

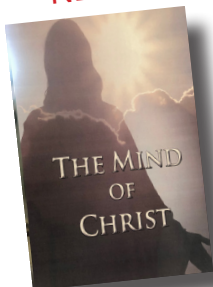
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# The DAWN

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**AUSTRALIA:** Berean Bible Institute, P.O. Box 402, Rosanna, Victoria 3084

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**BRITISH ISLES:** Associated Bible Students, 102 Broad Street, Chesham, HP5 3ED, England

**CANADA:** P.O. Box 1565, Vernon, British Columbia, V1T 8C2

**FRANCE:** L'Aurore, 39A rue des Bois, 68540 Feldkirch

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**GREECE:** He Haravgi (The Dawn), PO Box 521167, Longwood, FL 32752-1167 USA

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# Heaven's Windows Opened

*“It shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.”*

*—Isaiah 24:18*

**IN OUR OPENING TEXT,** “fear,” the “pit,” and the “snare” are used by the Prophet Isaiah as symbols of various troubles which would come upon the world in these last days. He indicates that as the people attempt to escape from one distressing circumstance, they would be confronted with another. What a true and graphic description this is of the world situation today!

There are, in fact, many more than three difficulties and dangers from which a fear-filled and distressed world is endeavoring to escape, and even if a partial solution is found for one problem, more distressing ones loom up in its place.

In the present world situation, and as we near the halfway point of 2022, it is perhaps worthy of note that three distinct, and yet related, events

have been at the top of the news headlines. This is not to suggest that these are equivalent to the fear, pit and snare spoken of by Isaiah, but they do illustrate the fact that multiple, interrelated troubles are presently upon the earth which are affecting the vast majority of mankind in one way or another.

First, there is the lingering Coronavirus pandemic, now entering its third year. Though its lethal results have declined considerably in many parts of the world since the spring of 2020, it is still having a considerable impact upon various segments of the world's population with regard to both physical and mental health.

Second, and much more recently, is the horror of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, seemingly instigated solely by the Russian leader. At the time of this writing, a month and a half since the conflict began, sources report that as many as 20,000 to 25,000 Ukrainian and Russian soldiers have been killed, plus nearly 1,500 Ukrainian civilians, though all of these numbers are likely understated. It is further estimated that more than 4 million Ukrainians have fled their homeland to other surrounding countries. These numbers say nothing of the widespread destruction of Ukrainian cities, homes, businesses, and other property, all of which has occurred within a brief span of time. How and when this conflict will end, we do not know, but it is a grim reminder of the ravages of war, and especially the tragedy of two nations who share so much in the way of history and cultural heritage doing battle against each other.

Third, and much the result of the events noted above, is the recent dramatic rise in inflation and

related increases in the cost of basic goods and services around the world, whether it be in the grocery store, at the gas pump, the housing market, or the many other areas of people's daily needs. The current situation in this regard not only weighs heavily on the individual consumer, but also, over time, could lead to a significant downturn in the economies of the world, most of which are already struggling to a greater or lesser degree.

### **WINDOWS OPENED—AND A GREAT SHAKING**

With these and many other troubling world conditions in mind, we turn again to the words of Isaiah. He speaks in our opening text of the "windows from on high" being opened, and as a result, a great shaking of the "foundations of the earth." To properly appreciate this, however, it is essential to realize that the "shaking" and resulting destruction of the "present evil world" is an evidence that God is preparing the way for his long-promised kingdom of righteousness, peace, joy and life.—Gal. 1:4; II Pet. 3:10-13

Verse 20 of Isaiah chapter 24 declares that the earth would "reel to and fro like a drunkard," and that it would be "removed like a cottage," or as rendered by the *American Standard Version*, "sway to and fro like a hammock." The reason given for these destructive forces upon the earth is that "the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again."

Regardless of how sincere and righteously inclined some world leaders may be, the stark fact is that the crumbling of present society, symbolically described in this prophecy as "the earth," is the result of the

accumulated sins of government and other institutions which make up the “world” as we know it. Surely these transgressions, the source of which is no less than Satan himself, the “god of this world,” are resting heavily upon mankind today.—II Cor. 4:4; Rev. 12:9

## **CONFUSION AND PERPLEXITY**

Confusion among the people is evident in all elements of society. World leaders are fighting an ever-increasing battle to keep the ships of state afloat, while religious leaders, Christian and non-Christian alike, are unable to explain the meaning of events which, to them, are completely at variance with their expectations of an ever upward progression of civilization. It is certainly the time foretold by Jesus when there would be upon the earth “distress of nations, with perplexity,” and when fear would be causing the hearts of mankind to fail as they look at the things coming upon the earth.—Luke 21:25,26

It is this very condition which marks the beginning of the prophetically foretold “day of the LORD.” It is thus described in contrast with the centuries of the past during which God has generally allowed evil to go unchallenged and unopposed so far as interference on his part was concerned. Now, however, and in contrast to the beneficent manifestation of his kingdom authority which is to come afterward, his hand is in the affairs of men to shake and root out every vestige of Satan’s evil world.

This “world,” or present social order, is symbolized in the Old Testament prophecies by the word “earth.” Isaiah wrote, “The earth is utterly broken down,

the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.” (Isa. 24:19) These symbolic references to the earth take place during the “day of the LORD.”

The prophet further wrote: “The day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man’s heart shall melt: And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: ... For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. ... Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.”—Isa. 13:6-13

New Testament prophecies pertaining to the end of the present age use similar language. Paul foretold that in the “day of the Lord” there would come “sudden” or unexpected destruction upon the present world order “as travail upon a woman with child.” (I Thess. 5:1-4) Jesus said that the “powers of heaven shall be shaken.” (Luke 21:26) Paul stated that at the end of the age God would shake “not the earth only, but also heaven.” (Heb. 12:26) The “heaven” and the “earth” symbolize the spiritual and material aspects of the present social order, and as we have already noted, both civil and religious leaders are increasingly unable to find or implement solutions to the myriad troubles which are shaking civilization today.



In times past, the words of great ecclesiastical luminaries, symbolized appropriately in the prophecies by “stars,” were trusted by many to carry some weight of influence in helping to settle the differences among and within nations. This is no longer so. The little light they may have once had is no longer even recognized by a world in which past religious and moral norms have been put aside and are, hence, greatly deteriorated. Thus, the powers of the symbolic heaven designed to hold the world together are shaken and weakened critically.

## **OUR POSITION**

The world today is suffering, bleeding, and filled with fear. We do not call attention to this condition as pessimists, however, but as optimists, because of our confidence in the promises of God to establish a new world order which will be under the righteous and just rulership of Christ. Man’s present failure is very apparent. It has been a long, downhill road from Eden until now, and soon will reach a climax of chaos and destruction—but this is not the end!

Rather, these events signal a new beginning just beyond the present trouble. It will be the beginning of a thousand-year “day” which, before its work is complete, will see mankind restored to perfection of life, with the glorious prospect of living in peace and joy forever upon the earth. (Jer. 23:5; II Pet. 3:8-10; Rev. 5:9,10; 20:6) Only those at present referred to by Paul as “brethren” are aware of this glorious meaning of the times in which we are living. This is because they are “not in darkness, that that day” should overtake them as a “thief in the night.”—I Thess. 5:1-4

“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day,” Paul continued, and are “not of the night, nor of darkness.” (I Thess. 5:5) Indeed, the Lord is very gracious to the “brethren,” his spiritual family, for he reveals to them the meaning of the trouble and distress which surround them, and which is filling the hearts of the people with fear.

Concerning this special care of the Lord during the troubles associated with a dying world order, David wrote, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.”—Ps. 46:1-3

Being enlightened and strengthened by the prophecies and promises of the Scriptures, we are not only able to lift up our own heads and rejoice during these trying times, but we are also in a position to comfort others. (Luke 21:28) This we are admonished to do. For example, much of the 34th chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah is descriptive of the present day of trouble upon the world; then follows the 35th chapter, which presents a beautiful picture of the bright outcome of this time of fear, distress, and perplexity. It is in the 4th verse of this chapter that we read: “Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.”

This is the blessed message that has helped to remove fear from our own hearts as we look out upon a confused and suffering world, and here we are

invited to make it known to others. We can do this by using every opportunity we have to explain to those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness the real reason for the present world distress—that it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance upon the current world order under the rulership of Satan.

