

The Dawn

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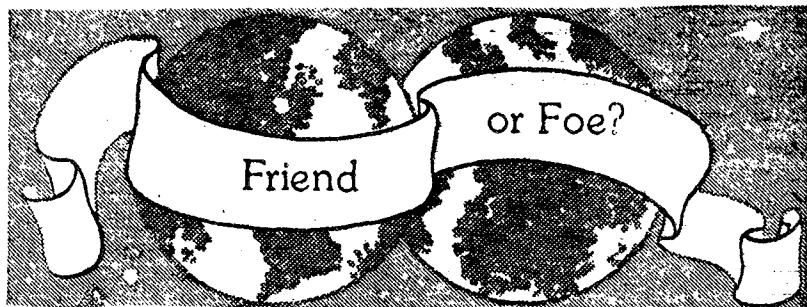
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HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN



CHANGES ARE HAPPENING so rapidly in the world today that it is hard to keep up with them. From one day to the next, friends and enemies reverse their roles. Currently, leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union—traditional foes—are pictured on the front pages of newspapers, amiably shaking hands in agreement on how to deal with the newest enemy to come upon the world scene—Iraq.

And—of all things!—instead of President Gorbachev admonishing the United States against taking military action in the present crisis, he is quoted as warning Hussein of Iraq not to provoke the United States to use their army. That's a switch!

On the other hand, the country of Iran, a former bitter enemy of Iraq—their animosity was so intense that they engaged in a bloody war for over seven years—is now beginning to make friendly overtures toward their former antagonist.

Some would like to see the principles of Christianity come to the fore in this situation but indications of this are not evident. The fact is that the major stimulus for present day action is basically that of selfishness and economic self-preservation. For reasons of survival many stronger nations of this earth cannot allow a shift of power among the Arab

countries that would in any way jeopardize their vital stake in the valuable oil under that land. Kuwait, so rich in oil, cannot be left in the hands of an unfriendly government for very long. Political observers apparently agree that the present smoldering stalemate cannot last long. If Hussein does not pull out soon he will have to be driven out, and that probably means war.

The main problem, of course, is the same one that has plagued mankind for many thousands of years, hindering solutions which would lead to world peace—and that is selfishness. A selfish desire for the wealth of Kuwait inspired the invasion in the first place, and the self interest of those impacted by Iraq's action, has brought about the strong reactions by nations needing the oil.

In this respect the world has not changed since the dawn of history, and looking to the future there is no reason to expect improvement coming from human sources. Men seem to lack within themselves the capacity for altering their subjective attitudes of mind and heart which have kept this world of ours in a topsy-turvy state throughout history, right down to our very day.

So we find, depending upon what is politically or economically expedient, that friends and foes can often change overnight. The instability of our world today was described by Isaiah in prophecy with these words: "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again."—Isa. 24:20

This is a graphic description of a world order headed blindly and staggeringly toward inevitable destruction. In this same chapter of Isaiah's prophecy, almost all of which is similarly prophetic of the overthrow of Satan's world, we are told that the earth is "made empty," and is "laid waste." The prophet also declares that the earth is "turned upside down," and "mourns." The same earth, according to this prophecy, is seen to "fade away," and to be "broken down," "dis-

solved," "moved exceedingly," and "removed like a cottage."—Isa. 24:1,3,19,20

The earth here mentioned is not this literal planet upon which we live. The term is used symbolically to denote what we call the world, or world order. In the 4th verse of the chapter, the words earth and world are used interchangeably. Just as the term earth is symbolic, so all the various expressions which are employed to describe how the symbolic earth is destroyed, are also pictorial. The use of so many of them conveys the unmistakable thought that Satan's world or empire is to be completely destroyed. Satan's world must indeed be put down before God's new world can be established—that world described by the Apostle Peter as one "wherein dwelleth righteousness."—II Pet. 3:13

There can be little doubt that we of the present generation are witnessing the foretold death throes of a world order. It is what the Scriptures elsewhere describe as the end of the world. (Matt. 13:39) World distress incidental to the transitional changes now occurring have caused men and women of all nations to long for a new and better world. We can well understand the desire of the democracies to do all in their power to make sure that the new world will be a free and happy one. We are not speaking disparagingly of human efforts when we say that there can be no ideal world order until the kingdom of Christ is established.

There is nothing which should better engender such hope and courage in the hearts of humanity today than to know that out of all the chaos and trouble experienced by the present generation there is soon to emerge an era of genuine and lasting peace and joy. It is just this that we can and should expect, not because man will finally triumph over his selfishness, but because God has intervened in the affairs of men and will establish divine control over the nations. In the last verse of the chapter from which our text is taken, we are given the assurance that "the LORD of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."—vs. 23

Jerusalem was the capital city of Judea, and Zion Hill in Jerusalem was where the government of Israel centered. The promise of God to reign in Zion would, therefore, denote actual God-control in human affairs. This symbolism of the divine kingdom and divine rule is mentioned many times in the prophecies of both the Old and New Testaments. In Psalm 2:6, God declared: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." The psalmist then explains that God's king, who is Christ Jesus, will dash the nations to pieces like a potter's vessel.

In Revelation 14:1, Jesus and his entire church are shown to be together on Mount Zion. The prophecy of Obadiah gives us an Old Testament portrait of the same kingdom, declaring that "saviours shall come up on Mount Zion, . . . and the kingdom shall be the LORD's." (vs. 21) It is clear from these references that the term 'Zion' is used in the Scriptures to denote the exalted status of Christ and his church as they reign together for a thousand years to uplift and bless the sin-sick and dying world.—Rev. 20:4

Micah 4:2 declares that "the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." This is another of God's promises in which the term 'Zion' is used symbolically to represent the divine Christ. There is good reason to believe, also, that the use here of the name 'Jerusalem' describes the earthly or visible operations of the new kingdom. The laws of that kingdom emanate from Zion—from Christ and his church. Because of this there will be no need for legislators—there will be no occasion to change or amend the laws—nor will new laws be needed to meet emergencies.

But God's laws will need to be made known, and the people will need instruction in their proper application. This will be done through the earthly representatives of the kingdom—the word of the LORD going forth from Jerusalem. Those who will represent the Christ in the Jerusalem activities of the kingdom have already been selected and prepared by God for this high position of trust as world educators under Christ. In Matthew 8:11 and Luke

13:27,28, they are identified by Jesus as being Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the faithful prophets. In Psalm 45:16 they are referred to as the fathers of Israel, and the promise is given that they shall be made "princes in all the earth."

When we view this Scriptural portrait of God's new world from the human standpoint, it would probably seem quite impractical, and we would have good reason to ask, Will it work? But we must remember that this is not a humanly devised Utopian arrangement. If it were only that, it would be a fool's paradise indeed. But, thank God, it is **his** plan for a sin-sick, war-weary world. The Creator of the universe, the great First Cause of all life, has planned it, and certainly he would not make promises to the human race which he is not able to fulfill.

Selfishness in Power

Hope that is based upon human plans and accomplishments is indefinite and weak. Human selfishness and sin stand in the way and are basically responsible for all the problems of the world. Well-meaning but imperfect human lawmakers and administrators are unable to do anything about sin and selfishness, for they have afflicted the human race since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. A new foreign policy will not change the hearts of world rulers or diplomats. The phenomenal increase of knowledge of our day is not bettering the hearts of the people. It is simply showing them more efficient ways to further their own individual ends.

Only the LORD God can change the hearts of the people, and this he has promised to do through the agencies of the long-promised messianic kingdom. Those who believe in the promises of the Bible realize that world conditions today are signs that the kingdom of Christ is about to be established in the earth. They are looking for a new administration of government which will truly solve the problems, not only of the United States, but of the whole world. This is the new government promised in Isaiah 9:6,7: "Unto us a child is born,

unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

Students of the Bible agree that this is a prophecy of the birth of Christ. The next verse reads, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. . . . The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." Jesus is the Creator's choice to be the new king of earth—a king who also will be the Prince of Peace. Not until this ruler actually takes control of the people of earth, or until his administration begins to function for the blessing of the people, will the problems arising out of human selfishness be solved.

Selfishness Destroyed

Christ's millennial kingdom will be a time when the LORD will enter into a covenant with the people. Entering into a covenant suggests a reconciling of the people to God. Ever since man's fall, the human race as a whole has been estranged from God, but by the close of the messianic kingdom, all the willing and obedient will have been made 'at one' with him. They will be in covenant relationship with him.

A promise of this is given by the LORD in Jeremiah 31:31-34. Here this "New Covenant" is said to be made "with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD, for they shall all know me, from the least of them

unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Adam was created in the image of God, and by nature was in covenant relationship with God. But he broke this covenant by his disobedience. Hosea 6:7, **Marginal Trans-lation**, reads, "They like Adam have transgressed the covenant." The entire human race since then has been drifting farther and farther away from God, and the divine image in their hearts has become dulled. Selfishness has replaced the spirit of love, and now the world is reaping the terrible harvest of rebellion against the Creator.

But in due time Christ, the great Mediator between God and men, will begin to change this condition by bringing the people into covenant relationship with the Creator. The laws of that covenant will be written in the hearts of the people. This, obviously, will not be an instantaneous work, for it implies the restoration of the people to that original godlikeness possessed by Adam. The work of making this covenant complete will require the entire messianic age.

