life. This thought, however, mistakenly assumes that the same God who gave ancient Israel food to eat for forty years in the wilderness will be unable to overrule the feeding of all mankind in the kingdom. "Is the LORD'S hand waxed short?" (Num. 11:23) Certainly the great God of the universe will be well capable of bringing about the conditions and resources necessary to feed all mankind in his kingdom.

HOW WILL THE KINGDOM OPERATE?

The kingdom will operate under the righteous heavenly rulership of Christ and his church. Under that heavenly authority, the earthly phase of the kingdom will operate through specially selected human representatives. All will be done under the principles of righteousness, and the operation of the kingdom will eventually destroy all opposing elements.

Psalm 45 is prophetic in this regard. There we read a description of the king—Christ Jesus—and a woman dressed in fine gold—the church. This psalm also talks about another group: "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou

mayest make princes in all the earth.” (Ps. 45:16) The “fathers” from the Jewish point of view were all their ancestors, particularly those who were most righteous. Sometimes we refer to these as “patriarchs” or “Ancient Worthies.” This simply means that they lived in ancient times and were deemed worthy of God’s special favor because of their faith. Psalm 45 says in prophetic language that these faithful “fathers” will be princes in all the earth in God’s kingdom.

The faithfulness of these is attested in the book of Hebrews. “These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” (Heb. 11:39,40) That “better thing” is the heavenly reward promised to the church, Christ’s footstep followers of the present Gospel Age. These faithful ancient ones will also be rewarded, by being made the earthly representatives of the kingdom—“princes in all the earth.”

The operating mode of the kingdom will be one of righteousness, according to another psalm: “In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.” (Ps. 72:7) The concept of peacefulness is also described by the Prophet Isaiah, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”—Isa. 11:9

It is easy to emphasize these positive aspects of the kingdom. We are also told, however, that all opposing elements will be destroyed. “It shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that

prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.” (Acts 3:23) At the conclusion of Jesus’ parable of the sheep and the goats, we read about the final end of those who, after being given ample time to reform and come to righteousness, fail to do so and are judged unworthy of continued life in the kingdom. Likening this to the separation of goats from sheep, those who will not learn righteousness are placed on the left hand—“These shall go away into everlasting punishment [Greek, curtailing]: but the righteous into life eternal.”—Matt. 25:46

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

We have examined here many of the features of the coming kingdom and how it will result in the blessing of all mankind. We have considered some basic questions and given answers to them as provided by the Scriptures.

It is God’s desire and plan that mankind be perfect and live forever. This is exactly what the Scriptures promise is to happen through the kingdom arrangement. Although the parable of the sheep and the goats describes the destruction of those unworthy, it also tells us about the enthusiastic welcome of those who become righteous. “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Matt. 25:34) God has promised a glorious day. By the eye of faith we see it draw near! ■

*In God’s works
we see his hand, but in his Word
we see his heart.*

Faith Calls for Perseverance

Key Verse: “*Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised).*”

—**Hebrews 10:23**

Selected Scripture:
Hebrews 10:19-31

and which was the basis of his relationship with the Heavenly Father through Christ. We have the same favors of God, the same promises of God, the same inspiring hopes that Jesus and the Apostles had. Paul’s inward man had the assurance of the Lord that the glories of the future would be proportionate to the trials of the present, faithfully endured. We should also hold our confidence in the Lord steadfast to the end. “We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.”—Heb. 3:14

Our desire should be that we continue to serve God with our whole heart. “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in

AS WE PROGRESS IN THE

school of Christ and meditate on life’s experiences, both the joys and the sorrows, we should become stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might, desiring more and more to serve him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:23) In our lesson, it is evident that Paul was energized by the message of God’s Word, which gave him inner peace,

the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” (I Pet. 5:7-10) All in the school of Christ must come to appreciate that the trials of the present, and those still to come upon them, are manifestations of divine favor. For this reason, the allurements of this world are not for those who strive to walk in the Lord’s footsteps, and their temptations must be resisted.—I Cor. 1:27,28; Luke 16:13

We will have many tests to show our degree of loyalty toward God. These will continually come throughout our Christian walk. Therefore, we must hold fast to the glorious truth not only in letter—words and actions—but also in spirit—character and disposition. An important part of our perseverance is that of having the humble attitude shown in Paul’s words concerning himself: “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 3:13,14) We must focus our energy upon the things that will draw us closer to God. This includes striving to keep our hearts and minds full of the precious gems found in God’s holy Word. “Whatsoever things are true, . . . honest, . . . just, . . . pure, . . . lovely, . . . of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”—chap. 4:8

A consideration of the importance of perseverance is not complete without mentioning the role of the great privilege of prayer. “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” (Eph. 6:18) A child of God must have an active prayer life that includes praying for help and guidance, and watching with a determination to be faithful to God in all things.■

Faith is Assurance

Key Verse: “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*”
—*Hebrews 11:1*

Selected Scripture:
Hebrews 11:1-3,6;
Psalms 46:1-3,8-11

WE CAN PERHAPS PARAPHRASE this verse from Hebrews 11:1 in this way: “Faith is the basis for, and evidence of, our convictions concerning things hoped for as well as for things unseen, based on the sure promises of God’s Word.” Faith is a real substance, a mental substance, so to speak, that stimulates and clarifies the

mind of the child of God. The essence of faith lies in receiving what God has revealed to us through his Word. It can further be defined as complete trust in the God of the Scriptures, and in Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Such faith should compel us to loving obedience, as well as good works. (Eph. 2:10; Matt. 5:16; James 2:14-26) Indeed, our personal faith is the very basis of our standing before God, from the beginning of our walk until death. The personal trust we have in God, day by day, is one of the primary means by which we will obtain salvation. This faith is centered in our Lord Jesus Christ, “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Rom. 4:24,25

Our walk by faith began when, with the first elements of trust and belief in God, we saw his character, and that of his beloved Son, though only in a limited measure. Gradually, as we were drawn closer to God, we were privileged to know more of him, to grow in appreciation

of his wonderful plan, having our feet set upon the solid ground of truth. (Eph. 3:17-19) These elements of faith are so important that we are told in Hebrews 11:6, "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

As defined earlier, faith gives "substance" to the things of God's Word for the footstep followers of the Lord—things which are hidden from the natural man. Faith makes it possible for God's people to act upon their convictions, knowing that they are based on the reality and verity of the Scriptures. Faith is also an integral element in prayer. "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." (I John 5:14) In short, faith is the primary working principle in the lives of the Lord's consecrated people.