Our message will fall far short of what the Lord wants it to be, however, unless we also explain that the purpose for which God is now manifesting his wrath is that, once the present order is fully shaken and cast aside, he will offer the people eternal salvation through the kingdom of Christ. While the Lord has come “with vengeance,” he has also come to “save you.” What a blessed and complete salvation that will be, as pointed out to us in the remaining verses of the chapter!

“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing. ... An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”—Isa. 35:5-10

## **TROUBLE, THEN KINGDOM JOYS**

Many of the prophecies which describe the troubles of the day of God’s vengeance are followed by

a beautiful description of the blessings of Christ's kingdom. Thus, in picturing the dark clouds of the "time of trouble" the prophets also reveal their "silver lining." This sequence of thought is found in the 24th and 25th chapters of Isaiah.

We have already quoted considerably from the 24th chapter concerning the fruitless efforts of the people to escape the troubles which come upon them, and about the shaking of the symbolic earth. It is then in the 25th chapter that we find the righteous kingdom of the Lord symbolically described as a "mountain," concerning which we quote below.

"In this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25:6-9

How glad we are that in addition to the blessings of prosperity, health, and life which will be provided through kingdom agencies, the "face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations" will be destroyed. This "covering" and "vail" seem clearly to refer to the blinding influences of Satan, the great deceiver of mankind. He is the

“god of this world” who has “blinded the minds” of the people.—II Cor. 4:4

However, when God’s blessings begin to flow out from the “mountain” of the Lord, Satan will be bound, rendering him powerless. Instead of the darkening influences of his evil rule hindering the people from knowing God, the knowledge of divine glory will fill the whole earth “as the waters cover the sea.”—Rev. 20:1,2; Hab. 2:14

The binding of Satan will also result in the “rebuke” of God’s people being taken away. Through his fallen, and often unwitting agents, Satan has opposed and persecuted God’s people during all the ages. For this reason, the righteous have suffered, but this also will be changed. With Satan bound, and finally destroyed, the righteous will “flourish,” and for them there shall be an “abundance of peace” forever.—Ps. 72:7

No wonder the happy response of the people to the blessings of the kingdom will be, “This is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” The same people are represented in Isaiah 26:12,13 as saying, “LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. O LORD our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.”

One of the “other lords” which has had dominion over much of the world of mankind is the god of pride and self-accomplishment. The viewpoint of the vast majority, even of those who profess to believe the Bible, is that whatever of peace and righteousness may be established in the earth, it will be accomplished by human efforts. Only those

who have been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God have been made free from this god of self-accomplishment. These know that the only hope for the world is in the promise that “the zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”—Isa. 9:7

When the kingdom blessings begin to flow out to the people, they will quickly recognize the powerlessness of their former “lords,” and will rejoice in the true God of their salvation. How wonderful it is to know this in advance, and to be able to say to a fear-filled world, “Fear not,” for while the efforts of your human leaders will continue to fail, the God of heaven, through his appointed Christ, “will come and save you,” not only from the present time of distress and trouble, but also from death and the grave—for he will “swallow up death in victory,” and “wipe away tears from off all faces.”

Thus, while the storm clouds gather and become ever more ominous and threatening, we will not fear, but are reminded of Jesus’ words, “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh.” (Luke 21:28) This does not mean that we rejoice to see human suffering increasing. Rather, our joy is in the fact that soon this period of great trouble will come to an end. Then there will be no more death, sorrow, crying or pain, for these “former things are passed away.”—Rev. 21:4

The present destructive trouble is as the surgeon’s knife which removes a malignant growth that is killing the patient. Under the rule of Satan, sin and selfishness have produced a social order which, if allowed to continue, would sooner or later lead to the destruction of the human race itself. However,

God is in full control and, as promised in the Scriptures, is intervening at exactly the proper time to save the people, and in this we can rejoice.

We can rejoice that God will soon answer the prayer offered by millions over the past two-thousand years, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10) A more detailed expression of this same sentiment is contained in a prayer by David, which reads:

“God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; That thy way may be known upon the earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear [reverence] him.”—Ps. 67:1-7

When this prayer is answered the people will know that the opening of the “windows from on high” will no longer produce the shaking which results in “fear,” the “pit,” and the “snare;” nor the scourge of a worldwide pandemic, the ravages of war, or the distress of economic uncertainty. Rather, there will be then the opening of another glorious “window,” resulting in mankind’s eternal joy. To those who willingly obey the righteous laws of the kingdom, the Bible promises that God will “open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” (Mal. 3:10) Let us continue to pray for that glorious day! ■

# Freedom from Sin

**Key Verse:** *“If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”*  
—Romans 6:5

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Romans 6:1-14*

because they, as consecrated believers, are walking in newness of life which, among other things, requires discipline in striving against the exercise of self-will. They cannot, therefore, engage in those activities that cater to the gratification of the fallen human appetites.  
—Rom. 6:1-4

Our Key Verse and Selected Scripture affirm that Jesus obtained a high, heavenly reward for obediently sacrificing his life in accordance with God’s will. Similarly, as dedicated followers of our Master, if faithful unto death, we may entertain the great hope of being united with him in the glorious first resurrection. We will then be empowered to assist Christ Jesus in blessing the human family when Satan is bound and a righteous government ensues during the glorious kingdom reign.  
—Rev. 3:21; 20:6; 21:1-7

Presently, as imperfect specimens of humanity, even

**FROM THE TIME OF EVE’S** deception and Adam’s disobedience by eating the forbidden fruit until the present, sin has been a part of mankind’s experience. In today’s lesson, Paul addresses the footstep followers of the Lord who through God’s grace have been baptized into Christ’s death and have received the Holy Spirit. These can no longer willingly practice sin



the spirit-begotten realize it is possible to be overtaken by sin, whether unintentionally or willfully, which could have the potential for the direst of consequences. When this occurs, such a deviation from the principles of godliness must be acknowledged and repented of if we are to be restored to God's favor. Prayer and filling our minds with holy thoughts can be effective tools towards preventing or combatting the effects of sin in our lives. The body of sin stems from the imperfection which came upon our first parents in the Garden of Eden because of their failure to hearken to God's requirements for life. However, the subsequent atoning work of Jesus opened the way to restore mankind during the "times of restitution."—Acts 3:20,21

Our privilege of being crucified with Christ through baptism into his death is a further aspect of the divine arrangement whereby the evil consequences of sin will be eliminated. With our imperfect bodies we could offer nothing to the Lord in the way of an acceptable sacrifice, but as partners with Jesus in the "ministry of reconciliation," God considers us as having passed from death unto life. (II Cor. 5:17,18) If we are "dead" with Christ, Paul states we are freed from sin's condemnation, and, on the authority of God's Word, are privileged to reckon ourselves as participants in the better sacrifices of the great sin-atoning work of Christ.—Rom. 6:6-14; Heb. 9:23

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." (Phil. 4:8, *New International Version*) May we exercise diligence in our daily walk and a reverential attitude towards Christ as suggested by the foregoing passage of Scripture. Thus we may be privileged to share in the future work of restoring all that was previously lost in Adam when the resurrection work is complete.—Rev. 21:4 ■

# Hope for the Future

**Key Verse:** *“I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”*  
—Romans 8:18

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Romans 8:18-30*

be blessed.”—Gal. 3:8

The means or method by which this will be accomplished is through the seed of Abraham. (Gen. 12:1-3; 28:14) Many notable individuals of the Old Testament had faith that a righteous government would be established during their lifetime. However, it was the divine purpose that its fulfillment would be realized during God’s kingdom under the leadership of Christ and his church.—Heb. 11:39,40; Gal. 3:29

Consecrated followers of our Lord Jesus have been invited to participate in this wonderful arrangement for the future by fulfilling the required conditions. “If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. 8:17

Our Key Verse asserts that the difficult trials we experience during our earthly sojourn pale in comparison to

## **ALTHOUGH THE EFFECTS**

of sin have been in existence since the dawn of mankind’s history, the Gospel, or good news, that God has a plan to eliminate unrighteousness was revealed during Old Testament times. “The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations

the future glory and high exaltation we will receive if proven “faithful unto death.” (Rev. 2:10) How encouraging it is, therefore, to realize that all our present troubles and sorrows as we strive to emulate our Master’s walk, will pale compared with the honors that await us for enduring patiently the testing that God permits. There will be a wonderful and glorious outcome for us personally, as well as for all mankind, when Satan is no longer the ruler of this present evil world.

