

The Dawn

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Table of Contents

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

- A Rulership of Nonviolence 2

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

- Disappointing to God 10
A Willing Volunteer 12
A Comforting Word 14
The Suffering Savior 16
A Better Day 18

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

- The Seed, Part 7—Gentiles Invited 20
"I Am . . . the Life" 37
Grace, Power, and Knowledge 45
Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts 63

OBITUARIES 54

VOICES FROM THE PAST

- The Ancient Worthies 55

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

- Radio Schedule 34

THE BIBLE ANSWERS

- Television Schedule 36

ENCOURAGING LETTERS 60

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS 63

CONVENTIONS 64

Highlights of Dawn

If a global poll were taken asking how the world might be made a better place in which to live, no doubt near the top of the list would be: "The elimination of violence." Just about everyone's vision of Utopia is a place of nonviolence.

But how to achieve this Utopia has eluded mankind for over 6,000 years.

As a matter of fact, it seems that the increase of violence in the earth has pretty much kept pace with the growth of population. This does not look good for the future.

Is there an answer?

What does the Bible say?

A Rulership of Nonviolence

"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."—Isaiah 11:9

VIOLENCE is so much a part of the world, that it is almost taken for granted. It has been often said that without violence there would be no news. A noted psychiatrist connected with a university center for the study of violence once observed: "Little children go 'bang-bang' with their fingers even before they're old enough to hold toy guns. 'Bang-bang, you're dead!' This is the chant of childhood in America."

The children have learned their "Bang-bang, you're dead," game from watching scenes of violence on television, in the entertainment programs, and the scenes of war. Violence manifests

itself in many ways—in crime, in riots, and in war. Generally speaking it is condemned by upright men and women; but legalized in war when it is thought that one's country is in danger of being attacked. Nor is legalized violence restrained until a nation is actually attacked. It is practiced many times by nations attempting to expand their sphere of power and influence by conquering other nations.

But violence is by no means a modern innovation for dealing with those who are not liked, or who may stand in the way of that which another may wish to accomplish. The first manifestation of violence among humans was motivated by jealousy. This was when Cain slew his brother Abel. Cain was displeased that God had accepted Abel's offering of "the firstlings of his flock," and had not accepted "the fruit of the ground" which he had offered to the LORD in sacrifice, so "Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."—Gen. 4:3-8

The Bible tells us that just before the Flood of Noah's day "the earth was filled with violence." (Gen. 6:11) While there have been brief periods in the experience of the human race when war and violence have been to some extent kept under control, every generation of man has experienced its blood baths of violence in one form or another. Sometimes these outbreaks of violence have been within nations, and at other times between nations—and sometimes, as is true today, it has been both.

Beginning with Moses, the Old Testament deals largely with the natural descendants of Abraham—the chosen people of God—their inward struggles, and their efforts to defend themselves against the non-Jewish nations with which they were surrounded. The record of their experiences is preponderantly one of violence. An example of this is found in Habakkuk's description of conditions within Israel in his day. We quote:

"O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? Even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save! Why dost thou show me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance?

For spoiling and violence are before me: and there are [those] that raise up strife and contention. Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.”—Hab. 1:2-4

While, as we noted, this is a description of the social situation within Israel in the days of the prophet, it is a fairly accurate description also of the situation in the world today. Violence and lawlessness are found everywhere—and among essentially all classes, even as in ancient times. It seems worse to us now because the news media are so effective that the acts of violence are brought right into our living rooms by newspaper, radio, and television.

All the great empires of the past, beginning with Assyria, were built by violence inflicted by conquering armies. The destruction of these empires was accomplished by violence. The Jewish nation was destroyed by violence inflicted by Titus and his army. The conquering armies of Rome later forced nominal Christianity upon one European country after another, by the power of the sword. Meanwhile those truly loyal to Christ were tortured and burned, and otherwise destroyed.

There were the unholy wars of the Crusades—more violence. The viewpoint of worldly men and nations has always been to destroy, by violence if necessary, anything or anybody that got in the way of the plans of those entrenched in positions of power. Violent attempts were made to destroy the Reformation, and later Protestant groups became violent against other Protestant groups. John Calvin caused Michael Servetus' death because he did not agree with some of his theological views.

And in America there has been the war with the British by which the Colonial States won their independence. There has been the War of 1812; the Spanish American War, and the Civil War. All of these represented outbursts of violence which were believed to be justified by those involved.

Later, Americans went overseas to take part in the violence which we now call the First World War. Essentially the whole world was sucked into this seething pot of violence, and millions of lives were lost, and other millions maimed for life. American soldiers were sent overseas to help prevent that carnage from spewing over the Atlantic to our own shores.

Then came the Second World War, which by far was more violent than the first. By then it was no longer thought advisable to limit the destructive violence of war to the armies of the various opposing nations, so millions of civilians were bombed to death, or maimed; and their homes and cities destroyed.

Since then, America alone has been involved in the Korean War, and later the Viet Nam War; other countries have had their own problems with wars; and so the violence continues. Besides, the virus of violence has permeated the nonmilitary institutions of the world. The Civil Rights movement is now divided into violent and nonviolent activities. Increasingly the viewpoint of the people is that it is right to use violence to obtain that which is considered to be good.

What this evidences is that violence, as a means of obtaining desired objectives, is no longer limited to military organizations of earth, or to the criminal element which has always been a blight to human society. But it is being adopted more and more generally by those who have a "cause" to win, or who wish to prevent someone else from winning their "cause."

Terrorists and terrorism are two words much in use today. They describe that which has come to be considered a political philosophy by certain groups which advocate the taking of innocent people hostage, and then using the threat of their torture and death as a means of gaining from other governments something for their "cause." While this is certainly not new to the world, it nonetheless seems to be growing, and adding to the violent nature of our present situation.

There is an ever-increasing number of people today who do not think that violence is ever legal, even in wartime. On the other hand it is often difficult for a soldier who has been encouraged to kill his fellows in war, not to adopt violence as a way of settling personal grievances when he returns home from the conflict. So the cancer of violence spreads, as the social structure of earth and the higher moral standards of the people are gradually crumbling.

The outlook for better days to come would be a gloomy one indeed were it not for the assurances of the Word of God that this present sickness of the world is in fulfillment of prophecies which describe world conditions just prior to the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. One of these prophecies (Dan. 12:1) speaks of a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." The growing destructiveness throughout the world is one aspect of this prophetic time of trouble.

In this prophecy of Daniel we are informed that at the time of its fulfillment "shall Michael stand up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people," and that it is as a result of this standing up of Michael that the great time of trouble

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comes upon the world. The Michael of this prophecy is undoubtedly the long-promised Messiah. His 'standing up' denotes his exercise of authority in the earth, an authority that results in the overthrow of all its institutions of selfishness, and ultimately the cleansing from the hearts of men all their evil ways, including violence.

Another prophecy pertaining to this exercise of authority reads, "Come behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."—Ps. 46:8-10

In this prophecy the desolations said to be made by the LORD are the making of wars to cease, and destroying the instruments of war! This will seem like desolation to all those who depend upon violence as a method of forcing their will and way upon other people. The rule of force at the point of a gun, whether it be by nations over other nations; or whether it be in self-defense—real or imagined, either nationally or individually—will be brought to an end by the agencies of Christ's kingdom. This will indeed seem strange to those who have known no other way to live in this world of chaos and fear.

But actually it will be the greatest boon ever to reach the human race. By nature, few have loved violence. Most people would rather live at peace with their neighbors whether as nations or as individuals, than feel that they have to resort to violence. One of the prophecies referring to this good time of Christ's kingdom now so near, reads, "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and the needy. . . . He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight."—Ps. 72:11-14

There are plenty of poor and needy in the world today, even as millions are being subjected more or less to violence. Seventy-five percent of the world's population are underfed. All this will be changed through the powerful agencies of Christ's kingdom. But the authority and power of that kingdom will not be implemented by munitions of war. The threat of nuclear warfare will be removed; and the world will be filled with peace, prosperity, and happiness.

The power of the great Creator of the universe will be utilized to fulfill all his wonderful promises. When Jesus came to earth nearly two thousand years ago, he used divine power to heal the sick and to raise the dead. At that time they put the Son of God to death, but this was essential in the plan of God that man might be redeemed from death. Divine power raised Jesus from the dead, that he might, in due time be the king of earth. At this end of the age divine power is again exercised to raise Jesus' faithful followers from the dead in the first resurrection, to live and reign with Christ a thousand years.—Rev. 20:6

Jesus and his associates in the rulership of the kingdom will be invisible to man, but the ancient servants of God will be restored to life as humans to be their representatives. These will be brought forth in what the Bible calls a "better resurrection." (Heb. 11:35,40) And then, through these spiritual and earthly phases of the kingdom, divine power will continue to function to heal the sick and raise all the dead; to provide the wonderful blessings which all the promises of God describe.

There will then be a program of education through which the people will learn the LORD's ways. And when they learn the LORD's ways they will do away with their instruments of violence, and will pursue the ways of peace. Then, every man will sit under his vine and fig tree, and none shall make afraid.—Mic. 4:1-4

In our text, the kingdom of the LORD is symbolically described as a mountain—God's holy mountain—the righteous

government of the Messiah. That is why we read, "They shall not hurt nor destroy, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." Violence will then be at an end. □

*Give me a thankful heart,
From every murmur free,
A heart which always feels Thy blood,
So freely shed for me.*

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International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR OCTOBER 2

Disappointing to God

KEY VERSE: "He looked for judgment, but behold oppression, for righteousness, but behold a cry."—Isaiah 5:7

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 5:1-7, 22,23*

THIS statement concerning Israel in Isaiah's day is sad indeed. The Lord was very outspoken concerning his displeasure with the moral decline that had taken place in a nation which he had so carefully brought up and nourished. He spoke of them in parable form as a special vineyard "in a very fruitful hill." Their land was fenced about, the stones all gathered out, and then planted with the choicest vine. A tower was built in the midst of it, and a winepress built in preparation for the gathering of its precious fruit. The vineyard owner then waited for the delicious grapes to be brought forth, but in place of the expected fruitage, wild grapes came instead.