To help guard our faith, the Lord has given us "exceeding great and precious promises" in his Word. (II Pet. 1:4) One of the most precious of these is: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) Another wonderful promise of our salvation is shown in the words, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) We are encouraged with the words, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, . . . To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Col. 1:23,27

The members of the church, a "little flock," are presently being selected, chiseled, and polished without the sound of a hammer—unknown to the world. (I Kings 6:7) Peter says, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (I Pet. 2:5) Therefore, with the substance and evidence of God's Word, let us walk in "full assurance of faith."—Heb. 10:22 ■

Faith is Endurance

Key Verse: *“Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*
—Hebrews 12:1,2

Selected Scripture:
Hebrews 12:1-11

in conjunction with our faith. Paul reminds us of this, but also points out that the endurance required of the

IN THE KEY VERSES OF our lesson we see that the Apostle Paul is exhorting us to look back at the experiences of a great “cloud of witnesses,” those “Ancient Worthies,” who lived prior to the First Advent of Jesus. We should consider what they endured and how faithful and loyal they were to God. So great was their trust in God that they have also come to be known as “Heroes of Faith.”—Heb. 11:4-39

Although these worthy ones of old possessed great faith, we are told that they “received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” (Heb. 11:39,40) However, we should gain inspiration from their example in order that we might continue to strive for the greatest attainment of faith possible in running the Christian racecourse.

Much endurance is necessary

child of God is really a “light affliction.” “Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”—II Cor. 4:16-18

The church will be the temple of God, perfect on the heavenly plane, and recipients of the divine nature. The glorified Jesus has promised, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.” (Rev. 3:12) Therefore, each prospective member of this temple, begotten as a New Creature in Christ, must have God’s Holy Spirit dwelling in their heart and mind even now. We can thus have the peace of God residing in us even as we endure the difficult trials and experiences of the narrow way.

Let us now examine an important verse from our Selected Scripture. “Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” (Heb. 12:3) Our mind is the special battleground for each of us because of the flesh’s resistance to sacrifice, and its tendency to be “wearied and faint.” This fallen and weak will of the flesh, the “old man,” is in constant conflict with the will of the “new man,” the new mind. The key to victory of the New Creature over the old flesh is to be found in studying, comprehending, and appreciating our Lord’s course, his example and teachings, and then to follow as closely as possible in his footsteps.

We should rejoice that our Lord Jesus has invited us to walk in his footsteps, and to endure as he did. In this cup of trials, testings, and even persecution, God has also blended the joys of our future hope. Thus, we can echo these words: “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, . . . Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven.”—Matt. 5:11,12 ■

Faith Inspires Gratitude

Key Verse:
*“Wherefore we
receiving a
kingdom which
cannot be moved,
let us have grace,
whereby we may
serve God
acceptably with
reverence and
godly fear.”*
—**Hebrews 12:28**

Selected Scripture:
Hebrews 12:18-29

time, talents, influence, means, and all that we might consider precious, or in any proper degree valuable, belongs to the Lord, even life itself.

Our Heavenly Father cares for us and loves us dearly. All pure, lovely, and true things originate from the “Father of lights” (James 1:17), and come to us through the Lord Jesus. God is concerned with, and about, even the smallest matters in our life. He is pleased to oversee by his divine providence everything in which we are involved. Our faith and trust in God should cause us to be ever mindful of the privilege of coming to him through our Lord and Master for help and encouragement, comfort, consolation, guidance, and rest. “Come unto me, all ye

WE SHOULD BE EVER

thankful to our Heavenly Father, for we owe our all to him through his only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. All things are of the Father, and by the Son. (I Cor. 8:6) We recall the words of Paul, “Know ye not that . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought [and paid for] with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (I Cor. 6:19,20) Our understand-

ing of this shows us that our

that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28; Ps. 29:11; 36:5,7) Our faith should inspire gratitude of heart, and engender within us peace and rest in God, knowing that he is strong and mighty toward us. “The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.”—Ps. 29:11

With gratitude we realize that Christ Jesus is our heavenly friend, and our comforter. His character is so in harmony with that of the Heavenly Father that the Apostle Paul refers to him as “the brightness of his [God’s] glory, and the express image of his [God’s] person.” (Heb. 1:3) Our depth of faith compels us to follow the example of the Apostle Paul when he declared himself an imitator of Christ. (I Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1,2) Imitating the character traits and disposition of Christ will lead the footstep follower of the Master to be a humble, loving, and tenderhearted person—as he was. “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” (I Pet. 5:6,7) Each day that we are privileged to walk in the narrow way, our attitude should be as that expressed in the words of Psalm 116:12-14: “What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.”

As faithful children of God, we should be ever thankful to our Father for his providential care and overruling in all aspects of our lives. We must also realize through the eye of faith that he has everything under control and in full accord with his wonderful plan. This should inspire all of us to strive to fulfill our consecration vows, even unto death, knowing that if faithful we will receive glory, honor, and immortality. (Rom. 2:7) Trusting in him completely, as partakers of his grace, we can truly say, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”—II Cor. 9:15 ■

Faith Requires Mutual Love

Key Verse: “*Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*”
—*I Corinthians 13:13*

Selected Scripture:
Hebrews 13:1-3;
I Corinthians 13

THE WORD “CHARITY,” AS used in our lesson, is more properly translated “love.” Love can be defined and expressed in many ways. It can be a disposition of goodwill to men. It can be shown by an unselfish act of kindness. Love can move one to give to a charitable cause, desiring that their gift may be of some benefit to those in need. Our Key Verse is the conclusion of a beautiful discourse on the subject of love in which the Apostle Paul expounds on the nature of love. “Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind; charity [love] envieth not; charity [love] vaunteth not itself [boasts not about self], is not puffed up, . . . thinketh no evil.” (I Cor. 13:4,5) Paul further points out to us that love “Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity [love] never faileth.”—vss. 6-8

How important is the quality of charity, or love? We are told in II Corinthians 9:7, “God loveth a cheerful giver.” This indicates to us what our disposition should be each day and how diligent we should be in “bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (II Cor. 10:5) We must strive as much as possible to keep

our hearts full of love, for by so doing there will be little room for evil thinking and surmising toward others. One desiring to be a faithful child of God must realize that heart loyalty to the Heavenly Father requires much effort. Paul tells us to “be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.” (Tit. 3:8) Love is our primary and continual duty, and it is the sum total and culmination of the development of the fruits of holiness. “Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (I Pet. 1:16) We must also have in our hearts and minds the motivation to “Let brotherly love continue.” (Heb. 13:1) “Honour all men. Love the brotherhood.” (I Pet. 2:17) To be pleasing to God, we must desire to conform ourselves to his will for us, so that our hearts may become richer still in the qualities of faith, hope, and love. When our hearts are enriched in these things, it leads to the realization that we should then act upon this heart desire, and manifest love, kindness, and consideration toward all. “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” “A friend loveth at all times.”—Gal 6:10; Prov. 17:17

While we have studied faith in this month’s lessons, we have concluded the series considering the importance of love. Our Key Verse from I Corinthians 13:13 also follows this order, beginning with faith and ending with charity, or love. This shows us that every aspect of being pleasing to God must involve love. This development of a loving heart, based upon our faith in God, is shown in these words of our Lord and Master Jesus: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”—Matt. 22:37-39; John 13:34,35 ■

“I Will Make a New Covenant”

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers: . . . But this shall be the covenant that I will make; . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts: . . . for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD.”
—Jeremiah 31:31-34

APOSTLE PAUL WROTE, “Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” (Rom. 5:14) Adam’s transgression was individual and willful, and it brought upon him the penalty of death. Because Adam fell from perfection prior to the birth of his children, they were born imperfect and, therefore, inherited the death penalty. Paul reminds us that this situation continued from Adam to Moses. Adam’s descendants were not necessarily as individuals willful sinners, but in any case they were under condemnation to death because of their inherited imperfection.