An important lesson to be appreciated and internalized by the people of God is that receiving his favor does not exempt us from problems in this sinful world. Sometimes, as we experience distress, it is difficult for our flesh to accept it as something overruled by the Lord for our eternal spiritual welfare. Yet we are assured that all things work together for the good of those who are called and chosen, however much our flesh may quake as unanticipated trials occur. Indeed, we are promised tribulations in the world, but that in Christ we would have peace.—Rom. 8:28; John 14:27; 16:33

We may at times equate peace with the absence of trouble and feel that trials are not good for us. Nevertheless, we are to meditate upon and claim the precious promises of Scripture which provide assurance that the Captain of our salvation will lead us to our desired haven. He loves us and has provided an example for us to follow which will strengthen us in every trial we may encounter. Truly, “What a friend we have in Jesus,” our great burden-bearer.—Rom. 8:10-28

How reassuring is our conviction that if we continue to obey righteous precepts and principles outlined in the Scriptures, we shall receive God’s choicest blessings that will be granted to those who prove to be more than overcomers. “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? ... In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”—Rom. 8:31,37 ■

# The Promised Seed

**Key Verse:** *“If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”*  
—**Galatians 3:29**

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Galatians 3:15-29**

## **WHENEVER GOD CALLS**

someone to his service, he has a specific purpose or object in mind, as he did with Abraham. This faithful patriarch was directed to leave his native country for a life of separation from its heathen influence. He also had a great influence upon his children, and later upon

the nation of Israel, because of a promise he received indicating that by obediently responding to this calling, all the families of the earth would be blessed.—  
Gen. 12:3

As Abraham’s natural descendants, Israel was given the first opportunity to qualify as God’s means for blessing the human family. Obedience to the Law Covenant would have prepared the nation to accept Christ when he came, and through faith, be joined with him to become the seed of promise. God said to them, “If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”—Exod. 19:5,6

Paul, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, provides us with much understanding concerning how this aforementioned blessing will come to fruition. He references the fact that as a result of Jesus’ perfect obedience throughout his earthly ministry, the Law

Covenant was fulfilled.—Rom. 10:4; Col. 2:14

Additionally, Paul reminds us that the Law provided at Mount Sinai through Moses was added over four hundred years after God's promise to Abraham. The Law was given to illustrate that sin was having a degrading effect upon the human family, as well as to demonstrate to the Israelites and everyone else the impossibility of any imperfect human being keeping the divine requirements for obtaining life on earth. Through all of this period, however, the original Abrahamic Covenant has continued to remain in force, and the blessings to be accrued will be realized during God's kingdom of righteousness, when Satan will be bound and unable to deceive mankind.—Gal. 3:16-19; Rev. 20:2,3

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."—Gal. 3:24-28

Our Key Verse affirms that all consecrated believers throughout this Gospel Age who comply with the conditions of discipleship, through baptism into Christ's death and faithfulness in keeping their covenant of sacrifice, will be a part of this spiritual seed that will bless all of mankind in the approaching kingdom of God.

What a privilege is ours to understand God's marvelous plan for the restoration of mankind from the devastating effects of sin in this present evil world. If faithful, we will also have the glorious privilege of being in the presence of Jesus, the "King of kings," throughout eternity.—Rev. 17:14 ■

# The Law Fulfilled

**Key Verse:** “*For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*”  
—**Galatians 5:14**

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Galatians 5:1-15**

## **IN TODAY’S LESSON,**

Paul is writing to the brethren in Galatia, a region which contained a number of ecclesias who were not of Jewish origin that were developed as a result of his missionary tours. One of the issues Paul sought to

counteract was the Judaizing influence upon these believers who formerly were heathen and were being subjected to efforts attempting to compel them to follow various aspects of the Mosaic Law. Although addressed to the saints in Galatia, in principle, this epistle has been preserved for the entire church throughout the Gospel Age. Bondage would include not only submission to the requirements of the Law Covenant in Paul’s day, but it would apply to any form of sectarianism or unscriptural traditions that would bring us under condemnation once we have been justified.

To the extent that, as Christians, we are becoming conformed more and more to the will of God, the sanctifying influence of his Word will enable us to progress spiritually. However, sometimes there can be pressures both from within our fellowship and from the world outside to have our behavior or beliefs conform to standards which do not necessarily represent scriptural teachings on a given matter.—Gal. 5:1-3

During his ministry, for example, Paul was very clear

that justification, or being counted righteous by God, was not dependent upon the keeping of various ceremonial features of the Mosaic Law, but rather upon the acceptance of Christ's ransom sacrifice as the basis for consecrated believers to become sons of God.—Rom. 3:20

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?”—Gal. 5:4-7

It is of great importance that believers study and apply scriptural principles in the exercise of liberty with regard to both doctrinal understanding and behavioral practices in order to be acceptable to our Heavenly Father. We are to “prove all things,” and never to use liberty as “an occasion to the flesh.”—I Thess. 5:21; Gal. 5:8-13

Our Key Verse indicates that God's law is fulfilled in the lives of the consecrated by serving one another in spirit and in truth. As such, we continually strive to have our hearts and minds regulated in accordance with the precepts set forth by our Lord during his earthly ministry and also elaborated upon in various New Testament epistles.

Consecrated followers of Christ are under the law of liberty. Our love for God is demonstrated by willingly sacrificing our human rights and privileges in serving him and his cause. The Law Covenant came to an end for those Jews who accepted Christ's death as the means by which they could be freed from this yoke of bondage. Through his ransom sacrifice and keeping all features of the Mosaic Law perfectly, our Lord met all the demands of divine justice and thus the price has been paid to release us from our former condemnation.—Rom. 10:4 ■

# Walking in the Spirit

**Key Verse:** *“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”*  
—Galatians 5:25

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Galatians 5:16-26**

## **ONE GREAT CHALLENGE**

for God’s children is to consistently keep our fleshly appetites, ambitions or desires in subjection to the divine will. High-mindedness may be caused by a desire to be recognized by others among our fellow creatures, to be well thought of, to

receive the empty honors of the earth, to have wealth, influence, or to be held in esteem, either by the world or even our brethren. These are characteristics which are part and parcel of our fallen nature, and must be striven against by hearkening unto God’s Word. “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”—Gal. 5:16

Additionally, as consecrated believers, if our spirit is such that we harbor feelings of animosity towards others, then we must wage an aggressive warfare against such a disposition lest it consume us. The Heavenly Father is very merciful, and even those who have opposed the followers of Christ prior to devoting themselves to godliness and consecrated living might subsequently repent of their wrongdoing and become acceptable to God. Saul of Tarsus, who became a sincere follower of Christ following his Damascus Road experience, was an example of such transformational conduct. What a marvelous provision God has made for all who truly desire to serve him in spirit and in truth.



—Acts 9:1-19; John 4:24

The Apostle Paul speaks to us concerning this battle of the flesh against the Spirit: “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”—Gal. 5:17,18

The works of the flesh which Satan encourages are contrary to the path that those begotten of the Holy Spirit should follow. Paul enumerates in our lesson some specific vices which, although not an exhaustive listing, illustrate various sensual, religious, social and interpersonal sins as examples of conduct that are inconsistent with righteousness. If persisted in without repentance, such practices would debar us from sharing in the hope of being a member of the body of Christ. On the contrary, if the “fruit of the Spirit” is properly cultivated in its many manifestations of love in our character including joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, faith and self-control, that will give evidence that we are voluntarily crucifying the tendencies of the fallen human nature and are walking in newness of life.—vss. 19-24

Our Key Verse affirms that as New Creatures in Christ, if we abide in him, we will receive the strength to be more than conquerors and ultimately, be united in glory with our beloved Savior. We thus see that the object of our having received the Gospel message is not merely to give us an intellectual knowledge of God’s plan, but to assist us in the transformation process so that through the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, we may develop a Christlike character. Let us indeed give diligence to these matters so that we can demonstrate our love for God, his righteous principles, and ultimately share in the work of reconciling mankind to the Heavenly Father and restoring them to the perfection that was lost in Eden. ■

# A Habitation of God

*“In whom ye also  
are builded  
together for an  
habitation of God  
through the  
Spirit.”*

*—Ephesians 2:22*

**THE IDEA OF THE CREA-**  
tor's interest in a house to  
be provided by his human  
creatures may have been first  
suggested in the instructions  
to Moses for the building of  
the Tabernacle in the wilder-

ness. (Exod. 29:43-46) Still earlier, Jacob, fleeing from Esau and in a dream seeing Jehovah looking down from heaven and assuring him of the blessing for which he had risked so much, declared, “Surely the LORD is in this place; ... this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”—Gen. 28:16,17