It is not difficult to see Israel in this parable. Genetically, the children of Israel were the very choicest vine. They were the seed of Abraham, a man of great faith,

justified as a friend of God, and to whom wonderful promises were made concerning his children. They were planted in a very fertile land, one flowing with milk and honey. They were hedged about with the special care of a covenant that provided for a continuance of bountiful basket and store. Judges and prophets were sent as a tower in their midst for guidance and protection from the encroachments of the godlessness around them.

The expectations of God, the husbandman, were expressed in the prophetic promises that at the time of Israel's harvest a royal nation and kingdom of priests would be brought forth. How sad that long before the grapes were ripe it was evident that the vines were bearing wild grapes characteristic of the neighboring Gentile nations.

Some of the further prophecies of this chapter pertain to the ca-

lamities which were to come upon the nation of Israel because of its sins. "Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff so, . . . their blossom shall go up as dust. Because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel."—Isa. 5:24

An interesting feature of these statements in Isaiah's prophecies is that along with the punishment there is also expressed the hope of Israel's return to the outstretched hands of the LORD. "Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people . . . and hath smitten them. . . . For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still."—vs. 25

This expression of God's outstretched hands well sets the stage for appreciating the great bulk of prophecy in this book. While in very colorful and forceful language Isaiah forecasts the coming desolation of the nation and of their land, saying, "Your country is desolate your cities are burned with fire, your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate" (Isa. 1:7), the book is concerned with much more. Intertwined are forecasts of major events in the outworking of their

eventual return, and connected with this are prophecies relating to the divine plan of redemption and restoration of all mankind, some of which were thousands of years in the future from Isaiah's time.

This prophecy tells of the future time when the world, including Israel, will undergo a great change. Then all will come to know and appreciate judgment and righteousness from God's point of view, and no longer will there be oppression and crying. "But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy, shall be sanctified in righteousness." (vs. 16) "And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from afar, and will hiss [call] unto them, from the end of the earth."—vs. 26

How disappointing the testimony of the Scriptures would be if God had only expressed his displeasure with the shortcomings of men. But with equal importance God saw fit to express his great love, by revealing a wonderful plan for their redemption and restoration to favor. God's Word bears marvelous testimony to the fact that the cruel circumstances of evil experienced now will play an important educational role in choosing between good and evil, and that men predominantly will choose the better part and live. □

A Willing Volunteer

KEY VERSE: *"I heard the voice of the LORD saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me."—Isaiah 6:8*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 6:1-8*

THESE words were uttered by Isaiah following a wonderful vision given to him by the LORD. In the vision Isaiah saw "the LORD sitting upon a throne," and he wrote that "the whole earth is full of his glory." While the LORD has permitted evil to flourish throughout the earth since the disobedience of our first parents in the Garden of Eden, he has always maintained his commanding position of control, not only over the affairs of earth, but of his entire universe. He has never vacated his throne. And it is true that the whole earth is filled with his glory. Certainly there is much in the earth that is inglorious. The sin-cursed and dying race itself does not reflect the glory of God. But those who reverence the LORD see his glory displayed all around and above them.

But even more pertinent to the vision is a time in the future when

the earth, being rid of sin and the curse of death, will reflect his glory even in its inhabitants who originally were created in his glorious image. And so to a large extent, Isaiah's statement that the glory of the LORD fills the earth was prophetic of the time when the restitution feature of the divine plan will be complete. It will be then, in the fullest sense, that the glory of the LORD will fill the earth, and it will be then that all flesh will recognize that glory and rejoice in it.—Isa. 50:5

Seeing the LORD "high and lifted up" caused Isaiah to feel very unworthy. He said, "Woe is me! for I am undone [margin, cut off]; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." (vs. 5) Seemingly the vision was so real that the prophet thought he had seen the

LORD literally, and therefore would be cut off. He knew that in any event he was not worthy of life.

But the LORD had other plans for Isaiah, who explained, saying, "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." (vss. 6,7) Isaiah further explained: "Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah quickly grasped the meaning of the vision. He realized that the LORD was calling him into his service, and his immediate and hearty response was, "Here am I: send me."—vs. 8

Like Isaiah, the LORD has called us with a vision of his glory. And in this vision of truth we can see God in the sense of discerning the four cardinal attributes of his character, those attributes which combine to proclaim his glory. We see his wisdom in all his creative works—and particularly in man, his crowning earthly creation.

We see God's justice in the condemnation of man because of sin, and also in his plan to redeem

him from death through the provision of another perfect man to be a Redeemer. In this provision we also see an outstanding demonstration of God's love, even as we do in many other features of his plan.

Indeed, in one way or another all God's attributes are displayed in essentially every aspect of his plan. We see his power in creation, in the resurrection, in the care of his people. All call attention to the various ways in which God's Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power are revealed in the outworking of his plan of the ages.

And it is this glorious plan which has served as a vision to enable us to see God high and lifted up. What has been the LORD's purpose in giving us this vision? It is the same purpose he had when he revealed himself in that vision to Isaiah. Through the vision of present truth the LORD is asking, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

The impetus for thus dedicating our lives for the cause of the truth was supplied by the work and example of Jesus. His ministry of the truth was an altar which not only supplied to us justification but the coals from it have symbolically touched our lips, and our great desire is also to go and tell the people.—vs. 9

A Comforting Word

KEY VERSE: *"The glory of the LORD shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."*—Isalah 50:5

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isalah 40:1-5, 9-11*

INDEED, what a comforting prospect to realize in this clear scriptural declaration that the divine character of God will not forever be shrouded in darkness. In search of an expression of God's grace men's minds are often impressed by displays of splendor which are to be seen throughout the world in the various temples of public worship. To the extent that these might lift our minds and hearts to the true and living God of wisdom, justice, love, and power, and inspire us to serve him, they serve a useful purpose. But may we ever realize that the true God of our worship, and to whom we are devoted, could not be expected to dwell in temples made with hands, as Paul explained to the Athenians.—Acts 17:16-19

King Solomon of Israel recognized this many long centuries before Paul's day. Solomon's Temple was probably the most magnificent ever constructed up until that time. But when it was

complete, he realized that the glory of the great God of Israel could not be confined within its walls, and in his prayer of dedication said, "Will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!"—II Chron. 6:18

Jesus also confirmed this larger viewpoint of the true and living God. A Samaritan woman raised the question with Jesus as to where God should be worshiped, whether at Mt. Gerizim, or Mt. Zion in Jerusalem? Jesus' reply did away with the necessity of limiting the worship of God to specific locations. He explained that "God is a Spirit," hence invisible to human eyes, and that the true worship of him is "in spirit and in truth."—John 4:20-24

To find and to know God is a glorious experience. The Prophet Jeremiah wrote. "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory

in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."—Jer. 9:23,24

Yes, the true glory of God can only be appreciated by coming to know his character and his purpose, and for the world of mankind this revelation is still future. Eventually, and in the Creator's own due time, he will reveal himself to his human creatures. They will see him as one who loves and cares; who is sympathetic and understanding; and also an all-powerful God who is able to rid the world of everything which contributes to human unhappiness.

The prophecy of our text tells us that this coming time of revelation, now close at hand, is heralded by a "voice"—a voice which instructs the 'Zion' class to get up into the high mountain and, thus viewing the world from the standpoint of the coming kingdom, to lift up their voice with strength with the good tidings that the glory of God is about to be revealed. "Say unto the cities of Ju-

dah, Behold your God. . . . Behold the LORD God will come with a strong hand and his arm [the Christ] will rule for him. . . . He shall feed his flock [the world of mankind] like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arms."

It is the great privilege of those who see this aspect of God's glory now to speak words of hope and comfort to a very troubled world. And while for the present they fall mostly upon deaf ears, they nevertheless are preparing the world to more readily accept the voice of the LORD when shortly he speaks from heaven. The Bible in another wonderful prophecy of Christ's kingdom, speaks of this future voice. "There was a *great* voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with them and they shall be his people and God himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21:3,4

Only in this way can the glory of God be adequately revealed to humankind who, though not literally able to see God, will see him through the eyes of their understanding, all flesh together! ☐

The Suffering Savior

KEY VERSE: *"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."*—Isa. 53:5

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 53:4-11*

FUNDAMENTAL to the out-working of the divine plan of salvation was the death of Jesus as man's Redeemer, and in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah this is foretold. In order that the dying race might be redeemed from death, Jesus took the sinner's place in death. Concerning the Redeemer's suffering and death, the prophet wrote:

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. . . . Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. . . . He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death. . . . It pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, . . . and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper

in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."—vss. 3-11

As a perfect man, apart from the condemned race, and having no sin nor any cause of death in him, he voluntarily bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. Though he was rich before he became a man, and though, as a man he had all the talent necessary to secure earthly riches, he voluntarily became poor and remained poor—so poor that often he had not where to lay his head. Thus he was able to sympathize with the poor of this world. And though as a perfect man, without sin, and consequently without the consequences of sin, he had perfect health, yet during the three years of his ministry he was continually imparting his vitality and vigor and strength to help the suffering ones around him, thus impoverishing himself

and being touched with a feeling of our infirmities.

