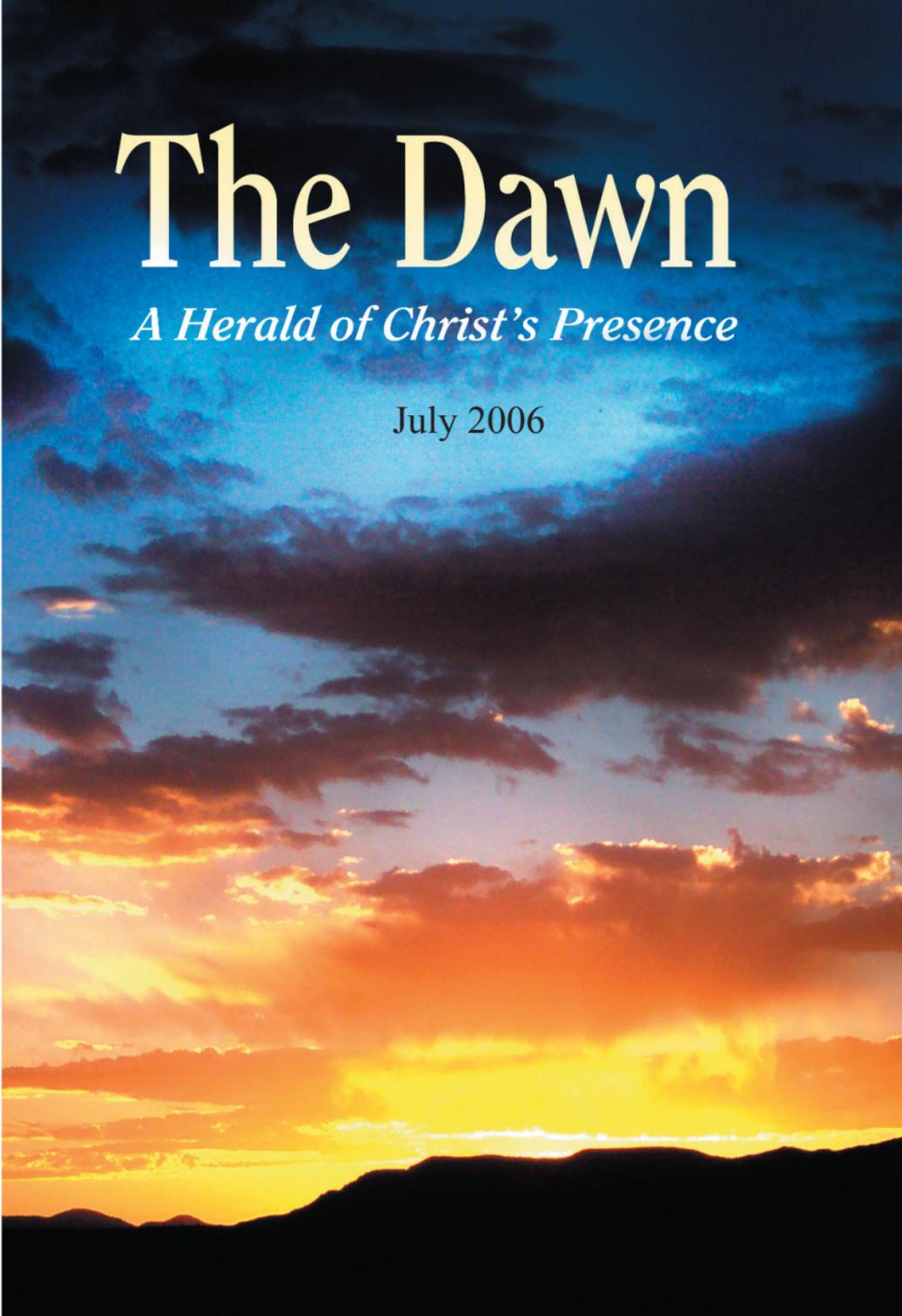


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Celebrating Independence

The Setting Free from Bondage

*“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?
—Isaiah 58:6*

IN THIS SCRIPTURE AND its context, Isaiah speaks in prophetic vision of the future Sabbath Day rest that is being prepared for the entire human family. When Christ’s kingdom is in control over the earth, it will be a time when all mankind will no longer be under the heavy burden of sin

and death. They will ultimately be liberated from their bondage and be set free from the oppressive yoke which now binds them.

The prophet provides a symbolic glimpse of the time when the poor groaning creation will come to realize the true meaning of the bread of life. “Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out [afflicted, *Marginal Translation*] to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not

thyself from thine own flesh?” (vs. 7) He thus describes the spirit that is associated with the morning of the new day. “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.”—vs.8

In this long-reaching prophecy, Isaiah continues by pointing forward to this most blessed time. “Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”—vss. 9-11

THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

The spirit of freedom from oppression marked the closing decades of the 18th century in a most remarkable and dramatic way. The American Revolution was one of the first of its kind, and became highly significant in relation with all other historical revolutions. It began in the year 1774 and lasted until 1783 when the thirteen original British colonies in North America were officially recognized as the newly formed United States of America. The Treaty of Paris, which was signed by representatives from both Great Britain and France on September 3, 1783, provided for a wide range of provisions in its landmark agreement.

The spirit that propelled American independence led to another revolutionary movement shortly afterward that took place in France, between the years 1789 and 1799. During that tremendous upheaval, France's former rule of absolute monarchy was replaced by republicanism and definitively brought an end to the Ancien Regime as it existed before 1789. The French Revolution became a major turning point in the history of continental Europe, as well as many other places in the world.

“GIVE ME LIBERTY OR GIVE ME DEATH”

Most Americans are familiar with the seven last words of Patrick Henry's address, which he delivered before the Virginia House of Burgesses on March 23, 1775. Henry had served as representative of the Virginia House since 1765. His words, “Give me liberty or give me death,” are mostly remembered as a slogan for independence from British colonial rule.

During this historical period, France was under absolute monarchy, while England was represented by a more moderate, limited monarchy. Although the British Crown had the power of final decision on important matters, the colonies were able to draw upon their limited claims to what was known at the time as their ‘traditional English rights.’ The Virginia House of Burgesses became the first popularly elected legislature in colonial North America, and Patrick Henry was its outstanding spokesman.

Henry had also been elected to the Continental Congress in 1774, and served as the Governor of Virginia between the years 1776 and 1778, being reelected to that office again in 1784. He also served

as a principal leader of the Virginia Militia during the struggle for independence. In his powerful position, he argued openly against British rule and was one of the early advocates of revolt. In his speech that day before the Virginia House of Burgesses, he concluded his address by saying, "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but for me, give me liberty or give me death."

A TIME OF UNREST

During the closing years of the 18th century, citizens of the thirteen American colonies became increasingly weary of unjust taxes and various social inequities that had been imposed upon them by a largely unsympathetic governing body in England. This rising tide of discontent and unrest in the colonies led eventually to open revolt against the policies of the powerful British Empire. The American patriots had gained enough support to act upon their longed-for rights, and ultimately declared their independence from Great Britain and formed the United States of America. The War of Independence, which began in 1775, was fought between Great Britain and the American revolutionaries, together with their powerful ally France, until 1783, at which time the British American colonies became officially recognized in Paris as the United States of America.

The Virginia colony took the initial step toward independence when they voted to set up a committee to represent the colonies under the first Continental Congress, which met in September 1774. They had drawn up a list of grievances against the British

Crown which became the first draft of a document that would formally separate the American colonies from British rule. Shortly afterward, George Washington took command of the Continental army and the eight-year War of Independence began.

In the meantime, a war of words was also being waged in the city of Philadelphia in the Pennsylvania colony. There, on July 2, 1776, the second Continental Congress met to present, and further debate, a second draft of the list of grievances against the Crown. John Hancock, president of the second Continental Congress, was the first one to sign the document. This historic document became known as the Declaration of Independence and included the signatures of fifty-six men representing the Continental Congress.

DECLARING INDEPENDENCE

The Declaration was adopted by the Continental Congress and was dated July 4, 1776. It included the meaning and purpose of the Congress as a unanimous declaration of the thirteen United States of America. The opening statement of the document defined the important basis of independence. It states, "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that

they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” The Declaration of Independence was read publicly before enthusiastic crowds of people for the following month.