Later this idea of the house of God was embodied in the Temple built by Solomon in accord with divine instructions. Both of these buildings, the Tabernacle in the wilderness and the magnificent Temple in Jerusalem, were recognized as inadequate to furnish a real home, or habitation, for Jehovah. Of the Temple, Solomon declared, “Will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven

and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" (I Kings 8:27) We see then that God did not dwell there as his literal home. Rather, it was, as he declares, a place where he would place his "name," a symbolic representation of himself, and which he designates a "house of sacrifice" wherein prayers might be offered and, if in accord with his instructions and in the proper spirit, forgiveness for sins and God's blessings would be obtained.—II Chron. 7:12-16

In the New Testament we have a clearer idea of God's thoughts with respect to his house. Certain statements of the Old Testament had given an intimation that the Tabernacle and Temple arrangements were merely pictorial, and their true significance quite unrelated to a material building. Such examples are found in Isaiah 57 and Psalm 132. We could know nothing of the physical requirements, if any, of a spirit or divine being's home. It is remarkable and inspiring to know where our Creator places the emphasis for his comfort, joy, happiness, and that which he will call his home. Thus, we can appreciate his specifications, and this would be quite natural with respect to human habitations. We can appraise and appreciate the utility, convenience, and beauty of a fellow man's home because we are of the same human make-up, needs, and grade of intelligence. If the wisdom and power represented in the universe were necessary for our understanding of the home God has designed for himself, it would be impossible for us to comprehend or even to reason about it.

An essential quality for an earthly dwelling to truly become a home is that in it there must exist

harmony, sympathy, understanding and companionship. This is also true of our Creator, "that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isa. 57:15) Those who aspire to be members of his spiritual family have similarly devoted their lives to acquiring, developing, and practicing all the elements of his own glorious character.

God, through the Prophet Jeremiah, says, "I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD." (Jer. 9:24) Therefore, it will be so with all who are being "builded together for an habitation of God." In "these things" will be their delight also, not only to know about them as the character of God and to proclaim them to others as illustrated in the Scriptures, but also to delight in the application of them in all their relationships, thus gaining a counterpart of the divine character of their very own, for eternity.

This degree of development in God's likeness is possible only under conditions of tribulation and trial, where tests of the utmost eternal benefit are permitted. Even of Jesus, we read that it was proper on God's part, "in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," and that he was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Heb. 2:10; Rev. 13:8) Likewise, Christ's body members, chosen "in him before the foundation of the world," must share his experience of suffering for righteousness' sake—presenting their bodies, including their

human hopes, now and in the future, “a living sacrifice.” (Eph. 1:4; Rom. 12:1) Such thereafter are engaged in setting their minds and affections upon “those things which are above,” that which is appropriate to their new spirit-begotten condition. —Col. 3:1,2

Thus, through what are often difficult experiences, we have been learning the elements of God’s character. We are ascertaining right, often by experience with wrong; justice, by suffering injustice and inequity; humility, by experience with pride and vanity; pity and tenderness, by contact with hardness and cruelty. We are learning sympathy for others’ infirmities because we are conscious of our own; and we are developing self-sacrificing love, in contrast to the prevalent selfishness, ambition, and greed in the world which surrounds us.

## **THE TEMPLE OF GOD**

In contrast to the literal places of natural Israel where our Creator placed his name, we find in the New Testament the detailed description of a symbolic home in which he can walk and dwell in spirit. We read, “Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” —II Cor. 6:16

The full significance of this and similar statements of Jesus and the apostles would be impossible for us to comprehend without divine assistance. With this realization the Apostle Paul prayed for the brethren at Ephesus that “the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his invitation, what the glorious

wealth of his inheritance among the saints.”—Eph. 1:18, *The Emphatic Diaglott*

We also, who entertain the same hope, view the wondrous beauty of our calling, and the inspiration it furnishes, “forgetting those things which are behind,” and concentrating thought and effort in “reaching forth unto those things which are before.” (Phil. 3:13) While setting our minds upon these things, as have all our brethren down through the age, we long for the time when all the members of this special class, God’s “inheritance among the saints,” will be gathered with our Lord and be introduced to the Father as members of his household for eternity.

To the woman who was a Samaritan, Jesus said that the hour “now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” (John 4:23,24) The thought here is that God seeks intelligent worship, not based upon misconceptions of his character, but upon an accurate knowledge of it. Later, Jesus said to his disciples, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, ... and we will come unto him, and make our abode [Greek: residence] with him.”—John 14:21,23

This figurative language implies that even here in our present trial state, if we meet the conditions, we can enjoy a genuine oneness with our Lord and the Heavenly Father. As their divine life is richer, fuller, and capable of higher emotions and joys, so will ours be also. Our spiritual joy in this intimate relationship will be “unspeakable and full of glory.”—I Pet. 1:8

## LIVING STONES

God's habitation, centered in his glorious character, is one in which there is room for full fellowship, and in which he can manifest his principles, disposition and power. Grateful indeed should we be that he has arranged matters so that we can share this course of study and development, and that he seeks such earnest disciples. In I Peter 2:4-6, Jesus is compared to a "living stone." As such, he also has the ability and desire to shape and prepare other living stones, his disciples, to be the symbolic materials of which the temple of God is to be built. The Temple built by Solomon illustrated in its construction the development of the members of the spiritual temple during the Gospel Age, and their final assembly in glory. We recall that the stones of which Solomon's Temple was constructed were all shaped and prepared for their respective positions while in the quarry, and were all fully prepared and ready when placed in the Temple walls.—I Kings 6:7

Considering the preparation of the stones for that Temple, we can imagine that some taken from the quarry were found not of the right type, or consistency, and defects came to light that resulted in their being set aside. Some of these stones may have proved too hard and brittle to take the shaping required. We so find it in our consideration of the development of the living stones for the true temple.

Some potential living stones may be disallowed because, if unresponsive to the Lord's instructions and discipline, the rough parts of their character cannot be refined sufficiently. Pride, the great hardener, is warned against as a dangerous snare in many portions of Scripture: "Despise not thou

the chastening of the Lord;" "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall;" "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."—Heb. 12:5; I Cor. 10:12; Gal. 6:3

In contrast, Jesus gave us a perfect example both in his words and his life, and could say, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." (Matt. 11:29) The Apostle Peter, having learned wisdom from personal contact involving reproof as well as instruction from the Master, exhorts, "All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." —I Pet. 5:5

In this and other expressions of the Apostle Peter, we have the blessed assurance that he was of the proper texture as a living stone and had taken to heart the humbling experiences that God had sent into his life. May it likewise be so with us. Let us not fail to throttle pride in ourselves, and if we have taken a wrong course, confess and correct it. If we have been too hard, too stern or too opinionated in our relations with members of our family, with the brethren, or with any others, let us hasten to repent, reform and undo any damage our human mind and conduct may have caused. Paul, also deeply impressed with the importance of meekness and gentleness, followed the example of the Master in his humble course among the brethren at Corinth, and besought them to recall and consider attentively the "meekness and gentleness of Christ." (II Cor. 10:1) Such qualities are unnatural to the fallen human nature, and hence need the most careful and persistent cultivation.



## FURTHER EXHORTATIONS

Moreover, stones for a permanent structure may be too soft. Living stones may also be excessively soft, and not useable in such a condition. Softness of will or character may be manifested in the fear of loss or suffering, restraining us from faithful obedience to the Lord's instructions. Softness may result in being "conformed to this world" instead of the reverse. (Rom. 12:2) It may be revealed in judging ourselves too tenderly or carelessly; or in not taking a firm stand in opposition to wrong conduct in the daily affairs of life.

Many exhortations are given us along this line. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." "Be no more children," but "grow up into him in all things." "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." (Gal. 5:1; Eph. 4:14,15; 6:10; I Tim. 6:12) Paul gives us an inspiring illustration of determination to be faithful to God at all costs, when he said concerning the "bonds and afflictions" that awaited him at Jerusalem, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy."—Acts 20:22-24

In the construction of a building, still other defects may be encountered. We may use as an illustration destructive carpenter ants or termites which attack wooden timbers, eat out the center, and weaken them so that the structure becomes unstable or even collapses. Such destructive forces, secretly working unobserved, (*Continued on page 36*)

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*(Continued from page 31)* well illustrate the damage to character resulting from secret faults permitted that are not dealt with honestly and quickly, and which over time may render much injury to our consecrated relationship with God. Let us, rather, echo the sentiments of the psalmist, who prayed, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me."—Ps. 19:12,13

These deflections, though perhaps appearing minor at the outset, would seem to indicate a corresponding neglect of the Word of God, the effect of which would be to leave us unprepared for tests as well as for opportunities to serve the Lord. It would make us the reverse of what was said prophetically of Jesus in Isaiah 11:1-3, that he would be "of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD."

