

The DAWN

VOLUME No. LXXXIII, Number 7
(USPS 149-380), July 2015

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First-class postage paid at Rutherford, NJ. Published monthly by The Dawn Bible Students Association, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. \$12.00 a year.

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God's Purposes for His Kingdom on Earth

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.”

—*Ephesians 1:10*

MANY CHRISTIANS TODAY

have grave doubts that the kingdom of Christ will ever be set up on the earth. This is with good reason, as we look at the world around us and its myriad problems. According to the World Economic Forum's “Outlook on the Global Agenda—2015,”

the top ten challenges currently facing the world and which will likely preoccupy its leaders over the next twelve to eighteen months are:

Deepening income inequality

Persistent jobless growth

Lack of leadership

Rising geostrategic competition between world regions

Weakening of representative democracy

Rising pollution in the developing world
Increasing occurrence of severe weather events
Intensifying nationalism
Increasing water stress
Growing importance of health in the economy

In addition, there are the continuing threats of terrorism in various forms, flagrant openness of immorality, and a general increase of godlessness throughout the world—all of which the religious and civil powers appear impotent to do anything about. Viewed only from this perspective, this is a dark and dismal outlook for the world in which we live today. Will Christ's kingdom ever come, and if it does, will it succeed in solving man's problems? Does the Bible tell us how?

In examining this important subject, we should first realize that God's plan of salvation for the fallen and dying human race embraces thousands of years in time. From this, we instinctively know there is a great deal more to it than simply believing on Christ and being saved. We should first remember that Jesus did not come to die for the world until 4,000 years after the fall of man. During that time, God gave no definitive revelation of his redemptive plan, speaking of it only vaguely through the prophets and by types and shadows, and then merely to the one little nation of Israel. It was not until Christ came and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel, that God's people began to realize that he has a plan, an "eternal purpose," and that it will not be until the "dispensation of the fulness of times" that things both in heaven and in earth will be gathered unto Christ.—Eph. 1:10; 3:11

Much of the detail of God's plan is revealed through his Word by means of illustrations and word pictures. Our first parents were tested as to their obedience to God's will. They failed, and even though Jesus paid the penalty of their sin, and thus provided a way of escape from death, no member of Adam's race will be given everlasting life until he is tried individually. The thousand-year period during which individuals of the race as a whole will undergo this trial is spoken of in the Scriptures as a judgment day. The word "judgment" used in this connection is to describe the thought of this particular aspect of God's purpose as it will be consummated during the "dispensation of the fulness of times."

The sin of our first parents was a rebellion against the Creator's will, and the entire human race has continued that rebellion to a greater or lesser extent ever since that time. God has assured us that this opposition to his will is to be put down, and his will is ultimately to reign supreme throughout the whole earth. In order to convey to our minds what is involved in this aspect of God's purpose toward mankind, the promises of his Word tell us of a kingdom, and that in this kingdom Christ will reign until all enemies are put under his feet—until God's will is done in earth even as it is now done in heaven. (Matt. 6:10) The term "subjects" is often used in connection with the thought of a kingdom, and it conveys the meaning of the kingdom illustration of the Bible. At that time, the world is to be made "subject" to the will of God.

There is another important word used in order to convey the full scope of God's intentions toward

the human race, and that is “covenant.” The human race is to be restored to covenant relationship with God. A man might prove loyal under trial, and might fully subject his will to the requirements of God’s law. Yet, to be restored to covenant relationship with the Creator provides an even greater and more complete picture of what God, through Christ, proposes to do for the fallen race. There are still other expressions used in the promises of the Scriptures, but in our present discussion we will confine ourselves to these three—the judgment work, the kingdom work, and the making of a covenant between God and men.

THE WORK OF PREPARATION

By reason of failure to rightly understand and harmonize the Word of truth, many have grossly misunderstood the divine purpose relating to God’s judgments, his kingdom, and his covenants. Most of the Christian world believe the human race is on trial during this life—that now is God’s judgment day for all men. Because the Bible speaks so emphatically of a future judgment day, this line of reasoning tries to take the Scriptures pertaining thereto into consideration, but the result is confusion and contradiction. It is bound to be so when based on the erroneous premise which insists that the moment of death marks the full end of probation for all.

God’s promises concerning the kingdom of Christ and what it will do for the human race are also misunderstood. Not knowing the plan of God, many insist that the kingdom was set up either shortly after our Lord’s First Advent, or at some

time in the centuries which followed, and that it has since been reigning on the earth. This viewpoint nullifies God's promises of a future glorious kingdom which will bring peace and joy to mankind, and everlasting life to all who obey its laws. How we rejoice that we can see clearly that what began with Christ's First Advent was the calling and training of those who would be associate kings with Jesus, and not the setting up of the kingdom itself.

The same principle of interpretation holds true with respect to God's promises to establish a covenant relationship between himself and the estranged human race, beginning with the "house of Israel, and . . . the house of Judah." (Jer. 31:31) This is called by the prophet a "new covenant." Many, failing to understand God's plan, assume this New Covenant began to operate between God and men when the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost. It is much the same mistake that is made with respect to the work of judgment and the work of the kingdom—and for the same reason.

The cause of so many failing to understand these fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures correctly is that they do not see the distinction between those whom God has promised to bless and those whom he will use to provide those blessings. They fail to discern that the association of his promises of the judgment day, the kingdom, and the New Covenant with his servants of this age does not mean that this is the world's judgment day, nor that the kingdom is now in operation, nor that we are now living under the terms of the New Covenant.

MYSTERIES REVEALED

Prior to Jesus' First Advent there was much of God's plan that remained a mystery. One important feature which was not unfolded until Christ came was that the seed of promise, the Messiah, the great King and Judge—through whom God's promises to bless the world are to be fulfilled—was to have associates who would share his glory and who would live, reign and judge with him. The Apostle Paul said that "this mystery . . . is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:27) When this mystery was revealed and unlocked, however, God's people learned that the saints "shall judge the world," that they will "reign with Christ a thousand years," and they were called to be made "able ministers" of the New Covenant.—I Cor. 6:2; Rev. 20:4,6; II Cor. 3:6

Taking note of the judgment day, Paul tells us plainly that God has "appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness" by Jesus, "that man whom he hath ordained." (Acts 17:31) The Scriptures also declare that God has "committed all judgment" to his Son Christ Jesus, who will judge the "quick [the living] and the dead at his appearing." (John 5:22; II Tim. 4:1) The first mention of the work of judgment that was given by one of God's prophets makes it clear that many would participate in it. That was Enoch, who, according to Jude, prophesied that the Lord would come with myriads of his saints, to execute judgment. (Jude 14,15) Corroborating this, Paul wrote, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"—I Cor. 6:2

Repeatedly, the Scriptures proclaim Christ Jesus the great King in the divine kingdom which is to

soon govern the affairs of the whole world. The Word of God also emphatically declares that Christ's faithful followers of this age are to share the glory of his kingship—that they are to reign with him. This is a wonderful “hope of glory” for those who sacrifice all, suffering and dying with Jesus, and who in the “first resurrection” will live and reign with him.

By the wondrous grace of God, the Bible authorizes us to include in that hope of glory the anticipation of sharing in the work of mediating the New Covenant. Christ Jesus is specifically declared to be the mediator of that covenant between God and man. (Heb. 12:24; I Tim. 2:5) However, the faithful followers of Jesus are also said to be “able ministers of the new [covenant],” called and trained to serve in the “ministry of reconciliation” under its arrangements.—II Cor. 3:6; 5:18

PRACTICAL TRAINING

In the divine arrangement, the training of those who are called to participate with Jesus in the blessing of all the families of the earth is being accomplished upon a very practical basis. When Paul inquired of the Corinthian brethren, “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?” he was admonishing them to give greater diligence in applying the principles of the Truth in their own lives and particularly in their dealings with one another. He reasoned that if they were to share with Jesus in judging the world, they should learn properly to apply the principles of justice and righteousness in solving the problems which arose among themselves from time to time.

This same practical training of the future blessers of the world is discerned in connection with their hope of reigning with Jesus, the King of Kings. When one prays, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," they should remember first of all that God's will should be done in their own hearts and lives. Full and unreserved surrender to the will of God through Christ our Head is the condition upon which any may hope to share with Jesus in the work of establishing the divine will in the hearts of the people during the kingdom. Thus it is only as they humble themselves under the mighty hand of God that he will exalt them to kingdom glory with the Master.

