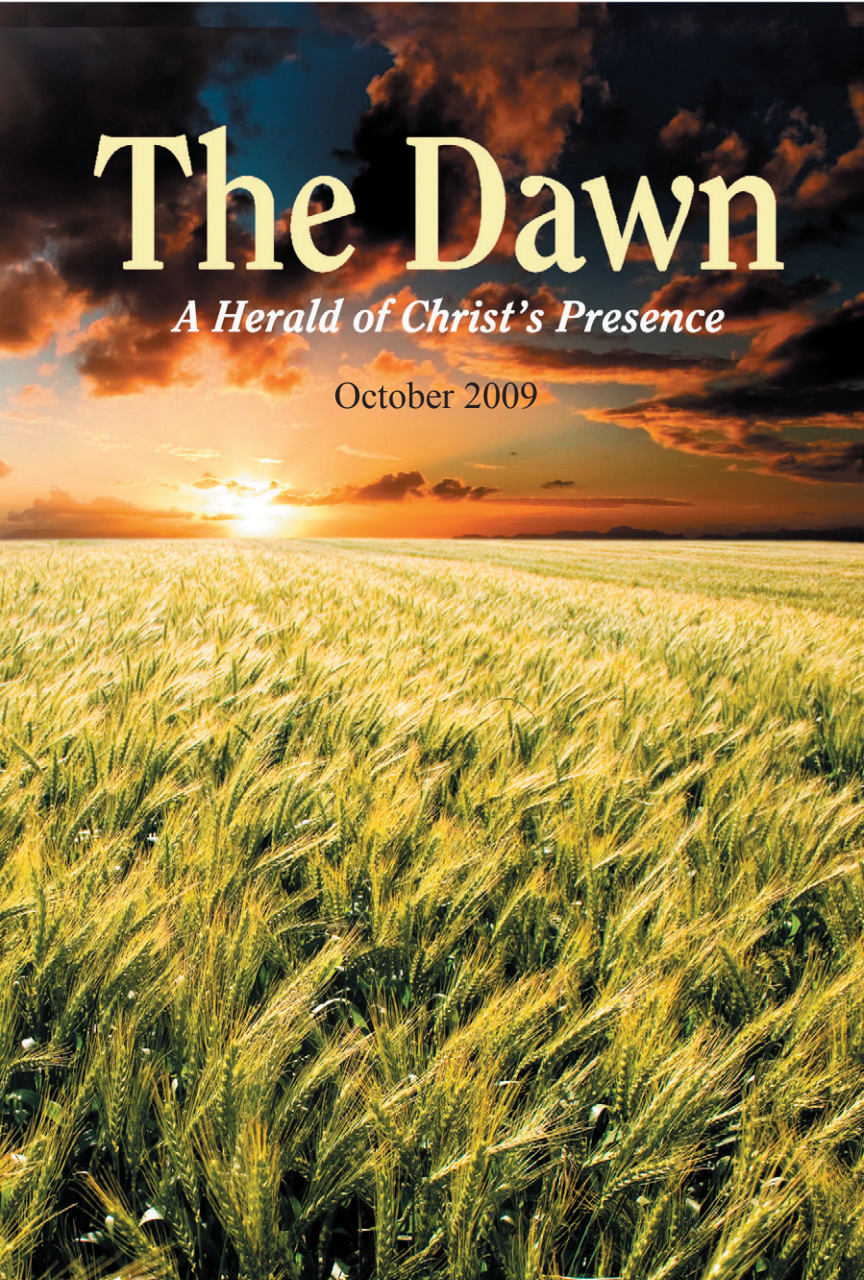


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# America's Health Care Dilemma

*“Whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.”*

—Mark 6:56

gives us a glimpse of the tremendous excitement that was generated whenever our Lord Jesus presented himself to members of the poor groaning creation. (Rom. 8:22,23) He was the long-awaited and promised Messiah who left his heavenly abode as the Word [*Logos*, Greek] of his Heavenly Father. (John 1:1-4) The Father's commission was that he take on the life of a perfect man, and then sacrifice that life as a corresponding price for the sins of Adam, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”—I Cor. 15:22

During his earthly ministry, Jesus preached to the people about the promises of a future kingdom in which he and a little flock of faithful followers would share in bringing blessings of life, health,

peace, and happiness to all the families of the earth who had inherited the penalty of death from father Adam. (Gen. 22:16-18) The many miracles of healing the sick and the infirm, casting out demons, and raising the dead that he performed, served as mere illustrations of a far grander and more extensive work that he would carry out for the whole world during his future kingdom.

## **IT WAS VERY GOOD**

During the beginning period of earth's creation and the preparation for its earliest inhabitants—the animal kingdom—God declared that “it was good.” (Gen. 1:24,25) Then it came time for the crowning glory of this magnificent scene by the giving of life to father Adam. The Heavenly Father invited his only begotten Son, the Logos, to share with him in this wonderful work. Thus the proclamation, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” (vs. 26) With the creation of a perfect man, God then declared, “Behold, it was very good.”—vs. 31

## **DISOBEDIENCE**

From the earliest written scriptural records of Moses, we read, “The LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—Gen. 2:15-17

When obedience to the Divine commandment failed, sin was introduced into the world and Adam

suffered the penalty of death which would then be passed on to his offspring. “Unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”—Gen. 3:17-19

### **A THOUSAND-YEAR DAY**

When Adam was disobedient to the law of God we realize that he did not die on the very ‘day’ in which he was created, as the scriptural record seems to suggest. However, later in the account we learn exactly just how long his granted lifespan was. “All the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.” (Gen. 5:5) To put this all in proper focus, we learn that the Heavenly Father looks upon a day as being a thousand years long. This is shown by the Apostle Peter, who wrote, “Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”—II Pet. 3:8

Thus we have the necessary information that when Adam died at 930 years of age it was still well within God’s designated one-thousand-year day spoken of as the penalty for disobedience. Methuselah was a descendant of Adam and of the eighth generation. He lived the longest of any of the human

family, yet he, too, died within the Heavenly Father's one-thousand-year day. "All the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died."—Gen. 5:27

## **THE DYING PROCESS**

God's commandment to Adam was, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17) An added perspective to this verse, and the Heavenly Father's warning concerning failure to obey his commandments, is recorded in the Marginal Translation of this scripture. It reads, "dying thou shalt die."

These words are important because they introduce more clearly the thought of a dying process rather than an immediate death. As seen within the concept of God's one-thousand-year day, this distinctly points to the gradual nature of the death sentence. If Adam had been obedient to God's laws he would have continued to live but, because of his condemnation to death, he lost more and more of his original vitality that ended in the grave 930 years later.

The record of mother Eve's creation follows soon after Adam's. (Gen. 2:18-25) Later, our first parents were vividly reminded of the reality of the sentence of death when a dispute arose between two of their sons which ended in violence and the death of Abel. Leading up to the controversy was God's acceptance of the sacrificial offering of Abel as having more worth than Cain's. Jealousy prevailed, "And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that



Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.” (Gen. 4:8) What a tragic scene transpired when the human family’s first murder had taken place.

From that time forward, mankind’s record is written in sorrow and blood as the momentum of sickness, disease, accident, war, and other violence has brought continuing misery and disaster to the whole human family over the course of its six-thousand-year history. Jesus’ earthly ministry and promise was to establish life and peace once again during his future and glorious kingdom for the uplifting and blessings of all mankind. That blessed time will also include a resurrection from the grave.