How we admire one such as Jesus, who was prepared for every test and opportunity, whether it called for him to be gentle, tender, and meek; or bold, strong, and uncompromising. So may it be with us, his followers and disciples. It is indeed possible for us to reach that degree of development, "conformed to the image of his [God's] Son," but only if we are saturated with the Word of God—the "word of Christ" dwelling in us richly and "teaching and admonishing" us.—Rom. 8:29; Col. 3:16

## **TESTS OF SPIRITUAL STRENGTH**

The living stones of which the "holy temple in the Lord" is to be constructed have still further tests. (Eph. 2:21) Even as some materials for earthly structures, these must be tested as to their tensile and their load-bearing strength. Tensile strength

well corresponds to longsuffering and patience. In that wonderful description of the divine character, we are told by the Apostle Paul that love “suffereth long, and is kind,” and in writing to the church at Rome, he assures them that “tribulation worketh patience.” (I Cor. 13:4; Rom. 5:3) With the same thought, James exhorts us to “let patience have her perfect [Greek: complete] work.” (James 1:4) How reasonable that God allows for time and experience in the development and ripening of the fruit of the spirit in each of his children! Thus the apostle again urges, “Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”—Gal. 6:9

Load-bearing strength is also a requisite in these living stones. This does not mean that any of us individually could bear all the extreme tests which might be applied, for we are assured by the apostle, “God is faithful, who will not permit you to be tried beyond your ability; but with the trial, will also direct the issue, that you may be able to bear it.” (I Cor. 10:13, *Diaglott*) This was Paul’s own experience, when he testified that while in Asia he was “pressed out of measure, above strength,” but that God delivered him though he had “despaired even of life.” He further said that he and his companions “had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead.” (II Cor. 1:8,9) What an inspiring testimony to the unbreakable determination of Paul and his associates to trust fully in God and his providences for them, inasmuch as they had made a consecration even unto death. Hence, we, too, are to look beyond this human life and trust in him that “raiseth the dead.”

In another place, Paul writes that God's purpose concerning the establishment of his promised kingdom is to shake all things in order that the things which can be shaken may be removed. (Heb. 12:26-28) The clear intimation from this passage is that not only is the kingdom we seek one which cannot be shaken, but also that its spiritual ruling class is to be composed of those living stones which likewise cannot be shaken, because they have sought and received the strength sufficient for their every need, and tests which, in his wisdom, the Lord has subjected them to in order to bring their development to completion.

## **FELLOW BRETHREN IN THE HOUSE OF GOD**

"That thou mayest know how to conduct thyself in God's house, which is a congregation of the living God," wrote Paul to Timothy. (I Tim. 3:15, *Diaglott*) Individual Christians are God's habitation through the Spirit, but he also has at the present time a more comprehensive representation and means of expression in and through the ecclesia or "congregation" arrangement. How important, therefore, is our association with the brethren in "God's house." Each member is a stone in God's symbolic temple, yet how much profit we may gain from our association with fellow members of this building! Through our fellowship with these other living stones, we will see a demonstration of God's Spirit, and at times, perhaps, greater development in some respects than our own. Let us note their examples of courage, meekness, patience, zeal, humility and love. Recalling another illustration given by Paul—that of the body—let us remember that it is by



“that which every joint supplieth” that the body is being built up in our Master’s likeness. (Eph. 4:15,16) Let us take a builder’s interest in the brethren, as God does, considering one another and provoking each other to love and good works.—Heb. 10:24

In every gathering of the Lord’s people, we find occasion for the exercise of godly character, sharing in the joint endeavors of the brethren to maintain “the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,” and at the same time, “with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Gal. 5:1; Eph. 4:2,3) Without doubt, in obeying the exhortation, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,” we shall find many of our greatest helps and blessings in the narrow way. At the same time in that blessed fellowship with others of “like precious faith,” we shall experience some of our most searching tests as to our knowledge of, and obedience to, the instructions of the Lord’s Word.—Heb. 10:25; II Pet. 1:1

## **HABITATION SOON TO BE COMPLETE**

Soon, we believe, God’s spiritual habitation will be complete. We could well exhaust language in our efforts to describe the grandeur and glory of that dwelling place of the Almighty. In the 45th Psalm, the head of the divine family of sons is pictured, and with him his bride, the church. The bride is said to be “all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold;” and she is “brought unto the king in raiment of needlework.” (vss. 13,14) The Apostle Paul describes the church as both the “bride” and

also the “body” of Christ—the “fulness” or completion of the Christ class—that “little flock” who are to be God’s heavenly family and enjoy the most intimate communion with him.—Eph. 1:23; 4:13; 5:25-27,29,30; Luke 12:32

We are told in the Book of Revelation that the activity of the completed Christ class for the first thousand years will be as kings, priests, and judges over the world. (Rev. 20:6,12; 5:10) The result will be the reuniting in loyal obedience to God of all his intelligent creation alienated through sin, except those who, with full light, reject the opportunity. One thousand years are only the beginning, however, of the church’s eternal association in the plans of the Creator, who in his perfect wisdom, love, and power will have formulated a program which will be sublime in every respect for the ages of eternity.

The opportunity to become of the immediate family of God is far beyond our ability to fully appreciate or understand. As the apostle says, however, we hope for it, remembering that “the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity. ... And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because it maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. ... For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”—Rom. 8:25-29, *Revised Version Improved and Corrected* ■

*“It is the blessing of the LORD  
that makes rich,  
And He adds no sorrow to it.”*

*Proverbs 10:22, New American Standard Bible*

# Lessons on Faith

*“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”*

*—Hebrews 11:1*

**WE CAN PERHAPS PARAPHRASE** our opening text in this way: “Faith is the basis, and the conviction, concerning things hoped for, as well as for things not seen, based

on the divine promises of God’s Word.” True faith has real substance, a mental substance or basis, so to speak, which stimulates and guides the mind of the child of God. The essence of faith’s substance consists in receiving what God has revealed to us in the Scriptures. Such faith should motivate us to loving obedience and to good works. (Eph. 2:10; Matt. 5:16; James 2:14-26) The personal trust we have in God, day by day, is one of the primary means by which we will obtain salvation. This faith is centered in our Lord Jesus Christ, “who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.”—Rom. 4:24,25, *English Standard Version*

## **FAITH GIVES ASSURANCE**

Our walk by faith began when, with the first elements of trust and belief in God, we saw his character, and that of his beloved Son, though only

in a limited measure. Gradually, as we were drawn closer to God, we were privileged to know more of him, to grow in appreciation of his wonderful plan, having our feet set upon the solid ground of truth. (Eph. 3:17-19) These elements of faith are so important that we are told in Hebrews 11:6, "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

As defined earlier, faith includes the "substance" of instruction and teachings found in God's Word, for the special benefit of the footstep followers of Jesus. Faith makes it possible for God's people to have conviction concerning his plans and purposes, and to act upon them in accordance with his will. "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." (I John 5:14) In short, faith acts as a fundamental working principle in the lives of the Lord's consecrated people.