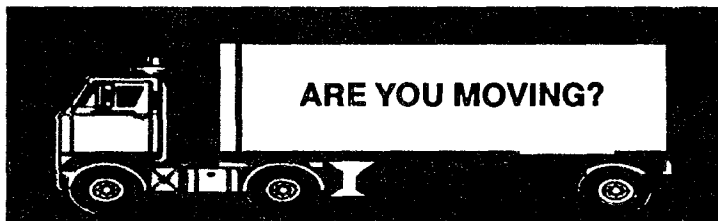
But when the Spirit and the law of God are implanted in the hearts of the people, it will mean that selfishness and sin have been eradicated. This having been accomplished, and with divine authority and power working through God's elected rulers, all the problems of the world will be solved. At present, human selfishness is threatening the destruction of all mankind in a time of tribulation such as the world has never known. Jesus said that this tribulation would be shortened in time to prevent total destruction.—Matt. 24:21,22

We know that even now we are living in the time of this threatened destruction, and we are thankful for the assurance that these days shall be shortened. But we are even more thankful for the promised divine intervention in the affairs of men through God's elect, for we have the assurance of his Word that this in reality means the setting up of the long-promised messianic kingdom; and this, in turn, will mean universal and lasting peace on earth.

Not only will there be freedom from war, but that blessed rulership will solve all the other perplexing problems of earth. With human hearts purged of selfishness, and the spirit of love and goodwill motivating human behavior, the ownership and control of oil or any other of the earth's resources, will no longer loom up as a menace to mankind's peace and safety. All will share equally in the good things that God has provided for humanity on this earth. When man is restored to perfection, and sin and selfishness is no longer present, the problems of humankind will automatically have been solved.

As the pattern of a changing world unfolds, the more we study that pattern the more apparent it becomes that Isaiah's prophecy of a reeling, staggering world is being fulfilled. This is encouraging to those whose hopes are centered, not in the maintenance of the old world's status quo, nor in a new world order formed by man, but in the kingdom of God.

Let us continue to pray for that kingdom, knowing that when our prayers are answered there will be security, peace, and joy for all, and that all will then "call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent," because they will have come under the influence of God's message of truth, and peace, and love.—Zeph. 3:9 □



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Thank you!

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

LESSON FOR NOVEMBER 4

Seeking Answers

KEY VERSE: *Josiah said "Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this Book that is found."*

- II Kings 22:13

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *II Kings 22:12-20;*
II Chronicles 34:1-33

GOOD KING JOSIAH was about twenty years old when he undertook a religious reformation in Judah. He broke down all the altars and groves of Baalim. The carved and molten images he had reduced to dust, and sprinkled it over the graves of those who had formerly worshiped Baal. Next he set about repairing the holy Temple in Jerusalem so that the worship of Jehovah might be reinstituted there.

The funds for this purpose had been collected previously and stored in a remote place in the Temple by the Levites. When Hilkiah, the High Priest, went to bring out the money he found an old Book of the Law stored away also. This was quite a

sensational find, since it had not been used for many years in Judah, and its precepts had been considerably forgotten even by those who were responsible for the Temple worship.

Even though he knew these were the commandments of the true and living God, Josiah was unsure of their meaning. At the time there was a prophetess in Jerusalem named Huldah. Apparently she was recognized for her righteousness and loyalty to the LORD and had the confidence of the people and the king. So Josiah sent messengers to Huldah to get what he believed would be an authoritative statement of what to expect.

The reply from Huldah was much as Josiah had thought: "Thus saith the LORD, Behold I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the Book which the king of Judah hath read." (II Kings 33:16) But Huldah had a word of comfort for Josiah. She reported the LORD's words for him: "Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spoke against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, . . . and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I have also heard thee, saith the LORD." —vs. 19

A long time had passed in Judah without any detailed knowledge of God's Law, except as it had been handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. When Josiah learned how much there really was to the LORD's Law, he made a covenant to "keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the

words of the covenant which are written in this Book." — II Chron. 34:31

Even the wording of this covenant—"with all his heart, and with all his soul"—had evidently been taken out of the Book of the Law which had been found in the Temple. Not only did the king enter into a covenant with the LORD to obey the Law, but he also enjoined "all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers."—vs. 32

What a wonderful example the life of this young king is as an illustration of seeking after God. The record is that "he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left."—II Chron. 34:1,2

"Ask . . . where is the good way, and walk therein." (Jer. 6:16) May the Word of God inspire us to inquire of his ways and to obey his precepts in our lives. □

Change Your Ways!

KEY VERSE: *"Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you."*—Jeremiah 26:13

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 26:1-6, 12-16

ONE OF THE sins of God's typical people was their inclination to place confidence in the messages of false prophets, or 'diviners', rather than in the words of the LORD that were sent to them through his true and holy prophets.

They refused to heed the messages of God's prophet, Jeremiah, preferring to believe those who told them that the nation was in no danger and who prophesied, "Peace, peace." (Jer. 6:14; 8:11) Now that calamity was imminent, the LORD, again, through Jeremiah, took the occasion to warn them of the evil results of not accepting the word of his righteous prophets.

The tone of this whole message is that of God's solicitude for the peace and prosperity of his people. They had sinned but he still

loved them, and he wanted them to return to him and serve him with their whole heart. God is not vindictive, but merciful and kind, ever ready to forgive and bless his people when they come to him in the spirit of true repentance and ask for his mercy.

But the Word of the LORD through Jeremiah also said that unless the nation forsook its sin it would be destroyed. False prophets endeavored to counteract the effect of this message by assuring the people that there was no evil in the land, and that they would continue to enjoy peace. This appealed to the vanity of the Israelites, hence it pleased them best to hearken to the false prophets rather than to Jeremiah.

And so God's forgiveness could not be extended to the

nation at that time. But the prophecy of Jeremiah in a later chapter tells us that nevertheless God's mercy will come to them by way of a long-range plan involving their eventual repentance and recovery—a plan that will effect a complete reversal of Israel's experience through the Laws of the Messiah's kingdom. This will be the time when, in fulfillment of the LORD's promise through the Prophet Jeremiah, he will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.—Jer. 31:31

The New Covenant arrangements will not be limited to Israel and Judah, although these natural descendants of Abraham will be the first to have the blessings of the kingdom offered to them. Ezekiel 16:60-63 re-reveals that Gentiles will become associated with Israel and will be blessed together with them under the New Covenant arrangements.

The making of the New Covenant with Israel and the world will be a work requiring the thousand years of Christ's reign, for it involves

the writing of God's law in the hearts of the people. This is one way of describing a work of restitution that will take place in the hearts.

As Moses was the Mediator of the covenant given at Sinai, so Jesus will be the Mediator of the New Covenant. The church of Christ will serve together with him as mediators or, as the apostle states it, "able ministers of the New Testament [or Covenant]." (II Cor. 3:6) The preparatory work looking toward the inauguration of the New Covenant began with the First Advent of Jesus. It will be his blood that will seal that covenant, and each one of his followers is being trained for the high position of joint-heirship with him in administering the terms of that covenant, but the covenant itself will not become operative until this preparation is completed.

Not until the time for this New Covenant to be active will Israel have ears to hear the LORD's voice, and obey. Then Jeremiah will be a prophet, or teacher, honored by the people. □

Courage to Continue

KEY VERSE: *"Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations."* — **Jeremiah 36:2**

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: **Jeremiah 36:4-8, 27-31**

DURING HIS LIFETIME Jeremiah was one of the principal prophets in the land, but had been hindered for some time from prophesying publicly. However, under the LORD's guidance, he wrote out his prophecy respecting the coming judgments and chastisements upon the people of Judea. When it was finished it was read before certain prominent people of Jerusalem, and so deeply impressed them that they desired the matter be brought to the king's attention.

King Jehoiakim demanded to see the document, and had his scribe read it before him. The king was unmoved by the message, and after hearing the contents of three of the columns of the manuscript, he took his scribe's penknife and cut them off and cast them into the fire

before him, and he continued to do so with the remainder, until the entire manuscript was read and destroyed. Thus he emphasized his determination not to accept counsel from the LORD, but to disregard his Word.

The king then ordered the arrest of Jeremiah and his scribe, but by the LORD's providences they had hidden themselves and were not to be found. They learned of the destruction of the manuscript and prepared another statement of the prophecy, which we are informed had certain further additions which constitutes the Book of Jeremiah as found in our Bibles today.

The prophet later began to speak publicly against the wickedness of the king and other leaders in Israel and frequently suffered imprison-

ment as a result. By nature Jeremiah was not a courageous man. He hesitated in the beginning; however, the LORD reassured Jeremiah by the promise that he would be with him, and that he would be able to prophesy whatever he was commanded.

God's commission of service to Jeremiah was identical in principle to the commission he gives to all those whom he calls into his service. This was particularly true with respect to the message Jeremiah was to deliver. It was not to be his message, but the LORD's message. The LORD said to Jeremiah, "I have put my words in thy mouth." This was true even of Jesus, the most outstanding of all the LORD's spokesmen, for he said, "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me." (John 14: 10, 24) And Jesus said of his disciples, those who were to be his ambassadors, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me."—John 17:8

Those who speak for the LORD during this present evil world must expect to suffer as a result of their faithfulness; yet this should not deter them from the course of obedience. Jeremiah was told by the LORD that a high honor was attached to his commission, yet the prophet found himself imprisoned because he insisted on telling the people the truth which the LORD had given him to declare. Not all the LORD's servants have suffered so severely because of their faithfulness as did Jeremiah, but many have.