Similarly, as prospective Messianic Age ministers of reconciliation, they are receiving their training now. In the present use of the word of reconciliation, it is their privilege whenever and wherever they find an ear to hear, to say, "Be ye reconciled to God." (II Cor. 5:20) Thus they serve as peacemakers in preparation for that enlarged service as able ministers of the New Covenant, when it will be their privilege to help bring the entire race into covenant relationship with God.

THE KINGDOM AT HAND

Students of the Scriptures should be familiar with the many texts which speak of the kingdom, from one standpoint, as having its beginning with the First Advent of Jesus. Paul wrote, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his [God's] dear Son." (Col. 1:13) Jesus also stated during his First Advent that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth

violence.” (Matt. 11:12) These and other scriptures show that the kingdom, in a certain sense, came into being at the First Advent of Jesus. However, those who are able to rightly divide the Word of truth understand that the kingdom reign over mankind did not begin then. They know the kingdom has existed merely in its preparatory stage, and that the Gospel Age is the period during which those who will reign in the kingdom have been and are being called and trained for this high position.

The reason for stressing these facts of truth is to emphasize also that the same principle of interpretation holds true with respect to God’s promises of the New Covenant. Just as God’s promises make it clear that the reigning period of that kingdom is during the Messianic Age, so his original promises of the New Covenant likewise identify when it will become operative, and that it will first be made “with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.” (Jer. 31:31-34) Similarly, just as in the case of the kingdom promises, those pertaining to the New Covenant also involve too much to be fulfilled in the experiences of the relatively small number of God’s consecrated people during the present age.

The New Testament does associate the consecrated footstep followers of Jesus with the New Covenant of promise, just as they are associated with God’s promises of the kingdom. When we understand that the present relationship of the saints to that covenant is merely in the sense of being trained as its servants, then we will have no difficulty in discerning the perfect harmony of all the Scriptures bearing on the subject. Let us then examine the New Testament references to the New

Covenant and note they imply no more than do the references of the New Testament to the kingdom and the church's relationship thereto.

THE BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT

In Matthew 26:27,28, Jesus is quoted as saying to his disciples when he gave them the Memorial cup, that it represented the “blood of the new testament,” or New Covenant. This is sometimes misunderstood to mean that Jesus was saying to his disciples that the foretold New Covenant had now become operative and that under its terms they were then, through his blood, being reconciled to God. When we examine the matter more carefully, however, we find that this is not the thought.

Hebrews 10:9 reads, “Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.” The “first” referred to in this text is the old Law Covenant, and the “second” is the New Covenant. According to the Scriptures, Jesus did away with the Law Covenant as a means by which Israelites, or the people of any other nation, could be reconciled to God. It was taken away just as definitely as Israel's typical kingdom was removed by Babylon as forecast by Ezekiel and Jeremiah, and later by the Romans as forecast by Jesus when he said, “Your house is left unto you desolate.”—Ezek. 21:25-27; Jer. 25:9-11; Matt. 23:38

Paul writes that the first covenant was taken away in order that the second, the New Covenant, might be established. The same is true concerning the kingdom. The typical kingdom was removed in order that the antitypical kingdom, under Christ,

might be established. With the removal of the typical kingdom, the real kingdom was at hand. It began to be established in the sense that the kings for that kingdom began to be prepared for the high office to which they were called. So it was with the New Covenant. Following our Lord's First Advent, its able ministers began to be tutored in the school of Christ that they might be ready, in association with him, to inaugurate that covenant at the beginning of the Messianic Age—the thousand-year kingdom period and judgment day. That is why Jesus said his blood was the blood of the New Covenant. There is no other blood. The very purpose for which Jesus shed his blood was that the lost race might be reconciled to God, and that work of reconciliation is to be accomplished through the New Covenant.

Let us further notice that Paul sets forth the complete thought of how the blood of Christ is the blood of the New Covenant. Prior to the inauguration of the typical "first" covenant, Moses, its mediator, sacrificed animals, and when the covenant was enjoined upon the people, he used the blood of these animals to sprinkle "both the book, and all the people." Then Paul adds, "Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. . . . It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."—Heb. 9:19-23

The sprinkling of "all the people" under the typical arrangement points forward to the inauguration of the New Covenant. In addition to that, however, as Paul explains, both the Tabernacle and all the vessels

of the ministry were also sprinkled, which, he said, pointed forward to the sprinkling of the antitypical tabernacle and its arrangements—the heavenly things of this age. The Book of Hebrews places the footstep followers of Christ in the same relationship to the antitypical tabernacle as the priests of Israel were to the typical Tabernacle. These are being developed as a priesthood, with a hope of entering the “Most Holy.”

We do not know how long it required for the building of the typical Tabernacle and the inauguration of its services through which the nation of Israel received its blessings under the Law Covenant, but it requires the entire Gospel Age to “build” the antitypical tabernacle and initiate its priesthood. This is a necessary work in connection with establishing the New Covenant. Because this is being done in preparation for reconciling the world to God through that arrangement, the blood of Christ which makes it possible is referred to as the blood of the New Covenant. In other words, the blood of Christ is being used during the Gospel Age to make acceptable the sacrifices of those who are being prepared as able ministers of the New Covenant. This does not mean they are under the New Covenant, but rather that they are being prepared to administer the laws of that covenant to the people when the preparation work of this Gospel Age is complete.

In Hebrews 9:14, Paul explains that the blood of Christ purges the Christian’s conscience from dead works. It is essential that this be done, else we could not be acceptable to God as able ministers of the New Covenant. In the next verse, Paul explains

that it is for the purging of sins that Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant. Because of this, writes the apostle, the death of Jesus will bring about the “redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament,” or covenant. Thus it will be that they who are called will receive “the promise of eternal inheritance.”

In this passage, therefore, we find two things which are accomplished by the blood of Christ. The first is the purging of our own conscience from dead works, and the second is the redemption of the transgressions under the first testament, or covenant. In Paul’s day, those Jews who had come “into Christ” had actually transgressed under the Old Covenant, but this was not true of the Gentile converts either then or now. What he is referring to is the manner in which the promise of Jeremiah 31:34 will be fulfilled when the New Covenant is made with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.

Paul speaks, in Hebrews 9:15, of the natural house of Israel as they which are “called.” This is not a reference to those who are invited to the High Calling. We should remember that the nation of Israel was called to certain favors in the divine plan, and Paul refers to this in Romans 11:26-29. Here he explains that out of Zion shall come forth “the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob,” that this is God’s covenant with them when he takes away their sins. Then he adds, “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” Comparing this passage with Hebrews 10:16, we can see clearly that in the latter verse Paul is explaining that the ultimate work to be accomplished by the

blood of Christ will be “after those days” during which that blood has first been used to purge our conscience from dead works. In the case of the Jewish converts, some of these dead works were their efforts to gain life under the Law, but the whole church, Jews and Gentiles, needs this purging in order to be prepared to administer the laws of the New Covenant when it is inaugurated.

“FLESHY TABLES OF THE HEART”

In II Corinthians 3:3-8, Paul illuminates further the relationship of the footstep followers of Christ to the New Covenant. It is in this passage that these are spoken of as “able ministers” of that covenant, and Paul indicates clearly the nature of their service. He says that they are the “epistle of Christ,” written not on stone, but on “fleshy tables of the heart.” In verses seven and eight, he makes it clear that he is comparing the ministry of the Law Covenant with that of the New Covenant, and that the typical ministry to which he refers is that which was conducted by Moses in connection with the Law which was engraved on stones.

Let us think of the tables of the Law as the “epistle of Moses.” Paul is telling us that those to whom he was writing—consecrated believers—are the “epistle of Christ,” and that this Gospel Age is the period during which these epistles are being inscribed by the Holy Spirit. In Exodus 24:12, God told Moses that the tables of the Law were given to him in order that he might teach the people. So it is with the antitypical tables of stone, the “epistle of Christ.” As able ministers of the New Covenant, they are being prepared as the future teachers of the people.

These are the Zion class, and the law of the New Covenant shall go forth from Zion. For this to be true, however, they must first learn that law, and be thoroughly reconciled to all of its terms, delighting in it even as did Jesus.