Jesus' daily labors of teaching and healing, sacrificing for the good of others, enduring weakness and weariness, spent his strength so much that at the end of the three and a half years of his ministry he was unable to bear his cross to the place of execution. (Luke 23:26) Men did not recognize the real cause of his physical weakness, but esteemed him stricken and smitten of God, as though he were a sinner like other men, and therefore, like them, subject to physical decline and death. But "In him was no sin:" he was generously and sympathetically bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows, while men "esteemed him smitten of God and afflicted."

The dreadful tragedy of Calvary was not for his own sins, but for ours, as also says the Prophet Daniel (9:26): "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself." "He suffered for sins," says Peter, "being put to death in the flesh, *the just for the unjust*, that he might bring us to God." (I Pet. 3:18) And Isaiah continues in verses six and seven, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD [Jehovah] hath laid

on him the iniquity of us all." Meekly and willingly he bore our burden; for, though "he was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."

The pleasure of the LORD, referred to in verse twelve, is the divine purpose, as stated to Abraham to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 12:3; 22:18) It is through the death of Jesus as the Redeemer that these promised blessings of life will be made available to the people for the thousand years of his kingdom.

As the prophet foretold, Jesus was cut off in death, and "who shall declare his generation?" (vs. 8) From the natural standpoint Jesus had no family, but, as the prophet foretold, he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. This also will be during the thousand years of his kingdom, for then the entire human race will be awakened from the sleep of death and given an opportunity to secure everlasting life through Jesus. All who then accept this loving provision of divine grace will become Jesus' seed, his children, for he will be their father, or life-giver. ☐

A Better Day

KEY VERSE: *"Behold I create a new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind."*—Isaiah 65:17

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 65:17-25*

THIS is another revealing prophecy of the kingdom of Christ, pointing out the great changes which it will bring about in human experience. In this chapter, Christ's kingdom is symbolically described as "new heavens and a new earth," and associated with this picture is another: namely, a new "Jerusalem." Through the prophet, the Lord says, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy."

The new heavens and new earth symbolisms are used in a number of the Bible's prophecies, being introduced in the Book of Isaiah for the first time. As symbols, the heavens and earth, in their relationship to each other, are very meaningful. All life on earth

is affected by the heavens. The seasons, the weather, the tides, etc., are all very directly related to the influences of the various heavenly bodies. The earth is not a law unto itself. This relationship of the two illustrates the spiritual and material aspects of Christ's kingdom. Together, these two phases of the kingdom of Christ will constitute the Jerusalem which will be such a joy to all who become God's people under the administration of that new kingdom.

The spiritual phase of the kingdom is thus symbolized by a city, the new Jerusalem. John gives us the key to this symbolism. In Revelation 19:7 we are told of the wife of the Lamb, and in chapter twenty-one, verses nine and ten, we are informed that the Lamb's wife is the holy city that comes down from God out of heaven.

Now let us note the great changes which are to be wrought

as a result of the coming into power of Christ's kingdom, the new heavens and new earth. Continuing, the prophecy states: "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that has not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall make them long enjoy the work of their hands."—Isa. 65:17,22, **marginal translation**

The "elect" here referred to is Jesus. Associated with him will be his faithful followers. As we progress with our study we will find that these will constitute the new heavens; that is, the new spiritual rulers of the earth. On the other hand, those pictured as building houses and inhabiting them, and planting vineyards and eating the fruit of them, will be the restored human race.

The "elect," the prophecy states, will "make them long enjoy the work of their hands." This

means, simply, that through Christ and his church everlasting life will be made available to all mankind. That is why one who continues in opposition to this rule of righteousness, and who dies because of his sins, will be only as an infant, even though he may not die until he is a hundred years old. Those who then accept the provisions of God's grace, through Christ, and obey the laws of that new kingdom, will live forever.

It will be through the messianic kingdom arrangements, the symbolic new heavens and new earth, and holy city, that God figuratively speaking will dwell with men. Just as Jesus in the flesh represented God, the messianic kingdom arrangements will also be his representative. Through these kingdom agencies God's promised blessings of life and happiness will be extended to the people.

Rotherham's translation of our Key Verse reads: "For behold me, creating new heavens, and a new earth, and the former shall not be mentioned neither shall they come on the heart." This does not imply that the evil ways of the former world as an object lesson will not be remembered, but rather by contrast they will have no part in the kingdom. ☐

Christian Life and Doctrine

THE SEED, PART 7

Gentiles Invited

TODAY, the religious world is quite accustomed to conferences and conventions. Representative groups meet to discuss their problems, make their plans, and for mutual encouragement. The first conference of Christ's disciples was held in Jerusalem a short time after Pentecost. The apostles were the chief spokesmen at this assembly, and James seems to have been the chairman. These devoted followers of Jesus were confronted with the problem of what to do with respect to Gentile converts to Christianity in various places who were associating themselves with Jewish believers.

It is only as we acquaint ourselves with the background of this situation that we are able to understand why the acceptance of the Gospel of Christ by Gentiles should create a problem. From the time God made the promise to Abraham that his seed would become a channel of blessing to all the families of the earth, his natural descendants claimed the exclusive right to be the inheritors of that promise, and by God's authority. Long centuries after that promise was made to Abraham, God said to his descendants, the nation of Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth."—Amos 3:2

The Jewish people had their exclusive position of favor with God further confirmed by Jesus, for when he sent out his disciples into the ministry he said to them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5,6) After Jesus was raised from the dead he commissioned his disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, but

they did not easily grasp this broader concept of the divine plan. It required time and study, and a conference.—Matt. 28:19,20; Acts 1:7,8

While the promise made to Abraham envisioned the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth, the privilege of being the seed through which the promised blessings would reach all mankind was made conditional upon obedience to the LORD and faithfulness in the doing of his will. Through Moses, Israel's lawgiver, the LORD said, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.—Exod. 19:5,6

The final test of Israel as a nation came when Jesus presented himself to them as the Messiah. Had they been truly obedient to the Law they would have been prepared in heart and mind to receive him and to become associated with him as a people in dispensing the blessings to the world which God had promised to their father Abraham. But as a people, or nation, they failed in this final test. Concerning this we read, "He [Jesus] came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."—John 1:11, 12

Among those faithful ones of Israel who did receive Jesus were his apostles. But, to begin with, they did not fully realize that the number of worthy individuals of their own people who did accept Jesus was not sufficient to make up the predetermined number of those who with Jesus would be the seed of promise, and that the remainder of this number was to be made up of believing Gentiles.

Actually, from the divine standpoint no one could be a member of this exclusive company simply because of parentage, although the descendants of Abraham were given the first opportunity to qualify. The qualifying condition for all is wholehearted

obedience to the divine will, regardless of what the cost of obedience might be.

This obedience to the LORD's will is described by Paul as a baptism, or burial, into Christ, which is the acceptance of his headship in our lives. Paul wrote, "Ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:26-29

Paul explained that when God made that wonderful promise to Abraham concerning the seed, that Jesus Christ was actu-

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ally the one referred to. (Gal. 3:16) Jesus, before his visit to earth, was the beloved Son of God, and has continued to be such. He gave Jewish believers the power to become sons of God. Now Paul includes believing Gentiles also: "Ye are all children of God by faith."

Romans 8:17 reads, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Here again the heirship to the Abrahamic promise is referred to, for that is the great prize God has offered to those who qualify through faithfulness to him. Christ, as the beloved Son of God, was the chief heir. We, as sons of God by faith and obedience, are joint-heirs.

The first Gentile to accept Christ, and through faith to be brought into the family of God to be a joint-heir of the promise made to Abraham, was Cornelius, leader of an Italian band of soldiers. The record is that Cornelius was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house." He gave also "much alms to the people and prayed to God alway."—Acts 10:1,2

Cornelius' devotion to the God of Israel did not in itself constitute him a son of God, and heir of the Abrahamic promise. In addition to this it was necessary that he accept Christ and receive the Holy Spirit. So in his own due time God directed Peter to visit Cornelius and minister the Gospel of Christ to him that he might have the opportunity to accept.

We read that "about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God" visited Cornelius, and said to him, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do."—Acts 10:3-6

Cornelius followed these instructions, and dispatched three messengers to Joppa to get Peter. (vss. 7,19) Meanwhile, the LORD prepared Peter for their visit. He "went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: and he became very hungry, and

would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, LORD; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spoke unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.”—Acts 10:9-15

While he still wondered how to interpret this dream, the men sent by Cornelius arrived at the home where Peter was living, and inquired for him. He met them and learned the purpose of their visit. While Peter had never ministered to Gentiles, he agreed to return with these men to meet Cornelius. Evidently he began to see the meaning of his dream, which was that now Gentiles who previously had been looked upon by the Jewish people as unclean and outside the pale of God's favor were, upon the basis of faith, to be made clean and acceptable. Because of this he was willing to visit Cornelius and to preach the Gospel to him.

Reaching the home of Cornelius, he “found many that were come together. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” (vss. 27,28) Then Cornelius related his experience in being visited by an angel who instructed him to send for Peter.

After hearing this explanation as to why Cornelius had sent for him, “Peter openeth his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.” (Acts 10:34,35) Continuing, Peter presented the truth concerning Christ, and the important position he occupied in God's great plan of salvation for all mankind.