At one point in his life, Jeremiah recorded that this commission was made more of a reproach and a derision by those to whom he prophesied than he could bear, and he determined not to speak any more. But he says he could not refrain from speaking. "His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." (Jer. 20:9) Oh, that we might all have such a burning fire in our hearts! □

Need for Compassionate Leaders

KEY VERSE: *"Thus saith the LORD God: Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out."*—Ezekiel 34:11

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Ezekiel 34:1-12*

THE PROPHECY OF today's lesson depicts God as the Chief Shepherd of his fold. The sheep of this flock represent Israel. The under-shepherds referred to did not have the interests of the flock at heart, and exploited them. They are spoken of as having scattered the sheep, and—rather than feeding them and looking after their interests—they even ate the sheep! (vs. 10) No doubt this is a reference to many of the rulers, and especially the degenerate priesthood and false prophets, who continued to lead the people of Israel throughout their history.

The righteous prophets whom God sent to the nation from time to time, were shepherds who did care for the interests of the flock. But false shepherds or pastors plagued the flock and under their influence Israel was scattered many times. (Jer.

23:1) True shepherds of the LORD never scatter God's people. (vs. 4) They are always gatherers.

Jesus called himself the Good Shepherd, and if the sheep of his day had recognized his voice and followed him they would have been gathered and richly blessed. Concerning this, although using a different simile, Jesus said to this people, "How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Luke 13:34,35) The people preferred to follow the false shepherds of their day, with the result that ultimately they were scattered and the nation destroyed.

A true shepherd is glad to make any sacrifice necessary in order that the sheep might be properly provided for and


protected. The Good Shepherd, Jesus, gave his life for the sheep, and we are admonished by him to do the same—to lay down our lives for the brethren. A true shepherd has a genuine love for his sheep, and is solicitous for their every need. He not only sees that food and water are available for them, but he stands guard to protect his sheep from those who would come among them to steal and kill.

The voice of a shepherd of God is the voice of truth—in reality the voice of the Chief Shepherd, Jehovah, as it reaches us through his Word. It was thus in the case of Jesus. "The words that I speak," he said, "I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14:10) So it should be in the case of all shepherds. Their voice, their words, should be only those messages of truth pertaining to the divine plan which have been transmitted to them through the Scriptures.

And the LORD's sheep should learn to know this voice of truth. If they do they will be able to discern any

discordant note they hear, and know that to follow its leading would take them away from the flock and the green pastures which the LORD has provided. And how rich and how blessed the experiences of those who know the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow its leading. It matters little who the LORD may use to transmit that voice or message to us. The important thing is to discern the voice of truth and to follow it faithfully.

True to his word, the LORD has searched out his sheep, first from among Israel and then from the Gentiles. Jesus spoke, however, of "other sheep" of a different fold. (John 10:16) The parable of the sheep and goats identifies the 'other' sheep, their gathering, and the inheritance into which they enter—the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.—Matt. 25:34

Thus Jehovah's work of searching out his sheep, as shown in today's prophecy, will be complete. The gathering of all into Christ will have been accomplished. 

YOUNG ADULTS BIBLE STUDIES

THE GOLDEN THREAD SERIES—PART 10



A SLAVE BECOMES RULER

THE LORD WAS with Joseph. This is the Biblical explanation for the marvelous series of events which took place in his life, and the way they finally led to his being reunited with his father and brothers. Joseph knew the LORD was with him, and no matter what his experiences were, his faith in God remained unshakable. When he was mistreated and unjustly punished, he realized the LORD would overrule, and had a purpose for allowing him to suffer. And when he had much honor bestowed on him, he gave all the credit to the LORD.

No doubt he often thought about the dreams which caused his brothers' hatred to grow, leading to their selling

him as a slave. He probably wondered how he would come to a position where his brothers would honor him; and he watched and prayed for God's guidance day by day.

When the traveling merchants who had purchased Joseph arrived in Egypt, they sold him to Potiphar, "an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian. The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian." (Genesis 39:1,2) Even Potiphar noticed "that the LORD made all that [Joseph] did to prosper." (Genesis 39:3) This, along with Joseph's honesty, industry, dependability, and wisdom, gave Potiphar confidence in him. "He made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand." (Genesis 39:4) Everything seemed to be going very well for Joseph now!

But Joseph's life, which lately had been progressing smoothly, suddenly began to be in new danger. Potiphar's wife told lies about Joseph, and as a result he was thrown into prison. Although God permitted this bitter misfortune to happen, we are told, "The LORD was with Joseph, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison."

The LORD's people in that ancient time, even as now, found it necessary to have trust and faith in God. It is not difficult to believe the LORD is with us when all the circumstances of our lives are to our liking; but when things go wrong, when trouble hits us, when friends leave us, when we are punished for things we did not do, then it takes a deep trust in the wisdom and love of God to believe that he is still with us. This was the kind of faith that Joseph showed.

God was preparing Joseph for later, still greater, events in his life. Joseph's outstanding abilities were used again; this time the keeper of the prison recognized his qualities of leadership and organization, and he set Joseph in charge of the entire dungeon, including all of the prisoners. He was true to his duty once again, and therefore God allowed his work to prosper.

Joseph had real concern for the prisoners. This is shown by the story as it unfolds. One day Joseph noticed that two

prisoners were very sad. He asked them why they were so unhappy, and they told him that each had dreamed a dream they could not understand. Joseph encouraged them to tell him their dreams.—Gen. 40:1-8

One man had been the king's chief butler. His dream was about a vine which had three branches. As he watched in the dream, the vine put forth buds, and blossoms, and finally clusters of ripe grapes. The butler dreamed that he took the grapes and squeezed them, and put the juice into Pharaoh's cup, and gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. Joseph explained the meaning of the dream to the butler: "The three branches are three days. Yet within three days shall Pharaoh restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler."—verses 9-13

Then the second man, who had been Pharaoh's chief baker, became encouraged when he heard the interpretation of the butler's dream, and that it was good. So he also told Joseph his dream. It went like this: "I had three white baskets on my head: and in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket on my head." And Joseph told him the interpretation: "The three baskets are three days. Yet within three days shall Pharaoh take thy office from thee," and shall sentence you to death!—verses 16-19. See the **Marginal Translation**

"And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants. He restored the chief butler unto butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them."—verses 20-22

Joseph had asked the butler to mention to Pharaoh how he had been sent to prison even though he had done nothing wrong. "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him." (verse 23) Because of this, two more long years passed, and still Joseph suffered the many discomforts and shame of being in prison.

But at the end of two years, Pharaoh himself had two dreams. The first one went this way: Pharaoh stood by the river, and, behold there came up out of the river seven fat cattle, and they ate grass in the meadow near the river. Then seven thin, unhealthy looking cattle came up out of the river, and stood on the riverbank near the first fat cattle. Next, an amazing thing happened: the thin cows ate up the fat ones! What a strange dream! His other dream was just as peculiar: Seven fine ears of corn grew on one cornstalk. Soon after, seven scrawny ears suddenly appeared, arriving with a blustery wind. "And the seven thin ears devoured the full ears [of corn]."—Genesis 41:14-32

These dreams greatly troubled Pharaoh, especially since none of his wise men could tell him what they meant. The chief butler heard about the dreams, and all at once he remembered Joseph. He felt miserable because he had forgotten Joseph's request to plead with Pharaoh for his freedom from prison. But now that he had remembered, this was an opportune time to tell Pharaoh about Joseph, and about his God-given ability to interpret dreams.

The king of Egypt sent for Joseph at once; Joseph shaved and changed his clothes, and went in to meet Pharaoh. After Pharaoh told him the dreams, Joseph explained that they both meant the same thing, and the reason he had two similar dreams was God's indication that the events forecast would surely happen. The meaning was that there would be seven years of good harvest and prosperity in Egypt, followed by seven years of famine. Joseph advised Pharaoh to choose a wise administrator over the agricultural affairs of Egypt, who would take advantage of the seven prosperous years to prepare for the seven years of famine to follow.—verses 28-36

Pharaoh was quite impressed with the wisdom of Joseph's recommendation, and he said to him, "Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: thou shalt be over my house, and according unto

thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.”—verses 39,40

Once again the LORD favored Joseph, not altogether for his own sake, but also for the saving of his people who would become the nation of Israel, as we will see in more detail in a later study. He proved to be a wise food administrator. Even though he had great power and authority given to him, he used it fairly, for the benefit of all the people.

Under his leadership—he was next in importance only to the Pharaoh—which began when he was just a young man, thirty years old, the Egyptians stored enormous quantities of food during the foretold seven years of plenty. Then began the seven years of famine, which was felt not only throughout Egypt, but in neighboring countries as well. It spread into Canaan, where Joseph’s father, brothers, and their families resided and were greatly affected by the starvation it brought.

This famine and its far-reaching effects brought about the climax to the strange and dramatic series of events in the life of the boy whose dreams had led him to be sold as a slave and carried off to the land of Egypt.

QUESTIONS:

1. To what country was Joseph taken by the traveling merchants who bought him from his brothers?
2. For whom did Joseph first work as a slave?
3. What happened to Joseph that caused him to be sent to prison?
4. How did Joseph act when he was in prison?
5. What happened to free Joseph from prison?
6. What position did Joseph gain in Egypt?
7. Was Joseph a good example for us? How?