## **PREPARING THE WAY**

John the Baptist had been the forerunner of our Lord Jesus and he had helped prepare the way for the Master’s earthly ministry. “[He] preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.” (Mark 1:7) When it was time for Jesus to begin his ministry his power and fame quickly spread far and wide. Multitudes of the sin-sick and dying human family sought his miracle-working powers of healing. “This rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about. And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.”—Luke 7:17,18

## **JOHN’S REASSURANCE**

Luke, the historian records some of the important details that took place about this same time. John was seeking reassurance that it was indeed our Lord Jesus of whom he had been hearing. “John



calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? And in that same hour he [Jesus] cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.”—Luke 7:19-21

### **MIRACLE-WORKING POWER**

Luke recorded the conversation that took place between Jesus and the two disciples sent by John the Baptist. We read, “Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.”—Luke 7:22,23

Jesus thus defended his earthly ministry and the Divine purpose by removing all doubt as to who he was, and what he had come to accomplish. His Heavenly Father had bestowed upon him great powers for the healing of sickness and disease, and strength for the redeeming work and ultimate reconciliation for the sins of the world. However, the wonderful work he was engaged in was but a mere foregleam of the much grander blessings that would become available to the whole sin-sick world under the administration of his future kingdom.

### **PRESENT DAY HEALTH CARE**

There is little doubt that the present health care system in the United States is the best that fallen

man has ever been able to offer to the poor groaning human creation. Although much progress has been made in health sciences to help alleviate some of the terrible suffering that is endured by mankind, a return to perfect health, life, and freedom from the death sentence can only be achieved through the administration of Christ's coming kingdom.

This prospect can never be realized by man, as the Apostle Paul proclaims. "We know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body."—Rom. 8:22-24, *New American Standard Bible*

Paul is pointing to a future time, which we believe is now near at hand, when the completion of the faithful members of the body of The Christ will soon be accomplished. They will then share in the dissemination of blessings that will be offered to all the obedient of mankind during the time of Christ's earthly kingdom.

## **AMERICA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

As of this writing, it seems likely that there will be major changes made to improve the present health care system in the United States under the new Obama administration. At the present time it is held mostly in private hands. However, millions of people have no health insurance at all and this country's system is the most expensive of any other nation.

There are certain facilities owned and operated by various governmental agencies but there is no nationwide system of government-owned medical facilities that are open to the general public. The few exceptions include the federally controlled military hospitals, both field and permanent, which are operated in connection with the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration.

America's hospitals and their staff of doctors and other personnel are usually funded by various insurance plans that are held by their patients. It is estimated that about 85% of United States citizens are covered by some kind of health insurance. Some of this coverage is provided through an employer program which may be available to them, or by other individually purchased plans. There is at present no government health insurance plan that covers all people, and there are nearly 50 million people who do not have a health insurance policy.

## **SPIRALING COSTS**

United States government economists estimate that health care spending will nearly double over the next decade, and this is prompting major concern that American citizens will not be able to keep pace with these cost increases, and that they will outstrip the nation's economic growth. A recent statistical report prepared by the Journal of Health Affairs is available for last year, and points to a health care bill that now averages approximately \$7,500 for every man, woman, and child in the United States. The report stated that this accounts for about 16 cents out of every dollar that Americans spend. If

costs are expected to nearly double in the next few years the increased costs will put added pressure on the United States Congress to either curb Medicare benefits, raise taxes, or more likely to do both. Health care expenses will thus put a burdensome strain on everything else the government does.

Another report by the government's Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services has concluded that the United States spends far more on health care than other advanced nations but with little or no measurable results. The excessive costs are generally attributed to higher administrative expenses, drug prices, doctors' incomes, and other factors with no single factor being entirely responsible. Basic health care costs such as hospital care and doctor's services are expected to rise at relatively modest rates of six to seven points a year over the next ten years. These rates are one to two percentage points higher than the forecast growth for the overall economy. As health care spending is predicted to increase faster than earnings, it means that more people will be unable to afford adequate protection.

Analysts point to the fact that as the United States moves from the more traditional sources of insurance to more federal and state provided programs, we will continue to face difficult questions as to how we can finance the present health care expenses.

## **HEALTH CARE REFORM**

The newly installed Obama administration and the United States Congress have been working to pass legislation that will overhaul the American

health care system. It is an exceedingly complex issue and it has eluded lawmakers for decades. There are no guarantees that an agreeable solution can be reached that will satisfy all major political alliances and financial interests, but it is hoped that some kind of a compromise may be found.

The basic goal of any new congressional bill is to provide health care benefits to the nearly 50 million uninsured Americans. At the same time, they also want to make the system more stable and affordable for those who may already have insurance through their employer or by other means. As the situation is now, to lose a job means to lose coverage. The aim is to lower insurance premiums for everyone, and as a result the young and the old, and the sick and healthy can be brought into the system as a way to spread the costs of high-risk patients. The present unresolved problem remains how to compel participation in the program, and then how to pay for it. Any package of options designed to achieve these goals however, would require hundreds of billions of dollars in new tax revenues and spending cuts that have yet to be worked out.

## **HUGE COSTS**

The proposed health care overhaul is estimated to cost in excess of 1 trillion dollars over a period of ten years. It has been suggested that some of this cost could be obtained by a tax levy on benefits provided by employers which could amount to \$200 billion annually which are not at present subject to taxation. Both liberal and conservative lawmakers support the change. Democrats and Republicans

agree that the government must exert more pressure on Americans to buy into the new program. Unions who fought for years to obtain generous health benefits for their workers are not in favor of the changes because they would have to pay taxes on their benefits.

Establishing a public insurance plan that competes with private insurers remains a contentious aspect of the whole reform debate. The Democrats hold all of the cards in the debate however. Because they have a very popular president, they dominate the House and now have a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate. They also can use the reconciliation procedure that would allow them to pass a bill with 51 votes if an agreement cannot be reached.

## **LEGISLATION DELAYED**

United States President Barak Obama has been pushing hard for quick passage of a bipartisan bill that he can sign that would expand health care coverage for all Americans. It is believed by many that he is seeking fast action before his first year of high level popularity begins to wane. In the meantime, minority Republican leaders and some of Obama's own Democrats are delaying quick passage of a bill before the historic changes to the health care system are finalized. As of this writing, it has been confirmed that there will be no Senate vote before Congress adjourns.

There are many doubts concerning additional costs to taxpayers and the government's takeover of America's health care system. Many are insisting that slowing down is the wisest course to follow at this time. Also, many say that it is better to have

a bill that is based on carefulness rather than to rush the issue. The creation of a government-run plan would compete with private insurance companies, increase taxes on the wealthy, and require employers and individuals to obtain health insurance.

It appears likely that President Obama may have to settle for some kind of a fallback strategy in order to overhaul America's health care system. Democratic lawmakers hope for action by the full House, and some sort of agreement on a bipartisan plan in the Senate. However, Republicans are repositioning their strategy and opposition, and some Democrats in both chambers of the House are voicing doubts about moving such complex and costly legislation too quickly.

## **GOD'S SOLUTION**

Students of the Bible know that the only solution to the overwhelming problems facing the human family in these distressing times at the end of the present Gospel Age lies in the wonderful promises of God's Word. For six thousand years man has inherited the penalty of death that has come to them because of disobedience to the laws of God and original sin in the Garden of Eden. This penalty is witnessed by the corruption, sickness, and disease that ends in the grave.