The record is that while Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and his household in evidence of the fact that they had been accepted into the divine family even as were the Jewish disciples at Pentecost. And this was just the beginning of Gentiles accepting the Gospel. It was a very revealing experience for Peter, and later, when the apostles met in conference at Jerusalem to decide what should be done about the Gentile believers who were now coming among the Jewish believers in various places, he related this experience of the fact that God's blessing was truly upon this new, and to their Jewish minds, astonishing development.—Acts 15:6-9

Paul and Barnabas were also at the conference and testified "what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. And after they had held their peace, James answered saying, Men and brethren hearken unto me: Simeon [Simon Peter] hath declared how at the first God did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name." (vss. 12-14) It should be noted from this statement that the divine purpose then in having the Gospel preached to the Gentiles was not to bring about a mass conversion of the entire non-Jewish world, but merely to take out of them "a people for his name," or those to be taken into the divine family as sons of God, and heirs of the Abrahamic promise.

This work of taking out from the Gentiles a people for his name has already taken nearly two thousand years, and it is still in progress. Meanwhile countless millions have, in a nominal sense, associated themselves with the name of Christ, the vast majority of whom have had no conception whatever of the divine purpose centered in him, or of what it really means to be one of his footstep followers. The masses of nominal Christians have not known that Jesus was sent into the world in fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham concerning a seed who would bless all the families of the earth. Not knowing this, they of course have not been aware that by suffering and dying with Jesus, his followers

qualify to be joint-heirs with him in the inheritance of that promise to Abraham.

However, the work of calling, selecting, and proving those who will constitute the people for his name has steadily gone on, unnoticed and unknown to the world. The world has not known these in their true light, even as it did not know Jesus. (I John 3:1) Many times they have been persecuted by the world and by the worldly churches, even as Jesus was persecuted. The enmity which the Creator said would exist between the seed of Satan and the seed of the woman has often led to acute suffering by these, even as it led to the crucifixion of Jesus.

Eventually, this phase of the divine plan for the recovery of the human race from sin and death will be completed, and then will follow the glorious consummation of that plan. James, the chairman of the conference, explained this as he continued: "To this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the LORD, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the LORD, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts 15:15-18

The tabernacle of David which is rebuilt after the people for the LORD's name are taken out from the Gentiles is in reality the house of David, the divine rulership which was established in his family, and guaranteed, upon the basis of mercy, to remain forever. Isaiah 16:5 reads, "In mercy shall the throne be established: and he [Jesus, the antitypical David] shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness."

It will be then that Jesus will fulfill that wonderful promise of Isaiah 9:7, which reads, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment

and with justice from henceforth, even forever." It will be then that the typical kingdom of David will merge into the antitypical kingdom of the Messiah, the seed of promise. And it will be through the agencies of that kingdom in the hands of Jesus and his joint-heirs that all the families of the earth will be blessed.

This indeed will be the purpose in building again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down. James expressed it in this way: "That the residue of men might seek after the LORD, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the LORD, who doeth all these things."—Acts 15:17

God's promise concerning the seed not only gave assurance that he would provide a Deliverer, but also that blessings would flow to all the families of the earth through the promised seed. This universal scope of the divine plan was reemphasized at the Jerusalem conference. James, quoting from Amos 9:11,12, gave assurance that the ruling house of David would be reestablished in the hands of the Christ, the promised seed, the purpose of this being that the residue of men might seek after the LORD, including all the Gentiles, even as the Prophet Amos had foretold.

This is a promise of God which applies to all the natural descendants of Abraham who have not qualified to be a part of the seed of blessing, and it applies also to all the Gentiles, including those in lands where, throughout the centuries, the Gospel of Christ has been preached, or as James states it, those upon whom the LORD's name has been called. Thus, following the present age in the divine plan when the people for his name is being called out from the world, will come the age during which the opportunity of life through Christ will be extended to all mankind, Jews and Gentiles.

In the eleventh chapter of Romans the Apostle Paul likens the unbelieving Jews of Jesus' day to branches broken off from an olive tree; and the Gentiles who throughout the age have been called out from the world to be a people for his name to wild branches which are grafted into the olive tree to take the places of

the broken-off branches. Then he explains that a Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and shall "turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (vs. 26) Paul explains that the result of this will be that all Israel shall be saved.

Mount Zion in Jerusalem was the seat of King David's government, or, more properly, the LORD's government in which David represented the LORD as ruler in Israel. When David's throne is reestablished with Jesus as King, it will be as though Mount Zion again exists as the center of divine government, and thus it is represented in the prophecies. Psalm 2:6 reads, "Yet have I [Jehovah] set my King [Jesus] upon my holy hill of Zion."

Revelation 14:1 shows Jesus as the Lamb which had been slain for the redemption of the world, standing on Mount Zion, and "with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." Thus again it is shown that the people for his name will be associated with Jesus as the promised seed, and will share with him the kingly honor, authority, and power symbolized by Mount Zion.

And it will be out of Zion that deliverance will come to all Israel. And the 'all Israel' thus to be saved are the former unbelievers of this people, unbelievers upon whom the LORD will bestow mercy. For Paul explains that God has considered them all in unbelief, that he might show mercy to all. (vs. 32) It will include those who have died as well as those who will be living at the time these blessings of enlightenment and life begin to be showered upon mankind.

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Jesus said to the unbelievers of his day who persecuted him to death, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD." (Matt. 23:39) All of those to whom Jesus directed these words fell asleep in death. For them to say, as prophesied by Jesus, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD," it will be necessary that they be raised from the dead. The Apostle Paul realized this, hence his explanation, "What shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead."—Rom. 11:15

Contemporaneous with Abraham during part of the time God was dealing with him, promising that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed, were the Sodomites. These were a wicked people, so wicked, in fact, that God had them destroyed. Nevertheless, these are to be among all the families of the earth who will be blessed through the promised Seed. In a promise to Israel of the resurrection, Ezekiel 16:55 reads, "When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate."

Not only will Jews and Gentiles be raised from the dead to receive the blessings which the LORD has promised, but, beginning with the natural seed of Abraham, they will be enlightened concerning Christ and the provision of life which the Creator has made through him. Isaiah 60:1-3 reads, "Arise, shine; for thy light has come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall rise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

Jesus is the true light which yet will enlighten every man that has ever come into the world. (John 1:9) Associated with him as the seed of Abraham will be his faithful disciples from among both Jews and Gentiles, for to these Jesus said, "Ye are the light

of the world." (Matt. 5:14) Together with Jesus these will constitute the "Sun of Righteousness" which will rise and enlighten all mankind, beginning with the natural descendants of Abraham.—Mal. 4:2

Concerning that future time, now near, when all the families of the earth will be enlightened concerning the true God, and concerning Jesus their Redeemer and Savior, the Prophet Isaiah wrote, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9) The Prophet Zephaniah (3:9) wrote that the LORD would turn to the people "a pure language [message], that they may all call upon the name of the LORD to serve him with one consent."

Isaiah 40:5 reads, "The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." One of the ways in which the glory of the LORD will be revealed to mankind is to be through the restoration of the dead to life. Just before the awakening of Lazarus from the sleep of death, Jesus said to Martha, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (John 11:40) Surely if the awakening from death of one individual was a display of God's glory, will not that glory be seen throughout all the earth when those of every nation, now asleep in death, begin to be awakened by divine power, as the Scriptures show they will?

When James as chairman of that Jerusalem conference summed up the findings of the brethren, he added, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18) James knew this because God had foretold his works from the beginning of the world. In the Garden of Eden he spoke of the seed that would bruise the serpent's head. This seed was Christ. It was this same seed that God referred to in his promise to Abraham, the seed that was to bless all the families of the earth.

It was this seed which would be a great king to rule the earth from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. (Ps. 72:8) This was the king who would sit on the throne of

David, together with his faithful followers, the people for his name, who will live and reign with him a thousand years. It will be through the agencies of that kingdom with Jesus at its head that the foretold blessings of peace and joy and life will be dispensed to the whole sin-sick and dying world.

Yes, God foreknew and foretold his wonderful works on behalf of the children of men! Let us rejoice in the hope that his promises set before us, promises which assure the faithful followers of Jesus that they are to be associated with him in the rulership of the kingdom, and promises which assure us that mankind in general will be given an opportunity, through belief and obedience, to be restored to perfection of human life here on the earth.

Truly, ours is a great and wonderful God!



God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, . . . and [has] made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.—Eph. 2:4-6

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SASKATCHEWAN
Rosetown CJYM 1330 10:00 a.m.
Weyburn-Estevan CFSL-1190 8:45 a.m.

YUKON
Whitehorse CKRW-810 9:30 a.m.

OVERSEAS BROADCASTS

BRITISH ISLES
Dublin Christian Broadcasting 9:00 p.m.
Radio Caroline-Tues. KHZ 962 8:45 p.m.

BRITISH WEST INDIES
Grand Cayman Radio Cayman 9:30 a.m.

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

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

ITALY (Italian)
Europa Radio Milano 83.3-FM 11:30 a.m.
Euro Tele Radio Calabria-Fri. MHZ 102 5:30 p.m.
Radio Corleone Centrale FM-88-500 FM-92 11:00 a.m.
MEXICO (Spanish)
Cullacán Ranchera XEQC 8:30 a.m.

NEW ZEALAND
Dunedin 4XD 11:15 a.m.
Whakatane IXX 8:45 a.m.

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

PANAMA
Panama City HOQ 1250 10:30 a.m.

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

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

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

SPAIN (Spanish)
Radio Gerona-Mon. 9:45 p.m.

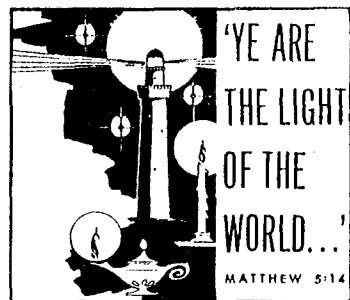
TONGA
Nuku' Alofa-Mon. 10:15 a.m.