Sacrifices of Thanksgiving

THERE IS NO better way—in fact there is no other way at all—to live a true life of thanksgiving and praise to God than to lay down our lives in showing forth his praises. When we consider that all we have and all we hope for are ours by God's grace, then we will know that our debt of gratitude calls for nothing less than the devoting of our all to him, no longer living unto ourselves, nor for ourselves, but for him. It is this thought that is expressed by David in those well-known words:

"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. Precious in the sight of the LORD is the [sacrificial] death of his saints. O LORD, truly I am thy servant, . . . and the son of thine handmaid: Thou hast loosed my bonds [released me from Adamic condemnation]. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people."—Psalm 116:12-18



Again the psalmist calls upon us to remember the LORD's goodness with thanksgiving, saying, "Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing." (Ps. 107:21,22) How clearly does David here, as elsewhere, associate thanksgiving with the declaring the works of the LORD! This is a very practical arrangement. Had we received special favors from an earthly friend and wanted to show our appreciation by letting others know of his goodness, there would be no better way to do it than to tell of his works—of what he did for us.

And how wonderfully the LORD has favored us! What rich blessings he has bestowed upon us! And how grand are the promises he has yet to carry out for us, and not only for us, but also for the whole world. To tell of all his works it is necessary to publish the truth of his plan. Thus it is that in appreciation of what God has done for us, because his love calls forth our love in return, his people become the light of the world, "a city that is set on a hill [which] cannot be hid."—Matt. 5:14

Trials Are Blessings Too!

As we count our many blessings we should not overlook trials which the Heavenly Father has permitted to come into our lives. If we had the choosing of our own experiences we would avoid the things which annoy, and vex, and try us. But God, in his great wisdom, sees that we need trials and in his love permits them. If our wills are wholly resigned to him, then we will be thankful that he is providing all our needs, even ordeals that are so necessary for the rounding out of our Christian characters.

Some of our trials may be permitted by God to test our faith and confidence in him. Others are to develop our patience and long-suffering. At times these may be in the nature of chastening from the LORD. In any case, they are permitted by our Heavenly Father who is too wise to err,

and too loving to be unkind. Even though he may discipline us, it is in love, and our hearts should respond in grateful appreciation for this evidence that he is not withholding necessary experiences.

"In everything give thanks," the Apostle Paul exhorts us in I Thessalonians 5:18. None but truth-enlightened, fully consecrated Christians can do this wholeheartedly. These know that nothing can come into their lives except that which is for their good. (Rom. 8:28) They know that they are the children of a loving Heavenly Father who is watching over their every interest. They have the assurance that even the most minute affairs of their lives—illustrated by the hairs of their head—are known by him, and directed according to his wisdom and love.—Matt. 10:30

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD," is a promise which every Christian should apply to himself, and should believe with all his heart. (Ps. 37:23) If we are truly thankful for the manner in which the LORD is guiding our lives then we will not try to resist or to go contrary to his will. Instead, with a prayer in our hearts and a song on our lips, we will continue to pay our vows unto him, keeping our sacrifice on the altar until it is wholly consumed.

"He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold," said Job. (Job 23:10) God also knows the way we take, and he is trying us as gold is tried. This means that he puts us through the fires of affliction so that the gold of our character might be refined.

But how precious is the thought that the Great Refiner tempers the heat. He will not permit us to be tested above that which we are able to bear. If he sees that the heat is becoming so intense that we are apt to be injured, he provides a way of escape. (I Cor. 10:13) Yes, he knows and he cares! (I Pet. 5:7) May this blessed truth become so thoroughly fixed in our minds and hearts that nothing will be able to disturb our inner peace and rest in him, and in his promises!

We have been blessed with the light of the knowledge of God. His "wondrous works"—the glorious doctrines of the divine plan—have enlightened us. We have a hope for the world and for ourselves. We have the assurance of divine care, of divine forgiveness, of divine help, and of divine discipline. All of these evidences convince us of divine love. Yes, we know that he cares, and that "no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly."—Ps. 84:11

We enjoy this knowledge because "God is the LORD, which hath showed us light." Shall we not then respond with thanksgiving, making melody in our hearts unto the LORD and sounding forth his praises throughout the land? Yes, let us thus offer the sacrifice of praise continually, and let us "bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar."—Ps. 118:27 □

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

NOVEMBER 1—"Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips."—Psalm 141:3 (Z. '04-23 Hymn 267)

NOVEMBER 8—"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain."—Exodus 20:7 (Z. '04-73 Hymn 45)

NOVEMBER 15—"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."—I John 2:6 (Z. '03-345 Hymn 325)

NOVEMBER 22—"The zeal of Thine house hath consumed me."—Psalm 69:9 (Z. '98-112 Hymn 310)

NOVEMBER 29—"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: for He is faithful that promised."—Hebrews 10:23 (Z. '01-119 Hymn 93)

Winning God's Election

ONE ADMONITION FREQUENTLY given to the New Creation in the Scriptures is that we are not to love the things of this present world. If any man love the world, we are told, the love of the Father is not in him. (I John 2:15) These are strong words—powerful words—given by our Heavenly Father and penned by the Apostle John. They have been preserved in the Holy Scriptures throughout the Gospel Age for the Christian's admonition. These words are important guidelines of instruction along our pilgrim way, urging us to center our lives upon the doing of God's will.

Our subject, "Winning God's Election," especially commends itself to our attention since the Bible's testimony is that before the establishment of the kingdom of Christ on earth God would send forth his angels to gather his elect. This elect class will become joint-heirs with his beloved Son, Jesus, in the grand and glorious kingdom, designed to bless all the families of the earth.—Matt. 24:31; Rom. 8:17

We will compare a few similarities, and some differences, between the election of a United States' president, and a Christian's winning God's election. Becoming co-laborers with our beloved Master in the kingdom will undeniably be the most wonderful privilege ever offered to anyone in the universe! It is indeed the greatest election to be won which can be imagined!

When we think of the great salvation to which we have been called, we should realize what an extraordinary privilege has been offered to us. Nothing greater has ever been offered prior to the Gospel Age; and never will this invitation be repeated again. We have been nominated to help restore Adam's lost dominion, taken from him when he fell from

grace so long ago in the Garden of Eden. Since we have received this great honor, we must "lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us."—Heb. 12:1

What are some of the measures we must take to ensure that ultimately we will become members of this elect class? How can we win our election to the class described as the "called, the chosen, and faithful," by the Revelator? (Rev. 17:14) Let us see what we can learn from the analogy we have chosen.

When political parties of this country hold national conventions to nominate candidates, they presume that after all the deliberations are over and the podium has been removed from the convention hall—when all the banners and balloons have been removed—that the delegates will go throughout the lengths and breadths of the land to capitalize on the momentum and excitement which had been generated during the sessions of the convention. It is their desire and hope that what they planned together will assist them to gain the coveted prize: victory in November when the election is held.

Bible Students also come together in conventions. These gatherings are not designed for frivolity, but are serious times of spiritual refreshment. As we drink deeply from the wellsprings of truth provided by God, we are strengthened, fortified, and assisted toward the successful completion of our heavenly race. We find these assemblages very exciting as we rejoice together as members of God's family, basking in the most precious words of truth, and enjoying holy fellowship with one another. As we receive divine instruction we are immersed in spirituality! Our joy exceeds a thousandfold any pleasure men find in being caught up in the selection of a candidate to serve as their president.

Let us pose a few queries to help in contrasting the distinction between these two elections—the election of an earthly head of government chosen to serve in that office for four years, and the election of the class which will be "born in

Zion," to be associated with Jesus Christ in the work of his kingdom, and to reign with him forever.

1. How was the intention to run in the race announced?

For the political aspirant, great fanfare takes place at the time that his name is given to the news media. A press conference is held so that all the world, particularly his own nation, can hear his statement: "I formally declare for the highest office of the land." And from that time until the election occurs, it is necessary to keep the nominee's name in the news in a positive way. He must maintain a high profile so that people will become familiar with his interests and aims. Spots are arranged on TV and radio programs in order that his attitudes can be set forth for study.

The Christian's decision to enter the spiritual race is quite different. We have been called to run for this high office based on our desire to seek after righteousness. We are dissatisfied with our present state. We feel a lack of ease with our sinful condition, and we turn to the LORD for help. We begin a reverential study of God's Holy Word. And we find that the Biblical truths satisfy our hearts as nothing else can do! We have received God's call to run for the great prize, and we then testify to our consecration to serve God by water immersion, as a demonstration to all other believers that we are now part of the class who seek the heavenly way.

2. Who is our 'opposition'?

The political candidate has many opponents. Everyone and anyone who would stand in the way of his attaining the presidency is the opposition. Initially the focus is on eliminating all the contenders within his own particular party. Once that has been accomplished, energy is devoted to defeating the standard-bearer of the opposing party.

The opponents of the LORD's people are clearly defined in the Bible. They are the world, the flesh, and the Adversary. Paul admonishes us not to be "conformed to this world," but rather to be "transformed" by the renewing of our minds,

that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.—Rom. 12:2

We are encouraged by the same apostle, by his words and by his example, to war against our foe, the flesh. He stated: "I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—I Cor. 9:27

And the Apostle Peter indicated that the Adversary is our most formidable opponent. He uses both the world and the flesh as his tools. Peter told us that "your Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." We must never underestimate this wily and crafty foe, for unless we trust in God's almighty help, he will conquer us; for we are no match for him.

As the New Creature battles against the world, the flesh, and the Adversary, unlike the presidential candidate who sees as his chief opponent other candidates running for the same office, we have the major task of keeping our own new will in a position of ascendancy, and our old will dead. We are to mortify the deeds of the flesh. We are to prevent the old man from resurrecting itself, and of controlling us. Parenthetically, one of the unique features of our running for this race is that we are assisted in making our calling and election sure by helping others to make their calling sure also! The presidential hopeful, on the other hand, has no thought of assisting anyone—only himself!