They are ministers of the New Covenant now, for there are two phases of that ministry. First, there is the sacrificial ministry of that covenant, and then will follow the ministry in glory. The sacrificial ministry has been going on throughout the entire Gospel Age, and soon the glory phase of the ministry will begin. This latter, Paul indicates, was typified by the glory on the countenance of Moses when he came down from the mount bearing the tables of the Law. Paul tells us that if Christ is in us we have this “hope of glory,” for the promise is that when he shall appear—typified by Moses’ appearance to Israel when he came down from the mount—we also shall “appear with him in glory.”—II Cor. 3:3-12; Col. 1:27; 3:4

Paul writes, in Romans 8:24, that one no longer hopes for that which they already see or possess. Therefore, if the glory phase of our able ministry of the New Covenant is as yet but a hope—and Paul makes it clear that this is so—we can assuredly say that the New Covenant is not operating now. Its future operation is in preparation. Those called are being sacrificed in its interests—their sacrifice being made acceptable through the blood of Christ. However, the New Covenant cannot be made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, and through them with all nations, until Christ appears in glory, as Moses did, and with him his “epistles,”—his co-ministers—as those typical tables of stone

were with Moses when he came down from the mount.

Hebrews 8:6 speaks of Jesus' mediation of the New Covenant as a better and "more excellent ministry." There can be no doubt that when Paul speaks of the church as "able ministers" of the New Covenant he means that they are to share with Jesus in the work of mediation—that better ministry. Additionally, in Hebrews 9:21, the apostle speaks of the "vessels of the ministry" being "sprinkled with blood." These vessels are also typical of things in the antitypical tabernacle arrangement, which emphasizes the consecrated believers' true relationship to the New Covenant—as servants and ministers of that covenant—not as those who are to be blessed under its arrangements.

When we keep this distinction in mind—the difference between the "servants" and the "served"—then we will have no difficulty in understanding all that the Bible says about the New Covenant. For example, in the lesson of II Corinthians, chapters five and six, where Paul designates the footstep followers of Christ as participating in the work of reconciliation, he speaks of these as being coworkers with God. Then he explains that this present age is the acceptable time, the day of this great salvation. In this connection he quotes from Isaiah 49:8-12, and applies it to the church. In this wonderful prophecy God addresses the Christ, Head and body, and says, "I will . . . give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages." (vs. 8) Here the Lord makes it very plain that the faithful of this age are to be a part of that New Covenant arrangement through

which the blessings of the kingdom are to flow to Israel and the entire world.

Let us rejoice in the kingdom joys that are to be dispensed to all mankind in God's due time. Let us be happy knowing that all the willing and obedient of Israel and the world are to be brought into covenant relationship with God, and that his Law will be written in their hearts—that they will be restored to perfection of both mind and body. Finally, let us be thankful that this arrangement will result in the righteous judgment of all mankind. ■

“The LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.”
—Psalm 9:7,8

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JULY 2—“Being reviled, we bless, being persecuted, we suffer it.”—I Corinthians 4:12 (Z. '99-5 Hymn 299)

JULY 9—“When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.”—John 10:4 (Z.'00-230 Hymn 257)

JULY 16—“Be ye filled with the Spirit.”—Ephesians 5:18 (Z. '99-92 Hymn 85)

JULY 23—“If any provide not for his own, . . . he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.”—I Timothy 5:8 (Z.'99-127 Hymn 23)

JULY 30—“Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines.”—Canticles 2:15 (Z. '99-172 Hymn 145)

Thy Kingdom Come

*The Sun and Moon, the night the day
The greatness of our God display
Which each doth show in its own way—
Obeying God in cheerful lay.*

*The field and stream the hill and dale
Bespeak God's greatness and his art
As do the mountain and the vale,
As all in nature play their part.*

*The animal and fish and bird,
By patterned way in which they go—
Whose instincts form God's guided Word
His wisdom and his power do show.*

*But as we contemplate the man—
His fallen sinful lost estate;
Where does he fit within the plan?
How hopeless his apparent fate.*

*But God so loved the man he made—
At cost of his beloved Son
Redemption's costly price was paid
And freedom for our race was won.*

*In God's due time his Church complete,
His Kingdom shall come unto man
To sin destroy and death defeat,
And good reward, in God's great plan.*

—*Poems of the Way*

No Rest to Those Who Practice Evil

Key Verse: *“O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the LORD straitened? are these his doings? do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?”*
—Micah 2:7

Selected Scripture:
Micah 2:4-11
oppressing them.—Mic. 2:2,9

THE WORDS OF OUR LESSON serve as a rebuke to the nation of Israel—referred to here as the “house of Jacob”—because they were not behaving in a manner worthy of being called his people. Part of their evil ways included transgressing against the laws for the protection of each man’s real estate and inheritance. (Lev. 25:23-28) They devised plans to take property by violence, destroying the inheritance of families, and

In our Key Verse, Micah bitterly reproves their actions and questions their very standing before God. He asks them if they recognize that God’s spirit has become “straitened,” or short and impatient. He also inquires as to whether they understand that he would “do good” to them if they walked “uprightly,” but they were not doing so. God had fostered Israel as his first born son, but found it necessary to mete out just punishment to them because of their unfaithfulness. They, on the other hand, foolishly thought that they could continue to claim the blessing of the Lord regardless of their conduct. God’s righteousness, however, could not be compromised or watered down.

Although God is unchangeable in his ways, it was not so with his chosen people. Israel, who had promised to obey God's commandments, openly violated them in many ways. Furthermore, they then failed to listen to God's messages of correction and reproof given through his prophets, telling them to cease speaking. For example, God had instructed Amos to "Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." When he did so, their response was, "Prophesy not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac." (Amos 7:15,16) Israel, not God, had changed, and his promises could no longer be rightfully claimed by them. They belong only to those who walk uprightly.

God truly desires that his people, in all ages, walk according to his precepts. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." (Jer. 29:11) We are further reminded in Psalm 84:11, "The LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." We realize that our Heavenly Father wants his children to be faithful and loyal to him. He will shine upon the pathway of those who trust in him, and will illuminate their hearts, minds, and actions.

Turning again to the second chapter of Micah, verse 10 states, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest." With these words God, through the prophet, points out to Israel that they no longer are worthy of abiding in his presence. Hence, they can no longer find rest in him, for such rest is only for those striving to serve him faithfully, and who cease "from his own works." (Heb. 4:5,6,9,10) In the arrangement of God's plan, Israel is a picture of the entire world of mankind. In Christ's coming kingdom of righteousness and peace, any who continue to serve evil and willfully disobey God, will be removed from his presence. Those who serve him and walk uprightly, under the same righteous arrangements, will be blessed with everlasting life. ■

Judgment Against Corrupt Leaders

Key Verse: “Truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.”
—Micah 3:8

Selected Scripture:
Micah 3:5-12

AS WITH OUR PREVIOUS

lesson, these words are addressed to the nation of Israel by Micah the prophet, whose name means “Who is like God.” He prophesied during the latter half of the eighth century B.C., as did Isaiah. Micah’s activities, like Isaiah’s, were primarily in Israel’s two-tribe kingdom of Judah. They were considered two of Judah’s greatest prophets.

Both Micah and Isaiah zealously supported the efforts of King Hezekiah to effect a reformation of the evils perpetrated by his father, King Ahaz. During his evil reign, Ahaz corrupted the Temple at Jerusalem by having an altar made that was fashioned after patterns he had seen in Damascus, the capital of Assyria. He also made other changes to the Temple furnishings which were not authorized by God, and eventually “shut up the doors of the house of the LORD” completely.—II Kings 16; II Chron. 28:24

Such was the condition that Hezekiah found when he was made king over Judah. “He did that which was right in the sight of the LORD.” (II Chron. 29:2) In the first month of his reign, Hezekiah had the doors of the Temple

repaired and reopened. He also gathered the priests and Levites and instructed them to clean up the Temple and “carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place,” so that it might once again be fit for worship. (vss. 3-5) Micah encouraged the efforts of the king to effect these changes and to also reform the hearts of the people.

In Micah 3:9,11,12 (*New International Version*), we read these words: “Hear this, you leaders of the house of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel, who despise justice and distort all that is right. Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. . . . Therefore because of you, Zion will be ploughed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.”