At the personal request of George Washington and the Congressional Committee, Betsy Ross, who was an upholsterer, was asked to prepare a flag for the newly formed United States of America. She was given information for the design with the hope that it would promote national pride and unity. The flag, when completed, was adopted by Congress on June 14, 1777. A few years later, during a second war with Great Britain—the War of 1812—Francis Scott Key composed “The Star Spangled Banner” as the national anthem for the new country. It was inspired while Fort Mc Henry was under attack on September 13, 1814, during which time the patriots repelled the attack on Baltimore, Maryland, turning the tide of war.

THE REVOLT SPREADS

The revolt against the British Empire quickly spread far beyond the territory of British North America. In the years running up to the war, other nations had begun to quietly provide financial and other assistance to the American patriots. In keeping with the long-standing conflict that existed between France and England and their colonial interests, France officially entered the American Revolution against England in 1778. Spain joined the war against England in 1779, not as an ally of the American rebels, but of France. They, too, had interests abroad and did not want to stir up trouble among their

overseas colonies. In 1780, the Netherlands also joined the conflict but were soon overwhelmed by British naval superiority.

REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

Numerous causes spawned the impending revolution in France, and it would be difficult to point to any specific event that led up to the climax. One of the major causes was a growing economic crisis in France, resulting from years of financial waste and mismanagement. To some extent, the financial situation became desperate because of France's participation in the recent American struggle against England.

During this time, there was a rising middle class in the country that occupied a unique social and economic position. The familiar term 'bourgeoisie' is usually associated with the revolution, but the concept was extended to include the middle class in general, not only in France, but subsequently to other nations. They were a class of social climbers who sought in many ways to strengthen their own economic status. They fought for freedom from the aristocracy while at the same time striving to attain the privileges of that honored and privileged class.

There was growing discontent among the peasants and working classes. It was a time marked by increasing and unjust taxation. There was governmental interference in the private lives of French citizens, and it included the persecution of religious minorities. The people became more and more critical of the monarchy's lack of proper leadership. The government was seen as being inefficient, and the legal system was recognized as being antiquated

and generally outdated. The French monarchy had thus become the ultimate symbol of waste and corruption.

LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY

The revolutionist's slogan "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" was one of several that identified the spirit of the times, but the meaning and ultimate purpose of the revolt was soon lost in chaos. The situation spun out of control under Robespierre's inspired Reign of Terror. The very principles of the slogan became perverted. First, the Royalists were beheaded, and then the moderate Girondists were also murdered. No one was safe from the dreaded guillotine, whether members of the nobility, politicians, intellectuals, or commoners. Even Robespierre himself became a victim of the guillotine in July 1794.

The revolution totally dismantled the corrupt Ancien Regime that had existed in France prior to 1789. It transformed France from an absolute monarchy under King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette, that had monopolized total power over their subjects, to a republic of theoretically free and equal citizens. It was replaced, however, with a series of different governments who in turn lasted for only a short time. The years of turmoil had produced a Bill of Rights and a Constitution. It had also established legal equality among the people, representative democracy and a Code of Law.

BASTILLE DAY

In France, Bastille Day is celebrated each year on July 14th. The day commemorates the storming of the notorious Bastille prison, which marked the beginning of the revolution. The Bastille, therefore, was

a symbol of the absolute and arbitrary power possessed by King Louis XVI and the Ancien Regime. In recognition of the tricolor flag of France, it symbolized the Republic's three main ideals—Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity—for all French citizens. It marked the birth of the sovereign French nation, and the creation of a Republic in 1792.

The French national anthem, “La Marseillaise,” was composed by Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle in 1792. It was first played at a patriotic banquet at Marseilles and sung a short time later by the revolutionary forces as they marched on Paris. The Convention officially accepted ‘La Marseillaise’ as the national anthem of France in a decree passed on July 14, 1795.

EXPECTATIONS AND FAILURES

The founding fathers, who designed the Constitution of the United States of America, struggled to establish an equitable system of self-government, and strove diligently to elevate the quality of life for its citizens. It was a noble attempt in which American independence brought a new sense of freedom for its citizens, including the vast numbers of immigrants who arrived to seek a new and better life. The New World, however, had many problems of its own and life was not without difficulty. Selfishness and pride, which was inherited from our first parents Adam and Eve, continued to be a factor in this country, as well as elsewhere.

A short time later, the people of France had been set free from long-time abuse and privation suffered under the absolute power of the monarchy. The Reign of Terror that existed in France during the period of

the revolution could not have been foreseen. The revolution had degenerated into the most devastating period in French history. The establishment of a republic and a new law code provided a new sense of freedom, but it could not bring life and a freedom from the bondage of sin and death.

SETTING FREE FROM BONDAGE

The Scriptures provide us with a wonderful hope for the world and the prospect for true freedom. Luke records an important moment in the life of Jesus, when he went to the synagogue at Nazareth to assume his authoritative earthly ministry. “He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.” (Luke 4:16) Jesus, preaching in his hometown, rose and turned to the words of the Prophet Isaiah that had been prophesied concerning him. “There was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”—vss. 17-19; Isa. 61:1,2

JESUS' COMMISSION

Jesus had been especially anointed to carry forward the eternal purpose of God and his plan of reconciliation for the recovery of the human family from their slavery to sin and death. His commission included the delivery, recovery, and the setting

at liberty from the many aspects of the shackles of bondage that had been placed upon mankind. All of the conditions for his earthly ministry were fully met.

As God's Anointed, Jesus spent his earthly life preaching the message of freedom to the poor in spirit, those who were humble-minded and receptive to the wonderful words that came from his lips. The 'brokenhearted' represents those who had experienced much heartache in the difficulties and adversities of life, and responded favorably to his message. The preaching of deliverance to the 'captives' points to the whole world of mankind who are yet dead because of sin's bondage. His message to the 'blind' includes those who are blind mentally and morally, as well as being blind physically. The setting at liberty of the 'bruised' portrays the blessing that will come upon all the families of the earth when human imperfection and blemishes are ultimately taken away.

A SYMBOLIC VISION

The Prophet Isaiah, writing in symbolic language, provides a glimpse of the freedom that will be realized by the poor groaning creation when they are delivered from the bondage of sin. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." (Isa. 35:5) The 'eyes' and 'ears' represent not only the physical handicaps of sight and hearing that will be healed, but suggest also the broader reference to the mental seeing and hearing of Truth. He continues, "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." (vs. 6) The human family

will come to love and appreciate their being set free from the shackles of bondage to sin and death with rejoicing and praise to God.

Countless numbers of the human race continue to wait for their liberation from the condition of death, and Isaiah includes all of these in this wonderful prophecy. “The ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”—vs. 10

THE ULTIMATE CELEBRATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Many centuries after the Prophet Isaiah wrote his vision, John the revelator also pointed to the time when the bondage of sin, sickness, and death would be taken away. “I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”—Rev. 21:1- 5 ■

Living in Relationships

Key Verse: *“I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.”*
—*I Corinthians 7:7*

Selected Scripture:
I Corinthians 7:2-15

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS are a vital part of life, for they provide a barometer of our most important relationship of all, that being with the Heavenly Father and his Son, Christ Jesus. Indeed, God instilled in his human creation the desire to have relationships one with another—to have love, care, and concern for one another—because that represented the desire he had to have fellowship with his creation.

One of the most important relationships among mankind is the institution of marriage, and it is this that is the subject of the Apostle Paul’s words in today’s lesson. Paul realized, and saw firsthand, that as a result of man’s fall from perfection, his ability to have successful relationships, including marriage, had been severely damaged by the effects of sin. Even in the church, Paul saw the struggles that some had with a proper appreciation of marriage and, in general, relationships between men and women. He saw that the results, in some cases, were serious violations of morality, and impure behavior. The church at Corinth was such that it had some of these problems, and Paul saw it necessary to give them needed

counsel. Yet, far from simply picking on the Corinthian church and making them a spectacle, he was providing age-lasting lessons that all of the Lord's followers do well to follow, even in our day.