3. Where does the battle occur?

The presidential candidate's battleground is the length and breadth of our nation. The organizational plan is that he might visit as many places in the nation as possible, to reach and influence as many people as possible in the short period of the electoral race. In the cities where he cannot visit, headquarters are established by a network of supporters, to persuade the people of that region to vote for their candidate on election day.

But we, as a "little flock" of Jesus' followers, are anxious to follow his example and to walk in his footsteps. We read, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." —Heb. 13:12,13

We are still *in* this world, but we are not *of* this world. We recognize that although we must perform our service to God in connection with spiritual things, nevertheless we have this treasure in an earthen vessel. So daily we are in contact with things of the world which would defile us. If we are faithful in carrying out our sacrificial course, resisting the world's influence, then we will be pleasing to the Heavenly Father.

Our sacrifice and devotion may bring reproach upon us. Laying down life itself in God's service will not be appreciated by the world of mankind. Often men think that ours is a foolish, wasteful life. And yet we know that these same reproaches fell upon the Master, in the same manner, and for the same reasons.

4. When may one enter the race?

The candidate for the presidency may declare his intent every four years within a specified time limit governed by the laws of our nation. In contrast to this, the Christian is told that the entire Gospel Age is the 'acceptable year' to run the race for the high calling. Of course we are limited to the span of our own lifetime. It is during this period that we may seek to make our calling and election sure as joint-sacrificers with his beloved Son, who first walked this way nearly two thousand years ago.

Just as Jesus was spoken of prophetically by Isaiah, we too are anointed by God's Holy Spirit. It was said of Jesus, "The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them

(Continued on Page 37)

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

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Portland KKEY 1150 7:00 a.m.

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MANITOBA

Winnipeg CKJS 810 9:00 a.m.

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MHz 102 5:30 p.m.

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MEXICO (Spanish)

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Dunedin 4XD 11:15 a.m.

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

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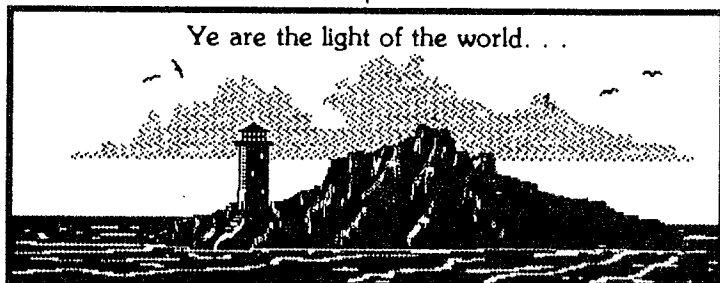
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Nuku' Alofa (Mon.) 10:15 a.m.

URUGUAY (Spanish)

Montevideo Radio El Espectador 810 9:15 a.m.



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PUERTO RICO

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(Continued from Page 31)

that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."—Isa. 61:1,2

Once this feature of God's plan comes to a conclusion, it will never be repeated. "They that were ready went in with him, . . . and the door was shut." (Matt. 25:10) This signals the end of any possibility of running for candidacy for the office of the high calling. We are, therefore, spurred on to greater fervency and zeal in the doing of God's will, so that we will not lose this marvelous opportunity.—Jer. 8:20

5. What are the qualifications for candidacy?

Would-be aspirants to the presidency have very specific requirements. They must be at least 35-years-of age. They must be natural-born citizens of our country, and they should have been a resident in the United States for 14 years.

Requirements as candidates to the high calling are specific. They are demanding. Not, however, along the lines of age, race, creed, place of birth or residency—concepts so important to men. The church has been "redeemed . . . to God by [Christ's] blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Rev. 5:9) Hear the words of Jesus concerning the conditions of candidacy: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matt. 16:24-26) These requirements must continue to be met throughout our entire lifetime since this electoral race ends only with the cessation of our last breath.

6. What will be the reward for the successful completion of this race?

We know the candidate who is selected as president of the United States receives great honor from men. He will be the leader of the free world. He will be the head of the mightiest nation in the world! He will be sought out from around the

globe for his counsel and wisdom, as leaders in every aspect of government seek solutions to the many perplexing problems which beset our planet. In some cases he is even called upon for military support to calm world crises, as is occurring at the present time in the Middle East.

But it will be demonstrated that any new president, as a member of the fallen human race just as his predecessors were, does not have power to improve the world scene to an appreciable degree. The present evil order is under the domination of the "god of this world," and no real, lasting solutions can be found for the problems which afflict mankind without God's help. Therefore, we will find that as long as Satan continues as the prince of this world, and although every four years a new aspirant will step up and declare that he will solve the still-continuing, ever-increasing problems of mankind, that no true and lasting solutions are forthcoming.

We read about the overcoming saints: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." This will be the portion of the candidates who make their election sure. And the glorious results of the new government are vividly described by the revelator. He tells about a "new heavens and a new earth" which will be the real solution to world problems. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21:1-4

The wonderful privilege of administering and controlling this grand government in conjunction with our Lord Jesus Christ will be our reward if we are faithful unto death. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life!" (Rev. 2:10) The 'crown' of life includes the wisdom to guide an administration such as the kingdom of Christ, as well as the power to enforce the changes necessary to accomplish the goals of our platform as outlined in Revelation 21:1-4.

7. Who will assist in carrying out the mandates of the new administration?

A new president has a vice-president and a cabinet to assist him to administer the government. Individuals with peculiar talents in varied fields are placed in key positions, to expedite reforms, and carry out day-to-day functions.

In the case of our beloved Head, Jesus, who will be the chief executive in this new order, it will be similar. We read in Psalm 45:13-16, "The king's daughter [the church class in glory] is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions [the Great Company] that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes [Ancient Worthies] in all the earth."—Ps. 45:13-16

The Great Company, the "companions" of the church class, as well as the "princes in all the earth," the Ancient Worthies, will not be idle during the thousand-year reign of Christ. They will share a part in the administration of the government which will minister, guide, direct, assist, and lift mankind back to perfection.

8. What strategy will gain the victory?

The successful presidential candidate must speak and proclaim those things which sound good to the ear. He must convince the widest spectrum of the electorate that there is something in his ideas that will benefit them personally. The electoral college must be appealed to so it will give him the largest number of votes. When the ballots are cast the candidate must have earned enough electoral votes to insure that he will become president. However, quite often he does not feel compelled to actually carry out the promises upon which he based his platform, once he is elected to office.

With the church, it is different. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? Who shall stand in his holy place? He that

hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." (Ps. 24:3-5) The development of purity and all the graces of the Spirit is essential if we are to gain the victory. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."—Rev. 2:10

9. What will be the portion of those who cease to run for office?

In the case of the presidential candidate, no harm is done. In fact, this is a common occurrence. The reason is often given: "This is not my year; I will try again in four years."

But the church must persevere in the race despite all odds, through persecution, hardship or trial. It is a difficult, strait, and narrow pathway we follow. The Apostle Paul avowed, however, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"—Rom. 8:38,39

Knowing this, we are not to cast away our confidence in his saving power, because "if any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him." But, Paul continues, "we are not of them who draw back unto perdition [Second Death]: but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—Heb. 10:38,39

10. How does the candidate respond to vilification or attack?

Almost universally, the presidential candidate responds in kind. The attempt is made to portray his opponent in a still more unfavorable light. Actually, he will do almost anything he deems necessary to gain the victory, stopping at practically nothing to effect his goal. Publicly he might indicate that he would not stoop to the level of his opposition. But, secretly he gives tacit approval to his advisors who are also adept at developing demeaning advertisements to draw a negative

image of his opposition. "Truth squads" might be organized. These are defined as being teams which follow the opposing candidate to his lecturing appointments. As soon as he has finished speaking, the "truth squad" informs the press that much of which has been said is false!

How do members of the New Creation conduct themselves in their race for the prize? They follow the Master's example. We read of Jesus that "no guile was found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again: when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously." As the footstep followers of Jesus, this must be our course. We must not—cannot—speak evil of any man. We recognize that "there is . . . no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:1) All are covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness, which hides defects and blemishes. We never need to respond to any accusation made against us, because "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?"—vss. 33, 34

As we draw to the close of this study, we must remember that the accomplishment of any earthly goal requires an evaluation at regular intervals of the progress attained thus far. In this way we can alter those plans which need altering, so that our ultimate goal will be attained. How important this is to the Israel of God! It is necessary for us to take inventory of our status, to determine how well we are succeeding in carrying out the principles of truth and righteousness which we have embraced.

Each morning, in order for our devotions to have maximum benefit, we need to assess how much spiritual growth is taking place in our lives. The truth is not a "talking" religion, it is a "doing" religion! And so, before we offer our prayers to God, read our Daily Heavenly Manna or other devotional studies, and discuss the truth with others, we must take stock of our hearts and minds to determine the direction we are going and the progress we are making along the way.

We offer a few questions for which we must provide our own answers. Are we moving in the right direction, standing still, or are we possibly experiencing retrogression? This sort of introspection allows to bring our course in life more into line with what would be pleasing to our Heavenly Father.

- Do I demonstrate an increasing ability to redeem the time, spending a larger percentage of it upon spiritual activities?

- Has my faith in God's plan grown stronger as I apply the lessons to my life which God permits?

- Am I experiencing greater purity of thought, evidenced by a life of increased holiness?

- Have I rid myself of any unnecessary "weights" which formerly I carried?

- Is my motivation for doing good solely from a desire to be a faithful, righteous servant of God, rather than for approval from my brethren?

- Do I habitually approach the LORD for guidance in the small affairs of life, as well as my large concerns?

- Have I grown in patience? Do I make allowances for my brethren's seeming faults?