The leaders of the people knew what was right, but they abused their responsibilities, using their position to fill their own pockets and enlarge their lands. (chap. 2:1-9; 3:1-3) By doing so they became oppressors of the people rather than acting as their guardians. As they grew stronger in their allegiance with one another, they devised a system of organized law breaking. “Concerning evil, both hands do it well. The prince asks, also the judge, for a bribe, And a great man speaks the desire of his soul; So they weave it together.”—chap. 7:3, *New American Standard Bible*

As a result of all the evil that had taken place in Judah, God proclaimed these words through his servant Micah: “Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God.”—chap. 3:6,7

God’s desire for Israel, and for his people of all ages, is that they serve him beyond mere outward show and ceremony—that is, with holiness of heart. Without this, no offering or service to God has value in his sight.—I Sam. 12:20,24; Prov. 4:23; Isa. 1:11; Mic. 6:6-8 ■

Justice, Love, and Humility

Key Verse: *“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”*
—Micah 6:8

Selected Scripture:
Micah 6:3-8

Micah, instructs us to “do justly.” This means to do “rightly,” applying the principles of justice and righteousness to our words and our conduct. For these to operate in the way that God desires in us, they must first be embedded in our hearts. Only then can they be properly applied in our actions.—Ps. 19:14

“To love mercy” is another requirement of one who desires to be pleasing to God. It is of such great importance that Jesus said, “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.” (Matt. 5:7) In other words, if we expect to be shown mercy when we fail, we must exhibit that same quality of character toward others. If we are enriched in the character of Christ and continually seeking to

AS WE READ THE WORDS

of our Key Verse, it should bring to our minds an immediate realization of the fact that they refer to requirements that have been given directly from our Heavenly Father. Hence, their importance should be paramount in the development of the Christian character. These are divine standards, and we must constantly remember that God’s laws are holy, just, and good.

God, through the Prophet

follow his example, we will realize the great importance of being merciful, loving, kind, and considerate toward all, doing “good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”—Gal. 6:10

To “love mercy” means that we rejoice in expressing this quality to others. Such a high standard of character as this does not come easy. It requires that we engage in a warfare against our fallen flesh and its tendencies to be harsh and cruel rather than loving and merciful. Success in this battle will involve “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”—II Cor. 10:5

In the foregoing verse, Paul mentions that our “fight of faith” includes casting down “every high thing that exalteth itself.” This points to the third requirement of our Key Verse—“to walk humbly with thy God.” We cannot expect to “do justly” and to “love mercy” in a manner fully pleasing to the Lord unless those efforts are based on the foundation principle of humility. The Apostle Peter tells us, “Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”—I Pet. 5:5

As we strive to properly develop a just and righteous heart, a loving and merciful character, and have these “clothed” at all times with humility, we must exercise trust in the Lord to direct our experiences in a way that will bring to fruition these vital qualities. As footstep followers of Christ, we have been called to sonship with God and have been given the opportunity to change the condition of our heart, mind, words, and actions to those traits of character identified in our lesson. We can sum up what God requires of us with these words of the Master: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”—Matt. 22:37-39 ■

God Shows Mercy

Key Verse: *“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.”*
—Micah 7:18

Selected Scripture:
Micah 7:14-20

WHEN CONSIDERING THE words contained in our Key Verse, we should quickly realize that there is no being in the universe greater and more loving and merciful than the true and living God. The Heavenly Father is given many names and titles in the Scriptures, such as “the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,” and the source of “every good gift and every perfect gift.”—Matt. 22:32; James 1:17

One of the scribes to whom Jesus spoke, as recorded in Mark 12, responded after hearing about the commandment of loving the Heavenly Father supremely: “Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” (vss. 32,33) Indeed, no god of man’s imagination can compare with the one supreme God of love, compassion, mercy, wisdom, power, and justice.

When our first parents fell from their perfection in the Garden of Eden, the penalty for disobeying God was

a just one. He had clearly informed them of his commandment in advance as well as the penalty for disobedience. (Gen. 2:17; 3:17-19) However, through his great love and mercy God provided a way of release from the penalty of sin and death that had come upon Adam and Eve and all their progeny. Providing a promise immediately after our first parents fell, God said that in due time the seed, or offspring, of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent.—Gen. 3:15

Many centuries later, Jesus, at his First Advent, made known with clarity just what God meant by that vague promise of so long before, saying, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son [the seed of the woman], that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) Through the gift of his only begotten Son, Jesus, “the kindness and love of God . . . toward man appeared.”—Tit. 3:4

Notice these words from the psalmist concerning the mercy of God: “The mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear [reverence] him, and his righteousness unto children’s children.” “I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations. For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.” (Ps. 103:17; 108:3,4) These verses suggest that we also have a responsibility in order to receive the full benefit of God’s mercy. We are to fear, or reverence, him, and we should show forth God’s praises to those with whom we come in contact.

“Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart.” (Prov. 3:3) In order for mercy not to “forsake” us, it is necessary that we demonstrate it to others. Having love and mercy toward others means that we will not consider their failings, but realize that they are part of the “world” which “God so loved.” Jesus instructed us, “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”—Matt. 5:7 ■

Rebukes to Israel's Religious Leaders

The Good Samaritan and
The Unjust Steward

*“Jesus rejoiced in
spirit, and said, I
thank thee, O
Father, Lord of
heaven and earth,
that thou hast hid
these things from
the wise and
prudent, and hast
revealed them
unto babes.”*

—Luke 10:21

MANY OF THE RICH TREAS-

ures of truth revealed by Jesus were set forth by him in response to controversial questions asked by the religious leaders of his day. Having the ability to read their hearts, he also drew important lessons from their hypocritical practices. The Master did not respond to the Jewish religious leaders

simply to level criticism against them. Rather, he did so to point out to the people that in order for them to follow the God of their forefathers, they must think and act very differently from those who

at that time were sitting “in Moses’ seat.” (Matt. 23:2) The two parables of our lesson—The Good Samaritan and The Unjust Steward—are both examples of Jesus’ teachings in this regard. They also convey lessons which are important for consecrated footstep followers of Jesus at the present time.

The parable of the good samaritan, as well as the circumstances surrounding it, are recorded in Luke 10:25-37. Beginning with verse 25, the account states that “a certain lawyer”—probably a Levite—“stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Here the “temptation” was to induce Jesus to say something that could be misconstrued as being against the Law given to Israel by Moses.

JESUS’ RESPONSE TO THE LAWYER

Jesus, however, turned the question back to the lawyer, asking him what the Law said. (vs. 26) The lawyer was well acquainted with the Law, and he quoted Moses’ own summation of it—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.” (vs. 27; Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18) Jesus replied to the lawyer, “Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.”—Luke 10:28; Lev. 18:5

Jesus knew that God had promised life to anyone who could keep the Law inviolate. By answering the lawyer’s question in this way, the religious rulers could not accuse him of setting aside the teachings of Moses. Jesus knew, of course, that the lawyer could not actually gain eternal life by his attempts to keep the Law. This was not the fault of

the Law, but was due to the imperfection of the people—including the religious leaders—resulting from original sin. As Paul explained, the Law was designed to give life, but failed only because of the inability of fallen humans to measure up to its requirements.—Rom. 7:10-14

SIMILAR ENCOUNTER WITH YOUNG RULER

Jesus, reading the lawyer's heart, knew that he was not sincerely inquiring the way of life. Had he been, doubtless the Master would have directed his mind beyond the Law as a source of life. He did do this in the case of the rich young ruler who asked him essentially the same question as did the lawyer. (Matt. 19:16-26; Luke 18:18-30) In answer to the young man's question, Jesus said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."—Matt. 19:17

Then the young man asked, "Which?" Jesus quoted some of the Ten Commandments, and also the one, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The young man claimed that he had been keeping these commandments, and evidently he had been sincerely trying to do so. (vss. 18-20) Mark's account informs us that Jesus loved this young man, and replying to him said, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."—Mark 10:21

Because this young man was earnestly seeking the way of life, Jesus showed his love by introducing him to the only way that would be open during the Gospel Age. It was to be a costly, narrow, and difficult way. It was a way to life that would lead into sacrificial death, as symbolized by the cross. The young

man, having great possessions, did not find it in his heart to make such a great sacrifice as outlined by the Master, so he went away sorrowful. However, Jesus did present the opportunity to him, and even emphasized the heavenly nature of the life the young man would receive if he accepted the Master's invitation and proved faithful unto death. "Thou shalt have treasure in heaven," Jesus said.—Matt. 19:21

"WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?"

In the case of the lawyer who asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life, he could find no fault with the reply. Indeed, the Master had confirmed his "reading" of the Law, and he was of those who professed great loyalty to its teachings. However, wishing perhaps to justify himself even further in the sight of his friends, he asked Jesus for a clarification of the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and asked, "Who is my neighbour?"—Luke 10:29

It was in response to this question that Jesus related the parable of the good samaritan. In this parable, a "certain man" traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho "fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." (vs. 30) Then a "certain priest," traveling the same route, noticed the robbed and wounded man, but instead of stopping to assist the unfortunate one, "passed by on the other side." "Likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side."—vss. 31,32

Here were two people who, according to their standing as religious servants, *(Continued on page 36)*

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(Continued from page 31) should have shown compassion for the robbed and beaten man, regardless of who he may have been, but they did not. They “passed by on the other side,” as though to ease their conscience by not getting too close a look at the suffering man.