When Moses became the leader of the Hebrew people and delivered them from Egyptian bondage, he mediated a covenant between them and God. Because this covenant was a representation of God's perfect law of obedience, anyone who could keep it perfectly would, by doing so, have the right to continued human life as long as such perfect obedience was maintained. This arrangement is often referred to as the Law Covenant. The epitome of that covenant, so far as God's law was concerned, was the Ten Commandments. The Apostle Paul wrote that these commandments were "ordained to life."—Rom. 7:10

When the rich young ruler asked Jesus what he could do to have eternal life, Jesus referred the young man to the Law, for he knew that anyone who could keep those commandments would be worthy of life. The young man indicated that he had kept the Law—and probably he had kept it as well as he could—but he realized that just like everyone else, he was dying. The fact is, as discovered by the most earnest of the Israelites, by the rich young ruler, and by Paul, that the standards of righteousness set forth in the Law were beyond the ability of any imperfect human to meet, so no one gained life under that arrangement. However, the Israelites were given an opportunity, and it was this Law Covenant arrangement that made the change in status of the Israelites who died after Moses.

Paul wrote that the Law was a "schoolmaster" to bring Israel to Christ. (Gal. 3:24) In other words, the Law demonstrated the need of a Redeemer in order for members of the Adamic race to obtain life, and that the Redeemer was, and is, Jesus. Paul

wrote, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:22) Through the Prophet Jeremiah, God reminds us of the principle involved in the matter of all mankind's dying because of Adam's transgression. He speaks of it as the fathers eating the "sour grape" and the children's teeth being "set on edge." In this scripture, God promises that it will not always be this way. He speaks of a new arrangement, saying, "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge."—Jer. 31:29,30

This wonderful passage of scripture immediately precedes our theme text concerning the New Covenant which the Lord promised to make "with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." The complete lesson is that through the instrumentality of the promised New Covenant, people will no longer die because of Adam's transgression, but if they die at all it will be because of their own individual transgression of divine law, having thus eaten the "sour grape" of sin.

INTERESTING DIFFERENCES

In his promise of the New Covenant, God said that it would be "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers." In connection with the giving of the Law Covenant, the one made with Israel's fathers, there was the sacrifice of animals to provide blood for sprinkling the people. Moses went up into the mount, and there received from God the tables of stone on which were written the

Ten Commandments. After returning, the Law was read to the assembled people, and they shouted, “All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.” Then Moses sprinkled the people with the blood of the covenant.—Exod. 24:3-8

In its entirety, this was an impressive and glorious inauguration of a most solemn covenant, or agreement, between God and his people Israel, and it has many valuable lessons for us today. The blood of that covenant pointed forward to the blood of Christ, which is the blood that makes possible the establishing of a New Covenant. The Law Covenant had a mediator, who was Moses, and the New Covenant will have a Mediator—Jesus. (Heb. 12:24) Associated with him in the mediatorial work relative to the New Covenant will be his bride, the church. Additionally, any who could have kept the Law Covenant would have been worthy of continued human life, and those who fully come under the terms of the New Covenant are promised eternal life upon the earth.

There are other aspects of the New Covenant, however, which will be “not according” to the old Law Covenant, and it is in the examination of these features that we obtain our clearest understanding of what the New Covenant will really mean to those who come under it. One of the principal “not according” features of the New Covenant lies in the fact that its law will not be written on tables of stone, but in the hearts of the people. According to our theme text, “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.”

Moses was in the mount with God for forty days while the Law was being etched on tables of stone. There will be no such literal procedure as this in

connection with the making of the New Covenant. The Apostle Paul gives us the antitype of this phase of making the New Covenant. "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves; . . . but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament [covenant]; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth, For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech."—II Cor. 3:3-12

There should be no misunderstanding of the meaning of this beautiful and straightforward presentation by the Apostle Paul. He speaks here concerning the relationship of Jesus' followers to the New Covenant, as "ministers," likening it to the relationship of the tables of stone to Moses in connection with the ministry of the Law Covenant. However, the "not according" aspect of this comparison

is striking. Moses was in the mount forty days receiving those typical tables of stone, but it requires the entire Gospel Age in the plan of God to prepare the antitypical tables of stone, embodied in the “ministers of the new covenant.”

When this “ministers of the new covenant” class is complete, they will appear with Christ in glory, which will be the antitype of Moses appearing with glory on his countenance, bearing the tables of stone. This is the “hope of glory” which so inspires us as we are being prepared for the future ministry of the New Covenant. It is the fulfilment of the promise referred to by Paul: “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”—Col. 3:4

TO TEACH THE PEOPLE

In Exodus 24:12, we are informed that the typical tables of stone were given to Moses that he might teach the people. The teaching of the people in connection with the making of the New Covenant will be the work of the entire next age in the plan of God. It will involve the enlightenment of the whole world of mankind concerning the truth of God’s provision of life through Christ. Paul touches on this, saying, “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”—I Tim. 2:3-6

The church, as the antitypical tables of stone, will be associated with Jesus in the work of testifying to all mankind God’s law. They will teach man the

truth concerning the ransom through Jesus, and offer the opportunity of life to all. The church, as the “bride” of Christ, will be associated with him in saying to the people, “Come . . . [and] take the water of life freely.—Rev. 22:17

What a wonderful provision God has made for writing the law of the New Covenant in the hearts of the people. This is another of the “not according” features of the New Covenant—its law will not be written on tables of stone, but in the inward parts of the people themselves—in their hearts. Of necessity, this will begin with their being made acquainted with the great truth of the ransom and the high standards of righteousness which will then be enforced through the agencies of the Messianic kingdom. Then also God’s Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh, and under its influence, through the teachings of the “able ministers of the new covenant,” mankind will, with different degrees of progress, gradually be restored to perfection of heart and mind and action. Upon the basis of this restoration under the terms of the New Covenant, mankind will come back into full harmony and communion with God as his human children.

THE DEAD AWAKENED

In the study of this aspect of the plan of God, it is important to keep in mind that the great majority of those who will be reconciled to God through the New Covenant arrangements and receive everlasting life will, at the beginning of that age of restoration, be asleep in death. This means that these will need to be raised from the dead in order to enter into the blessings of the New Covenant. While it might not require the entire age to reconcile a single generation

under the New Covenant, when we take into consideration the many generations who at the start will be in their graves, we can readily see that the restoration work of the New Covenant with all the people will indeed require the entire Messianic Age.

How wonderful it will be when that covenant is made and its restoration work is completed. Note again these words of our theme text: "For they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD." Here is another difference between the New Covenant and the old Law Covenant. While the people back there said, "All these things will we do," the precepts of the Law had not reached their "inward parts." It is only when this is accomplished that the people will be truly in full relationship with God. When this is accomplished in the lives of all the willing and obedient, and the willful opposers are "cut off from among the people," all will know him. The work of teaching the people concerning God will have been finished, for all will then know him from the least unto the greatest.