Paul states in this lesson that in marriage each man and woman should have only their own spouse, that husbands and wives should render "due benevolence" one to the other, and that they should neither depart from one another nor put each other away. (I Cor. 7:2,3,10,11) He takes the matter one step further in the Key Verse. After saying that he was now speaking his opinion, "not of commandment" (vs. 6), he expresses that it might be better that the Lord's people did not marry at all, and be 'even as I myself,' unmarried. (vs. 7) Paul meant by this statement that for those who had given themselves totally in consecration to the Lord, their betrothal was now to him, and marriage according to the flesh might be a hindrance to the carrying out of their consecration vows fully.

Paul, although here expressing that it may be best to be unmarried, nevertheless beautifully explains the symbol of marriage in his epistle to the Ephesians, where he likens it to our union with our heavenly bridegroom, Jesus. There he says, "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church."—Eph. 5:22-27,32 (*New American Standard Bible*) ■

To Eat, or Not to Eat

Key Verse: “*Meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.*”

—*I Corinthians 8:8,9*

Selected Scripture:
I Corinthians 8:1-13

heathen, that they were nothing in God’s sight. This realization also meant that there was no effect, positive or negative, to eating meat that had been offered to an idol.

In this lesson, Paul tells the newly enlightened brethren in Corinth that “as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. . . . We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.” (I Cor. 8:1,4) To further emphasize his point, he states that even Jesus, whom he preached, does not occupy the same position as God, saying, “There is but one God, the Father, of whom are

THE PEOPLE OF CORINTH,

a Gentile city in Greece, were steeped in superstition and the traditions revolving around the worship of heathen gods. So all-inclusive was their tendency in this direction that it was very common to have food offered to the gods for their blessing prior to eating. As the Gospel of Christ was preached, and its accompanying message of Truth spread throughout the Gentile world through Paul, the “apostle of the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:13), those accepting the message of Truth soon began to realize the true nature of the many idols and gods of the

all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” (vs. 6) Paul thus concludes that since idols represent absolutely nothing, having no power whatsoever, and that the gods they represent also are nothing, those who have this knowledge should not be concerned one way or another about eating meat that may have been offered to an idol. The meat is no better or worse, whether offered or not offered, to an idol.

Having come to this conclusion, however, Paul states concerning some, particularly those new in the faith, “There is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.” (vs. 7) In other words, some who had seen the Truth, and saw the falsehoods of the heathen gods when compared to the Gospel of the true and living God, were so repulsed by the thought of any association with idols that they wanted to have nothing at all to do with anything that might even have been remotely connected with such things. In their spiritual immaturity, though, they failed to appreciate the further Truth that an idol meant nothing, and any meat offered to an idol was not affected for good or bad. Yet Paul, in the Key Verse, counsels those who have a more complete understanding of their liberty to eat, that they “take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.”—vs. 9

Paul concludes this important lesson by telling us that in cases where our exercise of liberty in Christ might stumble others who are less mature, it would be a sin to offend their weak conscience, even stating that it would be considered a “sin against Christ.” (vs. 12) “Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.” (vs. 13) What an example of brotherly love is thus expressed in these words! ■

Called to Win

Key Verse: “*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.*”
—*I Corinthians 9:24*

Selected Scripture:
I Corinthians 9:24–10:13

will be a group of faithful followers of Christ who will gain the “crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

The *New American Standard* translation of the Key Verse clarifies the meaning of Paul’s words by stating the matter, “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.” In other words, it is not that only one will win the prize of the Christian race course, but it will be those who run as if there was only to be one winner—run ‘all out’—who will gain the ultimate victory. Nor are we to think of Paul’s words as implying, in any sense of the word, that we are to compete against our fellow brethren in this race. Indeed, in this race it is as we help and assist others along the way that we hasten our own progress toward an ultimate victory. All those who run in such a way will receive the

IN THE KEY VERSE OF THIS

lesson, the Apostle Paul likens the Christian life to a race course, and yet his words may be confusing at first glance. He says that in a race all run, but only one receives the prize, intimating by this that the racers are all in competition with each other to gain the prize held out to a single winner. This is true in the natural sense; however, the Scriptures are clear that there

prize of “glory and honour and immortality.”—Rom 2:7

Paul continues his lesson by pointing out to us that all who are running for the prize of the High Calling must exercise self-control in their life. They must also run with a sense of direction and purpose, not aimlessly. Additionally, they must keep their fleshly tendencies under control to the greatest extent possible. This is all necessary to be qualified as a winner of the race. He states the matter this way, “Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. . . Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.”—I Cor. 9:25-27, *NASB*

The nation of Israel, under God’s covenant arrangement during the Jewish Age, had previously been given the privilege of being his special people, the Law being their “schoolmaster” to bring them to Christ. (Gal. 3:24) Paul says they were “baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;” and were provided “spiritual meat” and “spiritual drink.” (I Cor. 10:2-4) However, due to their failure to follow God’s instructions, they were disqualified as a nation from the blessings they might have otherwise had. They desired after evil things, were idolaters, committed immoralities, tempted God, and murmured against the very God who had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt.

Paul concludes his lesson by calling our attention to the contrast between lawfully running the race, exemplified by Christ, and a failure to do so, as shown by Israel’s unfaithfulness. “These things occurred to them typically, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends [purpose] of the ages have come. Wherefore, let him who is thinking that he has stood, take care lest he fall.”—I Cor 10:11,12, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott* ■

All for One

Key Verse: “*The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*”
—*I Corinthians 12:7*

Selected Scripture:
I Corinthians 12:1-13

FOR ONE TO TRULY BE A follower of Jesus, it requires both recognition of singleness of purpose and mind, and also an appreciation of the importance of the individuality of each member of the body of Christ. “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.” (I Cor. 12:4-6) Our all-wise God has structured his plans and purposes concerning those who follow in the footsteps of his dear Son in such a way that the same Holy Spirit can guide and influence the life of each one so as to make use of their individual strengths and talents, and compensate for their individual weak areas. Because the Lord’s followers are all different in natural makeup, this unified, yet individual, working of God’s Spirit brings forth blessings to all. We are helped and encouraged by the strengths of others in those areas where we may be weak and, contrariwise, others may have weaknesses along lines that may be our strength. If we are thus activated, the body of Christ is mutually edified and grows together toward spiritual maturity.

The Key Verse, according to the *New American Standard Bible*, states, “To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” The common good,

or building up, of the church as a whole should always be at the forefront of our motives, as we are energized by the Holy Spirit. Paul, as he continues this lesson, lists some of the many manifestations of the Spirit that were working in his day in the individual body members—wisdom, knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, diverse tongues or languages, and interpretation of those languages. (I Cor. 12:7-10) All these workings, though manifest individually, are from “that one and the selfsame Spirit.”—I Cor. 12:11

One of the primary points of this lesson is to understand that every member of the body of Christ has positive things to contribute to its overall growth and development. Each one has abilities and talents that can be used for the benefit of the other members, and for the ultimate good of the whole. This means that each member is important. None should feel that they have nothing to contribute. Paul uses the illustration of the human body to emphasize his lesson. We know that the human body is made up of thousands, yes millions, of individual cells, tissue, muscles, bones, organs, and innumerable other parts, large and small. Not only are all these parts necessary to the proper functioning of the body, but they must also work together in unison and harmony. “As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” (vss. 12,13) It matters not, Paul says, what the background of each member is—whether they be a Jew, or Greek, bond or free—because in Christ all are begotten by the one Spirit, the power and influence of God, the same Spirit which descended upon his Son, Jesus at Jordan. Truly Jesus is our head, and we are his body. Together, we are ‘All for One.’ ■

Love Comes First

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

Selected Scripture:
I Corinthians 13

THE GODLIKE QUALITY OF love is chiefest of all character traits which the follower of Christ must develop. The Apostle Paul mentions it first when he lists the fruits of the Spirit as recorded in Galatians 5:22,23. The Apostle Peter, when enumerating the Christian graces to be added to our faith, mentions love as the final crowning grace to be added above and beyond all others. (II Pet. 1:5-7) Thus love is both first and last, encompassing all other Christian virtues—the beginning and the end of all character traits to be developed by the Lord’s people. In today’s lesson, Paul devotes an entire chapter to this most important subject.