Under the administration of Christ's future kingdom men will be given every opportunity to learn the ways of the Lord and, if obedient to the law of God, will receive everlasting life here on a perfected earth. "Then he [God] is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher



than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth."—Job 33:24,25

These inspiring words from the Word of God speak of a future scene when righteousness and Truth will prevail over all the earth and the human family will be witness to the marvelous features of God's promised kingdom. Tears of joy will surely accompany the reality of this blessed promise when the poor groaning creation realize that they have the opportunity to return to the days of their youth.

### **THE OPPRESSED SET FREE**

The Psalmist David was overjoyed with the wonderful prospect of God's promises, and he wrote, "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed."—Ps. 103:1-6

The oppressed will be set free from their bondage to sin and death, as addressed by the Prophet Isaiah when he wrote, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"—Isa. 58:6

The prophet continued to speak of the blessings that will become available to mankind in that wonderful day of Christ's future kingdom. "Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring

the poor that are cast out [broken, Margin] to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward.”—vss. 7,8

Isaiah described our Heavenly Father’s ultimate purpose for the blessing and reconciliation of the whole sin-sick and dying human creation. He wrote, “The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.”—Isa. 33:24 ■

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**OCTOBER 1**—“I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me.”—Psalm 39:1 (Z. ’97-156 Hymn 65)

**OCTOBER 8**—“Be not deceived,...he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”—Galatians 6:7,8 (Z.’04-57 Hymn 4)

**OCTOBER 15**—“Have faith in God”—Mark 11:22 (Z.’04-59 Hymn 174)

**OCTOBER 22**—“Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?”—Matthew 20:22 (Z. ’04-138,139 Hymn 106)

**OCTOBER 29**—“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.”—II Corinthians 4:8-10 (Z ’01-55 Hymn 348)

# Looking for Jesus

**Key Verse:** “*When they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.*”  
—Mark 1:37

**Selected Scripture:**  
Mark 1:35-45

meditation and prayer.

Notice the first verse of our lesson, “In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.” (Mark 1:35) Jesus was very busy throughout the day with his preaching and healing work, so he chose the quiet hours of early morning, before daybreak, to engage in meditation with his Father. Jesus realized the importance of communion with his Father, for it was by this that he learned his will for him, and also gained a closeness which helped him much in the difficult experiences which were to come.

On this particular morning, Simon Peter and others of the disciples found Jesus praying, and spoke to him the words of our Key Verse. Many were seeking after Jesus, both to hear his message and to receive the benefit of his miracles. Jesus responded to Peter by agreeing that they should travel on to more towns, that he might continue his preaching work. Jesus said, “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach

## **THIS LESSON, TAKEN FROM**

Jesus’ early ministry, is illustrative of how he conducted himself throughout his earthly life. He was committed to preaching the Gospel message, helping and healing those in need who displayed faith, and he spent much time in quiet

there also: for therefore came I forth.” (vs. 38) The account states they then went throughout all the region of Galilee, with Jesus preaching in the synagogues.—vs. 39

As Jesus preached, he encountered a leper. “There came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.” (vss. 40-42) Then Jesus did what might seem to be a strange thing. Although he had fully cleansed the leper, he told him to go show himself to the priest, and “offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded.”—vs. 44

The Mosaic Law required that certain things be done with regard to those who were lepers and their cleansing. Additionally, once cleansing had taken place, the former leper was required to provide certain offerings to the high priest (see Lev. 14). Jesus had come to fulfill the Mosaic Law, and to end the need for keeping its ceremonies, for he was now establishing a higher law, not based on the ‘letter’ of the old law, but on the spiritual principles of love, faith, and the character of God, his Father. However, Jesus knew that until he was faithful until death, every “jot and tittle” of the old law was still in force. (Matt. 5:18) His instruction to the leper to go to the priest and offer those things commanded by Moses was entirely proper.

Jesus told the leper not to tell others that he had healed him, but the leper was evidently so thrilled about the fact of his cleansing, he told the matter to all he came in contact with, so much so that the account says Jesus had to leave the city and go out into the desert, but the people continued to come to him “from every quarter.”—Mark 1:45 ■

# Recognizing Jesus

**Key Verse:**

***“Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.”  
—Mark 5:19***

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Mark 5:1-20**

he spent all his time “crying, and cutting himself with stones.” (vs. 5) Such a life must have certainly been hardly worth living.

When the possessed man saw Jesus, “he ran and worshipped him.” (vs. 6) Perhaps having heard that Jesus had previously healed others possessed of devils, the man was noticeably excited about the prospect that he too might be healed. The evil spirit that possessed him, though, was not pleased to be in the presence of Jesus, and said loudly, “What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.” Jesus then asked the spirit what his name was, to which

**JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES**

had crossed the Sea of Galilee and were now in the land of the Gadarenes, east of the sea. Immediately, he encountered a man who was possessed of an unclean spirit. The spirit had such control over him and produced such violent behavior that the man was forced to live “among the tombs.” (Mark 5:3) In fact, men had tried to bind him with chains and fetters, but the power of the unclean spirit always broke them to pieces. Living among the tombs,

the reply was given, “My name is Legion: for we are many.”—vss. 7-9

The evil spirit continued to converse with Jesus, and knowing his power, asked him that he not send them, the ‘Legion’ of evil spirits, out of the country. No doubt they were happy to be in that area, where it seemed fruitful to engage in their many evil activities. It was then that they noticed a herd of swine feeding not far away, so they asked Jesus if he would send them into the swine (vss. 11,12). Jesus obliged, sending the evil spirits out of the man and into the swine. The swine reacted so violently to this, though, that they ran down a steep hill toward the sea, and “were choked in the sea.”—vs. 13

Those who were the keepers of the herd of swine, and others who observed what had happened, were fearful because of what they had witnessed, and asked Jesus to depart. They seemed more interested in what had happened to the evil spirits and the herd of swine than the fact that this poor man, who previously had a useless life, was now “sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind.” (vs. 15) Jesus, though, stayed close by him, most surely conversing with him and telling him of the glorious Gospel message. What a joyous conversation this must have been!

As Jesus prepared to depart and enter the ship, the man who was possessed asked if he could go with him, (vs. 18) giving evidence of his love and thanksgiving for what had been done. Jesus replied, as the words of the Key Verse state, that his gratitude would be best shown by going home to his relatives and friends, and telling all who might listen of the great things the Lord had done for him. May we likewise show our love and appreciation for what Jesus has done for us by proclaiming the glorious Gospel message throughout the earth as a witness to the groaning creation that the blessed healing day of Christ’s kingdom is near at hand. ■

# Begging to Get In

**Key Verse:** *“The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.”*  
—Mark 7:26

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Mark 7:24-30*

## **AT THE TIME OF JESUS’**

First Advent, the Jews were God’s specially favored people, and he first went to them with the message of the Gospel. “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matt. 15:24) Jesus realized that Israel as a nation was not prepared in heart to receive him. In particular the religious leaders, the scribes and Pharisees, were hardened in heart and sought to criticize, belittle, stumble, and even kill, the one who had come to redeem the nation. In the verses preceding this lesson, Jesus had reproved the scribes and Pharisees, saying they had rejected God’s commandments, and instead “hold the tradition of men.”—Mark 7:8