Faith in the many wonderful promises of the Bible provides much assurance to the followers of our Lord. "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Luke 12:32; Ps. 46:1; Rom. 8:31) These and many other promises from the Word of God should strengthen our assurance that the Heavenly Father will provide us, if we trust in him, all the necessary guidance and direction in order that we may grow to spiritual maturity. Thus, with the substance and evidence of God's Word and his overruling in our lives, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."—Heb. 10:22

## FAITH CALLS FOR PERSEVERANCE

As we grow in faith, we should recall life's experiences, including its joys and sorrows, by which we are to become stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might. (Eph. 6:10) To become strong requires continual exercise, training and perseverance. In our spiritual training, we should be energized by God's Word, and by our relationship with him through Christ. We have the same favors, promises and inspiring hopes that Jesus and the apostles had. Yet, to fully attain these, we must persevere day by day. Paul stated, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."—Heb. 10:23; 3:14

Our desire should be that we continue to serve God with our whole heart, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, ... But 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, settle you." (I Pet. 5:7-10) All in the school of Christ must come to appreciate that the trials of the present, and those still to come upon them, are manifestations of divine favor. For this reason, the allurements of this world are not for those who strive to walk in the Lord's footsteps, and their temptations must be resisted.—I Cor. 1:27,28; Luke 16:13

We will have many tests to show the depth of our loyalty toward God. These will come throughout our

Christian walk. Therefore, we must hold fast to the glorious Truth not only in letter—words and actions—but also in spirit—disposition and character. An important part of our perseverance is that of having the humble attitude shown in Paul’s words concerning himself: “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 3:13,14) We must focus our energy upon the things that will draw us closer to God. This includes striving to keep our hearts and minds full of the precious gems found in God’s Holy Word. Concerning those things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous and praiseworthy, Paul says, “think on these things.”—Phil. 4:8,9

A consideration of the importance of perseverance is not complete without mentioning the role of the important privilege of prayer. “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” (Eph. 6:18) A child of God must have an active prayer life, “with all perseverance,” communing with him concerning our daily experiences and asking for his help and guidance in them, being motivated by a desire to do his will in all things.

## **FAITH INSPIRES GRATITUDE**

We should be ever thankful to our Heavenly Father, for we owe our all to him through his only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. (I Cor. 8:6) We recall the words

of Paul, “Know ye not that ... ye are not your own? For ye are bought [and paid for] with a price: therefore glorify your God.” (I Cor. 6:19,20) Our understanding of this shows us that our time, talents, influence, means, and all that we might consider precious, or in any proper degree valuable, belongs to the Lord, even life itself.

Our Heavenly Father cares for us and loves us dearly. All pure, lovely, and true things originate from the “Father of lights,” and come to us through Jesus. (James 1:17) God is concerned with, and about, even the smallest matters in our life. (Matt. 10:29-31) He is pleased to oversee by his divine providence everything in which we are involved. Our faith and trust in God should cause us to be ever mindful of the privilege of coming to him through our Lord and Master for help and encouragement, comfort, consolation, guidance and rest. “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28) Our faith should inspire gratitude of heart, and engender within us peace and rest in God, knowing that he is strong and mighty toward us. “The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.”—Ps. 29:11

With gratitude we realize that Christ Jesus is our heavenly friend, and our comforter. His character is so in harmony with that of the Heavenly Father that the Apostle Paul refers to him as “the brightness of his [God’s] glory, and the express image of his [God’s] person.” (Heb. 1:3) Our depth of faith compels us to follow the example of the Apostle Paul when he declared himself a follower of Christ. (I Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1,2) Developing the

character traits and disposition of Christ will lead the footstep follower of the Master to be a humble, loving, and tenderhearted person, as he was. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (I Pet. 5:6,7) Each day that we are privileged to walk in the narrow way, our attitude should be as that expressed in the words of Psalm 116:12-14: "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people."

As children of God, we should be ever thankful to our Father for his providential care and overruling in all aspects of our lives. We must also realize through the eye of faith that he has everything under control and in full harmony with his wonderful plan. This should inspire all of us to strive to fulfill our consecration vows, even unto death, knowing that if faithful we will attain to glory, honor and immortality. (Rom. 2:7) Trusting in him completely, as partakers of his grace through Christ Jesus, we can truly say, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."—II Cor. 9:15

## **FAITH LEADS TO MUTUAL LOVE**

"Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (I Cor. 13:13) Charity, as spoken of by Paul in this chapter, is more properly translated as love—love that is completely unselfish, not desiring anything in return. This kind of love can be demonstrated by acts of kindness, providing assistance, engaging in sacrificial service



on behalf of others, and even by acts of goodwill toward our fellow man. The apostle further tells us about this divine love. “Love suffers long and is kind. Love does not envy. Love is not boastful; is not puffed up; acts not unbecomingly, seeks not that which is not her own; is not provoked to anger; does not impute evil; rejoices not with iniquity, but rejoices with the truth; covers all things; believes all things; hopes for all things; endures all things. Love fails not at any time.”—I Cor. 13:4-8, *The Emphatic Diaglott*

Our hearts should be kept full of the love of God to such an extent that there will be no room for unkind thoughts toward others, even those who we may consider our enemies. We should remember that God “first loved us,” and did so “while we were yet sinners.” (I John 4:19; Rom. 5:8) We can do no less than show our love toward the Heavenly Father and his Son Christ Jesus by loving our brethren, our neighbors, and all mankind. Love is the ultimate mark of true holiness, and God has instructed us, “Be ye holy, for I am holy.”—I Pet. 1:16

The Scriptures give us these additional admonitions concerning love. “Honour all men. Love the brotherhood.” “Let brotherly love continue.” (I Pet. 2:17; Heb. 13:1) We note in these words that brotherly love is not merely to be given at certain times or under limited circumstances, but it is to continue. The word translated “continue” in the above text means “not to depart, ... to be held, kept continually.” When our minds are enriched by this understanding we are led to the realization that “a friend loveth at all times.”—Prov. 17:17

## FAITH PRODUCES ENDURANCE

“Therefore, having so vast a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, and throwing off everything that hinders us and especially the sin that so easily entangles us, let us keep running with endurance the race set before us, fixing our attention on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of the faith, who, in view of the joy set before him, endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb. 12:1,2, *International Standard Version*) Here we are exhorted to look back at the experiences of the faithful ones of the Old Testament, as well as Jesus and the apostles, all of whom constitute a great “cloud of witnesses.” We should consider what they endured and how faithful and loyal they were to God, even in the most difficult of experiences.

Their endurance should inspire us to greater faithfulness in running our race, and take to heart the many Scriptural admonitions which address the need for constant endurance. “All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.”—II Cor. 4:15-17; Rev. 3:12

As the church will be the temple of God, perfect on the heavenly plane, so all those begotten of the Holy Spirit as “new creatures,” must realize that God is dealing with them, and claim the promise,

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” (II Cor. 5:17; Rev. 3:21) The attainment of this goal is made possible by God’s providential care over us, and through patient endurance on our part. We recall the words spoken to Abraham because of his faith in God, and his endurance. “And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.”—Heb. 6:15

We are told: “Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” (Heb. 12:3) The mind is a special battleground for each of us. The “old man” of our fallen nature is in continual conflict with the “new man.” (Col. 3:9,10) Our flesh’s resistance to sacrifice is also part of this battle. Rather than succumb to these fleshly influences, however, we should rejoice that our Lord has invited us to walk in his footsteps, and to endure as he did. Let us drink of the cup he drank of and be baptized with the baptism he was baptized with. (Mark 10:38,39) Thus, when we endure hard experiences, or are scorned by others, we can remember the words, “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, ... Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.”—Matt. 5:11,12

## **FINAL VICTORY THROUGH FAITH**

The Apostle John wrote: “All that has been begotten by God overcomes the world; and this is that victory which overcomes the world—our faith.” (I John 5:4, *Diaglott*) We note that although faith is necessary to gain this victory, our triumph is only

made possible by the conquering power of God. It is he who has begotten us, and it is his Holy Spirit that, through our begetting, leads us to victory. Guided by God's spirit, we know that all things will work together for our ultimate good. (Rom. 8:28) Therefore, we are to be submissive to the will of our Heavenly Father and his Son, Christ Jesus, and continually put our faith and trust in them, even when the way seems dark and foreboding. This is the ultimate progression of going from "faith to faith"—to implicitly trust our loving and all-wise God even where we cannot trace him. This is how the righteous "live by faith."—Rom. 1:17

Only those who, from faith to faith, are fully baptized into the sacrificial death of our Lord will be granted a share with him in glory as his joint-heirs, and as members of the great prophet, priest, king, mediator, and judge of the world in the Messianic kingdom. (Rom. 8:16,17; II Tim. 2:10-12; Rev. 3:21) The final members of Christ's body will all soon be raised up in glory and become sharers in the "first resurrection." (Rev. 20:6) Having been faithful unto death, the promise given by Jesus in the upper room will be fulfilled: "I will ... receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:3) Then will come the glorious fulfillment of the prayer that has been uttered for nearly two thousand years: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. 6:10 ■

*"I will ponder all your work, and meditate  
on your mighty deeds."*

*Psalms 77:12, English Standard Version*

# Our Lord and Nicodemus

***“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night.”  
—John 3:1,2***

**THE ACCOUNT OF JESUS’** meeting with Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews, is found in John 3:1-15. It is one of the most interesting of the many incidents in the Gospel record, illustrating

the attitude of at least some of the rulers of the Jews toward God’s only begotten Son, whom the Father had sanctified and sent into the world. More important than this is the illustration this account provides of the attitude of a well-learned natural man toward spiritual things, and his difficulty to receive and understand them.