THE SAMARITAN’S EXAMPLE

Continuing in the parable, there was “a certain Samaritan” who, “as he journeyed,” also came across the man who had been robbed and nearly killed. The Israelites despised the Samaritans, who, so far as they were concerned, were not God’s people at all. This made the lesson of the parable all the more pointed to those to whom it was first addressed, for this despised Samaritan did show compassion for the man lying almost dead by the roadside. He bound up the man’s wounds, “pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.” He even arranged for the innkeeper to continue caring for the man, promising to pay any balance of the bill when he returned that way.—Luke 10:33-35

After relating the parable, Jesus asked the lawyer which one of these three men was a “neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves.” There was only one answer the lawyer could give, which was the man who showed mercy—he was the real neighbor. Then Jesus said to the lawyer, “Go, and do thou likewise.” In other words, Jesus told the lawyer that if he manifested the same spirit of compassion and helpfulness toward those in need, as the Samaritan did, he would be fulfilling the commandment to love his neighbor as himself.—vss. 36,37

HOW TO GAIN LIFE

When the lawyer quoted the Law correctly, Jesus said to him, “This do, and thou shalt live.” (vs. 28) Jesus did not imply by this that the lawyer could gain eternal life apart from the provisions of the ransom. It was simply that he did not consider it the due time to explain the divine plan further to this man who was merely seeking to find something against him.

No one can gain life, either in this age or in the age to come, apart from faith in the shed blood of the Redeemer. However, as James wrote, “Faith without works is dead.” (James 2:17,20,26) This means that one’s life must be brought into conformity with faith in the ransom through obedience to divine law. As we have seen, in the present age it is God’s will that believers lay down their lives in sacrifice, following in the footsteps of Jesus. It is thus that they demonstrate their faith.

The great principles of the Law given by Moses are binding upon these, and in addition Jesus said, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” (John 13:34; 15:12,17) Jesus’ love for his disciples, and indeed for the whole world, led him to lay down his life in sacrifice on their behalf, and his faithful followers are “planted together in the likeness of his death.” (Rom. 6:5) In this way they demonstrate their wholehearted love for the Heavenly Father, and for Christ Jesus.

As we have noted, to the rich young ruler whom Jesus invited to give up all that he had in sacrifice, Jesus said he would receive “treasure in heaven.” The “call” of the present age is a heavenly one.

(Heb. 3:1) Those who meet the conditions of this call by being faithful unto death will attain “glory and honour and immortality.” (Rom. 2:7) They will be made like Jesus and share with him the place which he went away to prepare.—John 14:1-3; I John 3:1,2

ATTAINING LIFE IN THE NEXT AGE

During the next age—the time of Christ’s Messianic kingdom—those who attain eternal life will also need to accept the provision of life made for them through the redemptive work of Jesus. They will also have to conform to the laws of God as they will be expressed through the agencies of the kingdom. God’s Law, in principle, never changes, so during the Messianic kingdom it will be essential for all who attain life eternal to love the Lord with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength, and also to love their neighbors as themselves, even as set forth by Moses, and reaffirmed by the Master.

All of this is implied in Jesus’ statement to the lawyer to the effect that if he kept God’s Law as it had been expressed by the great lawgiver, Moses, he would have “eternal life.” Jesus did not then explain that a truly favorable opportunity to do this would not be offered until the Messianic age, during the “times of restitution.” (Acts 3:21) The lawyer was not then ready to receive further truths than Jesus imparted to him. We can now rejoice, however, to realize that all will be given an opportunity and the needed assistance, when the due time comes, to practice the divine law of love. All who will live forever on the earth will become true neighbors to one another in a worldwide paradise.

THE UNJUST STEWARD

The parable of the unjust steward is recorded in Luke 16:1-12. It conveys an important lesson to all who are endeavoring to please God rather than men. In it, Jesus tells of a certain rich man who had received a report that his steward was unfaithful in the handling of his financial affairs. The rich man informed the unfaithful steward that his services were to be terminated, although he was allowed to continue temporarily—perhaps until another man could be trained for the position.

All stewards of that time had full authority to do with their master's goods as they chose and deemed wise. This arrangement was predicated on the assumption that they were honest and trustworthy, and would in no way misuse the wealth of which they were given such complete charge. This is expressed by Paul when he wrote, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."—I Cor. 4:2

The record states that the steward of the parable was unable to work, and too proud to beg, so he devised a scheme which he believed would afford him some degree of security after his stewardship was terminated. He called in one after another of the rich man's debtors and authorized them to make drastic reductions in the amounts they owed. Thus he used his position of authority to promote his own interests, for he believed his action would cause his master's debtors to feel very friendly toward him, so that when he was finally removed from his stewardship they would take him into their houses and care for his needs.

In the preceding chapter of Luke, there are three other parables recorded, all of which were addressed to the scribes and Pharisees (see May 2015 issue). The introduction to this parable reads, “He said also unto his disciples” (Luke 16:1), indicating that at least certain parts of it were to have a special meaning for them, consequently for all his true followers. In examining the details of the parable we will endeavor to distinguish between the lessons intended for the scribes and Pharisees and those which applied to the disciples.

LESSONS FOR SCRIBES AND PHARISEES

The unjust steward of the parable would seem to represent the scribes and the Pharisees as the religious leaders of Israel, since like them, he was about to lose his stewardship. They sat in Moses’ seat, and until they were cast off served as God’s stewards in handling the religious interests of the nation. At the time the parable was given, the scribes and Pharisees were in much the same position as the unjust steward. Jesus had served notice that they were to be replaced, although they were continuing to serve. “The law and the prophets were until John,” Jesus explained, “since that time the kingdom of God is preached.”—vs. 16

While John the Baptist was the last of the prophets, the age of the Law and the prophets was continuing through a transition period, so Jesus still recognized the position of the scribes and Pharisees. They were not fully aware of the great change that was soon to occur, although they seemed to sense that Jesus directed the parable against them. The record states, “The Pharisees

also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.”—vs. 14

Then Jesus impressed the lesson upon the Pharisees, saying, “Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.” (vs. 15) In reducing the amounts owed by his master’s debtors, the unjust steward endeavored to make himself “highly esteemed among men.” Jesus told Israel’s religious leaders that was what they were endeavoring to do, thus identifying them as being represented by the unjust steward.

“CHILDREN OF LIGHT”

In relating the parable, Jesus said that “the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.” (vs. 8) It was the course taken by the unjust steward that Jesus is using here to illustrate the wisdom of the “children of this world.” This would indicate that the scribes and Pharisees, as the religious leaders of Israel and supposedly “children of light,” while selfishly endeavoring to justify themselves before men, were not as wise as this steward. Indeed, until Jesus came on the scene to begin the work of a new age, these religious leaders, as God’s representatives, were to be his light-bearers in the world.

The parable states that the “lord,”—that is, the rich man—commended the action of the unjust steward. The Greek word here translated “commended” would be better translated “applauded.” (vs. 8, *Emphatic Diaglott*) This simply means that the rich man recognized the shrewdness of his

steward in thus taking care of his own interests while he still had an opportunity to do so. The moral aspect of what he did is not here under consideration.

CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD WISER

The unjust steward in his shrewdness was like “the children of this world,” and so far as his own interests were concerned he acted more wisely than the scribes and Pharisees were doing. Of them Jesus said, “The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.”—Matt. 23:2-4

This indicates that in this respect the scribes and Pharisees were pursuing a course quite opposite to that of the unjust steward. Instead of lightening the burdens of the people, they were increasing them. They desired the plaudits of men, just as Jesus had explained, but were not using even ordinary worldly wisdom to obtain them.

“All their works,” Jesus said, “they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ.”—vss.5-8

The unjust steward of the parable realized that he could not gain the favor of men by using his

master's wealth for himself. The scribes and Pharisees did use their position of trust to impress the people with their greatness, but by increasing their burdens and making gain for themselves as a result, they did not gain the respect of the common people. It is no wonder that Jesus indicated the unjust steward was wiser than "the children of light."