After Jesus finished his reproof of the Jewish religious leaders, perhaps having had enough of their ‘traditions,’ he left Galilee and went to the area of Tyre and Sidon—a heathen Gentile region. He entered the house of a Gentile woman whose daughter had an unclean spirit. (Mark 7:25) Verse 24 says that he had tried to enter the house secretly, but to no avail. Perhaps he felt it might be best if none of his Jewish brethren found out he had entered the house of a non-Jew. In any case, the woman, showing great humility and faith, “fell at his



feet: . . . and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.”—vs. 26

The following exchange took place between Jesus and the woman. “Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it unto the dogs. And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children’s crumbs.” (vss. 27,28) Jesus had spoken in symbol. The ‘children’ were the Jews, the lost sheep he had especially come to recover. The ‘bread’ was the Truth, the message of the Gospel which he preached. The ‘dogs’ were the Gentiles, including the woman and her afflicted daughter, for that is what the Jews considered them. It may seem that Jesus’ reply to the woman was harsh, but he sought to illustrate the truth of the matter that the nation of Israel was still God’s chosen people, and still rightly claimed the scriptural promise, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.”—Amos 3:2

An even more important reason for Jesus’ response was to test the woman’s faith. She immediately demonstrated her understanding of the symbols Jesus had used, as well as her great faith, by simply requesting that the ‘dogs’ be allowed to eat the crumbs of bread left by the ‘children.’ In her faith, she recognized that the Jews still were Jesus’ primary focus, but she saw also that they had left not just crumbs but much of the ‘bread of life’ that Jesus had fed them. The woman simply desired that she might have the opportunity to feed on what they had left, and receive the related blessing of her daughter’s healing.

Jesus replied to the woman, “For this saying [demonstrating your great faith] go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.” (Mark 7:29) Perhaps the sentiments in Jesus’ heart echoed the words he had spoken on another similar occasion, “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.”—Matt. 8:10 ■

# Opting Out

**Key Verse:** *“Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, 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

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Mark 10:17-31**

this by merely keeping the commandments of Moses, for it had been clearly demonstrated that no one among imperfect men could keep them. Even though this young man claimed to have kept the Law, most certainly he had not done so perfectly and, therefore, could not gain eternal life through it. Jesus stated that eternal life could only be attained by those who gave up their own earthly possessions, showed a character of love by helping their fellowman, daily sacrificed their own wills to do God's, and followed him as he was doing these very things.

## **ONE DAY A YOUNG JEWISH**

man approached Jesus and asked him what he needed to do to gain eternal life. Jesus responded by stating several of the commandments of the Mosaic Law, asking the man if he was aware of these. The man replied, “Master, all these have I observed from my youth.” (Mark 10:20) Then Jesus spoke the powerful, but no doubt perplexing, words of our Key Verse.

The words of Jesus give indication that a new arrangement was now to be in effect for those who desired to attain eternal life.

No longer would one hope to do

The account says that the young man “was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.” (vs. 22) While it is evident that the young man had a measure of love and respect for Jesus and his teachings, he could not commit himself to the requirements Jesus had put forth. He was rich in this world’s goods, perhaps well known among the people. He was unwilling to give up his earthly treasures. Jesus had said that keeping the requirements for eternal life would be counted as laying up treasure in heaven. On another occasion, he said of such treasure, “neither moth nor rust doth corrupt.”—Matt 6:20

All those during this present Gospel Age who desire to gain eternal life must do so by the same process as Jesus described. They must first present themselves fully to God in consecration, giving him their heart, their all. In doing so, they must also present themselves in sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1) Then they must seek to develop a character of love, one which gives of itself to others. Finally, all such must strive to “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.”—Rev. 14:4

As Jesus surveyed the situation around him, he concluded it would be very difficult, although not impossible, for the rich to enter the kingdom of God. (Mark 10:23) Most would consider it too great a cost to give up their earthly riches for ‘heavenly treasure.’ Apostle Paul said, “Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.” (I Cor. 1:26-29) Let us be as Peter, who said to Jesus, “Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.”—Mark 10:28 ■

# Suffering for Christ

***“If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.”***

***—II Timothy 2:12***

## **THE WORDS OF THIS SCRIPTURE**

show the direct relationship between faithfulness under trial, and sharing with our Lord Jesus in his future kingdom for blessing the human family. Those who are willing to stand the test of obedience during this present Gospel Age will share as joint-heirs with our glorified Lord. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”—Rom. 8:16-18

During Jesus’ earthly ministry he spoke of the spiritual reward that will be given to those who suffer for his name and are faithful to their High Calling. “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of

heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”—Matt. 5:10-12

The followers of our Lord must take up their cross when they have committed themselves to him in full consecration even unto death. “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” (Matt. 16:24,25) The one who seeks to preserve his life and its comforts, is the one who will not share joint heirship with our glorified Lord in his future kingdom. It is only through much tribulation that we may share in the heavenly glory and participate in the blessing of all the families of the earth.

## **THE GOD OF THIS WORLD**

The Apostle Paul also pointed to the fact that Satan, the Devil, is the god of this world, and would be allowed to severely test them and all the others who would respond to the heavenly call during this present Gospel Age. “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”—II Cor. 4:4

The faithful followers of Jesus have responded to the wonderful invitation of the heavenly calling in Christ Jesus. During their walk in the narrow

way of sacrifice they have been on trial for their loyalty to the Truth of his Word. Those who prove themselves faithful unto death will receive the “crown of life.” (Rev. 2:10) This is the grandest of all gifts from our loving Heavenly Father to his faithful children.

## **TEMPTER OF GOD’S PEOPLE**

The principle of our testing, chastening, and patient endurance has been recorded in the Scriptures for our admonition. It was written long before the invitation to the High Calling in Christ Jesus went forth. In the writings of Job, we learn about a certain occasion when Satan presented himself before the Heavenly Father. Even at that early time it was apparent that Satan was a powerful and opposing force that our Heavenly Father permitted to be unleashed against a man of righteousness. Satan was given liberty to plot against Job and to cause him great pain and distress. However, he was not permitted to take his life.

Of this encounter, we read, “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.” And the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.” Then Satan answered the LORD, “Does Job fear God for nothing? Hast Thou not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on

every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Thy hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse Thee to Thy face.” Then the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.”—Job 1:6-12, *New American Standard Bible*

Later, Satan returned to present himself to the Heavenly Father and was questioned about Job’s loyalty to righteousness. “Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth, and walking around on it.” And the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause.” And Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. However, put forth Thy hand, now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse Thee to Thy face.” So the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life.”—chap. 2:1-6, *NASB*

## **JESUS TEMPTED**

When our Lord Jesus left his heavenly home to become a perfect man and become the Redeemer of



the human family, he too was permitted to be tempted by Satan. This took place soon after Jesus had been baptized by John the Baptist in the River Jordan, and had received the Holy Spirit of Truth from his Heavenly Father. (Matt. 3:13-17) The Gospel record provides the details. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred."—Matt. 4:1,2

Satan took the opportunity to tempt Jesus when he was in a weakened state due to his fasting for forty days and nights. "When the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (vss. 3,4) The Devil challenged Jesus to be the Son of God. Having possessed perfect human qualities of mind, memory, and body he answered the tempter by pointing to the wonderful words of scripture that came from the mouth of God.

"Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." (vss. 5-7) The Temple overlooked the Valley of Hinnom high above the surrounding area. Satan wanted our Lord to recklessly expose himself to

danger and to receive a miraculous deliverance from danger, but he again pointed to the Word of God for his answer.

“Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.” (vss. 8-11) As the ‘god of this world’ Satan attempted to display his power, and to impress upon Jesus that it would be in his best interest to cooperate with him—the Adversary of the church—instead of giving his life for the sins of the world.