Paul begins this lesson by immediately getting to the heart of love’s importance. He says that one might possess every other talent and gift—speaking in foreign tongues, prophecy, understanding mysteries, having all knowledge, displaying supreme faith, giving to the poor, even laying down our life in sacrifice for others—and yet if any of these are done without love, “it profiteth me nothing.” (I Cor. 13:1-3) Love must be the motivating force behind any good work we might do. This leaves out any thought of pride or self-glory, making it critical that we each examine our motives continually to be sure that it is only love which prompts the good words and deeds rendered in our Christian walk.

Paul lists in this lesson many actions, some which do, and others which do not result from the exercise of unselfish love. He says, “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” (I Cor. 13:4-7, *New International Version*) Here again we each need to examine our actions to see if they are such as are motivated by love, or if they are of the kind that love does not prompt. If we find vestiges of fallen tendencies like envy, boasting, selfishness, anger, or other like qualities being displayed in our actions, then we must quickly go to the Lord in prayer, asking both for forgiveness as well as for the needed assistance to overcome our evident lack of love.

One of the important things to remember about love is that it is never-ending. Many of the other gifts of the Spirit ended when the apostles fell asleep in death. Other things, such as prophecies and knowledge, will be eventually all fulfilled, and open for each to fully understand without searching. Love, however, will abide eternally—it “never faileth.” (I Cor. 13:8) For the endless ages of eternity, God’s intelligent creation will have the privilege of showing love to their Creator, his Son Jesus, and to one another. The exercise of love will never become passé, nor lose any of its positive force among any who gain eternal life, whether in heaven or on earth. Love will become the single most important governing force in Christ’s coming kingdom.

The Key Verse provides a fitting conclusion to this lesson, declaring that three key qualities—faith, hope, and charity [love]—are vital to the Christian’s success. Yet, even among these, the greatest is love. How true ring the words, “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”—I John 4:8 ■

The Treading Down of Jerusalem

“They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”
—*Luke 21:24*

JESUS' PROPHECY CONCERNING the treading down of Jerusalem was part of his answer to the disciples' question, “What shall be the sign of thy coming [Greek, *presence*], and of the end of the world [age]?” (Matt. 24:3) In this scripture is one of the prophetic signs that was used by Jesus in connection with the city of Jerusalem, and its being a symbol

of the national polity of Israel. Jerusalem was the capital city of Israel, and would, therefore, properly represent the whole nation, even as national capitals do today.

Toward the close of our Lord's earthly ministry, he said to the religious rulers of Israel, and through

them to the rest of the nation, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matt. 23:37,38) It was not the literal city of Jerusalem that had killed the prophets, but it was the religious leaders of Israel who represented the nation, and were, therefore, the ones who were responsible. Jesus spoke in this same representative sense in his prophecy concerning Jerusalem being ‘trodden down’ by the Gentiles ‘until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.’

GENTILE POWERS

Jesus’ expression, trodden down, is therefore a reference to the fact that Israel at the time of his First Advent was not a free, but a subject, nation, and had been for hundreds of years. The nation lost its national independence in 606 B.C. when its last king, Zedekiah, was overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar, and the people taken captive to Babylon. Seventy years after this, under a decree issued by King Cyrus of the Medo-Persian Empire, the people were permitted to return to their own land, although still subject to Gentile rule and authority.

Later, the Medo-Persian Empire fell before the rising power of the Greeks; and the Grecian Empire, in turn, came under the domination of the Romans, while Israel continued to be a subject people to each of these Gentile powers. During the time of Jesus’ earthly ministry, the Jews were being trodden down by Rome. In his prophecy, Jesus took note of this,

and foretold that this situation would continue until the end of this present Gospel Age when the times of the Gentiles would be fulfilled.

COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

Through his servant Moses, God had entered into covenant relationship with Israel in which he promised to protect and bless the nation so long as they remained faithful to him and his word. “If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them.” (Lev. 26:3) God reminded his people of the blessings of his special relationship with them. “I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.”—vss. 12,13

The people were also warned by God of the disciplinary punishments that would come upon them if they were disobedient. In the event that they did not respect their favored relationship with God, and continued in their wayward course, a more drastic and long-lasting punishment was prophesied. Moses records, “If ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague [fever], that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and

ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.”—vss. 14-18

PROPHETIC TIME

This prophecy was stated with a degree of finality which makes it apparent that the ‘seven times’ was to be a more lasting and final punishment upon the nation of Israel, and that would come upon them because of their sins and disobedience. It was to this condition of heart that the Prophet Ezekiel referred when he said to Israel’s last king, Zedekiah, “Thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.”—Ezek. 21:25-27

To understand the significance of this prophecy, it must be understood that Israel’s kings reigned as the representatives of God. Referring to the Divine rulership of the Jewish nation through him and his successors, David said in his prayer to God, “Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.” (I Chron. 29:11) This arrangement was typical, and foreshadowed the future Messianic kingdom which will be established

in the hands of Christ, the rightful king over the earth.

It was this typical kingdom that came to an end with the overthrow of Zedekiah. It there ceased to function. It was overthrown until the antitypical kingdom should take its place as Ezekiel stated. This is a prophetic reference to Christ. It was with Zedekiah's overthrow that Israel's long and final period of punishment began, and from this historical point the prophetic seven times began to count—that long period of time during which Jerusalem would be trodden down by Gentile nations.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

It was Nebuchadnezzar and his armies that overthrew Israel's last king, Zedekiah, and took the people captive to Babylon. Among these captives was Daniel who, while serving in the Babylonian government, became one of God's outstanding holy prophets. He was especially used by God to focus attention on the great development which occurred in the Divine plan when King Zedekiah of Israel was overthrown. In the Lord's providence, this development is brought to light in connection with a dream given to Nebuchadnezzar.

The record of this is found in Daniel, chapter two. In the account, we read that King Nebuchadnezzar had a strange dream that he was unable to remember when he awoke. He had been frightened by it, and sought the help of the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to help him recall his unusual dream. He also demanded that they provide him with an interpretation of the dream, which they acknowledged they were unable to do. When it was

learned that they could give him no help, it was then arranged that Daniel should be brought in to give him a possible interpretation of his dream.

DANIEL'S INTERPRETATION

With the Lord's help, Daniel was able to relate the king's dream to him, together with its interpretation. This was the dream in which Nebuchadnezzar saw a humanlike image having a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, trunk and thighs of brass, and legs of iron. The feet and toes of this image were made of iron and clay. In his dream, the king saw a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which smote the image on its feet. Then the image fell, was ground to powder and blown away by the wind. The stone which smote the image then grew until it became a great mountain that filled the whole earth.

In his interpretation of the dream, Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."—Dan. 2:37,38

FOUR WORLD EMPIRES

Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, as given to him by God, reveals remarkable truths concerning God's plan of the ages. It indicates that, beginning at that time with King Nebuchadnezzar, whatever authority God chose to exercise in the affairs of men would be through Gentile rulers rather than the typical kingdom of Israel,

which Nebuchadnezzar himself had overthrown. Daniel had explained (vss. 32,33) that Babylon—‘the head of gold’ in the image—would have three successors as represented by the breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, and the legs of iron with feet part iron and part clay. These are identified historically as initially the Babylonian Empire, followed by Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. It was in the days of the Roman Empire that Paul wrote, “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained [ordered, *Marginal Translation*] of God.”—Rom. 13:1

We do not conclude from Paul’s words that God blessed the rulerships of these successive world empires, or that he sanctioned everything that they did. Throughout the centuries since, God has permitted them to rule and to maintain a semblance of law and order in the part of the world in which they governed. Gentile nations had existed in the earth from the dawn of history. Powerful among these were Egypt, Assyria, Syria, and Babylon. Under Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon had become supreme, conquering the last island of resistance, which was Israel. The Medes and Persians later began to threaten Babylon, and finally overthrew them. In time, they were also overthrown by Greece, and then finally by Rome.