- Is my love for God, the Lord Jesus, the truth, and the brethren growing stronger, as evidenced by deeper spiritual-mindedness?

- Have I taken the initiative to eliminate barriers to full fellowship with any brother or sister with whom I feel a sense of distance?

- Am I spending more time in prayer?

If our answers are affirmative, we can feel certain that we are on the right course. Our campaign has a firm and good platform! With faith in God, and our hands in his, we will surely win our election. If we continue to trust in him to the end, we will surely have the privilege—with our Lord and Master, Christ Jesus—of inaugurating an everlasting government of peace, health, life, joy, and righteousness. His kingdom will bring blessings to all people, and glory to our great God. To him be praise forever and forever. Amen! ☐

Drop a Pebble in the Water

Drop a pebble in the water: just a splash, and it is gone;

But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on,
Spreading, spreading from the center, flowing on out to sea.

And there is no way of telling where the end is going to be.

Drop an unkind word, or careless: in a minute it is gone;

But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on.
They keep spreading, spreading, spreading from the center as they go,
And there is no way to stop them, once you've started them to flow.

Drop an unkind word, or careless: in a minute you forget;

But there's little waves a-flowing, and there's ripples circling yet.
And perhaps in some sad heart a mighty wave of tears you've stirred,
And disturbed a life was happy ere you dropped that unkind word.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness: just a flash and it is gone;

But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on,
Bearing hope and joy and comfort on each splashing, dashing wave
Till you wouldn't believe the volume of the one kind word you gave.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness: in a minute you forget;

But there's gladness still a-swelling, and there's joy a-circling yet,
And you've rolled a wave of comfort whose sweet music can be heard
Over miles and miles of water just by dropping one kind word.—JWF

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The Consecration of the Priesthood

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."

—Luke 12:37

OUR THEME TEXT reminds us of a wonderful and long-looked-for event. Throughout the Gospel Age the saints have awaited the Second Advent of our Lord. His presence, they have been promised by God's Word, would initiate the harvest of the Gospel Age. It is during this harvest period, 'the end of the age' (Matt. 9:39), that the LORD pledged to make known to his people many additional grand and noble aspects of his plan of salvation. When the time of "blessedness" which the Prophet Daniel spoke of (Dan. 12:12) is fulfilled, the church class will have many aspects of God's plan revealed to them in purer clarity.

In his plan of the ages, the LORD set aside the Gospel Age for a particular work that is still progressing, although unknown to the vast majority of Christians. His plans and purposes have been made known only to those who have fully put their trust in him—who have made a covenant with him by sacrifice—who love him above all else—who wish to serve him with all that is within their being.

The Apostle Paul said, "Of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you." (I Thess. 5:1) Brethren in Christ are aware of the times and seasons of the plan of God and are informed concerning God's purpose in designing the long period which we call the Gospel Age. They know what God's work has been from the time following our Lord's death and resurrection, until today. It is the

time for the selection of the bride of Christ, the little flock, the church class. The closing features of the Gospel Age are understood today as the Holy Spirit enlightens our minds concerning the prophecies on the subject.

We believe we have been in the harvest period of the Gospel Age for over one hundred years, and still the work of the harvest goes grandly on. The harvest work consists of gathering the LORD's wheat into the barn, from the four quarters of earth. And today we are discovering, more than ever before in Bible Student history, that we have brethren in many countries. We find them in Romania, Russia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Nigeria, Japan, South America, and other countries, as well as our North American and European brethren, of whom we have long been aware. Many who had been hidden from us behind the Iron Curtain—now that the Curtain has dropped—have become visible to us! We can correspond with them, talk by telephone with them, we can visit them, and fellowship with them!

We must know the times and seasons in our Father's plan to prepare ourselves for whatever work takes place at that particular time. Here is a simple illustration of the fact that every work has its proper tenure: If you were driving along a road adjoining a farm and saw a man in the spring of the year with a corn picker and a combine out in his field, what would you think of his knowledge of farming? You might even question the man's sanity! The springtime is no time to gather in corn or combine wheat or other grain—it must be planted in the spring before it can be harvested. Suppose in the autumn—the latter part of October—you saw a man out with his plow planting corn or soy beans. Something would be seriously wrong! The farmer obviously has his seasons reversed!

How well this illustrates the importance of understanding the time features of the LORD's work. Many claim to be laboring with the LORD in his vineyard, but since they are unaware that we are living in the harvest of the age, they cannot assist in the harvest work which is in progress. How

true are the words, "Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it." (Ps. 127:1) Those whose eyes are open to understand the times and seasons are blessed indeed, and are able to intelligently serve the LORD. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears for they hear."—Matt. 13:16.

The purpose of the Gospel Age is the call and development of the saints. It is not the time for the conversion of the world to Christ. At this time only a little flock is being selected and trained for the vital occupation, together with Christ, of inaugurating his kingdom work here upon earth for the blessing of all those for whom Jesus died. The Gospel Age is also the time when the sin atonement is completed for the lost world, under condemnation through father Adam. When justice is fully satisfied by the atonement work—when the last member of the body of Christ *passes* beyond the veil—then the blessings which have been foretold by all the prophets (Acts 3:21) will begin to flow to the world in abundance.

Until the harvest of this age the LORD has well hidden various features of his plan. Prophetic words, dark sayings, types and shadows, symbolic features, allegories, have all been made manifest to the saints during Christ's Second Advent. The Lord has come, he has girded himself, and made us sit down to eat abundantly, and has served us meat in due season.—Luke 12:42

In Leviticus, chapter eight, we find a picture of the Gospel Age work, in type. It is an account of the consecration ceremony established by God for the typical priesthood of Israel: "The LORD spoke unto Moses, saying, Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread; and gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation. And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered unto the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation. And Moses said unto the congregation, This is

the thing which the LORD commanded to be done.”—vss. 1-5

“And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith. And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim. And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, even upon his forefront did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses. And Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the Tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them. And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.”—vss. 6-11

These were the LORD's instructions for conducting the consecration ceremony for Aaron and his sons, to anoint them for the work of the priesthood. (Exod. 28) And we realize that the clothes described that Aaron wore at this time were the garments of glory and beauty. (vs. 40) Thereafter the priests took care of the religious services for the people of Israel, enabling them to maintain their standing before God.

Before the consecration service could begin, those who would serve were first selected. God indicated to Moses that he had chosen Aaron and his sons as the first priests to carry out the religious services of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

Moses gathered the entire congregation of Israel together to watch the scene. Aaron wore the glorious robes, but first Moses washed Aaron. He must be cleansed with water before being robed with the special garments of the High Priest. Finally, the gold mitre was placed upon his forehead. Then Moses took the holy anointing oil and, seemingly disregarding Aaron and his sons, he began to anoint the Tabernacle and its furniture. When that was finished, then Moses approached Aaron to anoint him with the holy oil. What

does this picture teach us? Here was Aaron, the high priest, in his consecration robes waiting to be anointed, while Moses went about sprinkling all the articles of the Tabernacle!

In the 16th chapter of Leviticus—another beautiful picture of the sin-offering—Aaron first wore his sacrificial robes. These were the linen breeches and linen coat. Only at the conclusion of the atonement work did he then put on the robes of glory and beauty. This type specifically shows that the priesthood does not assume its glorious robes of office until the sacrificial work of the Gospel Age is complete. In the antitype, the church will then have been resurrected to be with Jesus, when together they will begin to bless the world of mankind. This can take place only because the atonement work is finished.

However, in the consecration of the priesthood (chapter 8), an opposite picture is given. Aaron was clothed in the glorious garments at the very beginning of the scene. Ah, there must be a reason for this. In this typical situation, as Aaron stood there robed from head to toe in the special garments, he represented our great High Priest—Jesus Christ. In the antitype, Jesus was already arrayed in his garments of glory and beauty, anointed of God, authorized by God, selected by God—for the grand work of the Millennial Age, even before he offered up his sacrifice. What a beautiful picture!

In this way God shows that the purpose for which the antitypical royal priesthood has been anointed is to carry out the Abrahamic Covenant—"In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3) This is the end God has in view—it illustrates the 'glory feature' when the antitypical priesthood will reign in Christ's kingdom. So Aaron is dressed in the glory robes right from the beginning. In this way God gave us a preview of what is promised to us even before we began to follow in Jesus' footsteps, laying down our lives in sacrifice. Our Heavenly Father lovingly gives us these illustrations. When he invites us to work with him, he reveals the purpose of the work. He does not call us

to a life of sacrifice without informing us why the sacrifice is necessary, or to what end it will eventually lead.

No, the husbandman that labors must be a first partaker of the fruit. We are even given a foretaste of the fruit before we are invited to the labor. This serves as a stimulus, an energizing principle, that lifts our hearts, giving us courage to walk the narrow way. God gives us a prophetic glimpse of the completed work of the priesthood in glory and honor, bestowing blessings upon the world. Then those invited ones can enter the work with joy and with zeal, and with determination to fulfill their part in God's plan.

Let us return for a moment to our previous allusion to how Moses 'ignored' Aaron during the ceremony of the consecration of the priesthood until after he had sprinkled the Tabernacle and its furniture, when finally he poured the remaining oil upon Aaron's head. Why did Moses follow this sequence? We believe it is because God wished to indicate that even from the initial planning stages—eons of time in the past—he knew exactly how his plan would develop. The satisfactory sin offering made by our great High Priest, and all the priesthood, had been in his mind long before the typical actors came upon the stage of history, and still longer before the time came for the ones pictured—Christ and his church—to come upon the scene. Thus, while Aaron and his sons stood there (those who would fulfill the typical atonement work) they watched Moses sprinkle the Tabernacle and all the furniture.