There will be still another "not according" in connection with the New Covenant. Concerning those who are reconciled to God through its agencies, the Prophet Jeremiah says, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:34) There was a typical forgiveness of sins in connection with the Law Covenant, based upon the year-by-year atonement day sacrifices of bulls and goats. This pointed forward to the "better sacrifices" of the Gospel Age, whereby, through the blood of Jesus, permanent forgiveness is provided for those who accept and whose lives become transformed through obedience. Then it (Continued on page 36)

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(Continued from page 31) will be true that God will remember their sins no more.

AS INDIVIDUALS

As we have already noted, the period spanned by the making of the New Covenant will be one in which every man will suffer for his own iniquity, and not for the sins of another. Each individual will then need to accept the provisions of God's love through Christ in order to be fully cleansed in heart and mind from the effects of Adamic sin. Each one, as individuals, will need to obey the Messianic kingdom laws in order to make progress toward perfection, and toward having the law of God written in his "inward parts."

In the promise of the New Covenant, it is said to be made "with the house of Israel and the house of Judah." This emphasizes the fact that the natural descendants of Abraham who have been regathered to their "Land of Promise" will be among the first who will be given the opportunity to come, through faith in Jesus, their Messiah, under the blood of the New Covenant, and to begin walking upon the "way of holiness" which will lead to perfection.—Isa. 35:8

However, the blood of the New Covenant is the blood of Jesus, which was shed for all mankind, not just for Israelites. "He [Jesus] is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (I John 2:2) This reminds us of another sense in which the making of the New Covenant will be different, and on a much grander scale than the making of the typical Law Covenant. Then, as we have noted, the blood of animals was sprinkled literally upon the people of Israel. However, in the case of the New Covenant it will be a symbolic sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ upon

the people of all nations. (Isa. 52:15) The Apostle Paul admonished the church, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."—Heb. 10:22

How different is this from the sprinkling of literal blood upon the heads of the people. While Paul is here speaking of consecrated believers in this age, the principle will be the same in the next age. Then also the antitypical sprinkling will be associated with the heart cleansing of the people. Paul again speaks of this in his preview of the wonderful prospect which is set before us as followers of the Master, when he talks of "the blood of sprinkling," which speaks better things than the blood of Abel.—Heb. 12:24

The Apostle Peter also mentions this blood of sprinkling. He says, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (I Pet. 1:2) Peter does not say that we are sanctified by obedience, or by the blood of sprinkling, but "unto" these, thus signifying a process. Sanctification is our setting apart to the holy service of God, and that setting apart is to be so complete that we will be wholly obedient to the divine will. This is the great objective of our Christian lives so far as the present is concerned. We are also set apart "unto" the great future work of sprinkling the blood of Jesus Christ in connection with our service of the New Covenant.

It will be through reconciliation to God, and a restoration to human perfection of body, mind, and heart, that the houses of Israel, Judah, and all people will become worthy to "inherit the desolate

heritages.” This, in reality, is descriptive of complete restitution. It is that which Jesus said of the sheep class in the parable, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”—Matt. 25:34

It will be then that the “knowledge of the LORD” will fill the whole earth “as the waters cover the sea,” and when nothing will “hurt nor destroy” in all God’s holy kingdom. (Isa. 11:9) What a blessed prospect it is to contemplate the human race restored, and reconciled to God, delighting to do his will! It is for this glorious consummation of the divine plan that we continue earnestly to pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”—Matt. 6:10 ■

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Charlotte Teklinski, Jersey City, NJ—July
13. Age, 93

Brother Eddie Williams, Bakersfield, CA—July 30.
Age, 75

Brother Edgar Buckley, Jackson, MI—July 30.
Age, 86

Sister Jayanthi Murthy, Bangalore, India—August
3. Age, 42

Brother Robert Bonney, New Brunswick, NJ—
August 7. Age, 47

Sister Betty Caldwell, San Luis Obispo, CA—
August 8. Age, 95

Sister Maria Klansko, New York, NY—August 13.
Age, 92

Listening when the Lord Speaks

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.”

—*Hebrews 2:1*

THE ABILITY TO LISTEN IS

a great asset even in human relationships. He who never listens to what another says shuts himself up in the small world of his own thoughts. Probably all of us are to some extent guilty of this habit. Are we good listeners, or are we discourteous toward those with whom we converse by almost always interrupting them in the midst of thoughts they endeavor to relate to us?

The story is told that on one occasion two brethren in Christ were conversing, and one was trying to express a certain thought to the other. The conversation went on for fully half an hour, because time after time the brother trying to express the thought he had in mind was continually interrupted by his friend. Finally he gave up, and the other brother walked away without knowing what it was he had failed to listen to. Indeed, he likely did not realize what he had lost. He was probably satisfied in that

he had managed to express what he had in his own mind and did not realize that he had lost a blessing by not being a good listener.

In our fellowship with the brethren it is especially important that we cultivate the habit of being good listeners, for each of them has thoughts that will refresh and strengthen us as New Creatures, if given the opportunity to express them. Some of the richest spiritual gems of thought have been expressed by those who are not considered teachers in the church. Let us realize this, and try not to monopolize conversations in which we participate.

The ability to listen is also important in our meetings, especially our study and testimony meetings. It is possible to be concentrating on some supposedly important thought of our own and miss a blessing from what someone else is saying. None of the Lord's people willfully do this, but it is so easy to fall into habits which tend to rob us of blessings which the Lord provides for us when we meet together with his people.

A COMPARISON

The loss of blessings through failure to listen to each other emphasizes the still greater importance of giving ear to the truths the Lord expresses to us through his Word. It is unfortunate if we show a lack of courtesy to our brethren by constantly interrupting them when they endeavor to converse with us, but we are both discourteous and irreverent to the Lord when we fail to give attention to him, or treat lightly what he has to say.

Throughout the Old Testament particularly, the Lord pleads with his people to give ear to his

instructions. To be impressed with this fact, consult a concordance and note how many times the word “hearken” is used by the Lord in exhortations to give heed to his Word. One of the Hebrew words used in these exhortations is explained by Prof. Strong to mean hearing with intelligence, and with the implied object of obeying.

In the New Testament, we have that well-known exhortation, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (Rev. 2:7) This admonition is used in connection with the messages to each of the “seven churches” referred to in chapters 2 and 3 of the Book of Revelation. This repetition should impress us with the importance of hearkening unto the Lord. If he has given us “ears” that are capable of hearing and obeying his instructions and admonitions, how serious it would be not to listen to “what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” While these messages to the seven churches have special chronological application, yet in principle they all apply throughout the present Gospel Age, and it is primarily in this regard that we examine each of these messages from God through his son Christ Jesus.

In each of the messages to the seven churches there are commendations and condemnations. These messages are directed to the professed followers of the Master, some of whom are true to their profession, and some are not. To a large extent the first of these messages, given to “the church of Ephesus” is one of commendation, but not altogether. “I have somewhat against thee,” said the Master, “because thou hast left thy first love.”—Rev. 2:4

Could this be true, or even partially true, of any of us? Certainly we should search our hearts to see if this message is directed to us. Looking back to the time when we first dedicated our lives to the Lord, and remembering how zealous we were then, do we now find that there has been a cooling of our “first love”? Paul wrote, “Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions.”—Heb. 10:32

Perhaps the loss of our first love is manifested by our inability to endure hardships resulting from the faithful carrying out of our consecration vows. It may be that the “light affliction” of the “former days” now seems to be an extremely burdensome trial. (II Cor. 4:17) If to any extent a change like this has occurred, we should take the Master’s warning seriously to heart, and endeavor by divine grace, not only to remember the former days, but also to regain our original first love and enthusiasm for the Lord, the Truth, and the brethren.