## **OUR MIGHTY FOE**

Satan is the great deceiver and enemy of the human family, but especially to the Lord’s people who are being called during this present Gospel Age. He is a mighty foe and much more powerful and crafty than any one of us. Jesus also commanded him to depart from Peter, “He [Jesus] turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.” (Matt. 16:23) Luke recorded, “Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.” (Luke 22:3) The revelator has written that Satan is also called “the Devil,” and is otherwise known as the “great dragon” and that wily “old serpent.” (Rev. 12:9) He especially

targets the Lord's footstep followers, and is "the accuser of our brethren" "before our God day and night."—vs. 10

## **SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS**

In addition to Satan, the great enemy of the Lord's people and "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2), the Apostle Paul points to the agents of darkness—the hosts of powerful demons and wicked spirits—that oppose the narrow way of the consecrated New Creature in Christ Jesus. These unseen agents of the great Adversary exercise unholy influences, and also plot to ensnare and entrap the members of the body of Christ.

Paul thus admonishes us, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."—Eph. 6:11-13

## **CHASTENING NECESSARY**

One of the great principles that govern the calling, selection, and glorification of the faithful class of the Christ is that testing and chastening are the means by which the Lord's people will be shaped and fashioned for a place in Christ's kingdom. The Apostle Paul addressed this matter in his letter to the brethren at Corinth, saying, "Those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what

son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.” (Heb. 12:6-9, *NASB*) Yet, the consecrated child of God is promised all necessary help from our loving Heavenly Father, even a guardian angel to watch over each of his people. The psalmist wrote, “The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”—Ps. 34:7

### **THE BRIDE TESTED**

Paul wrote, “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” (II Cor. 4:6,7) Because the faithful followers of our Lord are still in the flesh, they must heed the apostle’s admonition. “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.”—vss. 8-10

Those who respond to the heavenly calling in Christ Jesus appreciate their special position and circumstances in the wonderful plan and purpose of God. The Apostle Paul speaks of the opposition that the faithful must endure for their testing as New Creatures in Christ, and relates it to the grand and ultimate purpose of the Heavenly Father. He said, “If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled,

and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church."—Col. 1:23,24

The apostle counted it all joy to suffer tribulations of all manner, knowing that these testings would work out the peaceable fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit of God in his character and life. From another standpoint, he relates his afflictions to that of sharing with our Lord in his suffering and as members of his body.

## **MANIFOLD TEMPTATIONS**

In his first epistle, the Apostle Peter brings our attention to the many temptations that surround us. "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." (I Pet. 1:6-9) Thus are we assured that the consecrated child of God who is walking in the narrow way of sacrifice will find themselves being severely tested for their faith.

Peter speaks of our temptations further in his epistle and says, "Beloved, think it not strange

concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified." (chap. 4:12-14) "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."—vs. 19

## **ENDURE ALL THINGS**

When writing to his beloved Timothy, the apostle provides a glimpse of his trials as a New Creature in Christ. "Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."—II Tim. 2:9-13

"Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—chap. 3:10-12

## **MADE SPECTACLES**

Paul spoke of his experiences as an apostle. “I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.”—I Cor. 4:9,10

The apostle then reiterated some of the ways we are being tested for a position in the future kingdom of the Christ. He said, “Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; 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 write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.”—vss. 11-16

## **FILLING UP THE AFFLICTIONS OF CHRIST**

The apostle was pointing out that our walk in newness of life is seen by others, even by the angels. When writing to the called-out brethren at Colosse, he also emphasized that the footstep followers of our Lord Jesus during this present Gospel Age are being privileged to share in the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus. He explained to them, “If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel,



which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." (Col. 1:23,24) Thus are we made spectacles as we walk in newness of life with our dear Lord Jesus.

Paul emphasized that we are to be 'grounded and settled' in Truth and righteousness. We must be rooted in the Truth of God's Word, and our convictions should enable us to be grounded to the point that we will not be swayed by the teachings and traditions of fallen mankind—"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."—Eph. 4:13-15

## **CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE**

When writing to the Hebrew brethren, the Apostle Paul reminded them of the great struggle in which we all grow in the discipline of the Lord. He said, "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds,

and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.”—Heb. 10:32-36

Throughout the approximately two thousand-year history of the present Gospel Age, the invitation to the heavenly calling has been received by individual followers of our Lord Jesus whose main purpose in their lives has been to make their calling and election sure. It has been a long and difficult journey, but we believe that the time is growing ever closer for the completion of the grand work that began with the wonderful ministry of our beloved Lord Jesus. Let us not become discouraged nor turn back, but go forward as we approach the fruition of all of our hopes and desires in the invitation that has been extended to each of us who are walking in the narrow way. ■

## 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 Frank Suraci, New Haven, CT—August 26, Age,

# Encouraging the Temple Builders

***“Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you.”***  
—*Haggai 2:4*

**THE DECREE OF CYRUS,** king of Persia, represented a great call to all the faithful of ancient Israel to leave Babylon, and return to Palestine and rebuild the Tem-

ple that had fallen down. Likewise, at the beginning of the harvest of this present Gospel Age there was a decree that went out to the faithful ones in mystical Babylon to come out of her—to rebuild the spiritual temple that had fallen down during the long period of the Dark Ages. This is referred to in Revelation 18:4,5,23, which reads, “I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee.”

Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, and Nehemiah were all prophets who lived at the same time, and their

work was in connection with the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem. The Temple and the city had been destroyed by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, nearly seventy years before and in keeping with God's punishments upon Israel for their unfaithfulness. The land itself was to lay idle during this same seventy-year period. The people of Israel were taken captive to Babylon, and there they developed a lifestyle that was quite comfortable. Apparently they were not oppressed, and so long as they obeyed the laws of Babylon they were able to prosper, both in numbers as well as temporally.

## **THE END OF THE SEVENTY YEARS**

At the end of the seventy years, the time had come for the desolation of Jerusalem to end, and under the direction of the prophets Ezra and Nehemiah, and the cooperation of King Cyrus of Persia, an edict went forth that the Israelites should return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city and the Temple. King Cyrus saw it as an opportunity to get the Jews out from under his direct responsibility as they were prospering more than his own people. These events are all recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

The Lord raised up Zerubbabel as a leader in Israel to perform this great task, through his appointment as governor of Judah by King Cyrus. The Israelites under Zerubbabel returned to Palestine and began the work of rebuilding. They worked diligently for a while, but then began to weary of the task. They had also begun to mingle with the other peoples of the area. Jewish men were marrying Gentile women, and they were living more or less among the Canaanites of the land. They began

spending a lot of time fixing up and beautifying their own houses that they dwelt in, leaving the work of the house of the LORD. Also, opposition to the rebuilding of the Temple began to grow, to the point that some of the other governors of the area formed a confederacy and wrote a letter to King Darius, urging him to stop the rebuilding work. These opposers remembered how that Temple represented the mighty power of Israel's kings that had so destroyed and conquered their peoples and kingdoms years before. For all these reasons, work on the Temple stopped for several years, with only the foundation having been completed.

About fifteen years after the initial work of rebuilding the Temple had begun, we find the setting for the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah. They were prophets who dwelt in Judah at Jerusalem, and their prime concern was to encourage the people under the rule of Zerubbabel, the governor, to complete the rebuilding of the Temple. In Zechariah 8:3,9, they received instructions from the LORD. "Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain. . . . Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built."