URUGUAY (Spanish)
Montevideo-Radio El Espectador 810 9:15 a.m.

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

SHORTWAVE BROADCASTS

(Beamed to Africa, Europe, U.S.)
Eastern U.S. (Sat.) WRNO 15.20 12:45 p.m.



The Bible Answers

Regular Television Broadcasts

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

CONNECTICUT
Waterbury WCAT Channel 13 9:00 p.m.

FLORIDA
Miami WKID
Jacksonville Channel 17

GEORGIA
Atlanta WATL

ILLINOIS
Champaign-Springfield WBHW

IOWA
Cedar Rapids KTS-13
Mt. Vernon-WMVL Cable 7:00 a.m.
Lisbon (every weekday)

MICHIGAN
Ann Arbor-Sun .WIHT-31 12:00 noon

MISSISSIPPI
Jackson WAPT

MISSOURI
Springfield KOLR

NEW MEXICO
Roswell KSWs

NORTH CAROLINA
Hickory WHKY

OHIO
Dayton WHIO

TEXAS
Lubbock KCBD

WEST VIRGINIA
Logan-Mon. Channel 12

Satellite Cable Broadcasts

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

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

Christian Life and Doctrine

“I Am . . . the Life”

*“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth,
and the life: no man cometh unto the
Father, but by me.”*

—John 14:6

JESUS said of himself: “I am . . . the life.” It is spoken of him in Proverbs 8:22,23: “The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.” And John says of him, in John 1:1-4, “In the beginning was the Word [Logos], and the Word was with God, and the Word was a God [or God-like]. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.” (See **Wilson’s Diaglott**, interlinear translation.) John then says: “In him was life and the life was the light of men.” Again, in Acts 3:15, he is called “the Prince of Life.”

More meaning, therefore, was implied in his words, when Jesus said, “I am . . . the life.” He meant more than that he would be the ransom for fallen humanity, restoring the life they had lost. The *ministering* of life had been committed to him long before that time. If all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made, and he was the firstborn of every creature (Col. 1:15), it was he, as God’s instrument who created every living thing. He *gave* them life. Angels, archangels, cherubim, and seraphim—it was he who had brought them into being—through God’s power and authority, of course.

The first sight that mighty angels beheld at their creation, when they attained consciousness, may have been the Prince of

Life standing before them! It was he who, under God's direction, formed Adam of the dust of the ground, and it was he who breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And when light came into Adam's eyes and he sat up and looked about him, the Logos was there, although Adam probably did not see him. As a spirit being, the Logos would be invisible to mortal man, unless materialized in human form. Is not this what John meant when, speaking of Jesus, he said, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men"?

Life is the most precious thing in the world. Without it nothing can be known, and nothing can be enjoyed. One cannot even praise God without life. In Psalm 6:5, David, deserving death, prayed for a continuance of life, using the argument that "in death there is no remembrance of thee [Jehovah]; in the grave, who shall give thee thanks?" Man was designed to live, and to continue to live. This desire to live is universal. Even those of the most savage and primitive cultures cling to life, and the hope of life. They refuse to believe in the finality of death; instead, they believe in the abode of the dead, in life after death, which was Satan's original lie.

The ancient Egyptians placed in the tombs with their dead the comforts of life—food and furnishings, and the replicas of all their possessions in life—believing that those who died, journeyed to another happier land of eternal life. The various western Indian tribes who depended upon successful hunting to sustain life and who knew hunger when game was scarce, believed their dead went to a 'happy hunting ground', where game was plentiful and easy to take, where one could live forever without fear of hunger.

Other peoples believed the dead became living shadows to return and abide with the living, haunting them and influencing them for good or for evil. This is demonology, resulting in the slavery of the living to placate the dead; in reality, these are evil spirits masquerading as the dead. How strange that it was among

the more civilized peoples that the idea of torment as punishment of the wicked dead was fostered! The pagan Greek and Roman cultures believed in this theory, and it was from these beliefs that this horribly blasphemous doctrine was adopted into the nominal Christian churches. Here again, Satan's original lie was fostered.

The universal desire for continuing life is not accidental—it is inherent and God-given, having been implanted in man's very being. It is the most magnificent proof that man was actually designed to live forever. Every fiber of man's being resists death and the thought of death. "I must not die!" man says. "I **will** not die!" While dying, man reaches out and frantically grasps for life as a drowning man grasps at straws. He refuses to believe in death. He rejects it. But he sees it all about him, even in his own body. He cannot escape it. So what does he do? He rationalizes it. He calls it a friend. He calls it a gateway to another world, a better world, where one may live forever under more ideal and happier conditions. Again, accepting Satan's lie, rather than God's clear statement, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof *thou shalt surely die* [Margin: 'dying thou shalt die']." But man rejects God's sentence, and attempts to reconcile himself to death.

But is death a friend? We who have the truth know that it is not. First, we have the plain scripture calling it an enemy. (I Cor. 15:26) "The last *enemy* that shall be destroyed is death." Also, it is obvious that if Jesus Christ is the Prince of Life, the opposite of life is not a friend. But aside from this, reason alone tells us that death is not a friend. Is it a friend that causes hearts to break, that fills lives with anguish over a departed loved one? Is it a friend that snatches away the mainstay and support of a family, leaving behind a destitute widow and children in want? Is it a friend that suddenly and cruelly terminates all the beautiful dreams and plans of a life together? No! Death is an enemy! A miserable and hateful enemy that Satan's deception brought into the world. As

Jesus Christ is the Prince of Life, Satan the Devil is the Prince of Death.

And, from the human standpoint, the situation is indeed hopeless. Every earthly being in the world fearfully anticipates death. It is an inevitable fate. It is like a black and evil vulture ever circling overhead, watching intently for its victim to weaken, only biding its time to pounce suddenly upon him. Considering all this, could there be any better news or Gospel, than that death had been abolished? Not that man would continue to live on and on, in sickness and misery—the workings of death in our bodies—but that every vestige of death should be abolished, and man would live on in perfect health. Could there be a more joyous Gospel? “Our Savior Jesus Christ, . . . hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” (I Tim. 1:10) John 3:16 goes with it: “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” What better news could there be!

In these days of threatened atomic destruction, the most shocking headline that could appear in a newspaper would be the two words: WAR DECLARED! But after the long nighttime of weeping the world has been through, what an impact of joy would result from the two word headline: DEATH ABOLISHED! This, in essence, is the Gospel we preach. These are the words of life we take in our mouths; and it is the message of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Life, to whom Peter said, in John 6:68, “Thou hast the words of eternal life.” This is the very substance of the divine plan of the ages: man created perfect, designed to live forever; the fall of man into sin and death; the frightful experience with sin; a ransom found—appropriately that same Prince of Life through whom man was first created and given life; then the re-creation, the resurrection, the restitution—life restored in full measure, with man fulfilling the original design, and living forever in happiness upon the earth.

But when Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me," he was speaking to his disciples alone. He had just partaken of the Last Supper with them. Judas Iscariot had left the group, with Satan in him, motivating him. Jesus knew of the ordeal ahead for his disciples, when he would be taken from them, be crucified, and return to his Heavenly Father. So he tried to prepare their minds with the words, "Whither I go, ye cannot come." (John 13:33) "Why not?" Peter wanted to know. "Why can't I follow you?" (John 13:37) How could Jesus at that time explain to their fleshly minds the nature of the high calling to be partakers of the spiritual nature? He simply answered, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards."

Then he spoke intimate, encouraging, and comforting words which they would remember in the dark days that followed: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3) What simple and beautiful words these are! One would almost think he was speaking to children—and he was, in a way. His disciples were childlike, in the best sense of the word: loving, trusting, obedient—in the same sense that Jesus used the term when he said of little children: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. 19:14

When he told his disciples, "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am, there ye may be also," he was offering them the divine nature. This was the high calling, of glory, honor, and immortality. (Phil.3:14; Rom. 2:7) This was that of which David prophetically spoke, in Psalm 16:11, "Thou wilt show me the path of life. In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore." Jesus was showing them the way to immortal-

ity, in fulfillment of Proverbs 12:28, "In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death." He was pointing out the gateway to eternal life, as he did when he said in Matthew 7:14, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Jesus had the right to offer his disciples the divine nature, immortality. As our text says, he was 'the Life', the embodiment of life, and, as the Heavenly Father's agent, the dispenser of life. He himself said, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—John 10:28

And now let us fully realize that these promises Jesus made to his early disciples are ours also! We, too, are his disciples. Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:51) To which Paul added, "The bread which we break, is it not the communion [or participation] of the body of Christ? For we, being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." (I Cor. 10:16,17) We are of the body of Christ, which has 144,000 members. Therefore these promises of life which apply to the entire body are ours also, because our Head is the Prince of Life. Through Jesus, we are victorious over death. So "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—I Cor. 15:54,55

Jesus said that he would give his flesh for the life of the world. (John 6:51) He was willing to lay down his life in sacrifice. This is the ransom. "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing. There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches. The ransom of a man's life are his riches. Who is it that makes himself rich and has nothing?" (Prov. 13:7,8) On the other

hand, we read of Satan, "Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the Most High." (Isa. 14:13,14) And what does Satan have? What is his dominion like? Diseased and dying; depraved and degenerated; the earth one vast graveyard. Nothing! It is waste and desolate.

Then, "there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." We read of Jesus, "Who, being in the form of God thought not, by usurpation, to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." (Phil. 2:6-9) We also read, in II Corinthians 8:9, "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor." Is there any greater poverty than to be deprived of life? The death of an ordinary, sinful person is bad enough; but for the Prince of Life to die, that was poverty indeed!