The image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream represented Gentile powers that were given rule over Israel, and Gentile nations from that time until our own day at the end of this present Gospel Age. In the symbology of the king’s image, as Daniel reveals in his interpretation, the God of heaven gave him a kingdom. Then he explained to Nebuchadnezzar that

he was represented by the head of gold. (Dan.2:38) This was a new development in that God's typical kingdom Israel was overthrown, and that dominion had been given to a Gentile king. This marked the beginning of the Gentile Times in the overall purpose and plan of God.

THE HEAD OF GOLD

With Israel's exodus from Egypt, no Gentile ruler had for long been permitted to oppress this chosen people of God. Pharaoh and his hosts were destroyed in the Red Sea, and many other victories had been won by the Israelites over various Gentile rulers and armies. For brief periods, God had permitted Gentile nations to oppress his people as chastisement; but when they repented, and called to their God for help, they were subsequently delivered. Gentile nations no doubt realized the dangers that could be involved if they contemplated attacking Israel. But now the king of Babylon had overthrown Israel's ruler and taken the people captive. Instead of being severely punished for his actions, Israel's God had said through his Prophet Daniel that the God of heaven had given him a kingdom, and that he, Nebuchadnezzar, was represented as the head of gold in the strange image that he saw in his dream.

Not long after this commission, Nebuchadnezzar began to show his pride and, in an effort to magnify his power, he is reported as having said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Dan. 4:30) For this show of pride the Lord temporarily removed the kingdom from King Nebuchadnezzar. The record continues, "While the word was in the (Continued on page 35)

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(Continued from page 31) king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." (vss. 31,32) Nebuchadnezzar's beastly characteristics for seven years portray the nature of Gentile rulership under which the people of Israel would be subjected during the many centuries of history that would follow this initial proclamation in the days of the Prophet Daniel.

SANITY RETURNED

When the king had been properly humbled, and after the seven years of his insanity were over, reason returned to him, and he extolled the God of heaven. He said, "At the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation." (vs. 34) Furthermore, he said, "At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me."—vs. 36

The Prophet Daniel had become highly placed in the government of Babylon, and when it was overthrown he maintained his exalted position under the conquering Medo-Persian rulers. Under these

circumstances, it was probable that Cyrus and his successors would be impressed with the fact that Israel's God was in some manner overruling in their affairs. As evidence of this, we note the scriptural account as recorded by Ezra, "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled (see Jeremiah 29:1-10), the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah."—Ezra 1:1,2

SUCCESSIVE RULERSHIP

How true, then, was Daniel's marvelous prophecy concerning Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar. In the interpretation of his dream, Daniel made clear to him, "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." (Dan. 2:39) The scriptural record does not provide many details of the several centuries of history that led up to the birth of Jesus. It was during that time, however, that the Greeks gained power and overthrew the Medo-Persian Empire. Afterward came the powerful Roman Empire which overtook Greece, and under whose rulership Israel was subject during Jesus earthly ministry.

The symbology that characterizes Nebuchadnezzar's image did not end with the legs of iron; for Daniel's prophecy indicates that there would also be feet and toes of iron mixed with clay. This points to an eventual weakening and dividing of the Roman

Empire, which we know to be historically true. The idea of Divine rulership through the Roman Empire would continue throughout the various divisions of Rome. We should expect that this conception of government would, with the passing of centuries, become grossly distorted. It was this ideology that was once so much hailed in Europe as the so-called “Divine right of kings” in fulfillment of the prophecy.—Dan. 4:17

Thus we are given the succession of Gentile rule pictured by gold (Babylon), the silver (Medo-Persia), the brass (Greece) and the iron (Rome). The clay that was mixed with iron represented the Holy Roman Empire. The intent is that the same fact would apply to all these; namely, that the God of heaven would give each one of them a kingdom. Each, in turn, helped carry out the inevitable treading down of Jerusalem which was foretold in our featured text, Luke 21:24.

ENDING OF THE GENTILE TIMES

Gentile rule had its beginning in the days of Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C., according to Ezekiel’s prophecy noted earlier. (Ezek. 21:25-27) Although Jerusalem was rebuilt under Cyrus after the seventy years of captivity in Babylon, Israel never again had a king to rule over them. They, as a people, were subject successively to the Persians, Grecians, and Romans. The beginning of Cyrus’ reign is substantiated by scripture (II Chron. 36:21-23), as well as by secular history, to be 536 B.C. Seventy years before that time, when Israel had been taken captive by Babylon would, therefore, have been 606 B.C., marking the beginning of the Gentile Times. A symbolic year, as used in the Scriptures, is calculated on the basis of the lunar year, or twelve months of

thirty days each, which would be 360 days. (Ezek. 4:4-6) Seven times 360 days equals 2,520 days. In the case of prophetic time, 2,520 years, beginning in 606 B.C., ended in A.D. 1914.

After World War I, major historical events took place in the Holy Land that pertained to the Jewish people, and began to indicate that the Times of the Gentiles had expired, as prophesied so long ago. Turkish rule over the land of Palestine ended with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, during the closing years of World War I, in 1917. At the conclusion of the war, the Balfour Declaration made provision for a Jewish National Home in Palestine. The League of Nations gave mandate to Great Britain in 1922, which placed the Land of Palestine under British political control. Turkey renounced all claims over their territory in the Holy Land by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.

As a result of these and other events, there was an increasing interest by the Jewish people to emigrate to the land of their forefathers. During the intervening years between World Wars I and II, there was also increasing opposition to this incursion upon the land that Arab people had previously considered to be their own. During the Second World War, the Jewish people suffered at the hands of Nazi Germany and, soon after the conclusion of the war, the people of the nation of Israel were recognized by the United Nations in 1948. Since that time, the level of hostility and violence between the Arab and Israeli people has increased dramatically. We continue to watch with interest the fast-moving events that are transpiring in connection with God's plan of reconciliation for the people of Israel, and to all the families of the earth. ■

Casting Out Fear

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”

—I John 4:18

IN MARK’S GOSPEL, HE recounts a day when a large crowd gathered around our Lord Jesus as he was teaching on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. The multitude was eager to hear his words, and Jesus had to take to a boat where, just offshore, he continued to address the people until the evening of the day.

Mark provides a wonderful narrative of that very touching scene. “The same day, when the even was come, he [Jesus] saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so

fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”—Mark 4:35-41

The circumstance in Galilee demonstrated the vast difference between mature and immature faith. Jesus exhibited total faith and confidence in his Father to protect and preserve him in the midst of what appeared to be a desperate, possibly fatal, circumstance. The disciples on the other hand, failed to demonstrate the same degree of confidence in their Master and his concern for them.

The circumstance at Galilee was used to impart a vital lesson, yet one might ask if a loving Savior could not have instilled that lesson by means less terrifying? It is the psalmist who best answers that question by stating, in Psalm 107, a most obvious fact. He declares that all who sail upon the sea must expect occasional storms. He speaks of those storms as though they are created by God, but it is more accurate to say they are permitted by God for instructive purposes. Their intensity is precisely calibrated to reveal to the New Creature many wonders that could not otherwise be revealed.

The psalmist depicts those who are subject to stormy experiences while upon the sea. “They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end. Then

they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.”—Ps. 107:23-30

IN THE SHIP

This psalm characterizes the experiences that all New Creatures in Christ must endure while in the world. They, and their experiences, are portrayed as analogous to mariners who go down to the ‘sea in ships’ to do business in ‘great waters.’ The unbelieving world constitutes the great waters spoken of more familiarly in the modern idiom as the sea of humanity. Christ Jesus is the ship. Those who are in the ‘ship’ of Christ Jesus during the Gospel Age are the Lord’s people who sail upon that symbolic sea. The business of those in the ship of Christ is the business of proclaiming and defending the Truth of God—his righteous principles and precepts—under all circumstances of general opposition from an unbelieving world. While conducting their righteous business in that ship on the great waters, the child of God must be prepared to encounter deep currents and resistant forces as unseen and destructive as the wind.