FEAR NOT

God’s message through Jesus to “the angel of the church in Smyrna” (Rev. 2:8-11), reveals the presence “of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan.” These, apparently, were as the “tares” which had grown up amongst the “wheat.” (Matt. 13:30) The true disciples were encouraged to remain faithful despite the opposition which might be leveled against them by those of “the synagogue of Satan.”

“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer,” Jesus said. While Jesus was still with his disciples in the flesh, he said to them, “Fear not,

little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) One of the purposes of what "the Spirit saith unto the churches" is to remove fear from the hearts of the Lord's people. However, this objective will not be accomplished in us as individuals unless we give ear to what the Spirit says through the Word of God.

To the church at Smyrna, the Master said, "The devil shall cast some of you into prison, . . . and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) Literal imprisonment is not part of the experiences of a majority of the Lord's people today, but as few as seventy years ago hundreds of the brethren were suffering in prisons and concentrations camps in Europe. We do not know if and when conditions in this chaotic world might change to such an extent as to bring about a similar situation again, whether in Europe, America, or elsewhere.

We are not to "borrow trouble." "Fear not," is the Master's admonition. We know that strength will be given for our every time of need. Ofttimes it requires greater courage and stamina to endure the little vexing daily trials than it does to stand up against severe persecution. It is not for us to determine the experiences which are best suited to our needs. Our chief concern is that we remain faithful even unto death. If we do, we shall receive "a crown of life."

MORE THAN THE FIRST

The message of the Lord to "the angel of the church in Pergamos" reveals that there was much in this assembly which he did not approve. However, even here there were some fervent and pure-hearted

individual followers of the Master who held fast to his name, not denying the faith, but suffering as “faithful martyrs.” (Rev. 2:13) There were those faithful ones “of the church in Thyatira,” who had increased in “charity, and service, and faith,” also in their patience and works. “The last” was “more than the first,” the message said.—vss. 18,19

This information is not given merely as an item of interest, but rather that we might endeavor to be like these faithful brethren, who, amidst all the unfavorable circumstances which surrounded them in the Thyatira period of the church, progressed in grace and in godlikeness. They did not permit the iniquities in the professed church around them to cause their zeal to “wax cold.” (Matt. 24:12) Even if our greatest trial is simply in waiting for the outworking of the divine plan, may we actively wait, and continue to increase in love, and service, and faith, and patience, and works.

The message to the unfaithful in the Thyatira church is a drastic one. Dire punishment was to fall upon those who practiced evils of various kinds. Speaking of symbolic Jezebel, or Babylon, the Master said, “I will kill her children with death.” One of the purposes of this, the Lord explains, is that “all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”—Rev. 2:23

The glorified church of Christ beyond the veil will be made up of those who, individually, were faithful unto death. God is not taking groups into the kingdom to live and reign with Christ. It is blessed to fellowship and work together in our ecclesias, and to cooperate nationally and internationally in

a general service of the brethren and proclamation of the Truth. However, participating in a local or worldwide fellowship does not, in itself, assure us joint-heirship with Christ. The Master said, “I will give unto every one of you [as individuals] according to your works.” On the other hand, one of the tests which the Lord permits may well be how humbly we obey the instructions of his Word to “be subject one to another.” (I Pet. 5:5) This is essential if we are to work together to the glory of his name. We might be very faithful in serving the Lord independent of association with others, but the Lord who “searcheth the reins and hearts” might be more pleased if we worked together with others of like precious faith.

The general fellowship of the brethren in meetings and in the service of the Truth is God’s arrangement. It began at Pentecost, and was encouraged in the Early Church by the apostles. The spirit of division and of going separate ways was deplored. However, individual faithfulness to the Lord was then, and still is, required of each one who proves worthy to live and reign with Christ. May we realize at all times that the Lord sees into our hearts, and that only if they are pure and fully dedicated to him, will we enjoy his approval and, as a joint-heir with Jesus, receive “power over the nations.”—Rev. 2:26,27

EVEN IN SARDIS

The mingling of the true and the nominal (that is, “in name only”) disciples of the Master throughout the various stages of the church’s development, as illustrated by the “seven churches which are in

Asia,” is again clearly indicated in the message “unto the angel of the church in Sardis.” (Rev. 3:1) The Lord said, “I have not found thy works perfect before God.” (vs. 2) However, the Lord also said to this church, “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.”—vs. 4

To this church, the Lord also said, “Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” (vs. 1) Here, apparently, is described a state of spiritual lethargy on the part of many in this church which is such a crippling malady in any Christian’s life. This is a timely reminder to all of us of the possibility of becoming spiritually drowsy. We do not actually have to practice wrong in order to lose the Lord’s favor. Permitting our first-love enthusiasm to cool, and drifting aimlessly along, will do it. We should be hearing this message from the Lord’s Word and profiting by it.

How wonderful is the reward that is promised to those who overcome. The Lord says, “The same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” (vs. 5) Can we think of anything more wonderful than to have our names confessed before the Heavenly Father, and before his angels? This is one of the rewards for obediently hearkening to “what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

MESSAGE TO PHILADELPHIA

In delivering his message “to the angel of the church in Philadelphia,” the Master mentions some

of his own qualifications to speak. We read, “These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.”—Rev. 3:7

Jesus is both “holy” and “true.” We can depend upon his Word. How unwise it would be not to give ear to him, especially since he has the “key of the house of David.” (Isa. 22:22) This is the antitypical house of David in which Jesus himself is the supreme Ruler, and the overcomers of the Gospel Age are joint-heirs with him. He possesses the “key,” the authority, to open this door of special opportunity to whomsoever he will, and to close it whenever he desires to do so. What “the Spirit saith unto the churches” is that this door is opened only to the overcomers.

As we have noted, there are those who have been associated with each of the seven churches who have practiced the evils mentioned in these messages. The door to the “house of David” is closed to these, and no man can open it for them. It cannot be opened by human philosophy, or by an outward show of righteousness. Likewise, it cannot be closed to those whom the Lord judges to be overcomers, although some have attempted to do this.

Let us give ear to the Lord, rather than to human philosophy, and continue on zealously to do his will, that we may be among the overcomers. The Lord says, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, . . . and I will write upon him my new name.”—Rev. 3:12

It has been true of the called of God in every part of the present age that they have set before them an open door of opportunity to prove worthy of joint-heirship with the Master. Human philosophies cannot close this door. "Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name," the Master said. (Rev. 3:8) None of the Lord's people have sufficient strength of their own to be overcomers, but all must make the endeavor. If our hearts are in harmony with the Lord's Word and we are willing to acknowledge him and accept the opportunity of suffering and dying with him, he will give us the needed strength for every time of need. This is what the Lord is saying to us, but if we fail to listen we will not receive this much needed encouragement, and may faint by the wayside.