The Pharisees were considered by many, including themselves, as the holiest sect of the Jews in Jesus’ day. They claimed special sanctity as a result of keeping the Mosaic Law, manifesting scrupulous care for all its ceremonial features. Being spoken of as a “ruler of the Jews,” and a “master of Israel,” Nicodemus was much like some of the influential leaders in the churches of today. (John 3:1,10)

Though he no doubt attempted to live to the extent of his ability in accordance with many features of the Jewish Law, he was not able to grasp spiritual things on account of being a natural man, and thus was unable to receive the things of the Spirit of God, or to understand them, “because they are spiritually discerned.”—I Cor. 2:14

### **WHY BY NIGHT?**

The account states that Nicodemus “came to Jesus by night.” It has been suggested that he went at that time because he did not wish to be seen visiting such an unpopular person as Jesus was with the scribes and Pharisees, and he did not want to have it known that he was in any way influenced by his message. On the other hand, it may be said that the nighttime hours would be the most convenient time for a quiet, private conversation, especially in view of Jesus’ busy life of teaching, performing of miracles, and frequently having great multitudes following him.

For example, when the friends of the man “taken with a palsy” wished to bring him to Jesus, there was such a throng of people surrounding the house that the only way to obtain access to the Master was by making an opening in the roof, and lowering the sick man “into the midst before Jesus.” (Luke 5:18,19) On another occasion we read that there were so many going and coming to see our Lord and his disciples that they had “no leisure so much as to eat.” (Mark 6:31) Furthermore, we need not think of Nicodemus coming in the middle of the night, but merely after dark, perhaps the best time available for him to make a visit.

Nicodemus' approach to our Lord was very respectful: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." (John 3:2) From our Lord's reply, it is quite evident that only part of the conversation is recorded. It also seems clear that the vital subject of Messiah's kingdom, in which every Jew believed, must have been mentioned. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born [begotten: please see the next paragraph for further explanation] from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (vs. 3, *Rotherham Emphasized Bible*) Nicodemus had evidently heard that Jesus was preaching that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Possibly he heard that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah—the great king—in that kingdom.

By way of explanation, the word "born" as rendered in the foregoing verse, is a translation of the Greek word *gennao*. This word is unique in that it can refer to either the act of begetting—the beginning of the gestation period—or the actual birth at the end of the same period. Thus, *gennao* can be correctly translated either "begotten" or "born," depending on whether the subject is the father, who begets, or the mother, who gives birth. In this case, it should be translated "begotten," because God, the Father, "from above," is involved. The rendering of *gennao* as "begotten" should also be made in verse 7 of this chapter.

Returning to our lesson, in view of Jesus' absence of political influence, and with generally only followers from among the common people, Nicodemus was understandably perplexed that the Lord would make such bold claims regarding to the "kingdom

of God.” Hence Jesus emphasized the fact that a man must be begotten from above if he would “see,” in the sense of understanding, the kingdom in its embryonic stage during the present Gospel Age. Later, for example, the Apostle Paul said that God “hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” (Col. 1:13) Here the apostle suggests that God’s people, when begotten from above, enter into a new, spiritually focused, way of life, with new hopes, aims, ambitions, interests. “Old things are passed away,” and “all things are become new.”—II Cor. 5:17

The apostle says: “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” (Rom. 14:17) Christians, prospective members of the heavenly kingdom, are not restricted in the use of food, as were the Jews under the Law Covenant, nor are they bound to keep one day in seven as a day of physical rest, although, when possible, it is wise and advisable to do so. However, as prospective members of the kingdom, our liberties, privileges, and blessings are much greater than freedom to eat what we like, or liberty to busy ourselves, when necessary, with work on the first or seventh day of the week. Rather, as Paul states, some of the chief blessings we enjoy are “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

In spite of centuries of effort, and with the sole exception of Jesus, complete righteousness was not attained by any Jew as a result of keeping the Law. Peace with God was not the possession of any in natural Israel. The Law only condemned, and told God’s typical people that they were short of the divine requirements, and therefore under judicial



condemnation. (Rom. 3:20; 7:7-11) Similarly, neither was spiritual blessings, resulting from the operation of the Holy Spirit, the portion of any until Pentecost after our Lord's resurrection. We see how true it is that an individual must be "begotten from above" before they can understand or become intimately acquainted with the kingdom of God and the blessings to be enjoyed by those called to that hope during the present time.

## **THE NATURAL MAN AND SPIRITUAL THINGS**

Nicodemus asked questions in response to Jesus: "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" (John 3:4) Here we see the operation of the natural mind, with its ability to reason only on the level of earthly things. In his reply, Jesus enunciates a further vital truth which can be fully appreciated only by those who have been spirit-begotten. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (vs. 5) To "see," or understand, that kingdom, one needs to be "begotten from above," but to "enter into" the heavenly kingdom to which the church is called, it is necessary not only to be begotten, but also to be "born" of the Spirit. As Paul says in another place, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (I Cor. 15:50) A new spiritual body must be received before we can enter the Father's kingdom.

The Christian's birth, Jesus tells us, is brought about by means of two things: "water" and "Spirit." First is the cleansing, sanctifying power of the water of truth; living by "every word that proceedeth out

of the mouth of God;" and being built up by "the word of his grace." (Eph. 5:25,26; Matt. 4:4; Acts 20:32) Second is the operation of the Holy Spirit, quickening our mortal bodies in the work of sacrificing the flesh, "renewing" and transforming our minds that they may become more and more like "the mind of Christ." (Rom. 8:11-13; 12:1,2; I Cor. 2:16) In these ways we are prepared to be "born" as spirit beings in the resurrection. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again [begotten from above]."—John 3:6,7

Our Lord here tells us that there is more than one kind of begetting and birth. As the begetting and birth of the flesh are actual events, so the begetting and birth of the spirit is just as real, and necessary, if one would enter the heavenly phase of Messiah's kingdom. However, as the record indicates, Nicodemus continued to marvel and wonder as to the meaning of Jesus' words. How frequently has this been the experience of the Lord's people since that time, as they have come into contact with well-meaning individuals whose minds, however, are unable to discern spiritual truths.

In John 3:8, Jesus attempts to provide Nicodemus with a simple illustration of the powers possessed by one born of the Spirit. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." From this we gather that, to our limited human understanding, spirit beings are like the wind, invisible yet powerful, and their means of movement

very rapid. To use a common expression, they are able to “come and go like the wind.” Even with this explanation, Nicodemus, still handicapped by his natural mind, replied, “How can these things be?”—vs. 9

## **DID NICODEMUS BECOME A DISCIPLE OF JESUS?**

There is no definitive record in the Bible that Nicodemus became a disciple of Jesus. However, we know he defended Jesus before the Sanhedrin. The Pharisees and the chief priests had sent officers to take Jesus captive. (John 7:32) However, when they returned without the Lord and were asked why they had not brought him, their reply was, “Never man spake like this man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.” (vss. 45-52) What the Pharisees did not know was that Jesus had been born in Bethlehem of Judea, not in Galilee.

When Jesus was crucified, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of the Lord, asked to take his body for burial. Pilate granted the request, and together with Nicodemus, who brought embalming spices, they placed Jesus’ body in a sepulchre owned by Joseph. (John 19:38-42) These events suggest that Nicodemus had a great interest in Jesus and

his teachings. Certain traditional writings imply that after the resurrection of Jesus, Nicodemus became a disciple of Christ, and received baptism at the hands of Peter and John. Some writings further suggest that the Jews, in revenge for his conversion, deprived Nicodemus of his office, drove him from Jerusalem, and that upon his death he was buried near the graves of Gamaliel and Stephen. We know not, however, whether any of these claims are true, for the Scriptures are silent on the matter.

