

The Dawn

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As the World Turns

WITH WHAT RAPIDITY the complexion of the world has changed in recent months and years. As short a time as five years ago, who would have then predicted the complete collapse of the totalitarian government in the Soviet Union? In Europe the integration of the economic and social structure of what was then a strongly divided Western and Eastern Europe, was only a theory that few men expected would ever become a reality. The possibility of the State of Israel and her enemy neighbors meeting around a conference table seemed quite remote at that time. And a mutual arms reduction between the two great nuclear powers was talked about, but agreement and implementation seemed very improbable.

All of these changes coming in rapid succession have seemed like giant steps taken toward a more peaceful world, and have given a temporary sense of relief from the ever-present, nagging fear of war and possible nuclear holocaust.

Is the world beginning to solve its problems? Many political and economic experts say, No—they are simply trading one set of problems for another. Some assert that the instability of the emerging new framework of the Eastern world governments, along with the growing impatience of their underfed and disgruntled populace is producing fertile ground for much revolutionary turmoil in the days ahead. The impact of these same events upon the Western world has created so much uncertainty and confusion in the financial and economic markets that growing recession has hit hard, unemployment is soaring, and pessimism has rapidly overtaken the optimistic outlook of only a few months ago. No one is happy. Lack of peace continues, and the world, as ever, awaits the future with apprehension and uncertainty, a victim of circumstances.

When countries are as they exist today; when the plight of the world is beyond the ability of man to control; when the wisdom of the wise men has perished; when the knowledge of the prudent men of the earth is ineffective; when the diplomats and statesmen of earth do not know what to do; when, as today, "men's hearts [are] failing them for fear" of many things (Luke 21:26), some people instinctively turn to God to find the answer, to find the remedy for these conditions, and to learn how to solve their problems.

*. . . Are the giant steps the world
has recently taken, really leading
to lasting world peace? . . .*

We know that something is terribly wrong. We want to know what will make it right. We know that the earth is capable of giving an abundance of blessings to all who live upon it, but we also know that millions of earth's children are not receiving these blessings which the earth so lavishly supplies. Instinctively we know that it is not the earth which is at fault, but rather the people who live on the earth. Selfishness obstructs human accord. It prevents the peoples of earth from enjoying the good things of life.

We all agree that the world has many perplexing problems. The question is, will we be able to solve these problems? We have the problem of the nuclear bomb, of international finance, of foreign policy. We have many social and religious problems, including racial discrimination. But these are not merely the problems of one country. They are the problems of 'civilization'.

Today we often hear the question asked, "Will civilization endure, or will it commit suicide with the uncontrolled fury of atomic warfare?" Some confuse current civilization with Christianity, and therefore accuse Christianity of failure. That accusation should be challenged. Christianity has not failed, for Christianity has not yet been tried on a national or

international scale. Our present civilization with its many varieties of denominational faith, and our present social and political structures are on trial. In many respects they have already been weighed in the balances and found wanting. But these do not represent Christianity, and let us not confuse one with the other.

Human selfishness has long stood in the way, barring the human race from solving apparently simple problems. In spite of the fact that there is an abundance of food in certain parts of the earth, famine and starvation are stalking abroad on a tremendous scale, with millions having looked to the coming winter with fear and dread. All people should enjoy the blessings of industry, but they do not; mass unemployment seems to be a recurrent disease.

The planet has given forth tons of gold and silver, but we do not know what to do with it in the stabilizing of international currency. While one country needs what another country has, and one country produces what another needs, we have as yet been unable to organize a satisfactory and fair method of exchange. And, also, do not forget that while the majority of all peoples hate war and bloodshed, and desire to live in peace and security, we have never yet solved the problem of preventing increasingly destructive wars.

History has well recorded the rise and fall of mighty nations. Among these have been Assyria, Babylonia, Phoenicia, Persia, Grecia, and Rome. These nations were great in their day. Only a fool would say their intellect was inferior to our own. In some respects they were superior to us. But they are gone, as far as world power is concerned. Once flourishing nations, they have been destroyed. The blighting effect of war, hate, and selfishness entered their sinews and sapped their strength. And this is the same disease that is now eating at the vitals of what men call our civilization.

While history tells us of the rise and fall of nations, the Bible tells of the rise and the fall of 'worlds'. It tells us of the "world that was," which came to an end at the time of the Flood. It tells us of the "present evil world," which is now

being destroyed as if by fire, and it tells of the "world to come" and what we may expect in this prophetic new world. (Gal. 1:4; Luke 18:30) The apostle, in II Peter 3:6, declares, "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." Everyone knows that it was not the earth which was destroyed by water, for we know that we are still living on the same earth that existed before the Flood.

The 'present evil world' is being destroyed by symbolic fire, but before the discussion of this destruction by fire, let us notice the words of John the Baptist as recorded in Luke 3:16, 17: "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." Here is a prophecy that has been fulfilled. It is a prophecy concerning Israel, and as prophesied by John the Baptist, our Lord came and he did baptize with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. And he also baptized with 'fire'.

Sometimes people pray for the baptism of fire. How little they know for what they pray. Those who were baptized with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost were few in number. They were 'Israelites indeed', who recognized in Jesus their Lord and Savior. The remainder of the Jewish nation knew not 'the day of their visitation'. The Master, just prior to his triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem, speaking prophetically of the whole nation of Israel said, "Your house is left unto you desolate," and so it was indeed. (Matt. 23:38) They were burned as chaff in the time of fiery trouble which marked the end of the Jewish Age. That was their baptism of fire. It was a fire of destruction and of desolation.

Various steps were taken to hinder the complete desolation of the nation of Israel, but all efforts failed. Their house had been left unto them desolate. The baptism of fire that destroyed and desolated the nation of Israel is a prophecy which has already been fulfilled and therefore easy to com-

prehend as the key to the 'fire' of our day. It was not a literal fire then, but a symbolic one. It is not literal fire now.

The majority of Christian people have been taught to believe in the literal burning and destruction of the earth. This teaching is false, according to Ecclesiastes 1:4, where we find the simple statement, "The earth abideth forever." This plain scriptural assurance is in harmony with the Word of God through the Prophet Isaiah (Isa. 45:18), when God said that he had created the earth, not in vain, but he had formed it "to be inhabited." Some might find it difficult to believe that the earth itself is not to be destroyed because of the statement of the apostle in II Peter 3: 7, "The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men." While they believe that this earth will be destroyed by fire, they do not believe that God's throne will be destroyed, and yet the Bible says that heaven is God's throne. This text declares that the heavens as well as the earth will be dissolved with fervent heat.

There must be a more logical explanation of this prophecy than that which has been given us by ecclesiasticism. We believe that this is an account of the current time of trouble through which this present evil world is passing. As the Flood ended the old world, and as the 'fire' of trouble ended Jewish national existence, so, since 1914, our civilization has been receiving its 'baptism of fire'. The fire is symbolic of trouble and destruction. The heavens represent the present religious world, and these powers of heaven are being shaken. The earth represents our social, political, and financial systems, and the elements referred to in this prophecy, symbolize the various factors that constitute capital and labor, the rich and the poor, the bureaucratic and industrial phases of our life. The works that shall be burned up are the hate and war, the graft and greed, the selfishness, and jealous ruthlessness which is manifest on every hand.

Zephaniah 1:14-18 declares, "The great Day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the Day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the Day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land."

As we see the troubles in the earth constantly gaining momentum, we realize the dread possibilities which are confronting the world; but as students of God's Word we see a silver lining to this dark cloud of trouble. The Apostle Peter, after speaking of the destruction of those things which are out of harmony with God, gives us these words of encouragement, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (II Peter 3:13) Here we are directed to a promise which was given long years before by God through the Prophet Isaiah and recorded in Isaiah 65:17-25:

"Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long

enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain."

This is the promise that Peter referred to. This is the prophecy that stirred his mind with regard to the blessings which would come to the earth with the establishment of the new order. We may also look forward in anticipation to the time when the human race will be able to enjoy the fruits of their labor in the midst of happy Edenic conditions, wherein righteousness will dwell. There are many prophecies in God's Word which assure us that when this new order of righteousness is established in the earth, it will not be a temporary thing that will exist for a few years until another 'flood' or until another 'baptism of fiery trouble'; but rather, as declared by the Prophet Micah: "We will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever."—Mic. 4: 5

Possibly one of the most easily understood prophecies concerning this present troublous period and the assurance that after this has completed its work, conditions of millennial peace will be established, is found in Zephaniah 3:8, 9: "Wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For **then** [after that] will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent."

It is difficult now to discern a 'pure language', a pure Gospel message, because of the different creeds and theories that men have created to their own confusion. Today there are many voices, many languages, all claiming to be the

message of God. In this babble of conflicting philosophies it is difficult indeed to discern the voice of God, but after the fire of trouble has done its work, and after the present ecclesiastical heavens have lost their power, and after the present earth with its social, political, and financial elements has been brought to a condition of impotency, the mist and fog of prejudice and superstition will be lifted from the minds of men, and the pure message of truth concerning the glories of the coming kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will shine forth as a pure language to tell of the lengths and breadths, and the heights and depths of the love of God in the answer to our prayer that God's will may be done as fully in earth as it is in heaven.

*. . Christ's kingdom is the ONLY
solution to ALL earth's problems. .*

However, as we talk of this new day and the blessings it shall contain, particularly in the assurance that the reign of Christ will be able to solve every problem on the earth, the thought will present itself to many, "Why was this kingdom not established long ago, seeing that more than 1,900 years have passed into history since our Lord finished his earthly ministry? What has God been doing concerning this glorious kingdom from the time of Calvary until the present?"