LAODICEA

The Lord's message to the Laodicean church indicates that, like the others, it is also made up of the nominal and the true. "I know thy works," he said, "that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." (vss. 15,16) In one sense, this is addressed to the nominal believers who fail to prove worthy. What a realistic illustration the Lord uses to indicate lack of faithfulness on the part of nominal believers. A drink that is hot or cold is palatable and enjoyable, but distasteful if lukewarm. Nominal Laodiceans are like the lukewarm drink, so they are rejected by the Lord.

Their claim is that they are "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." The reason

they say this is because they have not hearkened unto the voice of the Lord, but have followed their own philosophies. This has left them outside of God's love and care. While they feel secure in their own wisdom and strength, they do not realize that from the Lord's standpoint they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."—vs. 17

In another sense, these same words could apply to any one of us as individuals. Such would be the case if we were to embrace the same viewpoint and attitude of self-reliance, and in our spiritual pride fail to give proper heed to the voice of the Lord. Let us not have the attitude of the Pharisee of Jesus' parable who thanked the Lord that he was not like the publican, assuming that the Lord's favor to us is a certainty. (Luke 18:9-14) Rather, let us "fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest," any of us should seem to come short of it, by failing to hearken unto the voice of the Lord, and to obey his instructions.—Heb. 4:1

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock," Jesus said, "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20) "If any man hear my voice" is addressed to individuals, and it is the individuals who hear his voice, and obey it, who make up the overcoming class.

Let us be careful lest outside influences of one sort or another be allowed to shut out the voice of our Heavenly Father. It is not a matter of hearing his voice once, accepting his invitation, and being thereafter secure. It is a matter of continuous hearkening to God's Word, and that of his son Christ Jesus, if we are to continue feasting at the banquet table provided by his love.

From a chronological perspective, we are now living in the Laodicean period of the church, and the Lord's statement, "I stand at the door, and knock," alludes to the belief that we are now living in the time of Christ's Second Presence. This makes it all the more important that we give heed to his voice and that he "sups" with us. This includes the privilege of feasting with him on the precious "meat in due season" provided during this Harvest time of the Gospel Age.—Matt. 24:45

How humble it should make us to realize that he has given us "ears" to hear the "knock" of his presence. Having been given ears to hear, however, it is necessary that we continue hearkening to the Lord's voice. Only by so doing can we hope to be overcomers. To those who are thus faithful, Jesus said, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. 3:21■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

SEPTEMBER 6—"There shall no evil befall thee."—Psalm 91:10 (Z. '03-331 Hymn 293)

SEPTEMBER 13—"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Psalm 133:1 (Z. '03-363 Hymn 143)

SEPTEMBER 20—"Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place,...to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones."—Isaiah 57:15 (Z. '03-383 Hymn 120)

SEPTEMBER 27—"Thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy God."—Matthew 4:7 (Z. '04-9 Hymn 238)

India Trip Report

IT WAS A great privilege and blessing from the Lord for Bro. O.B. and Sr. Janet Elbert and Bro. Ernie and Sr. Janice Kuenzli to visit the brethren in India earlier this year. We landed in India on January 27th and left on February 22nd—for a total of 27 days. During that time we attended 37 different meetings and met with nearly 1,100 brethren.

We landed in Bangalore and then traveled clockwise around southern India. During our trip, we visited ecclesias in Bangalore, Chennai, Vellore, Chittoor, Trichy, Andipatty, Dindigul, Lalgudi, Manaparari, Salem, Erode, Ondipudur, Mettupalayam, Jothipuram, Coimbatore, Podanur, Coonoor, Kethi, Wellington, Kotagiri, Ooty, Mysore, Mangalore and Timkur.

WITNESSING

One of the things that always encourages us concerning our Indian brethren is their zeal for witnessing about the Truth. They have a very entrepreneurial spirit about witnessing and most of the ecclesias are engaged in some type of effort to promote the Gospel. During our visits to the Salem and Erode ecclesias, we learned that they were each about to launch a public effort in a nearby

town. Salem planned to conduct a public meeting in Hosur. Erode planned to have a public effort in Nagapattinam in the month of March. Erode's public effort, as with most Indian public efforts, starts with a public meeting focused on the subject "Why God Permits Evil." During the meeting, the ecclesia collects the names of those who want to attend a series of follow-up studies. After the public meeting, the ecclesia sponsors a series of 53 weekly lessons which introduce the doctrines of the truth to the attendees in a step-by-step process for the purpose of drawing those who are interested to the point of consecration. After this, a new ecclesia is formed or, if there is a nearby ecclesia, the newcomers are invited to join it.

Both public meetings have been held and the follow-up meetings launched. At last report, there are approximately seventy attending the follow-up meetings in Hosur and twenty-six attending the follow-up meetings in Nagapattinam.

When we visited Trichy in February of 2010, one of the ecclesias was conducting follow-up meetings at that time. When those follow-up meetings ended, fifty were immersed and joined the ecclesia. When we visited the same ecclesia this year, they had conducted another public meeting and were now in the midst of another series of follow-up meetings. Attendance after four follow-up meetings was approximately 175.

TRANSLATION WORK

There are many efforts currently going on with the translation of Truth literature from English into the local languages. Not all brethren in India

understand English and that makes it difficult for them to study on their own if they do not have Truth literature in their own language. Since each state or province has their own local language, it takes multiple translations to get the *Studies in the Scriptures*, and other Truth literature, into the hands of the local brethren. Bro. R. Selvaraj of Chennai has been involved in translating and printing the *Studies in the Scriptures* into Tamil, the language used by the brethren of Tamil Nadu state. The translation of the six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures* into Tamil has been a great boon to the brethren in Tamil Nadu. Thus far, Volumes 2, 4, 5 and 6 have been translated and printed in Tamil (Volume 1 was translated many years ago). Volume 4 was printed and released to the brethren shortly before we arrived in India. Some of these volumes were translated by others, but Bro. Selvaraj reviews and corrects the translation and then works with a local printer to have them printed. Currently, he is correcting the translation of Volume 3 and will then have it printed. Because of the cost of printing, ecclesias and organizations in the United States have provided funds to help cover the cost of printing the volumes.

After all the volumes have been translated into Tamil, Bro. Selvaraj hopes to start translating the *Watch Tower* reprints into Tamil beginning with 1916 and working backward.

The Indian ecclesias study the volumes in different ways. In some cases, elders give discourses on different chapters of the volumes to the ecclesia. In other cases, the ecclesias will study 5-10 pages of the volume in a meeting during which the study

leader will explain to the congregation what is written. In some cases, the congregation asks questions and engages in a discussion about the volume passage being studied during the meeting.

The Erode ecclesia is currently working on translating *What Pastor Russell Said* (or the *Question Book*) into Tamil. They are approximately 50% finished. Other Indian brethren are translating the *Expanded Bible Comments* into Tamil. There are translation efforts going on in other languages spoken by the brethren. Volume 1 is being translated into Kannada (the language spoken in Karnataka) and into Telegu (the language spoken in Andhra Pradesh).