The Apostle Paul reminds us, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [*Marginal Translation*] in high places.”—Eph. 6:12

The psalmist indicates that only those who ‘go down to the sea in ships’ are privileged to ‘see the

works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.' Only those who are under sail, and driving toward their 'desired haven,' will experience the wonder of the deep things of God, many of which can be revealed in their fullness only by extreme circumstances while in his service.—I Cor. 2:10

RISING AND FALLING

The stormy experiences of life were also seen by the psalmist. He says, 'They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths.' The Lord's spiritual mariners are sometimes carried so high by experiences that they seem almost carried to heavens height, but then they may plunge into a trough of the deep. While in that trough their soul is melted because of the trouble. The buffeting and the pounding make the child of God 'stagger' and 'reel to and fro.' In their extremity, dazed and bruised, they wonder if they are able to stay aboard the ship of Christ. As the strength of the storms reveals the true weakness of the mariners, they often feel they might be swept overboard. They have been brought to 'their wit's end [all their wisdom is swallowed up, *Marginal Translation*].'

The Christian can never calm the storm by his own wits. Though the immediate ferocity of the storm might diminish, it is usually only temporary. It will never become a lasting calm, and the wind will never totally subside to a sailing breeze. The waters will never be truly quieted because deep below the surface they will remain troubled, the more easily stirred when the wind rises once again. If the one who is in the ship of Christ persists in trusting in his own strength and wisdom, one day

a storm will arise that will sweep him overboard into the sea where, exhausted and confused, both he and his wisdom will be swallowed up.

INCREASING FAITH

The Scriptures assure us that when we go down to the great waters, the Lord is ever present with us. He is prepared to help us avoid disaster and he is ever eager to help us maintain a safe and true course toward our destination. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.”—Ps. 46:1-3

The psalmist declares that the spiritual mariners who would avoid being swallowed up by the sea should ‘cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.’ That is what the Lord’s disciples did when on the Sea of Galilee. They did the right thing, but for the wrong reason. They cried unto the Lord in their distress, but their cry was born of terror and doubt about his ability and willingness to save them out of their distress. The psalmist emphasizes that all spiritual mariners of mature faith will cry unto the Lord while in the very midst of their distresses, not from doubt and terror, but with thanksgiving and praise for the certain knowledge that he will, in fact, preserve them.

He does not say that the Lord will not allow further distresses, or that all troubles vanish and the course of the mariner will become smooth sailing ever after. The distresses noted by the psalmist are

often the means by which the New Creature in Christ becomes more fully formed, and develops more fruits of the Spirit. When those in Christ cry unto the Lord in their trouble, they do not implore the Lord to make the trouble vanish solely for their personal benefit. They do not seek to be guided around the storms to attain a life of ease. They cry that by those experiences they may be made more nearly like their blessed Master, and more refined as gold from the fire. They become more mature in the faith, and more nearly ready to praise him for their promised providential care.

IN FULL CONFIDENCE

When those who go down to the great waters cease attempting to preserve themselves by their own wit and wisdom, and when they cry unto the Lord in full confidence that he will hear and respond, true peace comes to them. 'He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.' A stillness settles over the child of God, not because the storm itself is removed, but because his fear of the storm is removed. He has been brought to the realization that the very storms he is permitted to encounter are the truest indication that he is sailing in the proper course. He reaches the inescapable conclusion that a course without the storms would be a sure indication that he was not sailing in the proper direction. His perception of the storm has changed entirely. No longer does he fear being engulfed by the waves. He has come to understand that every experience is in the hands of our loving God and that his progress is toward mature faith in him. He has determined to rely upon the ship to carry him

through. 'Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.' Thankful for being delivered from the stormy experiences, he is convinced of his Heavenly Father's ability to guide and protect him under all conditions while upon the great waters, and that he will arrive at his desired haven.

The desired haven is the destination sought by every New Creature who is walking in "newness of life" with the Lord. Paul explains, "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." (Rom. 6:4) This is the reason we have undertaken the voyage, that we may reach our destination with mature faith and character. To make that journey we must go down to the sea. A successful voyage is not determined by conditions, but by our faith and the casting out of fear. That significant truth was conveyed by our Lord to his disciples that day at Galilee.

OTHER LITTLE SHIPS

Mark records another small detail in connection with the great event that took place that day at Galilee. He writes, 'The same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.' The other little ships, and those who were riding in them, may represent those who at times witness the stormy experiences of the consecrated. As the consecrated are tossed to and fro on their personal or collective

stormy seas, others are often affected by those storms. When God makes the storm a calm for his consecrated child, it no doubt has a powerful effect on the bystanders who may have been witnesses to what had taken place.

The Apostle Paul introduced this thought in his second epistle to the church at Corinth. He cautions his brethren in Christ not to seek respite from their distresses merely for personal ease, but for the beneficial effect it will have on those who witness God's tender mercy exercised on behalf of his children who cry unto him in full faith, believing he will surely hear. Paul writes, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation."—II Cor.1:3-7

The cries of the New Creature in Christ are more often cries of thanksgiving and praise to God, whether he is at peace or in the midst of distresses. He has learned that these are the means by which, in due time, he will be brought unto the desired haven. The spiritual mariner, the New Creature in Christ Jesus, may cry out of his trouble for personal relief,

but trusts the sanctifying effect of God's providence over him, and that his response will have on those in the other little ships nearby.

What a blessing it is to realize the nature of God's protecting hand over us that may often be manifest to others. The apostle brings this thought to our attention when 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 gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used."—Heb. 10:32,33

There is no fear with those who have cast out fear. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." (Heb. 13:5,6) Let us cast out fear, because perfect love has no fear. ■

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exodus 33:14

The Lord is ever present with his people. He is always thinking of us, looking out for our interests, guarding us in danger, providing for us in temporal and spiritual things, reading our hearts, marking every impulse of loving devotion to him, shaping the influences around us for our discipline and refining, and hearkening to our faintest call for aid or sympathy or fellowship with him.

—Exceeding Great and Precious Promises

The Everlasting Testimony

*“There was a man
in the land of Uz,
whose name was
Job; and that man
was perfect and
upright, and one
that feared God,
and eschewed evil.”*

—*Job 1:1*

THROUGHOUT ITS HISTO-
ry mankind has doubted the
necessity for reverencing God
and avoiding evil. Mankind
doubts the character of a
creator who demands of his
creation reverence and the
avoidance of evil, then allows
those who heed his demand

to suffer for their obedience.

Many have cursed God and openly embraced evil while living long untroubled lives surrounded by friends and family in majestic splendor, after which, full of years, they died peacefully. Others have revered God with their every breath while carefully avoiding even the appearance of evil, yet these have been persistently reviled and persecuted. Many have died shortened lives alone in misery. Unable to explain how a just God could tolerate such injustice, the world doubts his character. In due time, blessed assurance will replace that doubt. Even now, the preparatory work goes on.

Since the First Advent of Christ Jesus, individuals have been drawn by God as members of his church. That selection continues until now. These have been invited, chosen, and enlisted in the cause of righteousness, the mission of which is vast and eternal in its ramifications. (John 6:44) The mission is the eradication of doubt concerning the character of God, introduced by Lucifer. When that work is completed, reverent trust, security, and everlasting peace will reside in every heart that once harbored doubt, dread, and fears about God. In due time, all Creation will understand why Lucifer was allowed to openly question the character of God. All will then celebrate God's wisdom in allowing it.

LUCIFER'S AMBITION

God's character was brought into question as the result of Lucifer's ambition and pride. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."—Isa. 14:12-14

"Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee

as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.”—Ezek. 28:14-17

Nothing had ever existed that opposed the will and purpose of God. These two references recount the origin and growth of sin in Lucifer’s heart. The following is the account of his intent to sow it in the hearts of others.

GOD INSULTED

“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance has increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.”

(Job 1:6-12) Lucifer is here called ‘Satan,’ which means accuser.

Satan used this formal gathering of the various sons of God to further his agenda. Appearing to attack the hypocrisy of superficial worship, Satan suggested that Job, whom God held up as an example of humble virtue, was a hypocrite. To expose that hypocrisy, Lucifer proposed that God remove the many blessings he had bestowed upon Job. Satan’s claim was that Job’s pretended devotion to God would vanish if his blessings were to vanish; that Job would curse God to his face.