Yes, it was Jesus who "maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." But what are these great riches? The scripture continues: "The ransom of a man's life are his riches." Notice the singular—*a man's life*. This is Jesus' ransom for the life of Adam—a life for a life—a corresponding price. And this is confirmed in the words, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned . . . For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. 5:12,19,

The ransom of a man's life are his riches, the scripture says. This is the rich and complete offering Jesus had in his hands and which he presented in heaven for the redemption of the hu-

man race. It was the ransom of a man's life, Adam's life, and covering Adam and all of Adam's children who were born in sin and shapen in iniquity. It was a rich gift indeed. This verse sums it up: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6:23

Christ has returned; his second advent has come. He who said, "I am the life," is here. The kingdom will soon be manifested in power and glory, and the blessings of life will begin flowing to the peoples of earth. Instead of death notices in the newspapers, there will be resurrection notices! Instead of funeral services, welcome services will be held! And instead of a 'wake', an awakening! As the kingdom progresses, the memories of Satan's reign of sin and death will fade like the remembrance of a nightmare from which one has awakened. Only the lessons learned from the experience with sin will be unforgettable. Forever will be remembered and honored the sacrifice of Jesus, who died "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil."—Heb.2:14)

And thanks be to God, this, too, is yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and will surely be accomplished by our Prince of Life! ☐

"GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon the earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the People praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; Let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase and God, even our God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

—Psalm 67:1-7

Christian Life and Doctrine

Grace, Power, and Knowledge

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

—II Peter 1:2,3

GOD'S grace is his unmerited favor, and how unworthy we all are of his favor! Peter expressed the desire that God's grace, and the peace which comes through a knowledge of his love, be multiplied in the hearts and lives of those who have espoused the divine cause. God is always willing to multiply his blessings to us, although we lack the capacity to receive and appreciate his grace in all its full abundance.

In order to increase in grace and knowledge we must empty our hearts and minds of earthly aims and ambitions, for these selfish desires prevent our lives from being filled as they might otherwise be with the grace of God. True, we may be surrounded on every hand by manifestations of God's favor, yet if we have selfish hearts of unbelief the blessings which the LORD has made so abundantly available will not bring the peace and joy of heart which they otherwise would.

Peter explains that grace and peace are multiplied unto us "through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." How strongly this emphasizes the importance of knowledge, not worldly knowledge, but a knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord. This knowledge is revealed to us through God's great and loving plan of salvation, which is to be found in his Word. The Prophet Jeremiah wrote that we should glory in the fact that we know

God, who delights to exercise loving-kindness in the earth.—Jer. 9:23

We read that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) Our text explains that God has given us “all things that pertain unto life and godliness,” and his beloved Son is one of these gifts. All of God’s provisions for life and godliness are motivated by his love, and are manifestations of his grace, but they are made available to us by his power.

It was by divine power that the Logos was born of a woman, and thus became flesh, for the suffering of death. It was divine power that sustained the Redeemer throughout the three and one-half years of his ministry, and enabled him at the end to be triumphant in laying down his life. Because of this, life has been provided—provided, that is upon the basis of our acceptance of this precious gift of God, and faithfulness in doing his will.

In order to accept Jesus as the gift of God’s love we must know about him, and about the vitally important place he occupies in the divine plan of salvation. This knowledge reaches us through the Scriptures, and the Scriptures were provided by the power of God, or by divine power, as our text states it. The Bible speaks of divine power as the Holy Spirit of God, and it was the Holy Spirit that gave us the Word of God.

Peter informs us concerning the Old Testament Scriptures that holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (II Pet. 1:21) These Scriptures foretold the coming of Jesus to be the Messiah. They forecast his birth, his ministry, his suffering, and his death. They also prophesied his resurrection from death, and his exaltation. These messages of the Holy Spirit outlined the Heavenly Father’s will for Jesus, and it was by his obedience to this will that his sacrifice as our Redeemer was acceptable to God.

However, as a natural man, Jesus could not understand the full meaning of what had been written concerning him so there was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon him at the time of his baptism, which brought about, figuratively speaking, an opening of the heavens for him. Then there was a miraculous revelation of the divine truth which had already been recorded by the prophets as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

To the extent that it was possible, Jesus imparted this truth of the divine plan to his apostles. However, being natural men who had not yet received the Holy Spirit themselves, their ability to grasp the great truths of the divine plan was limited. But Jesus promised the Holy Spirit, and this promise was fulfilled by the gift of the Holy Spirit which came upon the waiting believers at Pentecost. This resulted in a miraculous revealment of truth to the apostles, enabling them to understand the many things which Jesus had said to them. Thus we have in their sermons and epistles a further rounding out of the divine plan for the blessing of mankind in general, and of the Heavenly Father's will for us who have now accepted God's precious gift of his beloved Son.

Altogether, then, through the prophets, the teachings and example of our Lord Jesus, and the teachings of the apostles, divine power has furnished us with all the truth we need to guide us in the way of life and godliness. Writing to Timothy, the Apostle Paul said, "All Scripture, divinely inspired, is indeed profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for that discipline which is in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly fitted for every good work."—II Tim. 3:16,17, **Diaglott.**

Through the Old Testament Scriptures, the meaning of which was miraculously revealed to him, Jesus was provided with the necessary information to guide him in the doing of the Father's will. Just so, the divinely inspired Scriptures as a whole now furnish the information relative to our association with Jesus in the great plan of salvation.

The Scriptures reveal that by nature we are members of a fallen and condemned race, and that we cannot please God by works of our own righteousness. It is essential always to keep this in mind in order that we may be kept humble before the LORD. The Scriptures also reveal that we can be acceptable to our Heavenly Father through the merit of Jesus' redeeming blood. To obtain this standing before God through the blood of Jesus, it is essential that we repent, and demonstrate our acceptance of God's gift by the consecration of our all to do the divine will, which is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. We have the assurance of the Word that if we take these necessary steps we will be "accepted in the Beloved."

During the present age God's will for his people is expressed through the invitation extended by Jesus when he said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. 16:24) This means following Jesus into death. Jesus was a perfect man, and he began his ministry in the prime of his life, yet so zealous was he in doing his Father's will that at the end of three and one-half years he was physically unable to carry his own cross to the place of crucifixion. So, following him into death means more than simply espousing his cause until we die. It calls for a vigorous sacrificing of time and strength and means, until our offering is consumed. This is why the Christian way is narrow and difficult.

In Jesus' teachings we find much information as to what it means to walk in his steps. Concerning our attitude toward others, especially our enemies, Jesus said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not

even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matt. 5:44-48

The Greek word here translated perfect means 'complete'. Jesus has reminded us that his Heavenly Father bestows the common blessings of sunshine and rain upon both the good and the evil; that he is complete in the bestowing of his benefactions. And he admonishes us to do the same—not to be partial, but all-comprehensive in the bestowing of our blessings. This is an exacting test of discipleship, but it is one of the facets of godliness concerning which the Holy Spirit has revealed the Father's will.

Again Jesus said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." (Matt. 6:19,20) Here is another facet of true godliness, one which requires great faith to accept and to put into practice. Paul tells us that faith is the evidence of things unseen. (Heb.11:1) We cannot see the treasures we are laying up in heaven, but if we can believe that through our faithfulness in following in the Master's footsteps these treasures are being laid up for future use, then the treasures of this world will seem of little value by comparison.

Jesus elaborates upon this viewpoint somewhat. He said: "I bid you put away anxious thoughts about food and drink to keep you alive, and clothes to cover your body. Surely life is more than food, the body more than clothes. Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow and reap and store in barns, yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. You are worth more than the birds! Is there a man of you who by anxious thought can add a foot to his height? And why be anxious about clothes? Consider how the lilies grow in the fields; they do not work, they do not spin; and yet, I tell you, even Solomon in all his splendor was not attired like one of these. But if that is how God clothes the grass in the fields, which is there today, and tomorrow is thrown on the stove, will

he not all the more clothe you? How little faith you have! No, do not ask anxiously, What are we to eat? What are we to drink? What shall we wear? All these are things for the heathen to run after, not for you, because your Heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Set your mind on God's kingdom and his justice before everything else, and all the rest will come to you as well. So do not be anxious about tomorrow; tomorrow will look after itself. Each day has troubles enough of its own."—Matt. 6:25-34, **New English Bible**

"Set your mind on God's kingdom," Jesus said. **The Common Version** reads, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." We rejoice as we look forward to the time when the blessings of human health and life will be flowing out to mankind through the agencies of the messianic kingdom, but we rejoice even more when we contemplate the share in the rulership of that kingdom which God has promised to us. Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke 12:32

In his vision on the Isle of Patmos, John saw those who had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus and the Word of God. John saw them come up in the first resurrection to live and reign with Christ a thousand years. Those who qualify for this high position are those who are faithful in following in the footsteps of Jesus, suffering and dying with him as his witnesses. The attaining of this high position with Jesus is the consideration of their lives. Material food and the other necessities of this human life will be given no more consideration by them than is necessary, and should be given no anxious thought at all.

Paul wrote, "Let all men know your forbearance. The LORD is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Je-

sus." (Phil. 4:5-7, **RSV**) Today we can say that the Lord is present, and therefore we appreciate all the more the importance of seeking first the long-promised kingdom which so soon will be established. But the kingdom and its interests will be something less than first in our lives if we permit anxiety over our temporal needs to divert our attention from our true spiritual interests.

In Peter's prophecy concerning the end of the age and the time of our Lord's second presence, speaking of the various aspects of this present evil world, he said, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." (II Pet. 3:11) The Greek word here translated 'conversation' means more than merely the things we say. It comprehends our whole walk in life, our daily conduct, including, of course, the use we make of our tongues.