The entrepreneurial spirit also affects the translation work. Both the English-language *Dawn* and *Herald* magazines are translated into Tamil and distributed by Indian brethren at their own cost and initiative. Bro. Godwin of Manaparai translates *The Dawn* magazine in Tamil and together with his father, Bro. Jeyaraj, print and distribute the Tamil-language version of *The Dawn* at their own expense. Bro. Joseph Daniel and Sr. Nirmala of Trichy translate, print and distribute a Tamil-language version of *The Herald* magazine in the same way.

CARING FOR THE FLOCK

The loving spirit of the Indian brethren is seen in the many ways they encourage and support the flock. There are individuals such as Bro. Ravi Chandra from Bangalore and Bro. Prabhakaran from Erode who engage in full-time service for the Lord. Bro. Ravi serves as a pilgrim helping ecclesias in Karnataka such as Timkur and Nagenahalli.

He also travels by train over 24 hours to serve the Vizag and Rajahmundry ecclesias in Andhra Pradesh. He has conducted public meetings and then led follow-up meetings in these areas, making regular visits to encourage them in our most Holy faith.

Bro. Prabhakaran from Erode serves in a similar capacity to both new and established ecclesias in Tamil Nadu. He is on the road six days per week either leading studies in different ecclesias or leading follow-up meetings in different places. During our visit, he met us at five different ecclesias where he translated our lessons to the brethren. This included waiting for us by the roadside late one evening in Ooty so that he could introduce us and translate for us when we met with a new ecclesia in the area. These two individuals represent just the tip of iceberg of the personal sacrifice and efforts of Indian brethren throughout Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh to encourage and feed the flock.

The Indian brethren are very talented in other ways. Many ecclesia halls are filled with beautiful color graphics and charts reflecting Bible prophecies (Nebuchadnezzar's image, Daniel's dream of the four beasts), Biblical structures (Tabernacle, pyramid), and God's plan (Chart of the Ages), etc. Ecclesias have produced colorful and spiritually-based calendars that encourage the brethren. During this trip, we visited one relatively new and active ecclesia, Tambaram. They have produced such a calendar for the brethren in Tamil Nadu. The large calendar shows two months on a single page revolving around a single theme. It has a different Bible verse for every date in that two months that aligns with the theme. On the right-hand side of the calendar, there is a

bookmark which explains the theme in some detail. Four brothers in the ecclesia collaborated on designing the calendar.

The talents of the Indian brethren also extend to audio recording. Bro. Samuel Premraj of Ooty has created a small recording studio where he records music and discourses for the brethren. He provides this service to all of the Indian brethren regardless of their affiliation.

The Indian brethren continue to take great interest in their youth. Various groups of Indian brethren periodically host youth seminars. The attendance of these seminars can exceed 200 young people. Due to the timing of our trip, we were unable to attend any of these youth seminars during this visit. During our past visits to India, we were able to attend large Youth Conventions held near Coimbatore. It is always a blessing to become re-acquainted with the young brethren whom we first met years before as teens at these Youth Seminars.

CHALLENGES FACING THE INDIAN BRETHREN

The Indian brethren face a number of challenges in their endeavor to proclaim the Gospel message and follow in the footsteps of Jesus. One of these challenges is a lack of electricity in the province of Tamil Nadu. Outside of Chennai, cities in Tamil Nadu endure 8-9 hours per day without electricity. This led to many meetings during our trip being held without electricity. The first was in Vellore where we had an evening meeting on a rooftop next to the ecclesia's prayer hall. When the power was cut just before the meeting started, a trio of young sisters sang and played the opening hymn by flashlight.

The discourse was given by the light of a battery-powered lantern on the podium. After the meeting was over, the lights came back on in time for pictures and refreshments.

One Coimbatore ecclesia was well-prepared for the power cuts. They have a generator which they switch on to power the fans, lights and the PA system. During a Saturday night meeting with this ecclesia, the power was cut twice during the meeting. Each time one of the brethren went out to the balcony where the generator was located to start it up.

Perhaps the most interesting experience regarding a “power-cut” took place on a Sunday evening in Podanur, a small ecclesia on the outskirts of Coimbatore. When we arrived for the meeting, a power-cut was already in progress. When we entered the home where the meeting was being held, the brethren were already singing the opening hymn. They were using the faint glow of their cell phones to read their hymn books. There were only four small candles in the entire room—for the 20-plus brethren who were there. Bro. O.B. Elbert gave the discourse and one brother stood next to him with a small flashlight giving Bro. O.B. just enough light to see his Bible and his notes. It was an unforgettable scene to see the brethren meeting in the dark such as this. It reminded us of the little lights of Truth scattered throughout the world during this Gospel Age and how those seeking the Truth have gathered around its light to learn about their Heavenly Father and his plan of salvation.

There are many physical challenges that the Indian brethren have to endure. First, there is severe air pollution in the country. The growing number of

vehicles on the road, including cars, leaves a brown haze covering much of the country. Many vehicles, particularly buses and trucks, have no pollution control and belch out clouds of diesel fumes at ground level forcing people to cover their nose and mouth as the vehicles pass. This affects the health of a number of brethren, particularly those with respiratory problems. Then, there are problems with accessing clean water which also affects the brethren and causes illness from time to time.

Another challenge facing the brethren is the vast amount of traffic India's growing economy has brought. This makes it more difficult to move around India's large cities, particularly in the evenings. As a result, it is difficult for Indian brethren to attend weeknight meetings that are any distance from their home. It tends to fragment the brethren into smaller, geographically dispersed ecclesias in the large Indian cities.

Most Indian brethren do not own an automobile. Instead, they depend on either motorcycles/scooters (called two-wheelers) or public transportation to reach the meetings. It is not unusual to see a family of four on a single two-wheeler, with the father driving the two-wheeler, one child sitting on the gas tank in front of him and then a second child and the mother sitting behind the driver. To attend conventions which are outside their local area, the brethren will generally use public transportation (buses, trains) to travel the longer distances.

India is a heathen country. The dominant religion is Hinduism, and at times there have been conflicts between Hindu zealots and the brethren. In Tamil Nadu, it is illegal to "forcibly" convert a Hindu to

Christianity. “Forcibly” can be construed to mean any incentive that Christian churches offer (free food, schooling for the children, help for the poor, etc.) to help local people and which can attract them to the Christian faith. These laws affect how the Indian brethren witness. At times, to avoid violating this law, they put disclaimers on their witnessing material stating that it is directed at other Christians.

We saw the strength of the Hindu faith within India during our trip. On our way from Trichy to the ecclesia at Andipatty, we passed by hundreds of Hindu pilgrims walking barefoot on the side of the highway to worship at a temple that was more than 20 kms away. They were dressed in saffron-colored robes and beating drums as they walked.

The brethren also endure persecution from other Christian denominations, particularly when they are sponsoring public efforts. Frequently, ministers of other Christian congregations denounce the brethren and encourage members of their congregation not to attend the public and follow-up meetings.

FELLOWSHIP

During our trip we enjoyed many opportunities of sweet fellowship. A sister who frequently travels to India on business provided rooms at a hotel in Chennai for the four of us at no charge. Brethren in many places took time off from work and used their cars to drive us to different ecclesias.

In Vellore, we had lovely fellowship at lunch with two young sisters who attend the local ecclesia. Both had grown up in the Truth in Erode and were now attending nursing school away from home in Vellore and meeting with one of the ecclesias there.