There are many scriptures which assure us that God has not been inactive during this long interlude; but rather, beginning at Pentecost and continuing from then until the present time, the purpose of God has been to choose the "bride" of Christ. (Rev. 21:2,9; 22:17) All together these will be but a "little flock" as compared to the billions of Adam's children, but they have been called "the salt of the earth." (Luke 12:32; Matt. 5:13) They have been the ones who have heard and accepted the invitation of the Master when he declared, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. 16:24)

These loyal, faithful Christians have endeavored to follow in the footsteps of their Master with the assurance that as children of the LORD, they are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. 8:17) They are spoken of as walking in the straight and narrow way which leadeth unto life, and to them the promise applies which has encouraged saints throughout past centuries, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I *will* give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10

It is this 'little flock' who will live and reign with Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20:4), assisting in the establishment of the new world wherein righteousness will dwell. The world's problems will be solved through the application of the principles upon which Christ's kingdom will be built. There shall be none to hurt nor to offend in all that kingdom, because, "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever."—Isa. 9: 7

Righteousness will at last be man's heritage in a new world order under the rulership of Jesus Christ, "the Prince of Peace." It is to establish his kingdom, that our Lord returns at his Second Advent. The first world ended with the destruction in the Flood of all those out of harmony with God. Noah and his house were protected and saved. The second world is ending with the destruction of those elements which are out of harmony with the principles of God. His church, through divine providence, is saved by being exalted to reign with him. The third world will see justice laid to the line and "righteousness to the plummet." It will see the power of truth "sweep away the refuge of lies."—Isa. 28:17

Those who are willfully disobedient to righteousness under those favorable conditions will also be swept to destruction. The human race, having learned well the exceeding sinfulness of sin through the experiences of six thousand years of the reign of sin, will rejoice in the opportunity to obey willingly the new rule of righteousness which will fulfill the prophecy

of Revelation 21:15. We read, "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." ☐

1992 Memorial Supper Date

THE PROPER TIME for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after 6:00 p.m., on Thursday, April 16th.

We have a complete Memorial Service available for isolated brethren, or for any who care to have it, on both audio and video cassette. The audio cassette service can be purchased for \$3.00, or is available on loan free of charge from:

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INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

LESSON FOR JANUARY 5

A Song of Worship

KEY VERSE: *"My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."*—Psalm 84:2

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Psalm 84:1-12

THE WORSHIP OF God by the nation of Israel often included the use of songs. The Book of Psalms is a collection of such songs of worship written by David, and others. They not only expressed reverence for God in words, but were accompanied by beautiful music. The 84th Psalm was dedicated 'to the chief musician upon the gittith', and was a psalm for the Sons of Korah. The gittith was adopted by Israel to make music for their psalms, and was manufactured in Gath.

The sons of Korah were descended from Levi through Kohath, and, together with other Levites, were given the service of song. After the genealogy of these is outlined in I Chronicles 6:31, 32, we read: "These are they whom David

set over the service of song in the house of the LORD, after that the Ark had rest. And they ministered before the dwelling place of the Tabernacle of the Congregation with singing, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem: and then they waited on their office according to their order."

The hymns we sing today are intended to express our devotion and love for God. Our key text relates the deep desire which every true child of God has to assemble with others of like precious faith for worship. The psalm begins with the words: "How amiable [lovely] are thy tabernacles [dwelling places] O LORD [Jehovah] of Hosts." We are reminded of the Apostle Paul's beautiful illustration, "Ye are the tem-

ple of the living God." (II Cor. 6:16) Thus, every loyal, consecrated heart is a dwelling place of God, and the church of Christ which is being selected during the Gospel Age, will be the great temple of the future age.

We are not surprised, therefore, that there should be a longing on the part of every true child of God to seek the manifestation of divine favor by assembling with others who evidence this same devotion to God. Psalm 84:3 gives an illustration of the joy of worshiping together, as found in nature. The **Lesser Translation** renders this with clarity. We read: "Even as the sparrow hath found a house and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, (so have I found) thy altars, O LORD of hosts, my king, my God."

We are reminded of the Brazen Altar in the Court of the ancient Jewish Tabernacle, and the great sacrifice which Jesus made thereon, pictured by the bullock. This elicits from us praise for God. And we recall the Golden Altar in the Holy,

where we are also pictured as having a share with Jesus in our joint sacrifice.

There are many beautiful sentiments expressed in this psalm. One of the better known is in verse 10: "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand [elsewhere]. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." How true we know it to be, that it is better to have a humble service in God's house, than a prominent service in this present evil world.

The last two verses of this psalm were the inspiration for a beautiful hymn, "**The LORD, A Sun and Shield.**" The first verse reads:

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

—**Hymns of Dawn, #273**

This, indeed, is a song of worship which expresses the heartfelt sentiments of the faithful children of God. □

LESSON FOR JANUARY 12

A Song of Gratitude

KEY VERSE: *"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."*—Psalm 103:8

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Psalm 103:1-17

THIS PSALM IS a song of gratitude composed by David. All of us have much for which to be thankful. What a wonderful way singing is, for us to express our appreciation to God for his goodness! Note the deep feeling of gratitude that David had as he wrote: "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." (vs. 1) Every morning that we awake from a night's rest we should remember, "My earliest thought I desire shall be, What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me." (*Morning Resolve*) To be aware of God's benefits is to feel gratitude for God's great love.

Our environment is conducive to life—God has given us air to breathe, food, water, and all the necessities

of life. But, above all, he has forgiven our iniquities. This we should never forget. One of the least expensive, but most highly valued offerings we can present to God is our thanksgiving to him for mercies past and present. "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."—Heb. 13:15

Our forgiveness by God is conditional. As Jesus taught us to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us" (Matt. 6:12), so we must do. To be forgiven, we must learn to be forgiving, and thoroughly so. God is thorough in his forgiveness, as we read: "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."—Ps 103:12

David listed many of God's benefits toward us, in

addition to forgiveness. After forgiveness he mentioned spiritual health. He wrote: "Bless the LORD, O my soul; . . . who healeth all thy diseases." (Ps. 103:2,3) In God's kingdom his forgiveness will be accompanied by actual physical health. Many seek such benefits today, but those who have been called to follow after Jesus know that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) Again, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." (II Tim. 2:12) Although we expect to have sufferings, we are indeed grateful if some of these are alleviated when it is the LORD's will for us. But we are especially grateful for spiritual health—for having all our spiritual 'diseases' healed, which enables us to endure all the necessary experiences.

David reminds us that life itself is a wondrous benefit, and that eternal life is promised to us because Jesus died as our ransom. "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." (Ps. 103:4)

It is because God is "merciful and gracious" that he gives us these benefits. He is "slow to anger," and "plenteous in mercy." (Ps. 103:8) "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." (Ps. 102:11) Such mercy and love is high, indeed!

God knows our many weaknesses which are due to our fallen condition. He is fully aware of our limitations. David said: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear [reverence] him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."—vss. 13,14

When we recount all of God's mercies towards us, past and present, it evokes a song of gratitude that comes deep from within our hearts. As we continue along our Christian walk, we sing:

"When all thy mercies,

O my God,

My rising soul surveys,

Transported with the
view,

I'm lost, in wonder, love,
and praise.

—*Hymns of Dawn*, #324 

A Song of Love

KEY VERSE: *"Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."*—Song of Solomon 8:7

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Song of Solomon 2:8-17*

THE SONG OF Solomon was written in the form of an oriental love song. It was intended by God to be an allegorical representation of the mutual love of Christ and the church. The language used in this love song is that of a young man and a young woman deeply in love. When God created man as male and female, he made them so that the motivating power of their attraction to one another would be love, because "God is love."—I John 4:8

However, we must not suppose that the mutual love of Christ and his church was modeled after the love of man and woman. On the contrary, God had in his mind a plan that would center primarily around his Son, the first begotten of the Father; and secondarily, around the marriage of his Son to those to be selected

as "a people for his name" (Acts 15:14), his "bride." (Rev. 22:17) This plan was in God's mind long before man was created. In fact, the mutual love of Christ and his church was to be the model for an ideal relationship between husband and wife, and for all human relationships as well.

Knowing this, the Apostle Paul wrote, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. That he might

present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let everyone of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband."—Eph. 5:22-33

If, today, when nearly 50% of all marriages end in divorce, men would love their wives as Christ loves his church, and women would reverence their husbands as the true church reverences Christ, there would be no marital problems. If the fer-

vent young love that is described in the Song of Solomon continues, and grows stronger into the later years of married life, the marriage will remain harmonious. It is only when love grows cold that problems arise.

God's great divine plan is that love should be the motivating force in earth's society. In his kingdom, the admonition of Paul will be applied: "[Submit] yourselves one to another in the fear [reverence] of God." (Eph. 5:21) How appropriate it is that this love song draws to a conclusion with the words of our key text, "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." (Song of Solomon 8:7) Just as true love cannot be affected by the natural imperfections of our friends and family, as these words suggest, so also true love will endure forever when God's kingdom is established, because, "Charity [love] never faileth."—I Cor. 13:8

"Now abideth faith, hope charity [love], these three; but the greatest of these is love."—vs. 13 ☐

A Song of Unreturned Love

KEY VERSE: *"The vineyard of the LORD of Hosts is the house of Israel . . . and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry."—Isaiah 5:7*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 5:1-7*

THIS PROPHECY CONCERNS the nation of Israel, and is described as 'a song' about God's vineyard. In reality it is a parable using a vineyard as an illustration. The seventh verse plainly identifies this vineyard as the nation of Israel. God did everything possible to make this vineyard productive. But, as Isaiah said, "He [Jehovah] looked that it should bring forth grapes," and instead it brought forth "wild grapes," or, "worthless things."—vs. 2, *Rotherham's Translation*

The remainder of this prophecy tells how God took away the protection which he had formerly given to that vineyard, and permitted it to become desolate, and a wasteland. This prophetic utterance was fulfilled at the time when Jesus rejected the nation, because they had

rejected him. (Matt. 23:34-39) And later it was still more completely fulfilled when the nation of Israel was destroyed, and the people dispersed throughout all the other nations of the world.

Jesus gave a similar parable, which is recorded in Matthew 21:33-46. There the picture is slanted toward Israel's leaders as being the 'husbandmen' of the vineyard. Note the similar language employed in Isaiah 5:2 and Matthew 21:33. However, in this parable more detail is given concerning what went wrong. God, the "householder," sent servants to the husbandmen to reap the fruitage of the vineyard for him, but they were beaten, stoned, and even killed by the husbandmen. Finally, the LORD, pictured by the householder, sent them his son, saying,

"They will reverence my son." (vs. 37) But, instead, the husbandmen said, "This is the heir; come let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance." (vs. 38) And, in reality, this is what Israel did when they refused Jesus as their Messiah.