The innocent are often accused by the guilty of the very crimes which the guilty are capable of committing. It was just so on this occasion. Satan himself was the hypocrite. In the guise of attacking hypocrisy, he intentionally insulted God. In the most public way, Satan very cleverly insinuated that God’s character alone could not inspire genuine devotion. That insult was not directly responded to for centuries. During that time, doubt about God’s character grew and deepened. In due time, however, there came a Divine response.

GOD RESPONDS

In due time, a momentous occasion took place which Satan could never have foreseen—the advent on earth of the only begotten Son of God in the flesh. (Gal. 4:4) No one had known the Creator longer than his Son, “the firstborn of every creature.” (Col. 1:15,16) He was present at the creation of everything—by whom and for whom all things were created. (Heb. 1:2; Rev. 3:14) No one had communed longer, or more closely, with God than

the Son as the Logos, the Word. (John 1:1,2, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*) He knew the Creator's character better than any other could have, or ever will. He was certainly present at the gathering of the sons of God when his Father's character was first brought into question by Satan. As a joyful offering to his God and Father, the Son volunteered to participate in a transaction that would have eternal repercussions as the final and universal refutation of Satan's accusations. "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."—Isa. 6:8

The Son entered the world quietly as a babe named Jesus. He grew to manhood of no particular reputation until age 30. After presenting himself and being immersed in the river Jordan at that age, he began to proclaim the wisdom, justice, love and power of his Heavenly Father. He was hated and scorned for it. The very traits that Satan had long before brought so cunningly into question were the very things that Jesus proclaimed formed the basis of his Father's glorious character. As Satan's challenge had been public, so the Divine response to it is even now witnessed by heaven and earth—"for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." (I Cor 4:9) Christ Jesus and those who follow him even unto suffering and death, in defense of God's holy name, are a source of wonder to men and angels.

IMPOSSIBLE DEVOTION

Jesus proclaimed the love, the infinite mercy, of his Father; his eagerness to provide all things perfect and beneficial for his Creation. Jesus was

hated for his message. The more he was hated for the Father's sake, the more he loved the Father. Satan had claimed such genuine devotion was impossible. The focus of heaven and earth was, therefore, upon the moment. Their perception of God would be determined for eternity by any degree of reservation shown by the Son. In adversity, he continued to proclaim the beauty, the depth of loveliness, and the infinite richness of the character of God. The Son's devotion to his Father was infinite. Christ Jesus counted his own life as nothing compared to the joy of defending the Father of life.

Reviled, mocked, spat upon, stripped of his clothing and mercilessly beaten, Jesus endured all, even unto the indescribable torment of the cross, for his Father's holy name. This established the eternal, unassailable fact that God's character is so luminous with love, so deep with compassion for and commitment to his Creation, that the very knowledge of his character could elicit selfless and limitless devotion even at the human level, the lowest intelligent estate. Jesus thereby "condemned sin in the flesh."—Rom. 8:3

A FATAL BLOW

This constituted a fatal blow to Satan, the accuser. His doom is sealed. Many subsequent blows have since fallen upon Satan. Following the example of Christ Jesus, many of God's people have eagerly availed themselves of the Gospel Age privilege of proclaiming their own undying devotion to their wonderful Creator. At the conclusion of the age, one hundred and forty-four thousand individuals will have added their voices to that of the Son in a

rising chorus of loving praise for God's holy character, the praises of most coming at the cost of privation, blood and tears. (Rev. 14:1) When finished, those praises to God will have driven Satan and his minions to the ground. "I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee." (Ezek. 28:17) Though the church has preached throughout the present Gospel Age the Truth of what was accomplished on behalf of God by Christ's life and death while on earth, much of mankind remains either unaware, or skeptical. When the Lord has fully completed his answer to Satan's insult, there will be nothing left of doubt in the heart of any intelligent creature, whether it be spiritual or earthly.

UNDESERVED FAVOR

There is to be an everlasting reminder of the unimaginable goodness, generosity and power of God. There is to be a lasting testimony to his wisdom, a devoted eternal presence continually and eagerly testifying to the incomparable splendor of his character. In the ages to come, the Father will refer to that as indisputable evidence of the infinite transforming power of his love. That living testimony is to be the church.

The Apostle Paul, writing to his brethren in Ephesus, also addresses those of like faith here at the end of this Gospel Age, "God is so rich in mercy; he loved us so much that even though we were spiritually dead and doomed by our sins, he gave us back our lives again when he raised Christ from the dead. Only by his undeserved favor have we ever been saved and lifted up from the grave into glory along

with Christ, where we sit with him in the heavenly realms . . . all because of what Christ Jesus did. Now God can always point to us as examples of how very rich his kindness is, as shown in all he has done for us through Jesus Christ.”—Eph. 2:4-7, *The Living Bible*

TRANSFORMED FOR SERVICE

The church is to be that testimony to our Father’s loving generosity. It is to be an everlasting example composed of individuals who, during this present Gospel Age, preached the very Truth of what our Lord Christ Jesus accomplished by his devotion while on earth. To these called-out ones, the truth of God’s character has been as a fire shut up in their bones; a fire that compelled them to express the wonder of that knowledge regardless of the consequences to themselves. (Jer. 20:9) They pray earnestly that they be transformed to serve whatever purpose he desires to his greater glory and honor, whatever the cost to them. These chosen and faithful ones have experienced the beauty, goodness, and majesty of God’s character in advance of the world. In thanksgiving, these submit, “Now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.”—Isa. 64:8

With his dear Son, the church is to become an eternal living testimony to God’s wonderful character. What amazing grace is poured upon those invited to such a prospect. What unspeakable honor it will be for those chosen and faithful of the Gospel Age to have a place in that eternal shrine to God’s wisdom, justice, love, and power. Let those who have been thus called and chosen be faithful. Let them

continue to preach the goodness of God, to bury self at all cost in total submission to him, to wash one another's feet in the spirit of his pure love, to bear each other's burdens, and to build each other up in the most holy faith. Finally, while eagerly looking forward to their place in that future monument, the completed church, let those now so favored determine to bind themselves ever closer in love as a present testimony to its marvelous power. ■

Love's Alchemy

*Love is the filling from one's own
Another's cup.
Love is a daily laying down
And taking up;
A choosing of the stony path
Through each new day
That other feet may tread with ease
A smoother way.
Love is not blind, but looks abroad
Through other eyes;
And asks not "Must I give?" but "May
I sacrifice?"
Love hides its grief, that other hearts
And lips may sing;
And burdened, walks, that other lives
May, buoyant, wing.
Brother, hast thou a love like this
Within thy soul?
'Twill change thy name to saint when thou
Dost reach thy goal.*

—*Poems of Dawn*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

QUESTION: As a child, I heard my parents discuss the doctrine of predestination. My father, a Presbyterian, believed it; my mother, a Methodist, did not. I have often wondered which one was right. Today, no one seems to know much about this doctrine. In your opinion, does the Bible teach predestination?

ANSWER: We understand the doctrine of predestination is taught in the Scriptures. This doctrine has been the cause of a great deal of controversy among religionists but, if we observe the law of order in “rightly dividing the word of truth” on this subject, we should have no difficulty in learning what the Bible says concerning it.—II Tim. 2:15

That which is known as the ‘Calvinistic view’ of predestination we believe to be unscriptural. It holds that “God is all wise, that he knows the end from the beginning, and all his purposes will be accomplished, that there are only a very few being saved compared with the many who are not; therefore, he never could have intended to save more than a few. These few individuals are saved, it is held, because God has elected, or predestinated, them for heaven; all others have been predestinated to be lost, and go to a hell of eternal torment, for ‘Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.’” (Acts 15:18) We disagree with this view because justice, mercy, and love are lacking in this conception of our Heavenly Father’s plan. It seems inconceivable that a God of love could have a plan wherein the majority is condemned to torment even before they are born.