Who did Moses represent in this picture? He represents God, himself. As strange as it may seem, Moses is the chief actor in Leviticus 8. Aaron and his sons merely obeyed his orders. They do hardly anything at all in this picture. They put their robes on, but Moses did all the work. They do have a small part as we shall see, but Moses is the busy character. He washes the priests, and handles the blood, and takes care of the animals. This is a good illustration of how God does most of the work in the consecration of the antitypical priesthood. We are invited to submit to his leading and his will.

But only as we cooperate with him in the carrying out of his grand design do we receive the full blessing. It is God that does the calling; it is God that justifies; it is God that sanctifies; it is God that pours out his Spirit. He begets, he directs, he blesses, he supplies all our needs.

All this work is done **through** our head, Christ Jesus. But it is God who is doing the work. "It is God which worketh in you," Paul said, "to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13) "He poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him." (Lev. 8:12) As Moses poured the holy anointing oil **upon the head** of Aaron it eventually ran down over his garments, onto the rest of his body.

Notice, however that it was **his** head which was anointed. Again, in this small action God teaches a wonderful lesson: It was Jesus, our 'head', who was anointed with the Holy Spirit as he rose from the Jordan River. He went to John the Baptist as soon as he became thirty years of age to be baptized. We, as body members, do not receive our anointing as individuals. We only receive our anointing as we come in under our head. As the holy anointing oil, poured upon our Master, runs down to touch the fellow-members of his body, they come in under this anointing arrangement. Here again the LORD shows us that our acceptance by him is only as we are **in Christ**—a member of his body. How beautifully this was signified in the enactment on this memorable day many millennia ago!

In this arrangement we are pictured by the sons of Aaron. "Moses brought Aaron's sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles, and put bonnets upon them; as the LORD commanded Moses." (Lev. 8:13) We see that Aaron's sons also had their robes on, and they took their position with Aaron. But their robes were different from his robe. They had on the sacrificial garments. They were in position before Moses—Aaron and his sons ready for the remainder of the drama to begin. This was very significant antitypically.

Moses brought the bullock for the sin offering into the Court. Notice that Moses is still the central actor here. "Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bullock for the sin offering." (Lev. 8:14) Moses slew the animal, but before this, Aaron and his sons had placed their hands upon the bullock's head, indicating by this act that it, in fact, represented them. It pictured that what happened to the animal—it was slain and laid upon the altar of sacrifice to be burned—represented their humanity being sacrificed as a sin offering for the camp of Israel.

"Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about . . . and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation. And he took all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and Moses burned it upon the altar." (Lev. 8:15,16) Certain choice portions of this bullock were burned on the Brazen Altar in the Court—the inwards, the life producing organs. Then the main portion of the body, "his hide, his flesh, and his dung, he burnt with fire without the camp as the LORD commanded Moses."—vs. 17

With the introduction of this first animal sacrifice, we see a wonderful lesson portrayed to us. God is here showing us in type what happens to the humanity of the Christ as it is sacrificed as a sin offering for the world. The body of the bullock was burned "without the camp." This is a picture of Christ's suffering and death when he left his heavenly home and came to earth as a sin-offering for mankind. Paul says he "suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12), and he adds, "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."—vs. 13

The stench which arose from the body of the bullock burning outside the camp to offend the nostrils of the people nearby, was another clear picture. It symbolically pointed forward to the sacrifice of the humanity of the Christ as the world views it. Oh, it is such a waste of time! It is a stench in

their nostrils. They see nothing beautiful nor useful in it. It is not appreciated by the world to any degree.

Was Jesus appreciated when he walked the three-and-one-half years of his ministry, which led to the cross? Was he appreciated by the world? No, he was considered an outsider and an upstart by the religious community and the Jewish rulers. Those who sat in Moses' seat, who should have been the ones prepared to accept him and recognize the Messiah, were the ones who disassociated themselves from him. His ministry made their lack more apparent. He did not favor their position as the leaders of Israel, but instead told his followers to do as they said, but not to do as they did. Eventually, hated and hunted by the religious leaders, he was crucified through their evil efforts.

Can the body members of Christ expect better treatment at the hands of the world, particularly the religious community? No, "If the world hated me," Jesus said, "they will hate you too—the servant is not above his master." We should expect similar treatment—a 'burning without the camp' where we go to 'meet him'—a stench in their nostrils. We should rejoice that we have the privilege of being counted worthy of such an honor!

The inwards, or vital portions of the bullock, were burned in the Court on the Brazen Altar. This was a sweet smelling savor to the LORD. Only those who are pictured as being in the Court—the believers or justified ones—could appreciate the sacrifice of the Christ during this Gospel Age. To some degree we who believe in Christ can appreciate his sacrifice now. Sometime in the future we will appreciate it to its fullest extent!

Leviticus continues, "He brought the ram for the burnt offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram." (Lev. 8:18) Again, the same procedure is followed as with the bullock. Then Moses killed this animal and "sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about, and he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses burnt the head, and the pieces, and the fat. And he washed the inwards and the legs

in water; and Moses burnt the whole ram upon the altar: it was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet savour, and an offering made by fire unto the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses."—vss. 19-21

In the Tabernacle pictures, burnt offerings indicated God's acceptance of the sacrifice of the animal which preceded it. Thus because the ram was burned, it signified that the offering of the bullock had been accepted. The ram was cut in pieces, and the inwards and the legs were washed. It is significant that the head did not need the washing—the head, representing Jesus, who did not require special cleansing. But the body members—representing the church class—need to be washed.

Then everything was placed together upon the altar. The whole animal was again joined, but now in pieces. Because it was acceptable to the LORD as a burnt offering, it was a sweet smell unto him. This showed how God manifested his acceptance of the great sin atonement work of the Christ, head and body. First those within the Court appreciate Christ's offering to God and its acceptance by him. Later, in the Millennial Age, the world of mankind will also learn to appreciate Christ's suffering and death on their behalf.

After this, Moses brought into the Court another animal which was called the ram of consecration. "Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram," teaching the same lesson as before—that it pictured them. Again, Moses slew the animal. Notice that it is still Moses—picturing God—who does the sacrificing. After the ram has been offered, Moses took its blood and "put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot."—vss 22,23

Here a completely different procedure is followed in the use of the blood of the third animal. Moses placed a few drops of it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and on the great toe of his right foot. Then he did exactly the same to Aaron's sons. After that, Moses sprinkled

the remainder of the blood upon the altar round about. What lesson could this be meant to teach?

First to be sprinkled with the blood was the High Priest, which teaches the preeminence of Jesus over the under-priests, the church class. This blood was put first upon the right ear, and then the thumb of the right hand, and then the great toe of the right foot. This is a beautiful illustration of what the consecration of the priesthood means to each individual member of the Christ—first to Jesus and then to his body, as represented in Aaron and his sons.

Oh, what a beautiful picture! The blood was placed upon the ear of the High Priest. This was an expression of the fact that Jesus' hearing would be always attuned to his Father's commandments, and his Father's Word and will. He said to his followers, "The Word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." And again, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." "I and my Father," he also said, "are one."—John 14:24; John 10:30; John 5:19

He was so in tune with the Father's plan and purposes and will that he was absorbed, not only in the hearing, but also in doing God's will. This is shown in the blood being put upon the thumb of the right hand—the hand being an active instrument of the human body. And then the blood was placed upon his right large toe—his feet were also willing servants to do the Word and will of his Father, as quickly as his ear heard it.

How often the prophets speak of Jesus' obedience to his Father's commandments, even unto death. God manifested his pleasure in Jesus again and again, during his sojourn on earth. "This is my beloved Son," he once said, "in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17) Then again, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." (Matt. 17:5) On another occasion when Jesus asked his Father that his life of sacrifice might glorify the name of his Father, we read, "Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it,

and will glorify it again.” (John 12:28,28) Those who were in the vicinity thought they heard thunder.

To them it *was* thunder, but the one whose ears were meant to hear the words knew that it was the voice of God giving him encouragement. How wonderfully God speaks, so that only the ears of the ones who have been anointed can hear the message of truth. Others nearby just hear some thunder! How wonderfully God works with his people! When God speaks to us, we hear his message. And we are glad to cooperate with him in sending out the glad tidings to all others whose ears will hear. The beauty of the plan of God for the salvation of mankind as we try to express it with our stammering tongues and quivering lips, is—to the ear untouched by the blood—just confusion, and trouble, and the noise of thunder.

“And he took the fat, and the rump, and all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and the right shoulder and out of the basket of unleavened bread, that was before the LORD, he took one unleavened cake, and a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and put them on the fat, and upon the right shoulder: and he put all upon Aaron’s hands, and upon his sons’ hands.” (Exod. 29:22-24) To paraphrase Moses’ words, we would say, “Now Aaron, you and your sons come together here, I want your hands in one place. Together you all must hold this shoulder with these various types of cakes on it, and then I want you to wave it before the LORD.” Aaron and his sons obeyed. Moses gave the instruction and they began to wave the portion of the ram’s body with the wafers, before the LORD, and the congregation was gathered together to celebrate the occasion.—Lev. 8:1-5

“Moses took them from off their hands, and burnt them on the altar upon the burnt offering: they were consecrations for a sweet savour it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD.” (Exod. 29:25) It was Moses who placed the offering on their hands and while they waved it was Moses that determined when the waving was complete and it was Moses who

then took this offering out of their hands and burned it upon the altar for a sweet savour to the LORD. What does this picture to us? Well, this dramatic scene shows again that it is God who places our sacrifice into our hands and he expects us to wave it before him, and not lay it down, until he says "enough, well done, I'll take it from your hands." It is God who invites; it is God who determines when we begin and when we complete the sacrifice.