Jesus gave this parable for the benefit of the chief priests and elders of the people who had sought him in the Temple. They asked, "By what authority doest thou these things?" (Matt. 21:23) In turn, Jesus asked them a question about the ministry of John the Baptist, which they could not answer. He avoided giving a direct reply to their question.—vs. 24

Instead, Jesus gave two parables—the husbandman and the vineyard parable, being the second. He turned to the chief priests and elders and inquired, "When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?" (Matt. 21:40) The answer given by the chief priests and elders was an accurate prophecy of events that took place not very long after this.

"They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons."—vs. 41

They could not have phrased it better! But they did not realize that they were speaking of themselves! The account continues: "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the LORD's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them." (Matt. 21:42-45) Praise God, this cast off condition will not last forever. Israel will be restored, and will, indeed, yield fruitage to God! □

What Manner of Persons?

LET US REJOICE in the marvelous grace, the unmerited favor that God has extended us; to reveal himself and his dear Son to us through an understanding of his Word and of his grand purposes. Looking into these things, rejoicing in them, and being encouraged as we encourage one another, may we press along in the narrow way, serving truth and righteousness, and endeavoring to be sanctified by the truth and by the Spirit of the LORD.

You will recognize the setting of the words of our topic, "What Manner of Persons?" as coming from the pen of the Apostle Peter recorded in II Peter 3:11. These words were written to have meaning in our time, because Peter is actually speaking of this end of the age. However, it was another time of trouble when the Apostle Peter wrote this at the beginning of the Gospel Age. Since a new age was beginning and the old Jewish Age was ending, Israel's polity as a nation, was deteriorating. Their age of special favor from the LORD had ended, and their rejection of their promised Messiah, Christ Jesus our Lord, had begun their dispersion. They were already in heavy bondage under Roman rule, and we know from history that the time was approaching ever closer when Rome would send her legions to Israel under Titus, as happened in A.D. 70—A.D. 73. The city of Jerusalem was taken, and the walls were broken down.

Then, beginning with that period of time, until around A.D. 130—135, the Romans finally banished the Jews from the land. They could not return under pain of death, and the great scattering or dispersion of the nation of Israel to the far corners of the earth proceeded. History only records it, but it occurred in fulfillment of God's Word. In our day, Israel is

being regathered into their own land once again, also in fulfillment of God's Word.

Peter's Words Especially Appropriate Today

When the Apostle Peter wrote these words they were appropriate, but they are more appropriate now because he was speaking of our day, as we will discover. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [conduct or behavior], and godliness." These words could be considered as having been written to us personally, and we should try to apply them in our own lives. What manner of persons ought **WE** to be in all holy behavior and godliness?

In opening this third chapter, Peter's words were these: "Beloved, I now write unto you; in which I stir up your minds by way of remembrance." He addressed them as 'Beloved'! We see by this expression the Apostle Peter's devotion to the brethren and his desire to help them, to admonish them, to encourage their faithfulness; he desired to stir them up to a greater understanding that would help them to stand in an evil day, and give them the strength to withstand the trials which would come to them.

Peter continued to call their attention to the words of the prophets, and by identifying the time in which they would apply, he indicated that the words are indeed appropriate in our day. "Knowing this first," he said, "that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming [or presence]? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." The world did not then see their time of God's visitation, at our Lord's First Advent. Israel did not recognize Jesus as their promised Messiah; and the world at large is not apprised to the larger issues that are at stake in our day, in our society, as a result of the Lord's Second Advent.

We see and appreciate that the best and the noblest efforts of the most sincere of Earth's leaders are but at best

temporary efforts. For until the condemnation to death is removed and the opportunity for life is extended—until Satan is bound and the kingdom is established in glory with a righteous administration from top to bottom in both heaven and in earth, and a program of enlightenment and instruction is in operation—there will be no permanent improvement in Earth's society. "When **Thy** judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9) A process or program of instruction in righteousness, not cut short by death, will continue until they are able, under the favorable climate of that kingdom, to walk up the highway of holiness. They will then be able to enjoy what God had in mind for the human family from the beginning—a full dominion of earth—as full and complete a dominion of earth as God's dominion is of the Universe! This is our Heavenly Father's glorious purpose!

Peter then called attention to the first world before the Flood which passed away—the heavens and the earth, the world's spiritual and social orders, that were of old. (II Pet. 3) He told how this present heavens and earth, that has been under the domination of Satan, and in which evil has predominated, would also pass away. This is the point at which Peter's words continue, and ask the question, "What manner of persons ought we to be" since we have knowledge of what is coming upon the earth. Knowing these things, "looking for and hasting unto the day of God, wherein the heavens [the present ecclesiastical order], being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements [the present social order] shall melt with fervent heat?" He continues, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The word dwelleth, we find in **Strong's's Concordance**, has the thought of 'permanently dwelling'. Yes, the new righteous social order will be an everlasting kingdom. It will be the world's first real opportunity for life and peace, health and joy, and which will only come when righteousness comes first.

Just think of the changes which will occur when this whole present arrangement is reversed, and, instead of growing older each year, man's flesh shall return to the days of their youth! (Job 33:25) You and I will have the privilege, if faithful now, of seeing that occur, and of assisting in that glorious work with our Lord and Savior. From beyond the veil, from the heavenly station, we will become 'workers together with God' in a much more grand and lasting sense than we can be now, in fulfilling his glorious purpose for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

By faith we accept these things and endeavor to order our lives, seeking to be 'that manner of persons' who would be in harmony with God's glorious purposes. We desire to submit to our experiences in order that we can best be prepared for a place in his kingdom to share with our Lord and Savior, and with all the faithful that have gone before us, in the glorious work of the fulfilling of God's gracious promises.

This faithful apostle, Peter, now grown old in the Father's service, manifested his love for the brethren in his words to them. Turning to I Peter 1:12-15, we read these words in which he spoke concerning the prophets, saying, "Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."

Since Peter says, 'unto us', let us include ourselves in his words: "Wherefore, let us gird up the loins of our minds, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning ourselves according to the former lusts in our ignorance; but as he which hath called us is holy, so let us be holy in all manner of conduct and behavior." What an encouragement these words are to us! What an invitation! What holy instruction and admonitions he gave us! It was because Peter loved his brethren. He realized that they knew all of these things, but he wanted to stir up their minds, that

they might be reminded of the glorious and righteous purposes of God.

Our Lord, An Example of Great Humility

In John's Gospel, the 13th chapter, this testimony is given of our Lord as he observed that final Passover and instituted the Memorial with his apostles: "Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."—John 13:1

We appreciate Jesus' wonderful example, when at the Last Supper, he washed the disciples' feet. His trial and crucifixion lay only hours before him, but he was not wasting his time fretting about his own welfare, or what pleasures he might enjoy during his last little bit of time allotted to him here upon the earth. No, he was thinking of what he could do best to help his disciples whom he dearly loved, for whom he was dying, as well as for the world, and showing his love even toward those who were putting him to death. When Jesus had finished washing the feet of his disciples, he put on his garments, sat down with them, and said unto them, "Know ye what I have done for you. Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."—vss. 13-15

In answering the question posed by three of his disciples, as to which of them would be greatest in the kingdom, Jesus pointed out to his disciples that those who desired to be great in the kingdom must be the servant of all. They must have the same spirit of sacrifice and service that he was personally demonstrating to them in the washing of their feet. This one who was the Son of God, this one who was perfect, this one who was superior in every way to them, was bent on sacrifice and service to them, and to all mankind.

The apostles had not yet received the benefits of his ransom sacrifice. At this juncture, Jesus had not died and been raised again. The Holy Spirit had not been sent upon them; they were yet in their sins—unjustified. He had called them his 'friends' because they had exhibited the faith of Abraham. He did not call them 'brethren' because they were not yet sons of God. No, not yet; but nevertheless he loved them, and he loved them to the end and manifested these things to them, not only by word, but by his example.

Many Wonderful Men Have Lived

You may have heard about some of the great people who have graced the earth with their lives, some who may not have known anything about the divine plan of the ages, but who have evidenced a spirit of service in their lives. One wonderful photograph was taken of Albert Einstein when he was at Princeton University. It showed him coming around the corner of one of the University buildings, with his hair flying in the breeze, his coat flapping, eating an ice-cream cone! Here was a man of superior intelligence, one who understood mathematical concepts far in advance of the mass of mankind's view of scientific matters. No doubt this great man was raised up of the LORD to forward the increase of knowledge in fulfillment of God's prophecies of our day. His humble philosophy was reflected in his words, "Try not to become a man of success, but rather a man of value." How true it is that if we render any service profitable or useful to the community and beneficial to mankind, we should never be ashamed of that labor or that work.

There was Fritz Kreisler, a great violinist. He never charged much for his concerts. He explained the reason for this: "It is a talent. It was given to me." His wife said, "We don't charge great prices for our concerts; it might keep a slice of bread from someone's mouth; or keep them from having a home, or proper things for their children." It will be wonderful when we, if faithful, have the privilege of calling forth from the tomb people like that, who will be in the

forefront of their communities, willingly and gladly assisting the world of mankind, making sacrifices for others.

Have you read what George Washington, America's first President, said? His words were: "Rejoice not in the adversity of another, even though he be your enemy." That statement represents a high standard of behavior. There have been a multitude of wonderful people who lived and died on this earth—of most of those lives we are unaware. But, if we are faithful we will have the privilege of sharing with our Lord in calling forth many just like them; to go in the forefront of the work of the kingdom, following after the Ancient Worthies.

In John 15:11, our Lord said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." In the fourth verse, he exhorted them, saying, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, and ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me [severed from me, or apart from me] ye can do nothing." We have found this to be a true statement, have we not?

Yes, not until we come into Christ through unreserved consecration, and are accepted in the beloved by the Heavenly Father, justified, and spirit-begotten, can we 'bear fruit' by remaining in him. He continued, in John 15:7, to say, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

Again we are reminded of Peter's question: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be?" (II Pet. 3:11) Since we know of the glorious things to come, and now we see around us the full effects of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the great need for Christ's kingdom; since we long for and pray for that great time when the benefits of righteousness will be made so

plain, we have a great responsibility in how we conduct our lives. Let us not only continue to pray for the kingdom blessings that the world needs so much, but let us bear the fruits of righteousness in order that we will be fit for dispensing the promised blessings.