The foreknowledge of God cannot be denied. (Acts 2:23; Eph. 1:4,5; I Pet. 1:2) His plan of salvation was known to him "before the foundation of the world." In this plan, the election, or choice, of the church had been predetermined on God's part, not as an unconditional election of certain individuals, but rather, he predestinated that there would be a church class, that some would be given special favor and, through becoming copies of his Son, would be accepted into the spiritual family of God as joint-heirs with their Lord. (Rom. 8:16,17,29,30) The class, or family, was predestinated, not necessarily the individuals.

Those who will be of that favored class must exercise their own volition as free moral agents in choosing the way of salvation. They, as individuals, must consecrate themselves to God and do his will, and Peter assures us in these words, "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. . . . Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:4,10,11

"Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29) This text emphasizes that the foreknowledge of God predestinated a class to be 'conformed to the image of his Son.' The election, or selection, of the individuals who will constitute this class has been

in progress during the Gospel Age, for they are the true disciples who are willing to deny themselves, and take up their cross, and follow him.—Matt. 16:24

We believe many have made the mistake of believing that all the nonelect will be condemned to eternal torment. This is not so! The election of the church during this age is for a purpose. They will live and reign with Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20:6), during which time Christ's kingdom will cause God's will to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. (Luke 11:2) The grace of God will then extend freely to the nonelect of this age, and his plan to bless all the families of the earth will be accomplished (Gen. 22:18); for Christ died for all, not merely for a few. How marvelous and beautiful the Bible message! How unreasonable Dark Age theology! ■

“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth.”—Psalm 60:4

We are to tell forth this glorious message. We are to tell it in our actions, in our words, by the printed page, by pictorial presentations to the eye, and in every way that the Lord shall give us the opportunity. If we refrain from telling the glad tidings, the result will be that the fire of God's Holy Spirit will become extinguished within us. The possession of the truth—God's message—brings with it great responsibility. . . . Shall we show to our God our deep appreciation of his lovingkindness in granting us the knowledge of his wonderful message of salvation?

—Songs in the Night, July 4

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

CHURCH CLEANING

Dear Dawn: While doing some church cleaning, I came across a pamphlet, *Why God Permits Evil*. I've tried to answer this question for many of my friends, but always feel like I've done an inadequate job of it. This pamphlet looks pretty old; however, if you still have one or two I would love to get them.

Any help you can give me in obtaining this information would be greatly appreciated.

Through the love of Christ—OR

RADIO AFRICA

Dear Dawn: I am a middle-aged housewife living in this city [Kwekwe]. I have listened to your programme on Radio Africa Two. Your message is so inspiring that it spiritually uplifts the listener.

I wish I could have reprints or cassette tapes of

your message. If you could offer a Bible, it will be of great help to me. Yours faithfully—ZIMBABWE

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

Dear Dawn: My mother passed away a few months ago. I was cleaning out my mother's household items a few days ago, and I stumbled on a book.

I sat down to glance through it, and could not put it down. I began reading parts of it to my sister and then to my friend over the telephone. We all love it.

Can we order three sets of *Studies in the Scriptures*, as is in the back of the book? Thank you—OH

WONDERFUL NEWS

Dear Frank & Ernest: May I greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May I thank you for the wonderful news you

have shared with us here in South Africa and other parts of the world. Yours in Christ—SOUTH AFRICA

ENJOYS WEBSITE

Dear Dawn: I really enjoy your site [www.dawn-bible.com]! It helps me with my Sunday School lesson each week. May God continue to bless you.—WEBSITE

BURDEN LIFTED

Dear Dawn: I enjoy your talks and it has opened my mind to the false doctrine [a burning hell] that I believed for so long.

A burden was lifted when I found out *The Truth about Hell*, and that God is not a God who will destroy and torture someone forever. Thank you—WEBSITE

HOPE

Dear Frank & Ernest: I was riding in my car the other day, listening to the radio. You came on the air, and I enjoyed what

you said. Please send me a copy of this message. It is called the *Hope* booklet.

Thank you so much for this booklet. God bless you—FL

PREACHING THE GOOD NEWS

Dear Friends: I received the case of *Hope* booklets—Wow!—and am very thankful that the Lord has enabled you to supply them, and me to distribute them.

I recently took a new job cleaning a 400-apartment complex. I have begun leaving large amounts of *Hope* booklets everywhere in the building, and they are disappearing as fast as I can leave them!

Thank you for enabling those of us without public speaking talent to nevertheless preach the Good News. My prayer is that the work will continue, both for me and for the Dawn. In Him—NY

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.

J. Freer		B. Keith	
Prince Albert, SK	July 1,2	Prince Albert, SK	July 1,2
North Battleford, SK	3	North Battleford, SK	3
Edmonton, AB	4	Edmonton, AB	4
Red Deer, AB	5	Red Deer, AB	5
Calgary, AB	6	Calgary, AB	6
Vernon, BC	7-9	Vernon, BC	7-9

The speakers listed below, in cooperation with the Dawn, are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

C. Chandler		B. Jakubowski	
Vernon, BC	July 7-9	Prince Albert, SK	July 1,2
		Vernon, BC	7-9
D. Christiansen		F. Nemesh	
Vernon, BC	July 7-9	Vernon, BC	July 7-9
O. B. Elbert		A. Oystryk	
Vernon, BC	July 7-9	Vernon, BC	July 7-9
L. Griehs		B. Sweeney	
Vernon, BC	July 7-9	Vernon, BC	July 7-9

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Ivy M. Prabhaker, Bangalore, INDIA—April 23.
Age 64

Brother Miquel A. Ramirez, Espeleta, ARGENTINA—
April 30. Age, 78

Brother Ernie Tucker, Boise, ID—May 4. Age, 83

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JULY 6—“What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.”—Psalm 25:12 (Z. '99-13 Hymn 275A)

JULY 13—“Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness.”—II Corinthians 11:14,15 (Z. '99-62 Hymn 91)

JULY 20—“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman . . . every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”—John 15:1,2 (Z. '99-109 Hymn 95)

JULY 27—“We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.”—Daniel 6:5 (Z. '99-167 Hymn 177)

CONVENTIONS

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

PRINCE ALBERT-SASKATOON CONVENTION, July 1,2,3—Siwak Farm. Contact B. Siwak. Phone: (306) 763-3170

OKANAGAN VALLEY CONVENTION, July 7,8,9—Schubert Centre, 3505 - 30th Avenue, Vernon, BC. Contact B. Blencowe, #113, 901 Middleton Way, Vernon, BC V1B 3Z1. Phone: (250) 545-0780

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 15-20—University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown, PA. Contact M. Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Phone: (310) 454-5248.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 6-11—Nowy Sacz, Poland. (International Youth Seminar follows in Baia Mare, Romania, August 14-18.) Contact T. Machacek. Phone: (219) 662-8107

ALBERTA, CANADA CONVENTION, August 11,12,13—Stanford Inn, 4707 50th Street, Red Deer, AB. Phone: (887) 347-5551. Contact A. Baumgarten. Phone: (403) 356-0004

MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, August 19,20—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact D. Moore, 2176 South 71st Street, West Allis, WI 53219. Phone: (414) 541-8937

JACKSON LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 2,3—FaHaLo Camp and Conference Center, 3000 Mt. Hope Road, Grass Lake, MI 49240. Contact R. Lumley, 2531 Ashton Road, Jackson, MI 49203. Phone: (517) 782-7252

NEW YORK LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 2,3—Wellesley Inn, Two Bridges Road & Exit 52, Route 80, Fairfield, NJ 07006. Contact D. Szybinski, 250 West 102 Street, 1A, New York, NY 10025. Phone: (212) 998-2095

SEATTLE LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 2,3,4—Seabeck Christian Conference Center, 15395 Seabeck Hwy NW, Seabeck, WA 98380. Phone: (360) 830-5010. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (253) 939-9838

HUNTSVILLE CONVENTION, September 8,9,10—Holiday Inn Select, 401 Williams Avenue, AL 35801. Phone: (256) 533-1400. Contact P. Mosley, 1006 Mill Race Circle, Guntersville, AL 35976. Phone: (256) 582-3640

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 28,29—Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Drive (corner of Hwy. 17-92), Sanford, FL. Contact H. Jeuck, 587 Queens Mirror Circle, Casselberry FL 32707. Phone: (407) 699-8303

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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