LESSONS FOR THE DISCIPLES

Having pointed out to the scribes and Pharisees their lack of wisdom in view of the position in which they would soon find themselves. Jesus turned to his disciples, and according to the *King James Version*, said, "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail [*Strong's*: cease or die], they may receive you into everlasting habitations."—Luke 16:9

New Creatures in Christ Jesus are not to use their stewardship to make friends for themselves from among their fellowmen. They are to sacrifice every self-interest so that the Lord's name might be glorified. We have given our "all" to the Lord, and he has made us stewards over it to use in his service. In verse 9, the phrase "they may receive you into everlasting habitations" seems to refer to the Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus, who will receive us at the end of our earthly course, if we are faithful, to "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."—II Cor. 5:1

The phrase in verse 9 in which Jesus instructs his disciples to "make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness" does not seem to fit the promise of being received into "everlasting habitations" if faithful in so doing. However, by

looking at verses 10 and 11 we get an insight as to what the Lord meant. These verses read: “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?”—Luke 16:10,11

UNRIGHTEOUS MAMMON AND TRUE RICHES

The “least” and the “much” referred to in verse 10 are described in verse 11 as “the unrighteous mammon” and the “true riches.” “Who will commit to your trust the true riches?” Jesus asked, if you have been unfaithful in the use of the “least,” “the unrighteous mammon.”

The “unrighteous mammon” would represent all the things we once called our own, but have now dedicated to the Lord. While they are “unrighteous,” imperfect, they are acceptable to God through Christ Jesus. Having devoted our all to the Lord, he has made us stewards of what now belongs to him, to be used in the furtherance of his cause, not our own. Based on this understanding, Jesus’ instruction in verse 9 that we make “friends of the mammon of unrighteousness” simply means that we are to be faithful in our stewardship over earthly goods, the “least” of true value, just as we should be over spiritual treasures of eternal worth.

These “least” things may vary in value, as illustrated by the widow’s mite on the one hand, to considerable wealth on the other—from small abilities to outstanding talents along one or more lines. However, in any case they are still “least” as compared with the “true riches,” “the mysteries of

God,” the truth, over which we have also been made stewards. (I Cor. 4:1) These “true riches” are the “much” entrusted to the Lord’s people, and over which we are admonished to be faithful.

Unlike the “least” things which we have dedicated to the Lord, “the mysteries of God” never did belong to us. The Truth belongs to the Lord, and is entrusted to us for our sanctification and to use in furthering the interests of his cause in the earth. Of what greater worth are these true riches than the meager offering we make to the Lord when we give him our all. How important it is that we be faithful in discharging the responsibilities of our stewardship over the Truth.

Our stewardship of the “least” and the “much”—the “unrighteous mammon” and the “true riches”—runs more or less concurrently. When responding to the call of God we dedicate our all to his service. This answer of a good conscience is a demonstration of our appreciation of the Truth, the “true riches.” As, day by day, we use faithfully the “least” things, the “unrighteous mammon” which we have given to the Lord, our appreciation of the “true riches” increases, and we become better qualified to exercise our stewardship over them. On the other hand, unfaithfulness in the “least” things could lead to the loss of the “true riches” entirely.

To have our stewardship of the “true riches” withdrawn would lead to a great loss in the future. Jesus explains this: “If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?” (Luke 16:12) “The mysteries of the kingdom” over which we have been made stewards belong to the Lord, not to us. However, if

we are faithful stewards, we will receive rewards which will be our “own.”

BE FAITHFUL STEWARDS

Jesus promised, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” (Rev. 2:10) We will not be made stewards over the crown of life. This priceless reward will be our “own” if we are found faithful to receive it. “Glory and honour and immortality” will be the actual possession of those who are faithful stewards over the Truth, the “true riches,” and over the “unrighteous mammon” which they have given to the Lord, and which he now permits them to use in his service.—Rom. 2:7

Thus we see that the parable of the unjust steward conveys a very heart-searching lesson to the followers of Jesus, and at the same time is a condemning depiction of the hypocrisy and injustices of the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day who, as a class, were about to lose their stewardship. We have been entrusted with the promotion of the Truth. Let us not betray this trust by endeavoring to gain anything for ourselves from our stewardship.

Only the reasonable necessities of life are to be taken from what we have dedicated to the Lord. This is the teaching and example of Jesus and his apostles. We are not to be “wise” like the unjust steward, and use the “mammon of unrighteousness” to promote our own selfish interests in life. However, we are to be faithful in our stewardship over these temporal things and direct their use toward the development of our New Creature. To the world in general this view and way of life may seem foolish. The treasures we are laying up in

heaven, however, are of far greater value than any advantages we could secure by misusing the perishable “mammon of unrighteousness.”

Paul wrote, “Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.” (I Cor. 4:11-13) Thus does the beloved Paul set forth the cost of faithful stewardship over the mysteries of God. ■

I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

—Psalm 16:8

He who has buried his own will completely in the will of the Lord can know no disappointment; but in every affair of his life he sees by faith divine appointment or supervision, and hears the Word of the Lord in all of life's affairs assuring him, “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.” It is one of the evidences of reaching the graduating condition of heart, when we are able to take the oppositions of the great Adversary and of the world and of our own flesh patiently, uncomplainingly, uncomplainingly, “joyfully”—as a part of the disciplinary experience meted out to us by our all-wise and all-loving Lord.

—Daily Heavenly Manna, July 3

“This Thing Is From Me”

“Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me.”

—I Kings 12:24

Preface: The article, “This Thing Is From Me,” was written by Bro. Norman Woodworth and appeared in the July 1949 issue of “The Dawn.” He also gave it in discourse form on numerous occasions, and it has doubtless been heard or read by thousands of brethren over the last six-plus decades. Several years ago, a PowerPoint version of Bro. Woodworth’s discourse, using a recording of his voice as the audio portion, was presented at the Bible Students General Convention. Most importantly, however, is the fact that this subject is vitally important to every consecrated child of God, and hence timeless. Its presentation here—as if the Lord is speaking to us directly—is also powerfully effective and personal. We are pleased to present this special message once again, unchanged from its original inclusion in the July 1949 Dawn magazine, and pray that it will be a blessing to our readers.

THESE ARE THE words of the Lord to King Rehoboam, and they express a viewpoint pertaining to God's dealings with his people which we should endeavor always to keep in mind. Rehoboam was a new king in Israel, having succeeded his father, Solomon, to the throne. Representatives of ten of the tribes interviewed the new king and demanded that burdens imposed upon them by Solomon now be lifted; but after due consideration Rehoboam decided not to yield to their demands. Then the ten tribes rebelled and asked Jeroboam to reign over them.

Acting hastily, Rehoboam assembled an army of 180,000 soldiers, with which he was determined to put down the rebellion and by force of arms compel the revolting tribes to be subject to his rulership. The Lord intervened to prevent the carrying out of this plan, sending instructions to the king to this effect with the explanation, "This thing is from me."—I Kings 12:24

Probably Rehoboam never understood just why the Lord had permitted this breach in the solidarity of the nation; nor is it essential that we understand it now in order to derive the important implications of this message which the Lord sent to this ruler over his typical people. What had happened seemed all wrong to Rehoboam and so much out of keeping with his judgment of the Lord's will that he was confident he would be divinely blessed in his plan forcibly to reunite the nation; but he was wrong—"This thing is from me," said the Lord.

Statements such as this, made by the Lord to his people, should bring home to us with blessed reality the fact that everything which concerns us is of

even greater concern to the Lord—that he is just as interested in our personal welfare as we, and eminently more qualified to know what is best for us. This, too, is the reassuring lesson which Jesus gives us, saying, “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.”—Luke 12:6,7

The Apostle Paul expresses the same reassuring thought when he tells us that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord and who are called in keeping with the divine purpose. (Rom. 8:28) The apostle knew this because of the many promises of God indicating his love and care for his people. He knew it also because, by the eye of faith, he was able to discern that even his greatest trials had often resulted in the richest of blessings from the Lord—blessings which could never have been enjoyed had it not been for the trying circumstances which conveyed them to him.

Our faith in God and in his overruling providences in our lives as Christians should enable us all to realize that nothing can come to us except by divine permission, and that many times our most painful experiences are actually by his appointment. If we can but have confidence that this is so, our every joy will be a deeper joy, and our burdens and sorrows will be borne with greater fortitude; for we will know that our all-wise Heavenly Father sees exactly what we need for our training in order that we may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

With reference to the Lord’s feelings toward his typical people, Israel, the prophet declared, “He that

toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye”; and surely our Heavenly Father is equally concerned over spiritual Israel and therefore enters into and shares our every experience, whether of joy or of sorrow. (Zech. 2:8) Of his ancient people, the Lord also said, “Thou wast precious in my sight.” (Isa. 43:4) Can we doubt that the same is true of us? Is not the Lord, through his Word, whispering these same reassurances of his love to us, and should not this enhance the value of our every experience, as daily we seek to carry out our covenant with him by sacrifice?