### **THESE EVENTS TYPICAL**

The question might be raised as to why the Lord dealt with Israel as he did, especially since the

rebuilt Temple itself was later destroyed when Israel fell under the Roman yoke at the time of the Maccabean rebellion. We believe this roughly hundred year period of Jewish history was to provide in a prophetic and typical way one of the outstanding pictures of the Gospel Age and the building of New Jerusalem and a spiritual temple, to become God's habitation. There are many scriptures that directly tie in that period of Jewish history with time and events as they have unfolded during this present age, and especially during the harvest of this age.

First, we understand that Israel as a nation was a type, or representation, of the church—spiritual Israel. During the time that Israel had kings, God dealt with her as his special people. They made a lot of mistakes, they had good kings and bad kings, but as long as God dealt with them they continued to worship God to some extent in the Temple that Solomon had built. Israel, however, became very unfaithful, going into various forms of idolatry, to such an extent that the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah warned the people that God was going to destroy them if they did not reform. They continued in their sins, though, and God permitted Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, to destroy Jerusalem and the Temple, and to haul all the vessels of the Temple, as well as the people, back to Babylon.

## **THE GOSPEL AGE TEMPLE**

This represents an important development in the history of the church of the Gospel Age. God dealt with the Early Church as his 'temple people' and the vessels of the Temple represent the doctrines

of truth, the doctrines of the Divine plan of the ages—God’s Word. Because of carelessness, and the sin and iniquity that came into the church after the apostles fell asleep, God permitted the temple structure—the organized church—to be taken captive by King Constantine of Rome, and he, like Nebuchadnezzar, set up his own temple, and he called it the Holy Roman Empire. The vessels of truth were brought in to this temple and, according to the Scriptures, were to be clothed in sackcloth until the harvest. “Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.”—II Chron. 36:7

Throughout the dark period of this present Gospel Age, there was a remnant of the true church existing as ‘captives’ in the Babylonish system. We remember Jesus, in his parable, said, let the wheat and the tares—the true church and the counterfeit church—“grow together until the harvest” at the end of the age. (Matt. 13:30) At the end of the age he said there was to be a separation and the true temple of God—the organization of the true church—would begin to be built, during troublous times. The faithful remnant down through the dark period of this age is well represented by the faithful remnant in Israel, Daniel, and the three Hebrew children during the long rule of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar in Babylon.

The burden of God’s Word to the prophets in Israel at that time was to encourage the people to build a Temple for the Lord at Jerusalem. The burden of God’s Word to his people during this present age is also to build the temple of God. Let us notice

some scriptures. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God.” (I Cor. 3:16) “Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Eph. 2:20-22) When this temple is completed beyond the veil, it will be opened in heaven for the blessing of the people. “The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament [covenant].”—Rev. 11:19

When Solomon’s Temple was dedicated, we read, “There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb.” (I Kings 8:9) Those tables of the Law Covenant represent the New Covenant that will bring blessings of life to all the people through the spiritual temple of God—our Lord and his glorified church.

## **THE TIME OF HARVEST**

When the seventy years of foretold desolation of Jerusalem was about to end, God raised up two prophets in Israel—Ezra and Nehemiah—who instructed the people about leaving Babylon and going down to Jerusalem and rebuilding the city and the Temple. Likewise, as the Gospel Age began to draw to a close the Lord’s people were instructed to leave Babylon, to ‘come out of her,’ and begin the work of harvest—to rebuild the temple of God that had fallen down. “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. . . . And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be



heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.”—Rev. 18:4,23

The time had come for the true wheat—who had the light of the candlestick—to separate from Babylon. The doctrines of Truth also had been hidden in the sackcloth of error throughout the age, and when the time of harvest came it was important for those vessels to be returned to the true temple of God. “In the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God. And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar [Zerubbabel], whom he had made governor; And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place.”—Ezra 5:13-15

There were many who began to see more clearly certain features of the Truth at the beginning of the harvest of this present Gospel Age, and a faithful servant was specially used by the Lord to bring these vessels of Truth out of the sackcloth and pollution of the mystical temple of Babylon. This servant laid them straight, brought them all into focus with the length and breadth of God’s character of love, justice, wisdom, and power—the beautiful ‘Divine plan of the ages.’

The decree by Cyrus, King of Persia, that the Temple and Jerusalem were to be rebuilt, was carefully

arranged by God beforehand. We read in Isaiah 44:27,28, "That saith to the deep, Be dry, [Euphrates River] and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." This was prophesied by Isaiah about two hundred years before Cyrus even lived—and the record of its fulfillment is in Ezra 1:1,2, when the decree went forth from Cyrus. This is a reference to the drying up of the Euphrates River, allowing the army of the Medes and Persians to walk into Babylon on the dry riverbed and overthrow Babylon in one night.

### **HAGGAI'S PROPHETIC TESTIMONY**

We previously noted that Haggai's prophecy dates from a period about fifteen years after the return of Israel from Babylonian captivity. The people had started off well the first few years and the foundation of the Temple had been laid. But it appears that they had become discouraged and lukewarm toward the work of completing the Temple, to the extent that very little work was being done on the Temple at all. "Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. . . . Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came

to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.”—Hag. 1:3-6,9-11

## **HARVEST SIFTINGS AND TESTINGS**

Considering this current harvest period, we note the enthusiasm and the sacrificial love that characterized the early work of the harvest. Surely the foundation work of the harvest church had been well prepared through the zeal of the brethren in those early years. Then, however, came a number of discouraging events that nearly brought to a halt the preparation of God’s spiritual temple. There came a gradual replacement of most all the important doctrines of Truth with so-called ‘new light.’ This new light destroyed the doctrine of the ransom; it relegated the doctrine of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus to a back burner; it even began to destroy the moral teachings of the Bible—high moral standards and developing a Christlike character no longer was considered essential to one’s spiritual life. Faith was replaced by works—the doctrine of fear was rampant. The doctrines of God’s grace and love were put into the background, and the doctrine of the Second Death was magnified and loomed up prominently

in the teachings of some. A great pall of fear and suspicion enveloped the Truth movement. Brethren were judging brethren, and it was accepted that anyone who resisted any of the edicts of the central authority were, as evil servants, consigned to the Second Death, as were most of the people throughout the world, who were judged as 'goats.'

In God's program for this harvest period of the Gospel Age, it was necessary for the hearts of all the professed people of God to be tested that he might see who are truly his. The test of love and faithfulness to the Lord was the issue at stake. Haggai 1:5 states, "Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways." The Hebrew word 'consider' here means 'set your heart on your ways' (*Marginal Translation*). During the harvest, indeed the hearts of the brethren were being tested and the Lord allowed a spiritual drought to rest over the land—the Truth movement.

## **A REMNANT STIRRED UP**

Going back to the prophecy of Haggai, we see that God did not forsake his people, but simply was giving them time to 'consider their ways.' Verse 2 of the second chapter indicates that only a residue of the people were stirred up sufficiently to return to the work of the Temple. The majority chose to remain in their own sealed houses. However, it was enough—this faithful remnant bound themselves together and completed the work and the Temple was finished. It took much longer than would seem necessary because so few had returned to the work—but it was completed.

Transferring this thought to this Gospel Age harvest—God had not forsaken his dear people as it may have seemed—but was giving them a chance to ‘consider their ways’—to set their hearts on their ways—and in due time the spirit of the Lord again began to direct his people, and there was a great revival in the land. The Lord was saying, “Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.” (Hag. 1:7,8) That revival may well be marked at the beginning by a group of brethren that began to meet in Pittsburgh in 1929, and that same year sponsored a convention in October. Interestingly enough, this convention was held in the old Bible House Chapel where the ministry of Truth had been carried on for so long a time in the early years of the present harvest.