And what manner of persons should we be? What is holy conduct and godliness? Peter has given us at least a partial answer to the question in the opening chapter of this epistle. After telling us, as in our text, that divine power has given unto us all things which pertain to life and godliness, "through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue," he continues, "Whereby," that is, by divine power, "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."—II Pet. 1:4

The inspirational power of the promises of God concerning our glorious hope of exaltation with Christ to live and reign with him, has much to do with preparing us for the divine nature. We have faith in these promises, and we are admonished to add to that faith, and diligently so, "virtue: and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance [self-control]; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love." What a comprehensive

summary this is of a life of godliness, and how diligent we should be in seeking to attain these various virtues, which in reality are the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit!

Peter explains further, "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." We need the knowledge of Christ, and of his Heavenly Father, but this knowledge is of little value to us unless, through our own diligence in its use, it bears the fruits of godliness.

God does not coerce us. His power has made every provision for the great salvation which he has offered us, and guarantees all the necessary help to attain to it, but we must cooperate by doing our part in diligently bringing our every thought into captivity to his will as it is expressed through his Word. We are assured that if we do this we will make our calling and election sure, and that an abundant entrance will be ministered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Paul knew, as stated by Peter in our text, that all things pertaining to life and godliness are given to us by divine power, and he expressed his willingness that these blessings of his Heavenly Father through his beloved Son should cost him all earthly things, including life itself. He knew by experience what it meant to deny self and to take up his cross and follow his Master. Even while languishing in a Roman prison, not knowing what the morrow might bring, he was still happy that he had made the sacrifice. Paul was interested only in the one thing, which was to finish his course through the complete consummation of his sacrifice.

Speaking of some of the things which he once held valuable, Paul wrote, "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the Law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the Law, blameless." But, as Paul explains, "What things were gain to me, those

I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."—Phil. 3:5-9

How highly did Paul esteem the knowledge of God and of Christ Jesus! He knew that this knowledge had reached him by divine power, through the Word of truth. And he knew that to continue growing in grace and knowledge it was essential to keep his sacrifice on the altar. At the beginning of his walk in the narrow way, the Lord had made clear to Paul that his course was to be one of suffering and his experiences had proved true to this forecast. Now, in prison at Rome, he would perhaps reflect on some of the experiences in which he had had the privilege of proving his worthiness of God's grace through Christ, but this did not deter him in the least from facing the future in which he knew that the sacrifice and suffering would continue.

Yes, Paul was still willing to have the knowledge of God and of Christ cost him everything of earthly advantage—"that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship [partnership] of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Phil. 3:10,11) Paul knew that the mighty power of God which had raised Jesus from the dead had been with the Master throughout the entire course of his earthly ministry, to sustain him as a new creature in his every time of need.

And Paul wanted to experience the benefits of that power through his own faithfulness as a partner in the suffering and sacrificial death of Jesus. Just as the Heavenly Father, through his promises, had set a great joy before the Master which enabled him to endure the cross and to despise the shame, so Paul was encouraged and sustained by the hope of sharing in the first resur-

rection and being with Jesus in the heavenly phase of his kingdom.

Paul continued, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those [earthly] 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." One with less faith and courage might well have wondered, under the circumstances, if it were worthwhile to continue serving the Lord. His whole life as a follower of the Master had been largely one of affliction. Stonings, imprisonments, stripes on his bare back, misrepresentations, trials among false brethren, weariness and other hardships had been his lot. But Paul was not daunted by any of these things.

Instead, he was determined faithfully to press on in the same rugged and narrow way. He was reaching forth unto those things which were before, and he wanted to continue pressing toward the mark, knowing that in doing so there would be further sacrifices, additional hardships. But Paul knew also, even as Peter states in our text, that divine power would continue to provide all the necessary help in order that he might ultimately apprehend that for which he had been apprehended by Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:12) May this also be our earnest desire and determination, that through divine grace and power we too may attain unto life and godliness, and share with Jesus and all his faithful followers in the future work of blessing all the families of the earth.



Obituaries

Sister McJilton, Pittsburgh, PA—January, 1988. Age, 93.

Brother John (Longin) Handzlik, Philadelphia, PA—June 26. Age, 91.

Sister Irene Tichansky, Detroit, MI—July 18. Age, 70.

Sister Lenore Valentine, San Francisco, CA—July 16. Age, 78.

Voices from the Past

BROTHER EDWARD FAY, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

The Ancient Worthies

"They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise."

—Hebrews 11:38,39

THE phrase, Ancient Worthies, refers to those individuals who lived in ancient times, before the time of Christ, who were worthy of God's favor because of their faithfulness. Since their lives were such excellent examples of faith, they are mentioned in general, and by name, in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

The Apostle Paul wrote this letter to the Jews who had become Christians. He wanted to rekindle their faith in and enthusiasm for the Lord Jesus Christ. In chapter ten, verse thirty-five, he says, "Cast not away therefore your confidence which hath great recompense of reward." Then, in verse thirty-eight, he says, "Now the just shall live by faith." Here he was quoting Habakkuk 2:4, to give Scriptural support for the point he was stressing.

Of course, from a human standpoint the unjust live as long as the just. But the apostle's perspective is that in God's sight, one does not 'live' at all unless one has personally accepted the sacrifice of Jesus by faith. The need for faith is a key lesson in this letter. To show that this quality is not something new, the apostle points to the lives of their ancestors. "For by it [faith] the elders [Ancient Worthies] obtained a good report."—Heb. 11:2

Then follows a list: by faith Abel; by faith Enoch; by faith Noah; by faith Abraham; by faith Sarah; by faith Isaac; by faith Joseph; by faith Moses. . . . Even to the apostle the list seemed

endless! "And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about . . ." (verse 32, **New International Version**) These examples emphasize the need for faith in *our* lives. Faith shows confidence in God and an appreciation that he will fulfill as he has promised.

In verses 39 and 40, the apostle makes a statement few understand: "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." From the world's viewpoint, the Ancient Worthies died without receiving any reward for their faithfulness. When Jesus arrived on the scene of history, he brought "life and immortality to light." (II Tim. 1:10) This means that those who follow him will, if faithful, receive an immortal life, something far beyond anything the Ancient Worthies expected to receive. Christ and his church will bring the Ancient Worthies back to perfect life on earth as human beings.

This point is made another way in the next chapter: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *just men made perfect*." (Heb. 12:22,23) The "church of the first-born" are in heaven; the "just men" are not.

The righteous rule of the kingdom is described in Psalm 110:2: "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." This is a reference to the rule of Christ and his church. Then follows a peculiar verse: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." **Rotherham** renders the last phrase: "out of the womb of the dawn, to thee shall spring forth the dew of thy youth." The original Hebrew translated by the phrase, 'thy people shall be willing', means they shall offer themselves as voluntary offer-

ings. We believe this describes the Ancient Worthies. They enlisted in the Lord's service voluntarily. At the dawning of the new age, they shall be vigorous and as refreshing as the dew.

Paul, in Romans, spoke about the Ancient Worthies, and used the word remnant to describe them. He said, "God did not reject his people [Israel], whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel: Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me? And what was God's answer to him? I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal. So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace."—Rom. 11:2-5, NIV

The apostle indicated that if one goes back to Israel's history at the time of the Prophet Elijah, there was a remnant class. This was a class who remained faithful to God in spite of the unrighteousness that surrounded them. In Romans he mentioned another, a different, remnant class, meaning those of Israel who have accepted Christ.

But the "remnant" of Elijah's time was the Ancient Worthies. Earlier in Romans Paul had referred to them: "As he [God] says in Hosea: I will call them 'my people' who are not my people [referring to the Gentiles who were called to be part of the body of Christ]; and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one, and it will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, You are not my people, they will be called sons of the living God. Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand of the sea, only the remnant will be saved."—Rom. 9:25-27, NIV

This "remnant that will be saved" does not refer to Israelites who accepted Christ. It refers to those faithful ones in ancient times who were pleasing to God. In verse 29, Paul quotes Isaiah 1:9, which reads: "Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a

very small remnant ["seed," in Romans 9:29], we should have been as Sodom and we should have been like unto Gomorrah."

Isaiah said—and Paul quoted him to emphasize the point—that if Israel did not have a class within it that was like a seed to God, the whole nation would have disappeared as did the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah! But the remnant class did show faith. Paul then made the point that there was also a remnant class in his day that similarly showed faith. They were those of the church class.

Micah prophetically described Jesus: "They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek [Israel rejected Jesus]. But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little [only a small city] among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. [As the Logos, Jesus was the very first of the creation of God.] Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel."—Mic. 5:1-3

The phrase, 'until she which travaileth hath brought forth', may have inspired Paul to see Sarah and Hagar as a type of two covenants, each of which brought forth a seed. He showed that Sarah's son, Isaac, pictured Christ and those who are Christ's. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."—Gal. 4:28

Micah indicated that God would cast off the Jewish nation until the Sarah covenant had brought forth. Because the church is only *almost* complete, the Jews are still in a "cast off" condition. But now favor is beginning to return to the Jews. So we know the time will soon come when "the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel." The phrase, remnant of his brethren, refers to the Ancient Worthies!

Micah has more to say about this remnant. Note these words: "And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass,

that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.”—Mic. 5:7,8

We have already seen how Psalm 110:3 describes the Ancient Worthies as the “dew of thy youth.” In the land of Israel, dew and showers are critical for crops. Thus the Ancient Worthies will be as welcome at the end of the great time of trouble, as water to a thirsty land. Their return is God’s doing. It does not depend upon anything which the ‘sons of men’ may or may not do. As the lion is the king of beasts, and has authority in the forest, so also will these ‘kings’ have authority to do what is required to enforce the rule of righteousness in the kingdom.