Do we have temptations? Well, the Lord knows about them. He does not lead us into temptations, for God tempteth no man. (James 1:13) Nevertheless, he knows about our temptations and permits them; and we have the assurance that when they become too great he will provide a way of escape—perhaps not our way, but a way which will be much better suited to our eternal welfare than any of our own choosing could possibly be. (I Cor. 10:13) So, at such times, the Lord might very well be saying to us:

“I want you to know that, when the enemy comes in like a flood, this thing is from me and that I have permitted it in order that you might realize more fully your own weaknesses and learn to depend more confidently upon my grace to help in your every time of need. (Heb. 4:16) I want you to learn that your safety as a New Creature in Christ depends upon your looking to me for strength; for while I want you to do the best you can to fight off all the enemies which assail you as a New Creature, I want you to realize also that the battle is not won by

those who think they are strong apart from me, but by those who look to me to do their fighting for them.”

To have faith that God’s hand is in all our affairs, it is essential to keep in mind that he is training us for the great work of the future and for that high position of joint heirship with his Son, King Jesus. One of the necessary lessons to learn in order to be qualified for this exalted office is that of humility, and it may be that the Lord will use very commonplace experiences to teach us humility. To those of us who need such an experience, the Lord may be saying:

“Are your surroundings in life such as are humiliating to bear? Has your lot been cast with people who do not appreciate you or understand you, people who never consider your preferences or your tastes, and who are always putting you in the background and themselves in front? Do not blame your associations; this thing is from me. I am with you in all your humiliations, helping you to bear them and, from them, to learn the needed lessons. I am training you to be a ruler, to exercise tremendous responsibility; but I want you to do it for my glory, not for your own. So, first of all, it will be necessary for you to come to the place where you will be glad to say from the heart, ‘O! to be nothing, nothing.’ So remember, dear child of mine, you are not in your present environment by accident; it is from me, for I knew that only under such circumstances can you be properly trained for kingdom glory.”

Again, to some of us the Lord may be saying: “Are you in financial difficulties? Are you finding it more and more difficult to ‘make both ends meet’?

This thing, too, is from me, for I want you to put your trust more fully in me and to realize that I know exactly what is best for you. I realize that it may be embarrassing at times not to have all the money you think you need. You would like to make a better showing among your friends, perhaps even among the brethren; but has it ever occurred to you that under my training and direction, and if you keep close to me, you may get into the kingdom before some who are able to make a better showing in the flesh? Of course, I do not want you to feel superior to others just because you are poor; for then you would not be learning the lesson I am endeavoring to teach you, which is that of trust in me and in my ability to provide all your needs, and a joyful acquiescence in your lot in life which I am permitting; for this thing is from me.”

Are we passing through a nighttime of sorrow, due to the loss of some beloved one, or to circumstances which seemingly no one can understand? Again we hear the Lord saying:

“This thing is from me. I have permitted earthly comforters to fail you in order that you might learn to look to me for consolation. Perhaps you have not realized—but I have—that as long as you had all your dear ones with you and your trusted friends were always able to console you in your trials, you did not think of me very often. But at one time you made a covenant with me, and I accepted you into my family. You have been very dear to me. I have wanted to do more for you, to bless you more richly; but you were getting along so well, your life was so filled with your friends, and you were so satisfied with your successes that I was largely shut out of

your thoughts and ways. You didn't realize your need of me. I do not rejoice in your trials; but I know, and you will learn, that in turning to me you will find comfort and solace beyond anything your earthly friends could possibly furnish. I want you to know that I am your everlasting portion, and I want you to draw nigh to me in order that I might draw nigh unto you."—James 4:8

Has someone circulated falsehoods about us, belittling our abilities, perhaps, or even misrepresenting our characters? The Lord permits these experiences also, for they are among the "all things" which, by his overruling, are working together for our good. From this standpoint, therefore, he might very well be saying:

"Leave those who misrepresent you to me. I will deal with them according to their responsibility in the matter. There is a lesson in this experience, a lesson which I want you to learn. It is another way in which you can learn the much needed lesson of Christlike humility. In this experience, 'Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.' (Heb. 12:3) When Jesus was contradicted, yes, even when he was reviled while hanging on the cross, he reviled not again, committing himself rather into my care and keeping; and this is what I want you to do."

Even though we have covenanted to do the Heavenly Father's will, we sometimes go along from day to day making our own plans, and neglecting to take into consideration whether or not our plans are in harmony with his will. Of course, we want him to bless the plans we make, and if he

does not, then we wonder why. Again, let us hear the voice of the Lord, for he may be saying to us:

“Have your plans been all upset? This thing is from me. It was well that you asked me to bless your plans, but in your consecration to me you expressed your determination to do my will, to follow the plans that I would make for you. I have been ready at all times to direct your steps, but often you have not given me an opportunity to do so, and now that your own arrangements are not working out so well, I want you to know the reason and to try to do the better way; that is, to consult me with respect to every detail of your life. I can assure you that when you do this, my blessing will make you rich—rich in peace and joy, and in the realization that I am ever by your side and that I will withhold no good thing from you as long as you walk uprightly.”—Ps. 84:11

All of the Lord’s people are, at one time or another, burdened with responsibility and loaded down with care. We are prone to worry about the outcome of this experience or the result of that effort. Under this burden of care, we are apt to wonder why we do not have the joy and peace in the Lord that once enriched our lives. And then, despite all our care and worry, something goes wrong, and we are crushed in spirit. In our distress we turn to the Lord and through his Word hear him say:

“This thing is from me. I have been telling you right along that you should cast all your care upon me, for I am abundantly able to take the responsibility for the successful outcome of every service I ask you to render for me. (I Pet. 5:7) Not only do I

want you to ascertain my will with respect to all the affairs of your consecrated life, but in doing this, also to let me be responsible for the outcome. Then you will have peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, for you will know that on account of my almighty power and infinite wisdom there will be no situation too difficult for me to handle. Even so, the outcome of your every experience and the result of your every effort to serve me may not be as you would desire; but you can be confident that, under the overruling of my providence, all things will work together for your good and for my glory.”

Every truly consecrated child of God is alert to serve him and his people in any and every way possible. Those who do not desire to be active in his service may very well doubt the genuineness of their consecration. However, for many the opportunities of service often seem quite limited. We long to do more for the Lord than we are doing or have the opportunity to do. It may be through lack of physical strength; it may be due to obligations toward those for whom the Lord expects us to care; it may be financial inability, or other handicaps. Do we, then, wonder why it is that, although our hearts long to do much in the Lord’s service, we are deprived of the opportunity? In this experience also, the Lord may very well be saying to us:

“This thing is from me. I know of your desire to do some great work for me, and yet I have permitted you to be laid aside on a bed of weakness and pain, for there is a lesson in this which is most essential for you to learn. Deep down in your heart, why are you so anxious to be busy in my service? Is your motive entirely that of love for me, for the brethren,

and for all who may be blessed at your hands through the ministry of the Truth? It is well that you examine yourself very carefully along this line. And there is no better time to do this than while you are laid aside from active service. If there is the slightest trace in your heart of a motive that is not unselfish and pure, prosperity in my service would be very injurious to you; and I love you too much to permit you to be injured.”

“And then, in order for me to bless you in my service, it is essential that you lean upon me for strength and look to me for guidance. This experience of waiting which you are now having will help you to realize your own weakness and your great need of me. My strength will be made perfect in your weakness, but only if you realize your weakness. (II Cor. 12:9) When you come to the point where you tremble when you think of self and realize how very little you can do for me in your own strength, then I will be able to use you for doing great things for me—if not this side of the veil, then surely when I have exalted you to glory to live and reign with my beloved Son.”

“And if, in my providence, it takes all your time and strength and means to meet your responsibilities toward those depending upon you, this thing is from me, too. If you discharge your responsibilities as unto me, I will accept your service as though it were done directly in my vineyard. I know that in your heart you want to render direct service to me, and that is proper. I delight in that attitude and will be very near to you and bless you. But keep alert; it may be that the time will come when I will open the way for you to serve me in more direct ways. Watch and

pray lest you settle down into a life of worldly indifference simply because at present you are deprived of the privilege of working directly for me.”