These brethren had one concern—to return to the work of the temple, to begin once again to project the High Calling of God as the central theme of God’s message to his people—to return once again to a proper view of restitution for all—to begin once again the work of preparation of their hearts and minds as ‘living stones’ through the developing of a Christlike character in which love, not fear, would be the motivating force in their lives. Though it was only a small beginning—a remnant, or residue of faithful ones as Haggai 2:2 points out—it was the Lord’s work, and could not fail. The message to the brethren at that first convention in Pittsburgh was indeed the message of Haggai 2:4, “Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, . . . and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts.”

## **THE TEMPLE BUILDING WORK CONTINUES**

Many decades have passed since these events took place. Thankfully, the Lord's work has continued. The High Calling, the ransom, restitution hope for all, the work of character development—the proclaiming of all these important elements of our faith continues. The sowing of the seeds of Truth still goes on even today through the collective working together of the brethren in many ways, and as each ecclesia feels the direction of the Lord in their particular circumstances and opportunities.

The building up and nourishing of the spiritual life of the church is of paramount importance—the development of a Christlike character, in which love itself is the predominant influence. The entire commission of the church is outlined in Isaiah 61:1-3, where it is shown to include a ministry designed to reach and nourish Christians, as well as to give a message to the mourning ones of the world—and finally to “proclaim . . . the day of vengeance of our God.” Proclaiming the ‘day of vengeance’ comes under the hand of general witness work, being merely an up-to-date application of the Truth message to present world conditions. We are not commissioned to pronounce vengeance upon the world. We are not to smite the people. They are being smitten by the great Time of Trouble, and are mourning because of it. Our privilege is to explain the cause of their mourning, and thus to comfort them. We are to tell them about the silver lining beyond the trouble of our day—when the ‘desire of all nations’ shall come—when this temple class will be complete, beyond the veil, and the glory of the Lord shall fill this temple.

## **FINAL SHAKING AND THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS**

According to the Prophet Haggai, we are standing just before this great transition, when the winds of Armageddon will be unleashed to rid the earth of all sin and unrighteousness, and then the wonderful kingdom of Christ will be established throughout all the earth. Concerning this we read, “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Hag. 2:6,7) There will not be a corner of this world, no matter how remote, that will not be touched with the shaking of all things—the ecclesiastical ‘heavens, and the earth, and the sea and the dry land.’ To further emphasize how worldwide this shaking will be, he added, ‘I will shake all nations.’ This suggests that Armageddon will finally conclude in a state of total anarchy, ‘every one by the sword of his brother.’

This suffering and trouble will be permitted only so long as is necessary to accomplish God’s purpose in the earth—and he has promised to cut those days short, lest all flesh be destroyed. The Prophet Haggai tells us of the wonderful hope that awaits all mankind. The ‘desire of all nations’—to live in peace, in happiness, and in good health, will surely come when the glory of God fills his temple and the blessings begin to flow out to the people. The blessings of “this latter house,” this spiritual temple, will be greater than of the former temple—made with literal stones—and it surely will be able to accomplish God’s eternal purpose for man.—vs. 9

## LET US CONSIDER

Finally, the prophet seems to have a special and final word to the Lord's people, living at this particular time. "Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider it." (Hag. 2:18) Let us 'consider'—'set your heart upon'—the beautiful truths of God's plan that he gave to the temple builders when the foundation was laid at the beginning of the harvest. Let us never depart from those beautiful truths. May we remember the comforting message of the Lord to you and me, and all the dear consecrated of the Lord living at this particular time—our theme text Haggai 2:4. "Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you."

"Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."—Zech. 6:12-13 ■

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# Baptized Into Glory

*“We are made  
partakers of  
Christ, if we hold  
the beginning of  
our confidence  
stedfast unto the  
end.”*

*—Hebrews 3:14*

## **IN HIS SECOND EPISTLE,**

the Apostle Peter assures his brethren—the called and chosen of God during the present Gospel Age—that they have been furnished all things necessary to complete their earthly course unto

death and to attain the promised reward—the Divine nature—which is grand beyond human imagination. Of that wonderful promise, the apostle says, “His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”—II Peter 1:2-4

## **UNMERITED FAVOR**

To strengthen the resolve of those called to the prospect of immortality, the apostles repeatedly

referred to the limitless benevolence of God, a fundamental aspect of which is the spiritual body that the faithful disciples of Christ will receive when changed to the Divine nature. In his first epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul informs us that the body with which they enter the tomb will not be that with which they will be resurrected. Referring to their identity as spirit-begotten New Creatures in Christ, he says, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." (I Cor. 15:44) This speaks to all of the faithful New Creatures in Christ Jesus, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."—vs. 49

## **THE DIVINE IMAGE**

Paul magnifies the marvelous generosity of the loving Heavenly Father by stating plainly that at their resurrection the faithful followers of Christ will receive not merely a spiritual body, but a spiritual body that is the same as that of their resurrected Lord and Master—the Divine nature. He explained, "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3:20,21) The Apostle John confirms Paul's statement that they will be resurrected in the likeness of the Lord by saying, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—I John 3:2

The Apostle Paul tells his Colossian brethren that Christ Jesus is now of the same nature and appearance as his Heavenly Father—"Who [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature." (Col. 1:15) The statements of the Apostles John and Paul reveal the astonishing truth that Christ's faithful disciples will, at their resurrection, be of the same Divine nature and appearance as their Heavenly Father. Thus the grace of God and his unmerited favor is revealed to be infinite, and profound to a degree beyond the ability of the human mind to fathom. We read, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."—I Cor. 2:14-16

## **THE PATH OF SACRIFICE**

The Lord Jesus himself declares the Divine nature to be attainable only by those who are called by our loving Heavenly Father to receive it during this present Gospel Age. Jesus declared, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44) Those who are thus drawn during this period of time must, as the Apostle Peter admonishes us, tread the path of sacrifice that their Master trod. "This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your

faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”—I Pet. 2:19-21

The path which Christ walked furnished his disciples with an example which they were to follow. That path began with the presentation of himself to John the Baptist at the Jordan River for water immersion. Those who are called to follow the Lord’s footsteps during this present Gospel Age are to have in mind, even as the Lord did, that water immersion is symbolic of a grander and much more profound immersion into the will of God that has already occurred in the heart.

## **HEARTS FULLY IMMERSED**

Paul provides a rare insight into the Lord’s very thoughts as he presented himself to John the Baptist. The apostle says, “Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.” (Heb. 10:5-7) It is manifest that, as he presented himself to John for immersion, the Lord’s heart was fully consecrated, dedicated, and committed to full cooperation with the will of God. Thus, it is seen that the Lord’s water baptism represented that which had already transpired, the death of his own will, his complete immersion into the Father’s purposes, and his plans for the redemption of mankind.

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Paul's proclamation to the Hebrew brethren (Heb. 10:5-7) made clear that the Lord was aware that his full cooperation with the Divine will would eventually entail the literal death of his flesh, an awareness that was declared by Jesus himself when he said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—John 6:51

However, as the Lord's immersion symbolized his death to all things fleshly, so also his rising from the water represented his resurrection to newness of life in the Spirit by the power of God. This was divinely declared at Jordan and witnessed by John the Baptist—"Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he [John] saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him [Jesus]: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Matt. 3:16,17

## **PARTICIPATION IN THE LORD'S BAPTISM**

The Apostle Paul, when addressing his brethren in Rome, comments on Christ's baptism. He wrote, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we

shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” (Rom. 6:3-5) Having been immersed by John the Baptist, Jesus symbolically entered death when he was lowered into the waters of the Jordan River. When he was raised from the water he arose in symbol from the grave. Hence, his water baptism prefigured his literal death at Calvary as well as his subsequent resurrection to glory, honor, and immortality.