These sisters were part of the trio who sang by flashlight at the meeting the previous evening. We appreciated their love for the Truth as expressed in their fellowship.

When we visited the ecclesias in the Trichy area, we stayed at the home of Bro. Godwin and Sr. Ophelia. They both teach architecture at a local college and are renting a two-story home in the city. They invited all four of us to stay in their home for the four nights we spent in the Trichy area and provided a lovely breakfast for us each morning.

In both Erode and Coimbatore, Sr. Janet and Sr. Janice attended question and answer sessions with the sisters after the ecclesia meetings ended. It gave them a chance to talk one-on-one to the Indian sisters and see the challenges they face. These meetings went late into the night, in one case, ending at midnight. The sisters were very interested in discussing the Truth and sharing their experiences.

This hunger of the Indian brethren for meeting together and studying the Truth is shown in other areas also. For example, during our visit to Ooty we met with two different ecclesias the same evening. Early in the evening we met with one ecclesia at the home of Bro. Samuel Premraj. We left his home after 10 p.m. and on our drive back to our hotel, we visited a new ecclesia, also in Ooty. The temperature outside was in the upper 40's because Ooty is located at an elevation of 7,200 feet in the Nilgiri Hills. There were four brethren, including Bro. Prabhakaran, who were standing on the side of the road waiting to flag us down, because we did not know the location of the prayer hall. Once we found them, we gathered in their small prayer hall and

had 45 minutes of spiritual discussion with them ending shortly before midnight.

While there are many new Indian brethren as a result of their witnessing, there are also multi-generational Bible Students who trace their heritage in the Truth to parents and grandparents. Bro. Samuel Premraj of Ooty is a 2nd generation Bible Student, and both of his daughters had recently made consecrations and planned to be immersed shortly after our visit. In Mangalore, Bro. Manohar and Sr. Rushmi, his sister, are both 2nd generation Bible Students. Their father, Bro. Alexander, had been a long-time elder of the Mangalore ecclesia until he died a few years ago. Now, Bro. Manohar's daughter has also made a consecration to the Lord.

The care of the Indian brethren over us during our travels was quite remarkable. They arranged our visits to all of the local ecclesias when we visited particular areas. Each ecclesia we visited provided refreshments and, typically, a lovely meal which they served after the meeting. Due to their limited means, these meals were great sacrifices on their part for us. They arranged our travel from town to town, and also took care of finding us accommodations for our stay in their locale. They frequently accompanied us as we traveled to the next town, and we greatly enjoyed this additional fellowship.

We had many more blessings and wonderful experiences with our Indian brethren during this trip, but limited space will not permit us to describe them all. These experiences will long be remembered in our hearts. Our desire is that you might remember them in your prayers that the Lord would help them be faithful, as they pray for you. ■

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

K. Fernets

Ukraine September 21-
October 8

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

G. Balko, Jr.

Clay City, IN September 14-16

M. J. Balko

New York, NY September 1,2
Clay City, IN 14-16

E. Blicharz

Atlanta, GA September 16

J. Brown

Clay City, IN September 14-16

R. Carnegie

New York, NY September 1,2

J. Freer

New York, NY September 1,2

R. Goodman

Seattle, WA September 1-3

L. Griehs

Jackson, MI September 1,2

S. Jeuck

Seattle, WA September 1-3

T. Krupa

New York, NY September 1,2

H. Montague

Seattle, WA September 1-3

P. Mora

Seattle, WA September 1-3

A. Oystryk

Seattle, WA September 1-3

T. Ruggirello

New York, NY September 1,2

J. Trzeciak

Seattle, WA September 1-3
Clay City, IN 14-16

C. Willis

Clay City, IN September 14-16

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*“Let us therefore follow after the things which  
make for peace, and things wherewith  
one may edify another.”  
—Romans 14:19*

# CONVENTIONS

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

**JACKSON CONVENTION, September 1,2**—Fa-Ho-Lo Camp & Conference Center, 3000 Mount Hope Road, Unit 1, Grass Lake, MI 49240. Contact V. Lumley, 2531 Ashton Road, Jackson, MI 49203. Phone: (517) 782-7252 or E-mail: lumley@aol.com

**NEW YORK CONVENTION, September 1,2**—Doubletree Hotel Mahwah, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NJ 07430. Deadline for subsidized rate is August 15. For room reservations, contact G. Passios, 245 Grand Avenue, Rutherford, NJ 07070. Phone: (201) 939-3196 or E-mail: gpassios11@verizon.net

**SEATTLE CONVENTION, September 1-3**—Seabeck Conference Center, 15395 Seabeck Hwy NW, Seabeck, WA 98380. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (253) 838-3822 or E-mail: laurie@flinn.us

**HUNTSVILLE CONVENTION, September 7-9**—Radisson Inn Huntsville Airport, 8721 Madison Blvd., Madison, AL 35758. Hotel Reservations: (256) 772-8855. Contact K. Getchel. Phone: (256) 660-1566 or E-mail: biblestudents@gmail.com

**CLAY CITY CONVENTION, September 14-16**—Canyon Inn, McCormick's Creek State Park, 451 McCormick Creek Park Road, Spencer, IN 47460. Cut-off date for reservations is August 14. Contact S. Clark, 7861 Clearwater Parkway, Indianapolis, IN 46240. Phone: (317) 578-2634

**COLORADO CONVENTION, September 15,16**—DoubleTree by Hilton Denver, 3203 Quebec Street, Denver, CO 80207. Contact L. Turner. Phone: (303) 278-4091 or E-mail: twink94@comcast.net

**COLUMBUS, INDIANA OLDE TIME HARVEST CONVENTION, September 22,23**—D. Ledwinka Farm, 10004 E. 550 N., Columbus, IN 47203. Contact G. Davis. Phone: (812) 372-7165

**LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, September 30**—Burbank Auditorium, 406 Irving Drive, Burbank, CA 91504. Contact J. Wojcik. Phone: (818) 982-7253 or E-mail: jrbwojcik@yahoo.com

**LAGOS, NIGERIA CONVENTION, October 6**—Ejigbo, Lagos State, Nigeria. Contact C. M. Oledibe, #29 Morning Star Church Street, Ejigbo, Lagos, Nigeria. E-mail: oledibe@yahoo.com

**PITTSBURGH CONVENTION, October 6,7**—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact G. Balko. Phone: (724) 771-0139 Or contact L. Mlinek. Phone: (724) 689-8733

**GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 13,14**—Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact J. Houlmont. Phone: (231) 972-4259 or E-mail: ljhoulmont@charter.net

**SAN LUIS OBISPO CONVENTION, October 20,21**—Masonic Temple, 859 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Contact M. Allard. Phone: (805) 773-2963

**ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 27,28**—South Seminole Masonic Lodge, 122 Triplet Lake Drive, Casselberry, FL. Contact J. Kuenzli. Phone: (407) 831-2098 or E-mail: jkuenzli@cfl.rr.com

*How sweet to leave the world awhile,  
And seek the presence of our Lord!  
Dear Savior, on thy people smile;  
Draw near according to thy Word.  
—Hymns of Dawn*