“If, in your case, it is a matter of wishing that you had large sums of money you could devote to my service, I appreciate that; but what are you doing with that little bit you do have? I have been saying over and over again to my people that those who are faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in that which is much. (Luke 16:10) After all, dear child of mine, my most important consideration for you is that you prove faithful; and you can do that with a few pennies just as well as though you possessed a large fortune which could be devoted to my service. You doubtless have read what my beloved Son said about the widow who cast her only two mites into the treasury of the Temple. The fact that you have only mites to use in my service is my providence for you. This thing is from me! I am watching to see if you will be like that widow.”—Mark 12:42-44; Luke 21:1-4

The Lord’s providences over his people are truly marvelous. Frequently, those who have had little or no opportunity for service suddenly find that glorious privileges in the harvest open up before them. Those who have had small opportunities may be granted larger ones. Those incapacitated by illness may recover. Family responsibilities may lessen. Some who possess little of this world’s goods may acquire more which they can use for the Lord. These changes of circumstances should also be accepted as coming from the Lord; so again we hear him saying to us:

“This thing is from me. You have profited as a New Creature by your past position in life, and now

I have answered your prayers for greater opportunities of service. But it is well to remember that you will need my help now more than ever before; for, in the use of these larger privileges of service, there may be a tendency for you to develop a feeling of self-sufficiency. When you were weak and ill, you felt your need of me; but now that you are strong and well, you need me more than ever; so do not now neglect to acknowledge me in all your ways, and look to me to direct your path and give you strength to walk in it.”

“The service which you rendered to those dependent upon you was important, but now that you are serving me directly you will need my guidance and blessing even more than before, for the simple reason that you will be handling the holy things of my Word and plan. And if you may now have more money to spend for me, take heed lest you come to feel that your money should buy you special privileges of honor and authority among my people. Watch also lest you rest in the thought that your money is all I want. Above everything else, from you—as from all my children—I want the affection of your heart. I want you to keep close to me and to be very attentive to all of my instructions. I want you to tremble at my Word, not in fear of what I might do to you, but because you are anxious lest a promise being left you of entering into a full rest of faith in the doing of my will, you should even seem to come short of it.”—Heb. 4:1

“So, dear consecrated child of mine, since you have agreed to acknowledge me in all your ways (Prov. 3:6), remember that I am directing you in all things. There is not a single experience that comes

into your life of which I am not aware, but have either permitted it or ordered it because I knew that it would be for your good as a child and heir of mine and a joint-heir with my beloved Son, Jesus. (Rom. 8:16,17) Never doubt my interest in you, nor my ability to care for you. As each new blessing comes to you, as trials weigh down upon you, keep your ears attuned for my reassuring message. This thing is from me, the God of your salvation, the God of mercy and abundant grace, who daily lifts up his countenance upon thee to give thee peace.”—Num. 6:24-26

“I am your Father, too, your Heavenly Father, and everything that concerns you, my child, concerns me. My love is yours for your comfort and joy. My infinite wisdom is yours to direct all your steps. My almighty power is pledged to your support, to help you over all the rough places in your heavenly journey, to defend you against all your foes, and to strengthen you in all your weaknesses. And remember, dear child of mine, that I will withhold no good thing from you, and that I always give my very best to those who leave the choice with me. (Ps. 84:11) Blessed are all they who put their trust in me.”—Ps. 2:12; 34:8

Reassuring indeed are the Lord’s words, as he talks to us out of the Scriptures. Perhaps one of the important lessons we should learn from his messages is that when we fellowship with him, it is best that we have little to say ourselves. If it is important that all the world keep silent before him, it is even more so for us, his children. (Zech. 2:13) Our Heavenly Father is, however, pleased for us to express our devotion to, and love for, him, to reiterate our

longing desire to please him, and to keep near to him. How appropriate that we should say:

Sun of my soul, my Father dear,
I know no night when thou art near.
O! may no earthborn cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes.

Shield of my soul, though tempests rage,
And 'gainst me hosts of foes engage,
My refuge and my fortress thou,
Before thee every foe must bow.

Thy grace and glory thou dost give
To those who near thee ever live;
And no good thing dost thou withhold
From sheep which stray not from thy fold.

Thy choicest treasure, e'en thy Son,
Thy well-beloved and only one,
Freely thou gavest once for me,
From sin and death to set me free.

Yea, thou who sparedst not thy Son,
Whose sacrifice our ransom won,
Shalt, with him, all things freely give;
He lives, a pledge that we shall live. ■

OBITUARIES

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

Brother E. Terry Nadal, Somerset, England—May
19. Age, 84

Sister Martha Mull, Grand Rapids, MI—June 21.
Age, 93

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

G. Balko

Sturgis, SK July 10-12

D. Rice

Prince Albert, SK July 3-5

O. B. Elbert

Sturgis, SK July 10-12

B. Siwak

Sturgis, SK July 10-12

P. Mora

Prince Albert, SK July 3-5
Sturgis, SK 10-12

J. Parkinson

Prince Albert, SK July 3-5

*How sweet to leave the world awhile,
And seek the presence of our Lord!
Dear Savior, on thy people smile;
Draw near according to thy Word.
From busy scenes we now retreat,
That we may here converse with thee.
O Lord, behold us at thy feet;
Let this the gate of heaven be.
Chief of ten thousand, now appear,
That we by faith may see thy face.
O speak, that we thy voice may hear,
And let thy presence fill this place.
—Hymns of Dawn*

MOVING?



If you are moving, please let us know six weeks before you move so that we can change the address on your Dawn subscription.

CONVENTIONS

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

PRINCE ALBERT-SASKATOON CONVENTION, July 3-5—Siwak Farm. Contact A. Siwak, RR 1 Stn Mpp, Prince Albert, SK, Canada S6V 5P8. Phone: (306) 764-7692 or Email: ahsiwak@inet2000.com

EAST SASKATCHEWAN CONVENTION, July 10-12—Sturgis Community Hall, Highway #9, Sturgis, SK. Contact N. Paley, Box 1522, Canora, SK S0A 0L0. Phone: (306) 563-5441 or Email: thepaleys@sasktel.net

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 18-23—University of Pittsburgh, 450 Schoolhouse Road, Johnstown, PA. Contact E. Kuenzli. Phone: (407) 670-4189 or Email: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com

OKPUALANGWA CONVENTION, August 8—Okpuala Ngwa Class Meeting Hall, Isiala Ngwa North, Abia State, Nigeria. Contact G. C. Adiele. Phone: 234-811-611-1533 or Email: godwin.adiele@yahoo.com

COLORADO CONVENTION, August 21-23—DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Denver - Stapleton North, 4040 Quebec Street, Denver, CO. Contact L. Turner. Phone: (303) 809-1957 or Email: twink94@comcast.net

NIGERIA GENERAL CONVENTION, August 21-23—Emmanuel College, Owerri Imo State, Nigeria. Contact C. O. Egbu, #24 Fayemi Street, Coca Cola Mokola Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Phone: 234-803-333-9949 or Email: egbucaje@gmail.com

HUNTSVILLE CONVENTION, September 5,6—Wyndham Garden Huntsville Airport, 8721 Madison Blvd., Madison, AL 35758. Contact R. Armstrong. Phone: (256) 281-9556 or Email: robin@exzaktec.com

JACKSON LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 5,6—Holiday Inn Jackson NW, 2696 Bob McClain Drive,

Jackson, MI 49202. Contact V. Lumley, 2531 Ashton Road, Jackson, MI 49203. Phone: (517) 782-7252 or Email: raylumley2531@comcast.net

NEW YORK LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 5,6—DoubleTree Hotel Mahwah, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NJ. Contact G. Passios. Phone: (201) 939-3196 or Email: gpassios11@verizon.net

SEATTLE LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 5-7—Seabeck Conference Center, 13395 Lagoon Drive NW, Seabeck, WA 98380. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (253) 838-3822, (206) 518-2678 or Email: laurie@flinn.us

COLUMBUS HARVEST CONVENTION, September 19-20—Ledwinka Farm, 10004 E. 550 N., Columbus, IN 47203. Contact D. Ledwinda. Phone: (812) 546-5276

MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, September 26,27—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact S. Kuenzli. Phone: (414) 690-8281 or Email: song_of_hope@sbcglobal.net

GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 3,4—Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact J. Houlmont. Phone: (231) 972-4259 or Email: ljhoulmont@gmail.com

PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, October 3,4—Sewickly Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact G. Balko. Phone: (724) 771-0139

SAN LUIS OBISPO CONVENTION, October 17,18—Masonic Hall, 859 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Contact M. Allard. Phone: (805) 773-2963 or Email: medlallard@juno.com

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 24,25—South Seminole Masonic Lodge, 122 Triplett Lake Drive, Casselberry, FL 32707. Contact J. Kuenzli. Phone: (407) 831-2098 or Email: jkuenzli@cfl.rr.com

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL CONVENTION, October 24,25—Carioca Hotel, Rio de Janeiro - RJ. Contact: estudantesdabiblia_aurorabrasil@hotmail.com