The World Needs the Kingdom

The LORD knows that the world needs Christ's kingdom. That is why he arranged for it. And he has told us so much concerning it, because he wants us to know about it in advance of the world. We have the privilege of continuing to send forth his Word of truth in a meager way at this time. But, in due time, he wants all mankind to know and to recognize their great need of his promised kingdom and its overwhelming blessings of life, joy, and peace, through righteousness. Mankind will then recognize our loving Father's glorious character. Only then can they come to love God and his dear Son, as you and I have come to love them and, therefore, desire to serve them, and be blessed in so doing.

In John 15:12, the apostle continues to record Jesus' words for us: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

No, he did not call them 'brethren' yet, or 'sons' of God. No, Jesus was very accurate, because it was not yet time for him to use those words of close kinship. They had not yet received the benefit of the application of the merit of his ransom price, which he provided when he obediently finished his sacrifice upon the cross. No, they could not be called brethren, or sons of God until Jesus was raised from the dead to present the merit before his Heavenly Father's throne. The value provided by the willing sacrifice of his perfect human life which provided redemption for Adam and his entire race.

When God raised him from the dead, Jesus had the merit of his sacrifice in negotiable form. He appeared in the pres-

ence of God to satisfy the demands of justice. As in the Tabernacle type, after the animal was slain, the blood representing the life poured out was taken in and sprinkled on the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy, thus satisfying justice and making reconciliation between God and man for another year.

So our great, glorified High Priest appeared in the antitypical Most Holy, in heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for the Church. (Heb. 9:12,24) His sacrifice, however, differed from the Tabernacle type in that it was a satisfaction not just for a year, but for all time. Jesus understood these things and his words were in complete conformity to them in every instance. We, too, must choose our words carefully to accurately state matters as they are.

The "Family Likeness"

Let us consider the Apostle Paul's words in Romans 8:28,29. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And what is this purpose? The apostle answers, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate [or predetermine] to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." In families, there is generally what we call a 'family resemblance'. Jesus was the firstborn Son in this divine family, among many brethren who were to be conformed to his image. They were to have a family resemblance or character likeness to the firstborn Son. Of course we cannot actually be perfect like Jesus, because of our fallen human nature, but we must strive to be like him to the best of our ability.

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? He that hath a pure heart, and clean hands." This cleanliness is reckoned to us because we are covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness. May the LORD help us to walk worthy of his love and blessings.

Peter exhorts us along this line to examine our lives in order to become more worthy of his love. One important

concept we should be cultivating is to be concerned always with the common good, as was our elder brother. This is Godlike, and Christlike. Our Heavenly Father is not self-seeking, he does not think of what is good for himself, and then act accordingly. No, he is willing to be longsuffering and endure this nighttime of evil, because he knows it is for mankind's everlasting good. Is our first reaction when something is said or done: 'How will it affect me?' Well, if it is, do not be discouraged, because that is a natural tendency of the fallen flesh. But the New Creature is endeavoring to transform itself—to divorce itself from the fallen tendencies of the flesh—and to be like its Lord and Savior.

The Apostle John wrote: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."—I John 4:7

If we love one another we will be thinking of what is best for one another, and not simply what might be most convenient for ourselves. When we think of Christ's ministry and of what he did for others, we realize that he went about doing good, healing all manner of diseases. He worked tirelessly, foreshadowing the glorious work of the kingdom and its blessings for all mankind. His thoughtfulness for his disciples at the time he was taken from them, can be seen in how he endeavored to prepare them for their loss. His thoughtfulness for his mother even while he was suffering excruciating pain upon the cross, also indicates his selflessness. One of the things that we appreciate so much about our Lord Jesus is that he is now more glorious and thoughtful than ever!

After his death and resurrection, the disciples were in a state of turmoil. They knew not which way to turn and so

they went back to fishing. In one instance they had toiled all night and caught no fish. They were still out in their ship when Jesus appeared on the shore. He told them to put the net down on the right side, and there were so many fish in it that they could hardly bring it in. We read in John 21:9: "As soon then as they were come to land they saw a fire of coals there and fish laid thereon and bread." Jesus was there on shore waiting for them, having cooked the fish, and prepared the bread. "Jesus cometh and taketh bread and giveth them and fish likewise."—vs. 13

Jesus, although now an exalted divine being, had not changed a bit! He was with them there on the shore of Galilee serving them natural food. He who held the position of sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high had the same humble, serving spirit as before, and would be so henceforth, and forever, eternally!

This is the character that he has called us to develop, and has given us the opportunity, the strength, and the help to attain. In order to accomplish this, we must learn to think of what is best for others, and to forget our own aims and desires. We should be seeking those things which are the blessings of Zion collectively. God is doing this at all times. He is always providing for the needs of all his creatures. We cannot be different from our Father if we wish to be his children and to have this family likeness. Thus we will express our appreciation, our obedience, and our thankfulness to him for being such a splendidly magnanimous God.

Motivation Is Most Important

Jesus said in Luke 14:27: "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Taking up his cross and following him includes loving less our aims and ambitions for ourselves, and even for our families. This does not mean that we do not love our families—no, of course not, but we have to establish our priorities. "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33) In fact, when we put

God first, we find we love our families more all the time, because we are becoming more Godlike and Christlike.

What we think and say and do is not the most important aspect in our lives, but, rather, *why* we think and say and do what we do. The Apostle Paul was certainly correct when he said that the Word of God was "sharper than any two-edged sword" dividing between marrow and bone. (Heb. 4:12) The following of the precepts of the Word of God gets down to the matter of character development in the image of our Master. This work begins right in our new mind, which is all we actually have of the New Creature, and is where the Christian's battlefield is.

We have been told: "Sow a thought, reap an act; sow an act, and reap a habit; sow a habit, and reap a character; sow a character, and reap a destiny." We know these things, but "Happy are ye if ye do them," Jesus said. This is where sanctification of heart and mind is being worked out, every day of our lives. Opportunities to seek the common good are everywhere. May the LORD help us to put these things into practice.

In Proverbs 16:28, we are told, "A froward man [one who stubbornly goes on in his own willful way], soweth strife." We do not want to sow strife; instead, we wish to be peacemakers. We want to follow in the steps of Jesus, and to be wise as serpents, harmless as doves, meek as lambs, bold as lions, but always in keeping with that which would be pleasing to our loving Heavenly Father, and our Lord.

Mistakes Cannot Be Corrected Until Recognized

In Proverbs, we have this counsel given us, and we desire to heed it that we might be better prepared for a place in God's glorious kingdom. We read, "Ponder [consider] the path of thy feet and all thy ways shall be ordered aright." (Prov. 4:26, *Margin*) "My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. . . . For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the

(Continued on Page 37)

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CALIFORNIA

Claremont	KTSJ 1220	9:45 a.m.
Lancaster	KVOY 1340	8:15 a.m.
Los Angeles(Mon)	KTYM 1160	6:30 a.m.
Los Angeles(Span)	KALI 1430	5:45 a.m.
Monterey	KNRY 1240	8:30 a.m.
Sacramento	KJAY 1430	10:00 a.m.
San Francisco	KEST 1450	3:30 p.m.
Tehachapi	KTPL-FM 103.1	8:15 a.m.
Yuba City	KOBO 1450	3:30 p.m.

FLORIDA

Jacksonville	WXTL 1010	7:45 p.m.
Orlando	WGTO 540	6:45 a.m.
Tampa	WTMP 1150	8:30 a.m.

ILLINOIS

LaSalle	WLFO 1220	9:45 a.m.
Rockford	WRRR 1330	6:15 a.m.
West Frankfort	WFRX 1300	9:15 a.m.

INDIANA

Hammond	WJOB 1230	8:30 a.m.
LaPorte	WCOE-FM 96.7	10:00 a.m.
North Vernon	WKRP 1460	8:00 a.m.

KANSAS

Goodland	KLOE 730	7:15 a.m.
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KENTUCKY

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MICHIGAN

Detroit	CKLW 800	7:45 a.m.
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NEW JERSEY

Salem	WNNN-FM 101.7	9:45 a.m.
Salem	WJIC 1510	9:45 a.m.

NEW MEXICO

Los Alamos	KRSN 1490	6:45 a.m.
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NEW YORK

Buffalo	WHLD 1270	12:00 noon
New York	WOR 710	9:15 p.m.

OHIO

Cincinnati	WNOP 740	9:00 a.m.
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OREGON

Portland	KKEY 1150	7:00 a.m.
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PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown	WHOL 1600	10:45 a.m.
Jenkintown(Wed)	WIBF-FM 103.9	12:30 p.m.
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Charlestown	WOKE 1340	7:06 p.m.
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TENNESSEE

Nashville	WLAC 1510	7:45 p.m.
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VIRGINIA

Richmond	WGGM 820	7:45 a.m.
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WASHINGTON

Spokane	KUDY 1280	9:45 a.m.
Tacoma	KAMT 1360	7:30 a.m.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee	WNOV 85.6	7:00 a.m.
Jackson	WYLO 540	2:15 p.m.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE . . .

. . . of adjustments which are continually being made in the "Frank and Ernest" program schedule. New stations will be added, and some old ones will no longer carry our program. You may wish to check this schedule regularly, to see what is happening in your area.

.... WORLDWIDE RADIO BROADCASTS

Canada

ALBERTA

Banff	CFHC 1340	11:45 a.m.
Brooks	CIBQ 1340	9:00 a.m.
Canmore	CFNC 1450	11:45 a.m.
Stettler	CKFQ 1400 a.m.	7:45 a.m.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Duncan	CKAY 1500	9:00 a.m.
Duncan	CKAY 1500	7:30 p.m.
Grand Forks	CKGF 1340	9:00 a.m.
Nanaimo	CHUB 1570	9:30 p.m.
Qualicum-Parksville	CHPQ 1370	9:30 p.m.

MANITOBA

Winnipeg	CKJS 810	9:00 a.m.
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ONTARIO

Leamington	CHYR 710	5:00 p.m.
St. Thomas	CHLO 1570	10:45 a.m.