### **OUR FAITH ENABLES US TO SEE**

As we review in our minds this interesting meeting between Jesus and Nicodemus, how thankful we should be that, as a result of our faith in the Redeemer and consecration to God through him, we have been enabled to lay aside the natural mind. By being “begotten from above,” we “see the kingdom of God,” and we appreciate the spiritual things related to it. In addition, we understand the conditions for membership in God’s kingdom, and the work associated with it, both now and in the future. To actually enter into that kingdom, however, we must be “born of the Spirit.” Therefore, let us each strive daily to fulfill our vow of consecration to God, that being “rich in faith,” we might be “heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him.”—James 2:5 ■

*“Peace to a Christian  
is not the absence of trouble,  
but the presence of God.”*

*Deep Waters and a Bubbling Brook*

# ENCOURAGING LETTERS

## SPANISH DAWN MAGAZINE - EL ALBA

Dear Dawn: God bless you greatly. I am wishing you many blessings from the Lord and also for the distribution of the material *El Alba* [*The Dawn*, Spanish edition]—material that is a great blessing to broaden my knowledge in the ministry that the Lord has entrusted to me.

Thank you very much once again for sharing the material *El Alba*, which is a great blessing for all leaders in the work of the Lord. I will always be praying for the great ministry that you carry out.—NC

## EYES OPENED

Dear Dawn: I found a copy of *The Dawn* in a waiting room many years ago. I have subscribed to it ever since. What a blessing it has been to me.

It opened my eyes to what the Bible really teaches; not what I was taught all through the years before.

May your precious work for God continue.—CO

## BOOKLETS OF HOPE

Dear Dawn: I would like to thank you for the booklets of hope you sent to my Mom through the years. Mom passed away this month and was not able to enjoy the booklet [*The Dawn*].

I have read it and love the outreach your organization is doing. God bless your ministry.—WA

## PROCLAIMING TRUTH

Dear Dawn: The articles in *The Dawn* are wonderful, and we look forward to each issue.

We pray daily for those who are responsible for all aspects of the Harvest work at the Dawn ... as they proclaim the Truth. Thank you very much.—MI

## RESURRECTION FOR ALL

Dear Dawn: Keep up the great articles on the Apostles and disciples that were with Jesus, and the good news of the resurrection for all! Faith, Hope, Love—WI

# ENCOURAGING LETTERS—*cont'd*

## GOOD NEWS

Dear Dawn: Could I please get four copies of the free booklet, *Hope for a Fear-filled World?* I would like for my two sons to get a copy mailed to them, and one for my best friend who would love this booklet to share with her whole family, and for me, so me and my husband can share it with each other, and who ever stops by. Thank you.—IL

## LEARNING MORE

DawnBible: I want to learn more about the bible, that is my reason that I need this precious information. May God bless all who participate.—CA

## DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Dear Dawn: I was so pleased with the *Daily Manna* which replaces my mother's. Her's was very old and well used.

The new one has inspired me to order a copy for each of my children. They can refresh their beliefs each day and record the dates of events that are

meaningful to them. Please send me three *Daily Mannas*.—OH

## GOD HAS A PLAN

DawnBible: I just happened to find this website. I've enjoyed reading and plan to continue. I know that God has a plan for our lives. Thank you and God Bless!—NC

## GLAD TIDINGS

DawnBible: I appreciate the Dawn from years ago even until now. I knew many by their voices only via the tape service, and many others in person. The booklets have been helpful in giving out the glad tidings which shall be unto all people. Luke 2:10. May His church soon be completed.—IL

## TEACHING MATERIALS

DawnBible: I would like to thank you for this website. There is so much free teaching materials. I would like to be included in receiving the magazine [*The Dawn*] if possible. God Bless—CANADA

## **KINGDOM TO COME**

Dear Dawn: I want to thank each of you for all the wonderful words of life that you share with us in your beloved *Dawn* booklet.

It fills my heart and mind with so much joy and love for our heavenly Father and our blessed Saviour. It gives me great comfort and hope of the wonderful kingdom to come that will bless all and seems closer and closer to us each day.

What a wonderful time we look forward to with all this evil to be gone and gone for good.

Blessings to each of you daily and thank you again for the wonderful *Dawn* monthly booklet.—FL

## **THIRTY-YEAR SUBSCRIBER**

Dear Dawn: Please send me two copies of the *Paradise* booklet, one copy of *Divine Healing*, and three copies of the *Hope* booklet.

I've been receiving *The Dawn* magazine for over thirty years, and listened

with my mother to the *Frank and Ernest* broadcasts before that. Thank you so much.—MN

## **LEARNING ABOUT JESUS**

DawnBible: Please send me the free booklet *Life after Death* and any other free books you have. I'm learning about Jesus and how to live in peace and holiness.—MS

## **RESTITUTION**

DawnBible: The plan of God Almighty is wonderful. It's been good to know man's restitution plans.—INDIA

## **REFRESHING SITE**

DawnBible: A wonderfully refreshing site—His blessings on the ministry entrusted to you. Keep on keeping on for Christ!—CANADA

## **NOT ABLE TO MEET**

DawnBible: Thank you for your efforts. I appreciate reading *The Dawn*, especially when we cannot meet for health reasons.—PA

# SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

## L. Griehs

Online Broadcast of Convention  
Detroit, MI May 7,8

## S. Jeuck

Online Broadcast of Convention  
Detroit, MI May 7,8

## E. Kuenzli

Online Broadcast of Convention  
Chicago, IL May 28,29

## H. Montague

Hartford, CT May 15

## J. Parkinson

Online Broadcast of Convention  
Detroit, MI May 7,8

## T. Ruggirello

Online Broadcast of Convention  
Detroit, MI May 7,8

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*We see, then, that as one act of sin exposed the whole race of men to God's judgment and condemnation, so one act of perfect righteousness presents all men freely acquitted in the sight of God.*

*One man's disobedience placed all men under the threat of condemnation, but one man's obedience has the power to present all men righteous before God.*

*—Romans 5:18,19, J. B. Phillips*

# WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**MAY 5**—"If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Romans 8:13 (Z. '03-172 Hymn 44)

**MAY 12**—"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."—II Corinthians 7:1 (Z. '03-408 Hymn 247A)

**MAY 19**—"We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."—Romans 15:1 (Z. '97-75 Hymn 154)

**MAY 26**—"Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up."—I Corinthians 8:1 (Z. '97-277 Hymn 238)



# CONVENTIONS

*These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, PO Box 521167, Longwood, FL 32752-1167*

**METRO DETROIT CONVENTION, May 7,8—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact B. Johnson. Email: beckystevej@aol.com

**AUSTRALIAN CONVENTION, May 13-15—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact R. Charlton. Email: randscharlton@gmail.com

**HARTFORD CONVENTION, May 15**—West Hartford Senior Center, 15 Starkel Road, West Hartford, CT. Contact J. Slivinsky. Email: djslivinsky@sbcglobal.net

**JACKSONVILLE CONVENTION, May 15—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact C. Johns. Phone: (904) 316-9587 or Email: Johnsc11@aol.com

**CHICAGO CONVENTION, May 28,29—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact C. Martire. Email: christina.martire@gmail.com

**DELAWARE VALLEY CONVENTION, June 5—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact R. Griehs. Email: rgriehs@gmail.com

**ABA/IGBERE CONVENTION, June 12**—Contact P. Ekeh. Email: peterudochieke@gmail.com

**PORTLAND CONVENTION, June 17-19—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact J. Wojcik. Email: janetlwojcik@gmail.com

**PRINCE ALBERT/SASKATOON CONVENTION, July 2,3—IN PERSON AND BROADCAST ONLINE**—Siwak Farm, RR 1, Prince Albert, SK, Canada S6V 5P8.

Contact B. Siwak. Phone: (306) 960-5526 or Email: bswk77@gmail.com

**BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 16-21**—Contact E. Kuenzli. Phone: (407) 670-4189 or Email: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com

**SOUTH AFRICA CONVENTION, August 12,13—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact J. Isife. Phone: +2348035220141 or Email: johnisife@yahoo.com

**SEATTLE CONVENTION, September 2-5—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact J. Christiansen. Email: jrchristiansen@comcast.net

**GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, September 24,25—TENTATIVE ZOOM ONLY**—Contact K. Osterman. Email: kenosterman@gmail.com



## OBITUARIES

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

Brother Gerald Tomes, Owensboro, KY—November 16. Age, 79

Sister Glenda Tomes, Owensboro, KY—November 30. Age, 78

Sister Giuseppa Vaccaro, Agrigento, Italy—February 23. Age, 89

Brother Eugene Simmons, Bolingbrook, IL—February 28. Age, 88

Sister Stanisława Dąbek, Soultz, France—March 28. Age, 94

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## ***To us the Scriptures clearly teach . . .***

### **THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD**

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

### **THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING AND POLISHING**

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

### **THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD**

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

### **THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH**

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

### **THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH**

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

### **THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD**

lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 55