Those who would, during this present Gospel Age, follow the footsteps of Jesus must do more than follow him into the water. They must follow him also by the death of their respective wills and ambitions. They must follow the Lord even unto the death of their flesh if they would attain life. Reminding his brethren of the prospect before those who faithfully endure temptation even unto death, the Apostle James says, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” (James 1:12) This promise is stated by the revelator who wrote, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

## **DESCENDING DOVE**

As the Lord Jesus emerged from the water of the Jordan River, God’s acceptance of his dedication was signified by his Holy Spirit alighting in the figure of a dove seen and declared of John the Baptist: “John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. . . . He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit

descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.” (John 1:32, 33) Thus, water baptism was declared to be but a shadow of the true—the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Further, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was itself revealed to represent something far more profound than Divine acceptance of a disciple’s devotion. It is even as it was with Jesus when he arose from the waters of Jordan. That was a sign of the attainment of that most precious distinction—sonship with God.

## **DEAD AND RISEN**

The Apostle Paul declares that those who are baptized with the Holy Spirit are reckoned as both dead and alive in Christ. He says, “If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”—Rom. 6:8-11

To his Colossian brethren, the apostle explains that it is by their faith in Christ’s death and resurrection that they can be both dead and alive in Christ, “And in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and

the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions.”—Col. 2:11-13, *New American Standard Bible*

## **INDWELLING SPIRIT**

When it came time, Jesus’ disciples were likewise begotten of the Holy Spirit of God. “When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:1,4) The Apostle Paul exhorts his brethren to understand that, since Pentecost, they are seen of God to be no longer in the flesh but in the Spirit of Christ. The apostle says, “The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”—Rom. 8:7-9

Thus, the Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of God indwelling as the apostle taught the Romans, Galatians, and the Colossians alike. “If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Rom. 8:11) “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:24,25) “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as



ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.”—Col. 2:6,7

## **DIVINE EMBRACE**

The Apostle Paul confirms that those upon whom the Holy Spirit is bestowed during this present Gospel Age have been embraced as sons by Almighty God. To these he says, “Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. 8:12-17

The gift of the Holy Spirit is a sign of sonship with God as Paul says. “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 3:26) He exhorts all who receive the Holy Spirit to rest assured that they are among the elect, the chosen, of God, “Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit.”—I Thess. 1:4,5

## **INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS**

Paul impresses upon his brethren all that is signified by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in

light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

“For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.”—Col. 1:12-23

## **FURTHER EXHORTATION**

The Apostle Peter reminds his fellow disciples that their baptism of the Holy Spirit and the subsequent opening of the mysteries of salvation to their understanding is a marvelous privilege that

was denied to the ancient prophets, and even to the angels. Praising the prophets of old who faithfully preached a future salvation that they longed to understand Peter says, “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.”—I Pet. 1:10-12

It is only through the baptism of the Holy Spirit of God that these things of the Divine plan of the ages can be seen. They were previously sealed not only from the worldly wise, but by both the prophets and angels who sought to look into them. Only those who are fully consecrated unto death will understand and be truly thankful for having received of the wonderful love and grace of the Heavenly Father. ■

*“All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.*

—Psalm 145:10-12

# SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

## **K. Fernets**

San Luis Obispo, CA

October 17,18

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

## **M. J. Balko**

West Newton, PA October 3,4

## **E. Blicharz**

Atlanta, GA October 11

## **C. Chandler**

Orlando, FL October 24,25

## **O.B. Elbert**

Orlando, FL October 24,25

## **J. Freer**

West Newton, PA October 3,4

## **L. Griehs**

San Luis Obispo, CA

October 17,18

## **M. Nemesh**

West Newton, PA October 3,4

## **J. Parkinson**

San Luis Obispo, CA

October 17,18

## **D. Rice**

San Luis Obispo, CA

October 17,18

## **G. Tabac**

Detroit, MI October 18

## **G. Tivador**

West Newton, PA October 3,4

## **J. Trzeciak**

Orlando, FL October 24,25



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# 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.*

**PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, October 3,4**—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15012. Contact J. Krasonic, Sr., 1106 State Route 136, Belle Vernon, PA 15012. Phone: (724) 872-6215

**GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 10,11**—Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact T. Malinowski, 5609 Buttrick Avenue SE, Alto, MI 49302. Phone: (616) 868-0313

**SAN LUIS OBISPO CONVENTION, October 17,18**—Masonic Temple, 859 March Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Contact M. Allard. Phone: (805) 773-2962

**DETROIT/DETROIT METRO JOINT ECCLESIA MEETING, October 18**—Pleasant Ridge Community Center, 4 Ridge Road, Pleasant Ridge, MI 48069. Contact N. Zendler, 20 Devonshire, Pleasant Ridge, MI 48069. Phone: (248) 399-8843

**ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 24,25**—Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Drive (Corner of Hwy. 17-92), Sanford, FL. Contact: J. Kuenzli, 330 Jasmine Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 831-2098

**CHICAGO NEW YEAR'S CONVENTION, January 1-3**—Ramada Inn & Suites, 780 North Avenue, Glendale Heights, IL 60139. Phone: (630) 942-9500. Contact J. Farrell, 310 S. Lambert Road, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137. Phone: (630) 469-9511

**FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 6,7,8**—Clarion Hotel, 230 West State Road 436, Altamonte Springs, FL

32714. Phone: (407) 862-4455. Specify "Florida Bible Students." Deadline for special rates is February 24. Contact E. Blicharz, 320 Raven Rock Lane, Longwood, FL 32750. Phone: (407) 260-8083

### *Glory, My Home*

*'Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints,  
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints,  
To know at the banquet of blessing there's room,  
And feel in the presence of Jesus at home!*

*Home! home! sweet, sweet home!  
Prepare me, dear Saviour for glory, my home.*

*Sweet bonds that unite all the children of peace;  
And thrice precious Jesus, whose love cannot cease;  
Though having thy presence wherever I roam,  
I long to behold thee in glory, at home!*

*Home! home! sweet, sweet home!  
Prepare me, dear Saviour for glory, my home.*

*While here in the valley of conflict I stay,  
O! give me submission and strength as my day,  
In all my afflictions to thee would I come,  
Rejoicing in hope of my glorious home!*

*Home! home! sweet, sweet home!  
Prepare me, dear Saviour for glory, my home.*

*—Hymns of Dawn*

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*To us the Scriptures clearly teach:*

**THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD** —peculiarly “his workmanship;” that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world’s Redeemer and the chief “corner stone” of this temple, through which, when finished, God’s blessings shall come “to all people,” and they find access to him.—I Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

**THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING, AND POLISHING** of the consecrated believers in Christ’s atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these “living stones,” “elect and precious,” shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8

**THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD** lies in the fact that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God “tasted death for every man,” “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5,6

**THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH** is that she may be like her Lord, “see him as he is,” be a “partaker of the divine nature,” and share his glory as his joint-heir.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4

**THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH** is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God’s witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6, 20:6

**THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD** lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35