QUEBEC

Montreal	CFMB 1410	5:15 p.m.
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SASKATCHEWAN

Rosetown	CJYM 1330	9:45 a.m.
Weyburn	CFSL 1190	8:45 a.m.
Estevan	CJSL 1280	8:45 a.m.

Argentina (Spanish)

Buenos Aires (Sat)	FM Malvinas 91.5 MHz	
		10:00 a.m.
		10:00 p.m.

Brazil (Portuguese)

Curitiba	Radio Capital 1270 KHz	8:45 a.m.
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British West Indies

Grand Cayman	Radio Cayman	9:30 a.m.
Trinidad	Radio Trinidad 610	10:30 p.m.

Chile (Spanish)

Santiago (Sat)	Radio Panamericana CB 142	
		10:00 a.m.

China

Hong Kong	Radio Villa Verde (Fri.)	6:00 p.m.
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East Africa

Radio East Africa	4:00 p.m.
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Ecuador

Quito Radio Anoranza (Sat.)	99.7-FM 8:45 a.m.
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Israel & Middle East

Voice of Hope (Wed.)	945 AM 10:30 p.m.
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Italy (Italian)

Europa Radio Milano	83.3-FM 11:30 a.m.
Euro Tele Radio Calabria (Fri.)	
	MHz 102 5:30 p.m.
Radio Corleone Centrale	
	FM-88-500 FM-92 11:00 a.m.

Kenya & Uganda

Radio East Africa	4:00 p.m.
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Mexico (Spanish)

Culiacán Ranchera	XEQC 8:30 a.m.
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New Zealand

Whakatane	IXX 7:00 a.m.
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Nigeria

Radio Africa (Thurs.)	7:45 p.m.
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Panama (Spanish)

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

Manila (Sat.)	DZAM 1026 KHz 7:15 p.m.
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South Africa

Joubert Park (Thurs.)	SWAZI Music
	Radio 1400 & shortwave 49 & 60 9:00 p.m.

Sri Lanka

Columbo (Sat.)	Radio Sri Lanka 7:15 p.m.
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Tonga

Nuku' Alofa (Mon.)	10:15 a.m.
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Uruguay (Spanish)

Montevideo Radio El Espectador	810 9:15 a.m.
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THE BIBLE ANSWERS – TV Programs

ALABAMA	Channel	MAINE	Channel	OKLAHOMA	Channel
Montgomery	56	Portland	57	Broken Bow	28
CALIFORNIA		MARYLAND		Muskogee	19
Arroyo Grande	66	Leonardtown	52	Oklahoma City	7
Lancaster	38	MICHIGAN		Tulsa	33
CONNECTICUT		Detroit	16 & 26	PENNSYLVANIA	
Litchfield	5	Muskegon	40	Berwick	47
FLORIDA		MINNESOTA		Harrisburg	40
Daytona	42	Minneapolis	13	Hazleton	35
Ft. Myers	7	MISSISSIPPI		Johnstown	9
Jupiter	9	Bolivar	8	Pittsburgh	63
Naples	9	Philadelphia	20	SOUTH DAKOTA	
Orlando	21	Starkville	5	Mitchell	16
St. Augustine	22	Tallahatchie	11	TENNESSEE	
St. Petersburg	35	MISSOURI		Harrogate	18
Tallahassee	9	Cameron	35	Heiskell	12
Tampa	57	Columbia	2	Murfreesboro	27
GEORGIA		St. Louis	7	TEXAS	
Athens	34	NEBRASKA		Austin	13
Cordele	55	Lincoln	67	Corpus Christi	50 & 7
Dublin	36	NEVADA		Mt. Pleasant	54
Savannah	55	Las Vegas	39	San Antonio	67
ILLINOIS		NEW JERSEY		Sulphur Springs	18
DeKalb	7	Hammondon	8	UTAH	
Plano	30	NEW YORK		St. George	55
Rockford	45	Glens Falls	8	VIRGINIA	
Urbana	1	Jamestown	8	Gloucester	51
INDIANA		Oneonta	15	Norfolk	68
Evansville	52	Rochester	40	WASHINGTON	
Indianapolis	11	Syracuse	14	Wenatchee	27
IOWA		NORTH CAROLINA		Yakima	60
*Cedar Rapids	13	Burlington	16	WEST VIRGINIA	
Marshalltown	39	Charlotte	15	Huntington	55
KANSAS		Henderson	34	*Logan (Mon)	12
Junction City	6	Lenoir	53	WISCONSIN	
Waterville	26	Raleigh	63	Waukesha	43
KENTUCKY		Wilmington	10	PUERTO RICO	
Morehead	10 & 7	OHIO		Mayaguez	42
Mt. Sterling	6 and 2	Akron	29		
LOUISIANA		Ashland	59		
Jennings	13	Cincinnati	25		
New Orleans	61	Delaware	56		
		Youngstown	20		

"The Bible Answers" television programs are aired each Sunday afternoon from 12:00 to 12:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, on the stations listed above. The times, days, and channels of those listings marked with an asterisk (*) can be found in your local newspaper.

issues of life. . . . Ponder the path of thy feet and all thy ways shall be ordered aright.”—vs. 20

Again we read, “The ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.” (Prov. 5:21-23) God is watching to see what is motivating us and how diligently we are considering others. Jesus said, “I am the way the truth and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me.” (John 14:6) We must be like our great forerunner and be willing ‘workers together with God’.

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” (Prov. 28:13) We really should want to be aware of our faults. The first step in the solution of any problem is to know that a problem exists. And we know that we can go to the LORD in prayer to receive the strength to overcome. By effort we can make progress toward being conformed to his image in our minds and hearts and characters. By God’s grace we can be successful in our endeavors. Since it is God who is working in us, we can be conformed to the image of his dear Son. May the LORD continue to work in us.

‘Folly’

It would be folly for us if we did not heed the instruction of the LORD and learn the lessons along the way that he knows we need. (Ps. 48:13) Israel was spoken of as being ‘stiffnecked’ because they were disobedient to the LORD, and did not learn the lessons he patiently endeavored, time and again, to teach them. About them, and others, Solomon wrote: “He that being often reproveth hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy.” (Prov. 29:1) This text is there for the benefit of those who are on trial for life at the present time. Those to whom the Heavenly Father has made glorious promises are expected in return to learn his lessons.

If we have an experience where things do not work out as we might hope or think they should, then that is an opportunity for self-discipline, for trust in the LORD and in his

overruling providences. It is an opportunity for us to take the matter to him in prayer. After all, it is one of his ways to draw us closer to him by these very experiences. It is one of his ways to prepare us for an honored place in his glorious divine family. What a transcending thought, that we should be called to his eternal glory!

The Apostle Peter calls this to our attention. We read, "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle you." (I Pet. 5:10) And in the 4th verse, "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Yes! It will be ours for all eternity! We will have a permanent dwelling place in the family of God!

We cannot conceive of there being a more interesting privilege offered throughout all eternity. Since he has offered us the best that he has to give, is it surprising that he would expect of us the best that we have to give? May the LORD help us to be faithful. "What manner of persons ought we to be, seeing that we know these things" beforehand? Jesus said, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them."

May our loving Father help us to finish our course faithfully, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the glorious halls of light,
Thou go not, like the quarry slave, at night,
Scourged, to his dungeon; but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams. □

Nehemiah

THE NAME NEHEMIAH signifies, 'consolation from God'. We are certain we will receive consolation and encouragement in considering some of Nehemiah's experiences, which are recorded in the Book bearing his name.

Nehemiah's Background

Nehemiah was the son of Hachaliah, of the tribe of Judah, of one of the prominent Hebrew families of the Babylonian captivity. The Medes and Persians had conquered Babylon. The second universal empire, represented by the breast and arms of silver of Nebuchadnezzar's vision (Dan. 2:31-33), now ruled the world. Our story begins in about 454 B.C., at Shushan, the palace of Artaxerxes, King of Persia.

Josephus tells us that Nehemiah was a very young man at this time, probably in his twenties. In spite of his youth, he held a high rank in the royal court—that of cupbearer to the king. This title, sometimes translated 'butler', is somewhat deceptive to modern ears, and does not give the proper conception of the dignity of this position. His duties did not consist solely of tasting the king's food and drink, to prevent poisoning. He was, in fact, one of the most trusted officers of the realm; a confidant of the king, always at his right hand; one whose advice the king valued and sought; what we would today call a Minister of State. Daniel held a similar position in his time in the universal empire of Babylon.

We do not know how it came about that young Nehemiah was appointed to such an exalted station. We are not told. We can only surmise that, as in the case of Daniel, it resulted from some sort of competitive examination in which Nehemiah excelled. But we may be absolutely sure of one thing. We know by his conduct that he was reared by godly

parents, who from earliest infancy inculcated in him a reverence and love for the God of Israel; who imbued him with his ancient and rightful heritage, so that although he was living *in* Persia, he was *not* a Persian by nationality.

As confidential officer and counsellor to the king, it was Nehemiah's duty to be acquainted with the mood and temper of the people, so as to be able to advise the king of any potential threat to the empire. To this end, it appears to have been his custom to mingle, unrecognized, with the people in the marketplaces, and especially among those of arriving caravans who could tell of conditions in other parts of the realm.

Word from the Holy Land

Josephus tells us that he was doing this one day when he heard some new arrivals speaking the Hebrew language. He engaged them in conversation and was delighted to find that one of them was a close relative returning from an extended visit to Jerusalem. It was a tribute to Nehemiah's upbringing in the faith of his fathers that he eagerly inquired respecting the Holy Land, the Holy City, God's Holy Temple, and the conditions of the Jews who had, years before, returned from captivity in Babylon, under the proclamation of Cyrus. He was deeply interested in the welfare of Israel.

Now let us read the record in Nehemiah's own words as recorded in Nehemiah 1:2-4: "Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction, and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven."

Do you see how keenly young Nehemiah felt about his people, how closely he identified himself with them and the

Holy City? He had never seen Jerusalem. All he knew about its former glory was from nostalgic accounts by his parents and others of the captivity. Yet he was deeply moved and distressed to hear of the devastation and degradation of Jerusalem, so much so that he wept. And it is an evidence of his great faith in the God of his fathers, that he immediately and naturally turned to prayer.