In the 45th Psalm, the church is pictured as the bride of Christ. Verses 9 and 10: “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.” The 16th verse describes the Ancient Worthies: “Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.”

In this verse, the Ancient Worthies are called the ‘children’ of the Bridegroom and Bride [Christ and his church]. As princes they are also the fulfillment of a prophecy which states: “Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.” (Isa. 32:1) These ‘children’ are the ‘dew of thy youth’.

These remarkable men and women of old who maintained their faithfulness to God have not been forgotten. Like the dew in the early morning, they shall spring forth from the womb of the dawn, perfect, and with the power to perform whatever is needed in the next age. They shall be the princes on the earth. And they will have been made perfect by earth’s great Mediator. □

Encouraging Letters

Wonderfully Accurate!

Dear Sir: Please send me "Daily Heavenly Manna" and "The People of the Bible." I have most of your booklets and I think they are wonderfully accurate and true to the teaching of the Bible. Thank you for helping me to understand the Bible better. God bless you.—WV

Overcome with Joy

Dear Dawn Bible Students: After reading The Divine Plan of the Ages, I was overcome with great joy, tears, and heartfelt praise to our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, and thanked them for sending the truth into my life. I also prayed that you would be blessed more abundantly as you pursue His work and His will in spreading His Word. I also thanked him for sending you friends to me, so that you would help me come to know his love. I seek Jesus. I sincerely wish to continue with

my Studies in the Scriptures, to know the whole truth, and walk with Jesus. I remain, Your friend.—OH

So Glad to Hear Program

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Came across your program as I was looking for another, and am so glad—as I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it and benefitted spiritually from it. Plan to listen to it more often. I would very much appreciate the free Creation book that was offered on the air. Thank you so much.—FL

Quite Impressed

Dear "Frank and Ernest": Heard your broadcast over Station WNOV, Milwaukee station, on Sunday, May 22. I was rushing getting ready for church. I didn't hear all of it but what I did hear I was quite impressed and enlightened. I am an older Christian striving for more knowledge of God's Word. Please send me the free copy of the booklet, "Father,

Son, Holy Spirit," and whatever else that I can learn more about our Lord. Thank you for being on the air. You are a great service. I pray that you can continue. May God bless your endeavors. Thanking you in advance. Yours truly.—*IL*

So Engrossed

Dear Sir: Please send me information regarding The Bible Answers program. After watching it on television I was so engrossed in what I was learning that I knew the information you send me will give me an opportunity to gain so much. Thank you.—*FL*

Read with Enjoyment

Dear Brethren: Loving greetings in our dear Master's beloved, precious name, Jesus Christ! It was with much enjoyment that I read in this month's Dawn the article about Brother Panucci and others and of their trip to Mexico and other South American countries to spread the truth about God's Word. The truths are going forward in spite of everything, and we know God

is surely with them. It is just wonderful and we can continue to pray for his kingdom to come and his will to be done. May the dear Heavenly Father continue to watch over each and every one at the Dawn as you strive to do his will and serve him. May he bless and keep you in loving care always. Warm Christian Love. Yours in Christ.—*England*

Surprised and Relieved

Dear Sir: I can't express my surprise and relief over the truths in your publication, "Hope beyond the Grave." It is great to see such Scripture-backed work evolving from the woodwork! Thank you for your time, consideration, and research. Keep up the great work.—*AZ*

Found "Hope"

To Whom It May Concern, Since October 1987, I have lost four loved ones, and when I went to the funeral home I happened to see your booklet, "Hope." I didn't read it then, but a couple days after the funeral I couldn't sleep, so I sat

on the side of the bed. I saw the booklet on my table. I picked it up and started reading it and I must confess it has given me a greater outlook on losing my loved ones and now I feel as though a great burden has lifted up off of me. So I am writing to request some more of your booklets for some of my family, plus the one on "God and Reason" and whatever else you have. Please send me what you can and as many as you can. God bless you.—

IL

Gentle Reminder to Study

Dawn Bible Students Association: Dear Friends: I am so truly grateful for the regular arrival of The Dawn magazine in my mailbox. As another reader puts it, it has so often gently reminded one to study. I grew up in the truth, and yet for many years my eyes did not see all of the precious things which are in the Scriptures. But somehow, He arranged it, with other family members being away for long periods and I alone here on the prop-

erty where I could, night after night, wander outside and gaze at His glorious sparkling stars in sheer, captivated wonder! Truly I say, friends, we have indeed known Him! The LORD's kingdom now so close at hand is surely the only thing for mankind in his helpless estate. May God continue to bless your good work as He has always done. My sincerest Christian love to you all and readers everywhere.

—Australia

Stirred to Strive Harder

Dear Brethren at the Dawn: Loving greetings to all the dear co-laborers in the name of our Lord and Master! The article on Precious Promises in the May issue has stirred me deeply and is an incentive to strive to be more faithful and to show a proof of my faith. May God bless you dear ones in your labors of love. With Christian love.—*IL*

Hoping for Help

Please send the free booklet, "Why God Permits Evil" to the address below. These are ques-

tions my husband has been asking for some time now, and I don't know the answers to

give him. I hope this booklet will help because he is losing faith in God. Thank you.—AL

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

October 6—"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them."—Luke 9:55,56 (Z. '04-43 Hymn 259)

October 13—"I will show thee my faith by my works."—James 2:18 (Z. '04-45 Hymn 210)

October 20—"Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves."—Matthew 10:16 (Z. '04-91 Hymn 301)

October 27—"My times are in thy hands."—Psalm 31:15 (Z. '04-237 Hymn 135)

Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

G.M. JEUCK
Middletown, NY October 16

N. KASPEROWICZ
Allentown, PA October 23

S. MENGOS
Fresno, CA October 2

F. NEMESH
London, Ont. October 9

J. PANUCCI
Milano, Torino, Florence,
Lucania, Octaviano, Calabria
Italy October 1-17
Orlando, FL 29,30

G.H. PASSIOS
Pittsburgh, PA October 9

E.K. PENROSE
Arcadia, IN October 1

Indianapolis, IN 2
Louisville, AL 23
St. Petersburg, FL 26
Warm Mineral Springs, FL 27
Orlando, FL 29,30

L.B. POST
New England Conv. October 8,9
Detroit, MI 30

J.H. SNYDER
Chico, CA October 4
Sacramento, CA 5
San Francisco, CA 6
Palo Alto, CA 12
Upper Lake, CA 13
Arcata, CA 14

J. TATE
Bloomsburg, PA October 2

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

63

Conventions

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE KALISPELL & HAVRE, MT Convention planned for September 23-26 must be cancelled due to forest fires.

MILWAUKEE WI, October 1,2—Myron Reed Lodge, 4300 W. Villard. Contact: Mrs. Violet Pazucha, 4454 S. 14th St., Apt. 3 53221

DETROIT, MI, October 2—Redford YWCA, 25940 Grand River, Detroit. Contact: Walter Blicharz, Secy., 19146 Bedford Rd., Birmingham MI 48009

NEW ENGLAND CONVENTION, October 7,8,9—Quality Inn & Conference Center, Chicopee, MA. Contact: Mrs. Richard Suraci, 171 Johnson Rd., Hamden, CT 06518 Phone: (203) 248-3793

GRAND RAPIDS, MI, October 8,9—NOTE: New address—Kenowa Hills Jr. H.S., 4253 3 Mile Rd, N.W. Contact: Ruth Kowalski, 862 First St. N.W. 49504 Phone: (616) 456-5069

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA, October 8,9—Masonic Temple, 859 Marsh St. Lynn Murray, 43 Del Sol Ct, 93401. Phone: (805) 544-3937

RICHMOND, VA, October 14-16—Roslyn Conference Center, 8727 River Road. Contact: Miss Katharine R. Warren, 2805 Stonewall Ave. 23225

LOS ANGELES, CA—October 16—Burbank Masonic Auditorium, 248 E. Olive Avenue, Burbank, CA 91502 Phone: (818) 843-9092

CINCINNATI, OH, October 22,23—Ramada Inn-Sharonville, 11029 Dowlin Dr. (off I-75) Contact: Mrs. Edith M. Harp, 2609 Merrittview Lane, 45231, for room reservations, which must be received by October 1 to get special rate.

MARSHFIELD, WI, October 22,23—Spencer Village Hall, Spencer. Contact Sr. Starr Carpenter, P.O. Box 864, Marshfield, 54449

NEW HAVEN, CT, October 23 (New date)—Italian-American Club, 87 Chase La., West Haven, CT

ORLANDO, FL, October 29,30—NEW LOCATION: Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Dr., Sanford. Contact: Mrs. Stanley Jeuck, 587 Queens Mirror Circle, Casselberry 32707

Phone: (407) 699-8303

DETROIT, MI, October 30—Redford YWCA, 25940 Grand River, Detroit. Contact: Walter Blicharz, Secy., 19146 Bedford Rd., Birmingham, MI 48009

JERSEY CITY, NJ Pre-Thanksgiving Convention, November 19,20—Masonic Temple, 1912 Morris Ave., Union, NJ. Contact: Mrs. Charlotte Teklinski, 84 Arthur Street. Ridgfield Park 07660.

Phone: (201) 440-0925

SAN DIEGO, CA Thanksgiving Convention, November 24-27—LaJolla Village Inn, 3299 Holiday Ct., LaJolla. Phone: (619) 453-5500 Contact Gilbert Rice, 4005 Olympic St, San Diego 92115

Phone: (619) 583-2431