Nehemiah's Prayer

Let us consider some aspects of this beautiful and effectual prayer which is found in Nehemiah 1:5-11: "I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments." In other words, "How great thou art!" Nehemiah said. He had a proper concept of the majesty of God. And that word "terrible," as it has been translated, does not mean 'terrifying', but, rather, 'greatly to be revered'.

Then Nehemiah showed his familiarity with the Holy Scriptures, by an almost direct quotation from Deuteronomy 7:9, which reads: "Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant, and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations." We continue from Nehemiah's prayer, verse 6: "Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee."

This reference to the ears and eyes of God reminds us of Hezekiah's prayer, when he spread before the LORD the insulting letter from Sennacherib. He said, as recorded in II Kings 19:16, "LORD bow down thine ear, and hear; open, LORD, thine eyes, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God!" Such an expression is not at all presumptuous. It is entirely in harmony with one of the precious promises the LORD has

given his people, found in Psalm 34:15: "The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." And, in the prayer of Solomon made at the dedication of the Temple, he said, as written in II Chronicles 6:40: "Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and thine ears be attent [attentive] unto the prayer that is made in this place."

Reminding God of His Promise

Then in his prayer, Nehemiah made a confession, not only for himself, but for all Israel. He said: "Both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandest thy servant Moses." A confession of sin should be a part of every prayer. Then Nehemiah reminded the LORD of certain promises he had made to his people. He said: "Remember I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations. But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen, to set my name there."

In saying this, Nehemiah cited to the LORD his own edict of Leviticus 26:33, "I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you, and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste." This is exactly what had happened to the holy land, and the city of Jerusalem. This was the curse upon Israel because of their disobedience. But Nehemiah was a good Bible student—he knew that a blessing was promised Israel if they obeyed the voice of the LORD.

He called to mind, and cited to the LORD, the promise of Deuteronomy 30:1-3: "It shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath driven

thee, and shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; that then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee."

What did Nehemiah do then? First, he quoted to God his own word, that he is a covenant-keeping God; a God that will surely perform what he has promised. Then he reminded the LORD of a promise he had made to regather his people under certain circumstances. Then he claimed the promise. This is reasoning with God. Then he concluded his prayer by specifically referring to the distressed inhabitants of devastated Jerusalem, who desired to return to God and prosper.

He said: "Now these are thy servants, and thy people whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. O LORD, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name, and prosper. I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

Artaxerxes

The one referred to as "this man" was Artaxerxes, the king; he was an absolute monarch, not accountable to any parliament or laws, whose every whim was law. History records that he was arbitrary and self-willed, easily aroused to violent anger; often killing on the spot those who offended him. Artaxerxes was also called, "Longimanus," which means "long-handed," because his right hand was longer than his left. He was proud of this deformity, claiming it was the result of his frequent and sudden use of the sword. And this was the man through which Nehemiah must work to accomplish his purpose!

Nehemiah did not pray only once and then wait for the LORD to answer him. He said that he prayed day and night. So this prayer is merely a summation of what he prayed continuously for four months. We know this because the first verse tells us that it was in the month, Chisleu, when he learned of the plight of Jerusalem and began to pray; and we are told in Nehemiah 2:1 that it was in the month Nisan that he finally received an answer to his prayer—a lapse of four months. If his custom was the same as that of Daniel, who prayed three times a day, with his windows open toward Jerusalem (Dan. 6:10), Nehemiah must have uttered this prayer at least three hundred and sixty times!

Nehemiah's Prayer Is Answered

The answer came suddenly and unexpectedly. The king had prepared a banquet for his nobles, at which the queen also was present. We can imagine that the guests were all attired in their best silks and jewels, and were smiling and joyful. Nehemiah, as usual, was at the king's right hand, so that he might taste of the food and wine before it was served to the king. As he served the wine, the king glanced up, and noticed the contrast between Nehemiah and the happy guests. He saw a sadness and pallor he had never seen before. After all, let us remember, Nehemiah had not only been praying, but had also been fasting—eating sparingly for four months—and sorrowing on behalf of his people. He was gaunt and hollow-eyed.

Artaxerxes placed his hand on Nehemiah's arm. "What's troubling you?" he asked. "Everybody else here is happy and you are sad. Are you sick?" "Oh no, your majesty," Nehemiah replied, trying to smile. "I am quite well." The king's eyes bored into his own. "Well, then," he said, "if you are not sick, it must be a great sadness of the heart. It shows on your face." Nehemiah was terrified. As he himself expressed it in Nehemiah 2:2, "Then I was very sore afraid." Or, as **Moffatt** puts it: "I was dreadfully afraid at this."

Why was he so frightened? It was because he well knew the temper of his king. He had seen this man summarily thrust his sword through any who offended him. Nehemiah realized that his sadness of heart might be misconstrued. It might indicate to the king a spirit of discontent, and loss of interest in his duties; even disloyalty and treachery. An urgent, silent prayer, went up to God and Nehemiah quickly recovered his poise.

Nehemiah's Courageous Request

He instantly realized that this might be the LORD's doing, proving just the opportunity he sought. We read his words in Nehemiah 2:3,4: "I said unto the king, Let the king live for ever. Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven." The exact words that he should speak to the king now came easily and readily to his lips, as though prompted from above: "I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant has found favor in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him), For how long shall thy journey be? And when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time." And it was no short time, either, that Nehemiah set. We know, from Nehemiah 5:14, that he asked for, and got, a twelve-year leave of absence!

It took great courage for Nehemiah to make the request he did. The king could easily have considered the rebuilding of the walls and gates of Jerusalem an act of rebellion against his rule—a desire by Nehemiah to set up the nation of Israel as a separate and rival government, with himself as king. In fact, we read in the 4th chapter of Ezra that this same king, Artaxerxes, had previously stopped the restoration work of Ezra, because of similar accusations. So when Nehemiah

asked for what he did, he laid his life on the line. And he won, because the LORD had answered his oft-repeated prayer: "Grant me mercy in the sight of this man."

Nehemiah had complete confidence that his prayer would eventually be answered. He did not know just how or when it would be answered, but he had carefully planned in advance just what he would need for the success of his undertaking if the opportunity presented itself—just what he would request of the king. He did not have to leave to figure everything out, to come back, and then ask the king for more favors. He struck while the iron was hot, without hesitation. This is evident from the next two verses, Nehemiah 2:7,8: "Moreover, I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over, till I come to Judah; and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me."

So we see that Nehemiah had the necessary materials needed for the work all laid out in his mind. He had done his homework. And this also indicates how closely he had previously questioned his kinsman as to the details of the damage which must be repaired. Such foresight, thoroughness, and wisdom impressed the king. He not only granted Nehemiah's requests, but gave him more than he had requested. He appointed him Governor of Judea, and gave him a strong military escort of cavalry, befitting a governor.

Nehemiah Begins His New Work

A four-month-long journey brought them to Jerusalem, where Nehemiah was welcomed by the desolate city's inhabitants. He did not, at first, reveal the object of his coming, nor the fact that he had been appointed their governor. To them he was simply a visiting dignitary, a wealthy young Hebrew who had attained high office in the Persian govern-

ment. This they could see from his military escort, and the richness of his caravan. He wanted to first make a personal appraisal of the situation.

Nehemiah Begins His Work with a Survey

After three days of mingling with the people, and becoming well acquainted with them and their tribal rulers, he secretly made his inspection of the ruined city. He waited until everyone was asleep, and then, on horseback, accompanied by a few trusted servants on foot, he toured the broken walls by moonlight. We read his own words in Nehemiah 2:12-16: "I arose in the night, I, and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem. Neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night, by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool; but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. Then went I up, in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall; and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned. And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, not to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work."

This moonlight ride had been a distressing experience for Nehemiah. If, before, he had wept when he had merely heard of the plight of Jerusalem, how overwhelmed he must now have been to see it with his own eyes! But now he had firsthand knowledge of the facts. What he had seen confirmed the feasibility of his plan for rebuilding. The next morning he called together the elders and prominent representatives of the people and explained to them the real object of his coming. He showed them his authority from the king and told them how God had heard his prayer, and how wonderfully he had prospered him in this undertaking.

Then he outlined to them a method whereby the repair work could begin immediately. We read his words in Nehemiah 2:17,18: "Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in; how Jerusalem lieth waste and the gates thereof are burned with fire. Come, let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God, which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build! So they strengthened their hands for this good work."

How quickly Nehemiah was able to inspire the people! He fired them with his own zeal. It was they who said: **"Let us rise up and build!"** And as they went to work, Nehemiah worked with them. He, no doubt, worked with his hands as hard as any of them, carrying stones and heavy timbers, and mixing mortar for the walls.

Why Rebuild the Walls?

Why was the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem considered so important? Was it merely a status symbol? No, it was not only that. There was also a very practical aspect. With the city walls broken down, the enemies of the Israelites raided and robbed them regularly. They were at the mercy of every nomadic tribe that chanced to ride that way. But if the walls were repaired, it would be a different story. A Bible dictionary reports concerning the original walled city: "Jerusalem was an almost impregnable Gibraltar. The steep sides of the ravines on the east, the south, and the west provided bulwarks against siege. The north was the only direction from which a foe could attack the city, under the conditions of ancient warfare." No one knows how high the original walls were; but, as restored in 1542 A.D., they ranged from twenty to sixty feet high. It seems likely that the original walls formed an irregular quadrangle, a little more than four miles in circuit.

In the third chapter of his book, Nehemiah lists fifty families as participating in the building work. This would

mean an average of about four hundred and eighty lineal feet of wall for each family to repair. It was Nehemiah's plan that each family would work on that portion of the wall nearest its home quarters. This was a wise plan. Each would be especially interested in having the wall strong in his own neighborhood. And there would be a certain degree of proper pride of workmanship, each family making their portion of the wall a monument to their skill.

Through many trials and difficulties and discouragements, the work progressed. Every difficulty was overruled by the LORD, and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, using the original stones, was completed in the incredibly short time of fifty-two days!

Lessons from Nehemiah

Now let us consider some of the valuable lessons to be learned from this account. Although Nehemiah was a very young man, he was held in high esteem by the king as possessing rare ability. This reminds us of Paul's words to Timothy, in I Timothy 4:12, quoting from the **Weymouth Translation**: "Let no one think slightly of you because you are a young man; but in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, be an example for your fellow Christians to imitate." The younger brothers and sisters of our fellowship should not be underestimated. It must not be presumed that they are "shallow" because they are young. This is a serious mistake. Stephen, too, was a young man; but in a few months, he made his calling and election sure. The LORD held young Stephen in such high esteem that he was accounted worthy of the honor of being the first to follow in his Master's footsteps even unto death.

The fact that Nehemiah was so carefully reared in the faith of his fathers, has a lesson for those of us who are the parents of young children. Just as Nehemiah was born in Persia and received his formal education in that heathen nation, our children are subject to the influences of this present evil world. But these influences can be counteracted by godly

parents. Nehemiah's intensity of feeling for the welfare of Jerusalem indicated that this had been accomplished in his case.

Similarly, it is our privilege and duty to teach our children the truth; to instill in them a love for the LORD and for his people. As Nehemiah was taught the Hebrew language by his parents, we can teach our children the language of the Truth. Who knows if the LORD will draw them, and use them for exalted service, as he did Nehemiah? Let us at least prepare them for the Master's use.

As Nehemiah was in Persia, but was not a Persian, the Christian is in the world, but not of the world. Jesus said of such, in John 17:16: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." No matter what our positions in the world, whether high or low, our primary interest should be the welfare of Zion. We should have an intensity of feeling for the Gospel message, and its service, praying for opportunities, and being ready to act when the LORD opens the way.

The thing that particularly distressed Nehemiah was the condition of the walls of Jerusalem. We read in Nehemiah 1:3,4 that they reported to him: "The wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire." Then he gave us his reaction to this report, saying: "It came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept." Without walls, Jerusalem was no city. It had no cohesion, no integrity, no honor. Enemies could invade and rob and plunder at will. It was a by-word and a laughing-stock. In the words of Nehemiah 2:17 it was "a reproach."

The Antitypical City with Broken Walls

The Christian church, as established by our Lord and the apostles, was symbolically referred to as a city of God. As we read in Hebrews 12:22,23: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in

heaven." The primitive church could be likened unto a city that had walls. It had integrity and cohesion. It was held together by a strong faith in the Gospel, "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3) The great divine plan of salvation was understood. As Isaiah 60:18 expressed it prophetically: "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." This "most holy faith" was its protection against the assaults of the Adversary. The walls of sound doctrine kept the church apart and safe.

But after the apostles fell asleep, the walls began to be broken down. Paul foresaw this, saying in Acts 20:29,30: "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things." False doctrines and evil practices began to be introduced into the church. Paul's prophecy of II Timothy 4:3,4 was also fulfilled: "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

As the great antichrist system developed, the walls of Zion were broken down more and more, until, in the Dark Ages, little remained of the original structure of sound doctrine. Even the great foundation stone of the ransom was lost amid the rubble. Then came the reformation, and the walls began to be rebuilt, in spite of great opposition. David's prayer of Psalm 51:18, echoed by faithful Christians, began to be answered: "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion. Build thou the walls of Jerusalem." Truths long lost sight of, were rediscovered, and placed in their proper settings. The work of rebuilding accelerated. Then Christ returned, and by the hand of a "faithful and wise servant" (Matt. 24:45), the structure of sound doctrine was rebuilt to completion. And do not forget that Nehemiah used the old stones which had been knocked down to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He did not quarry new ones. It was the old, old story, "the faith once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 8), which was restored.

There is another meaning to a city with broken-down walls. It is a more personal application, and is given in Proverbs 25:28: "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls." The 'spirit' referred to here is the disposition of mind, the thoughts which control our actions. We must rule our thoughts, and imaginations, and cast out, and keep out, anything unprofitable to us as New Creatures. Our warfare is in the mind. The New Creature is developed in the mind. The New Creature must use our fleshly mind as its instrument, making it a captive of the new will, the mind of Christ. This is concisely stated by the Apostle Paul: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (II Cor. 10:5) This is not something which is easily accomplished. The repairing of stone walls is not easy.

Nehemiah was undoubtedly one of the faithful ones referred to in Hebrews 11:36,39 who will be "princes in all the earth." He fits the description which says that they "wrought righteousness; obtained promises; escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness were made strong; . . . of whom the world was not worthy." And he finally "obtained a good report through faith."

Nehemiah last words were: "Remember me, O my God, for good"—Neh. 13:31 □



If you will notify the Dawn of your new address three weeks in advance of your move, it will save us considerable expense in mailing your magazine.

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THE GOLDEN THREAD SERIES, PART 23



A Shepherd Becomes a King

AS SAMUEL, THE prophet, poured the anointing oil over Saul's head, indicating him to be God's choice to serve as Israel's first king, he had been filled with hope that Saul would prove a good king. (I Samuel 10:1) At first Saul did appear to be controlled by the right spirit, and seemed very humble. He rejected the idea that he was God's choice as king, saying, "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin?" (I Samuel 9:21) And when the time came for Saul to be presented to the people as their king, he was nowhere to be found—he had hidden himself, and they had to search for him and bring him to the ceremony.—I Samuel 10:17-25

But it was only a matter of a few years before he began to disregard the ways of God. At one time Saul called for Samuel, and when the elderly prophet was slow in arriving to offer the sacrifice and prayers for Saul's success in battle over the Philistines, Saul impatiently decided not to wait any longer. He offered the sacrifice and the prayers himself! Samuel said to Saul on that occasion, after he learned that Saul had taken the prophet's duties on himself, "Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now [if you had been faithful] would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart."—I Samuel 13:13,14

However, this prophecy which Samuel spoke was only fulfilled after many years had passed! Time plays an important part in God's dealings with his people, and he is not in a hurry where the working out of his purposes and lessons is concerned. The Apostle Paul said Saul reigned as king for forty years, and then God raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, "I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, which shall fulfill all my will." (Acts 13:21,22) Could a greater tribute than this be given to a man by the great Jehovah!

A number of years of Saul's reign had passed, and yet the Prophet Samuel, now grown very old, continued to mourn over the king, because he ignored God's righteous and just laws. Finally, the LORD said to him, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go; I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons."—I Samuel 16:1

Gladly Samuel set out to follow the LORD's instructions. He went to the home of Jesse in Bethlehem, called his sons together, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD. Neither Jesse nor his sons were aware of the real purpose of Samuel's visit,

which was to anoint one of them to be the king of Israel! Samuel was very impressed with each of the seven sons as Jesse introduced them to him. But the LORD said to Samuel, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." And as each young man passed before him, Samuel said "Neither hath the LORD chosen this [one]."—I Samuel 16:7,8,10

There was an air of suspense as Samuel said to Jesse, "Are here all thy children?" And he answered, "There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold, he keepeth the sheep." Samuel then requested, "Send and fetch him." Jesse sent for David, and brought him to the elderly prophet. Looking at this youngest son of Jesse, Samuel thought, "Now he is ruddy, and of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look [at]!" And then the LORD spoke to Samuel, saying, "Arise, anoint him: for this is he." (I Samuel 16:6-13) How surprised Jesse and his sons were when they learned the true reason for Samuel's interest in their family—especially when he anointed the youngest of the brothers, the young shepherd lad, David. What could this mean? Was not Saul their king?

We remember the description given of Saul when Samuel first saw him. He also was a choice young man, and a goodly one, and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he to look upon! Both these men picked by God to be kings over Israel were fine specimens of manhood. But as we compare their lives, we can understand why the LORD considered it so important to consider the heart attitude. It is evident that David was not only beautiful to look at, but he had a beautiful heart, as well!

So Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him there before his family. The Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. Just as Samuel had anointed Saul as king, yet he did not immediately begin his reign over Israel, just so it was with David. David patiently waited until it was

time for him to assume the role of ruler of Israel. During this period of time he had many varied, strange, dangerous, and exciting experiences, but in them he always behaved himself wisely, and the LORD was with him.—I Samuel 18:14

Although David was very young when he was anointed by Samuel, he had a deep appreciation of what a great honor that was. In spite of his youth, he had strong faith in Jehovah, which continued to grow during his entire lifetime. Samuel died before David actually took the throne, but he did live long enough to realize that David was indeed very different from Saul. David's trust was firmly and immovably placed in the LORD God.

David was introduced to life at the court of King Saul in a very unusual way. Once David had been anointed by Samuel, and God's spirit came upon him, conditions began to worsen with Saul. The Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit troubled him. (I Samuel 16:14) Since his faith in God was shattering, the peace it brings also departed. He would become very disturbed and troubled in his mind at times, and often terror gripped him. His servants suggested that perhaps he would find music soothing and quieting. Saul agreed to try their advice, and said, "Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me." One of his servants highly recommended David, saying, "I have seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the LORD is with him."

So it happened that David was sent for, and came to serve Saul, who became very fond of his young and talented musician. And every time that Saul became distressed or upset, David took his harp out and played for him. Saul found this refreshing and calming to his nerves. He sent a message to Jesse saying, "Let David stay here at the palace with me, for he hath found favor in my sight." At first, he loved David greatly, and before long gave him the choice position as his armor bearer, when he was not using his

musical skills. But Saul's love for David was not to survive very long.

It was not a time of peace in Israel, for tensions between Israel and their old enemies, the Philistines, had now reached the point of war. The Philistines camped with their army on a mountain, and Saul and the men of Israel were on another mountain opposite, with a valley separating the two forces. Battles raged from time to time, and then would quiet down for a short while. To make the situation still worse, the Philistines had chosen a champion—a great giant—whom they sent out to challenge the Israelites. He was a huge hulk of a man, about ten feet tall!—I Samuel 17:4

This giant, Goliath, was armed with a heavy brass helmet, a coat of armor for his body, and even his legs were protected by brass leggings. His armor-bearer went before him carrying a great shield, and in his hand Goliath carried a tremendous spear with a fearful iron spearhead! Goliath strode boldly into the valley every morning and every evening for forty days. He roared out his insults and threats to the Israelites, and challenged the men of Israel to come and fight him. He cried, "Give me a man, that we may fight together. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us!" But even among all the strong, brave soldiers of Israel, not one man was willing to do battle with the fierce giant—all knees trembled, and they fled at the sight of him.

Serving in Saul's army at this time were the three eldest of David's brothers. But David had been sent home to take up his duties again as shepherd for his father while his brothers were away, since he was the youngest son. It was during a visit to the battlefield to bring his brothers some supplies, that David first saw this giant, Goliath. He heard his deafening voice, and threatening words! Once again, all the men of Israel ran away from before his face. David did not run. He told several of the Israelite soldiers that he would be willing to

fight and kill Goliath. These men told King Saul about David's confidence, and his desire to go face to face against the giant. So Saul sent for him. David, brave and full of faith, again volunteered to meet the giant. Since there were no others willing, Saul was finally persuaded to allow the young lad, David, to accept Goliath's challenge. After forty days of Goliath's jeers, no doubt Saul was desperate! His already jangled nerves were suffering, and his men were also badly frightened.—I Samuel 17:24

David's brothers were angry with him for asserting that he would kill the giant. They were afraid for him. But he was determined to go, so, King Saul reluctantly said to him, "Go, and the LORD be with thee." Early the next morning, David set out with his shepherd's staff in his hand, to climb down into the valley to meet Goliath. At a brook, he stopped and chose five smooth stones, putting them in his shepherds' bag. He had his sling with him, which he had used many times to protect his flock from predators. He drew near to the place where Goliath would come.

The giant lumbered out onto the battlefield and looked around him. This time there was a challenger waiting, but when he saw David standing there without any armor, a fair and ruddy youth, he scorned him! He shouted, "Am I a dog, that you bring out a staff to hit me?" And he cursed David by his heathen gods, and said, "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field."—I Samuel 17:40-43

These fearful threats did not shake David. He firmly stood his ground, and answered without any hesitation, "Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee! The battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hands!"

Then Goliath strode closer and closer to meet David. David began to run toward him, and while he was running

he took one of the stones, put it in his slingshot, aiming it carefully to hit Goliath directly on the forehead with great force. Goliath fell upon his face to the ground. David ran and stood upon him. He took Goliath's own sword, and slew him by cutting off his head. It happened so quickly! When the Philistines saw their mighty champion was dead, they hastily fled. (I Samuel 17:45-51) David was victorious! The giant was slain! The Philistine army was on the run, with the triumphant soldiers of Israel chasing after them. Saul insisted on taking David back to his palace to live. His youngest daughter, Michal, became David's bride. David's days as a shepherd came to an abrupt end, for now he was the hero of Israel.

It was this defeat of Goliath and the Philistines that brought David before the public eye, and made him hugely popular with the people. He was indeed a national hero! Soon Saul began to grow jealous of this popularity, and his love for David faded. His envy became even deeper when he and David returned from the slaughter of the Philistines. The women came out from all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul. As they played their instruments they sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands!" Their songs displeased and angered Saul. He protested, saying, "They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands! What can he have more but the kingdom?" (I Samuel 18:6-8) Saul did not know, of course, nor did he even suspect that God had already chosen and anointed David as king over Israel!

However, it is in David's victory over the giant through his trust in the LORD that we begin to learn why God considered him a man after his own heart. David's true character was revealed. His faith and patience in waiting for Jehovah's time to set him upon the throne of Israel continued to be shown, and to be increasingly evident, during the trying years to follow.

Now David was living in the palace of Saul. He became his son-in-law, and his wife, Michal, loved him dearly. Saul's

son, Jonathan also greatly loved the young hero. We are told that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. (I Samuel 18:1) But Saul's fierce jealousy blemished David's happiness in the palace of the king. Saul became more and more afraid of David, because it was evident that he had God's favor, and the king realized he himself was no longer pleasing to the LORD.—I Samuel 18:12

Slowly the determination became fixed in his heart that David must die. At one time, when Saul was unusually distraught, David came to play his harp for him. But in a fit of rage, Saul threw his javelin at David, attempting to kill him. David dodged quickly, and the javelin implanted itself firmly in the wall where he had been standing. David was unharmed. But Saul did not give up his efforts to destroy him. He tried to turn his children against David, ordering Jonathan and Michal, David's wife, to cooperate with him to bring about David's death. Instead, they used the knowledge of their father's plans to save David, and to help him to escape.

For a time it seemed as if Jonathan had persuaded his father not to let his anger and jealousy control him. Saul still had some periods when one could reason with him. But eventually he again became overcome with suspicion and resentment of David. And when war with the Philistines broke out anew, and David was successful against them, it was more than Saul could bear. He vowed that David must die. God had permitted these circumstances to arise in order that the wicked and rejected king would show his true character. The people did not immediately understand why the LORD had rejected Saul, or why David had been anointed to succeed him, but later on this became very clear.

More than once, the increasingly strong friendship between Jonathan and David made Saul very angry with his son. But the close companionship continued nevertheless. When Saul renewed his relentless pursuit of David to kill him, David and Jonathan had to part. As they departed,

Jonathan said to his dear friend, "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed forever."—I Samuel 20:42

After this last meeting, David continued to be hunted by Saul, who seemed to be insanely obsessed with his hatred of David. On the other hand, twice, while Saul was sleeping and at the complete mercy of David, David spared his life. Saul was still the anointed of the LORD, and David was very much aware of that fact. He would not take the responsibility of destroying Saul, even though it would mean safety for himself. God would remove Saul as king, David knew, in his own time and way.

And Saul did come to an inglorious end. It was during another battle with the Philistines, many years after Goliath had been killed, that David's dear friend, Jonathan, was slain. Then Saul was wounded. Fearing what the Philistine soldiers might do to him if they found him in this injured and helpless condition, he asked his armor-bearer to kill him. He refused. So Saul fell upon his own sword, killing himself.

Thus ended the reign of the first king of Israel, who, when he began his rule was little in his own eyes, but became proud and disobedient to the LORD, and died an outcast from divine favor. David, the shepherd, musician, poet, warrior, and prophet, then took the throne and became one of Israel's most beloved kings.

QUESTIONS:

1. Did Saul prove to be a good king over Israel?
2. After Samuel mourned over Saul's wickedness for several years, God gave him instructions to anoint a new king. To whose home did Samuel go?
3. How many sons did Jesse have? Which one was God's choice to be Israel's second king?
4. Why did God choose David to be king?

5. How did Samuel indicate that David was God's choice?
6. Did Samuel live to see David take the throne of Israel?
7. What were the circumstances that brought David to King Saul's palace? Did Saul like David at first?
8. Tell the story of David and Goliath.
9. Why did Saul become David's enemy?
10. Who was David's best friend?
11. How did David show his great character, and faith in God?
12. When did David become king over Israel? ☐



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19-The Three Worlds
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On Sunday, January 19th, **"Frank and Ernest"** will discuss a topic of interest, **"The Three Worlds."** Free circulars are available which announce this program. You are invited to send for as many as you can use. Write to:

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SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of the Dawn, or by classes associated with the Pilgrim Service. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

W. Blicharz
St. Petersburg, FL January 12

L.B. Post
St. Petersburg, FL January 12

R. Shahan
Claymont, DE January 19

E. Worfler
Middletown, NY January 19

Arise and Shine!



LIFT UP, LIFT UP thy voice with singing,
O earth, with strength lift up thy voice!
God's kingdom to the earth is coming,
The King is at thy gates—rejoice!

—Hymns of Dawn, #151

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JANUARY 2—"Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."—I Corinthians 6:19,20 (Z. '97-35 Hymn 219)

JANUARY 9—"Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?"—I Corinthians 4:7 (Z. '03-430 Hymn 9)

JANUARY 16—"Instant in prayer."—Romans 12:12 (Z. '95-215 Hymn 239)

JANUARY 23—"Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."—I Corinthians 7:24 (Z. '99-155 Hymn 109)

JANUARY 30—"Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."—Luke 18:1 (Z. '95-214 Hymn 56)

OBITUARIES

We wish to express our sympathy to the families and friends in the loss of these dear ones.

Brother Carl Cinnamon, Laramie, WY—November. Age, 91.

Brother David Chastain, Hope, IN—November 3.

Sister Ida M. Allison, Helena, MT—November 7. Age, 100.

Sister Mary Drago, West Newton, PA—November 19. Age, 64.

Sister Nellie Korness, San Diego, CA—November 21. Age, 87.

Sister Eva. C. Leonard, Evansville, IN—November 24. Age, 45.

CONVENTIONS

LOS ANGELES, CA, January 19—Masonic Auditorium, 248 E. Olive, Burbank. Contact: Michael Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades 90272
Phone: (310) 454-5248

DETROIT, MI, January 26—Redford YMCA, 25940 Grand River, Redford Twp., MI. Contact: Frank Nemesh, 2183 Babcock Dr., Troy, MI 48084. Phone: (313) 649-6588

PALO ALTO, CA, January 26, 27—San Jose Masonic Lodge, 2500 Masonic Drive, San Jose. For information, please contact: Mr. Mitchell Blicharz. Phone: (408) 356-7973

ST. PETERSBURG, FL, January 12—Majestic Park Homes, 8300 Seminole Blvd. (Alt. 19), Seminole. Contact: Stella Slavich, 3847 Tarpon Pointe Circle, Palm Harbor 34684
Phone: (813) 786-3795

SACRAMENTO, CA, February 14-16—Beverly Garland Hotel, 1780 Tribute Rd. 95815. For reservations, **contact hotel by January 31**: 1-800-BEVERLY. For special rates, mention Bible Students Convention. Or, contact Mrs. E.F.

Lankford, 6000 19th Ave. 95820.
Phone: (916) 457-0569

ROCKLAND BIBLE STUDENTS, CORRECTION: March 8—New Location: Green Meadow Waldorf School, Chestnut Ridge Road, Spring Valley, NY. Contact: Mrs. R. Shallieu, 1041 Johnston Drive, Watchung, NJ 07060

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 10, 11, 12—Macomb Community College, Bldg. K, 14500 12 Mile Road, Warren, MI. Reservations should be made by **March 20th**. Contact: Mr. Frank Nemesh, 2183 Babcock Dr., Troy, MI 48084. Phone: (313) 649-6588

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 18-23—Missouri State College, St. Joseph, MO. Additional convention information will be given in future issues of *The Dawn* magazine.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF BIBLE STUDENTS, August 8-14—Poitiers, France. Contact: Michael Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades CA 90272. Phone: (310) 454-5248