No doubt Aaron and his sons' arms became weary holding the parts of the animal and the cakes, and from waving it before the LORD. However, they had to continue to wave it until Moses released the burden from their hands. Perhaps we experience, as did the antitypical priesthood, similar hardships—our sacrifices will cause us to become tired and weary. Perhaps we sometimes inwardly long for deliverance from our burdens. But the LORD is pleased to watch and wait, just as Moses watched and waited. Until a certain time arrived when Moses determined that a sufficiency of waving had been accomplished, and removed the burdens.

"Moses took the breast, and waved it for a wave offering before the LORD." (Lev. 8:29) It was Moses' part in the wave offering of the consecration ceremony. (Exod 29:26) Here is an additional feature of the picture that arouses our curiosity. As a final feature of the consecration ceremony Moses took the breast of the ram of consecration and waved it before the LORD and then burned it. What lesson can we see in this? Perhaps since Moses represents Jehovah, our Heavenly Father, and it was he who had invited us to bind ourselves to him in fulfillment of our consecration—a covenant by sacrifice—he in turn binds himself to us with all his promises, that he will help us to fulfill our obligations to him.

Oh, how this strengthens our hope of completing our vow successfully, does it not? Not only do we have all the exceeding great and precious promises that he has given to us to lift us up! We have this hope as an anchor that reaches within the veil to give us assurance that with his strength we can carry out our commitment to God. Not only did he give us

promises but he gave his covenant and then he added his oath! God's word alone is sufficient, but in addition to all this God gave his oath. Since he could not swear by anyone greater, he swore by himself, that he would fulfill his covenant. Paul tells us, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called."—Rom. 9:7

The LORD saw that we needed all these assurances—covenants, promises, and even his oath. When God predestinated the formation of his royal priesthood he also foreknew the type of material from which they would be formed—the "dust" of the earth. (Ps. 103:14) His plan was to ask men and women, weakened by sin throughout the centuries, to follow in the footsteps of his Son during the Gospel Age. They would need **all** the assurances he could give them! Do you think God gave one promise more than was necessary? No, he gives only as many as he knows we need.

Jesus put it this way in one place, "Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." (Matt. 19:24) The world is so attractive to us as natural men and women, that it takes all the help God has provided to encourage us to mortify, to deaden, the desires of the flesh so that the desires of the Spirit may become energized. How can we completely mortify or deaden the desires of our flesh? We can 'will' aright, but we cannot 'do' aright. We feel like the Apostle Paul, when he said, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I."—Rom. 7:24,15

Yes, the LORD knows that we cannot actually or perfectly fulfill this covenant we have made by sacrifice. He has ordained an arrangement whereby the will and the intent of the New Creature is reckoned as perfect, because Jesus died to pay for our sins. Therefore, God **attributes** perfection to those who are New Creatures in Christ Jesus. What wonder-

ful grace God gives through this arrangement on our behalf, we who are but creatures of the dust. The LORD tells us that if we continue to set our affections upon things above, and not on things of the earth, he will count the will for the deed!

We can clearly see the need for the sin offering. A mass of sin engulfs the whole world. It has led them captive and has bound them with chains of slavery from which they could never break forth and become free. It is impossible for man to deliver himself from the sin which works in him, the motions of which are in his heart, and mind, and flesh, and which eventuate in death. But God, in his great love, is preparing the agency that will completely destroy all sin during the thousand years of the kingdom. All the effects of Adamic sin will be destroyed. Christ shall reign until he has put down all enemies of God under his feet, "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is [Adamic] death."—I Cor. 15:25,26

Yes, the Christ, will be in a position to free the world from the slavery of sin and death, and eventually will lead them into the condition which Paul describes as "the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. 8:21) Then, when the kingdom is delivered up to God at the conclusion of the reign of the antitypical priesthood, God will eventually be all and in all.—I Cor. 15:24-26

What a wonderful plan the Father has revealed in measure to us! He has made us drink of it, feed upon it, joy in it, so that it absorbs our time and our attention and our energy. How can we show him in some small way how much we love him, his ways, his character, and his Son? By our little sacrifices from day to day—pictured in the consecration ceremony—by the blood being put on the sons of Aaron's ears, and their thumbs, and their large right toes. Just as his consecration affected Jesus, so it must affect us. We must keep the hearing of our ears constantly attuned to the Word of the LORD, and follow through with the actions of our lives.

Jesus made two statements that encompass the entire realm of 'hearing' which are necessary for the New Creature. He said, "Take heed *what* you hear" (Mark 4:24; Luke

8:18), and "Take heed *how* you hear." When we are given the privilege of seeking to carry out our consecration, let us remember to allow the strength of our right hands, and our right feet to do his bidding. These efforts will be acceptable to God because we are following the LORD's directions which we have heard with our ears! God appreciates our feeble efforts to have our feet run swiftly in his ways. In the descriptions, both in the Old and the New Testaments, of the lives of God's people, there is always attached to them the idea of motion. Faithful followers of Jesus are either running, or walking, or working—they are striving, they are sacrificing. They are always in motion, there is always activity—hands are working; and feet are running—because the ears are attuned to the message of God. They hear and they want to obey.—Ps. 1:1

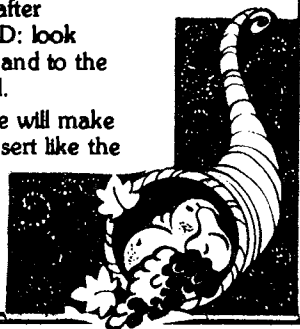
Those of us who appreciate the types and shadows of the Tabernacle which God carefully designed and preserved for us, should reflect upon their lessons. This meditation will bring us much joy and pleasure, strength and hope. We know and love God's Word, yet it is important to refresh it in our minds—it is so easy for us to forget. These truths leak out, and unless we keep filling the vessel, the leaking out could overtake the filling—and soon we could be empty. □

THANKSGIVING

"HEARKEN TO ME, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.

"For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."

—Isaiah 51:1 and 3



1990 General Convention Notes

LOOKING BACK AT the 1990 General Convention, we would have to call it "a big success"! Houghton College proved to be a nearly ideal facility for our needs, as well as a comfortable and friendly place for fellowship.

The discourses offered a fine mixture of Bible topics which were very uplifting to our faith, and encouraged us all to press on in the Christian way in these difficult times.

The overall attendance was somewhat in excess of five hundred, with a large representation of children and young adults.

The Convention Committee at the present time is working on the next convention to be held in 1991. We are not able to let you know yet if we will return to Houghton, or whether some other site will be selected. In recent weeks several colleges have been visited that have possibilities.

Talks given at the Houghton Convention are available both from our Video Cassette Service, and Recorded Lecture Service. Video tapes cost \$6.00 each; audio tapes are \$2.00 each. If you wish to have them on loan or to purchase, please write to the following addresses:

For audio tapes: Recorded Lecture Service, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

For video tapes: Video Cassette Service, P.O. Box 4355, North Hollywood, CA 91617.

"O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart."
—Psalm 36:10

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to the families and friends in the loss of these dear ones. We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.

Brother Stephen Roskiewicz, Grand Rapids, MI—August 28. Age, 77.

Sister Berna Bolton, Vancouver, B.C.—August 31. Age, 66.

Brother Floyd Meyer, Beloit, WI—September 3.

Sister Lorita Krebs Williams, New York, NY—September 11. Age, 87.

Brother George Luz, Paterson, NJ—September 22. Age, 80.



In Memoriam

Brother Stephen Roskiewicz, long-time trustee of the Dawn Bible Students Association, and expositor of Bible truth, finished his earthly course on August 28, 1990. He was 77 years old.

His many years of faithful service to the LORD included eldership in the Bible Student congregation at Grand Rapids, Michigan. In former years he was very active in traveling to promote the "Frank and Ernest" radio programs, and The Bible Answers TV programs with broadcasting stations nationwide. To many brethren in the United States and abroad he will be remembered for his untiring pilgrim service, bringing strength and encouragement to large and small classes alike, as well as many isolated brethren. He also served for many years as a highly valued member of the General Convention Committee.

Brother Stephen's greatest joy was in discussing the beauty and harmony of the Scriptures as they revealed the glorious plan of God for the salvation and blessing of all mankind.

He is sorely missed by his loving family and his many friends in many lands, who were privileged to know and love him.

"Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the LORD: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

—Ephesians 2:20-22

Let us, as day after day rolls by, remember our three-fold relationship to this temple: (1) We are still in process of preparation as living stones. (2) As members of the Royal Priesthood carrying the Ark we are marching from the Tabernacle into the Temple condition; some of our number have already entered in, and some are still on the way. (3) As the LORD's people the time has come for us to know, to sing with the spirit and understanding, the new song of divine mercy, justice, love and truth. Let us be faithful in each of these respects, fulfilling our parts, and ere long our course will be ended and the glory of the LORD will fill the temple.—Z. '03-443

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To the left is a suggestion for a small advertisement in your local newspaper. This outline is designed for three and one-half inches in one column.

NOVEMBER SPECIAL

On Sunday, November 18th, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss a topic of interest to many. Attractive circulars are available for announcing this program, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. They are free. Address your request to:

**The Dawn
East Rutherford, NJ 07073**

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

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

G. Balko

Bath, NC	November 4
Atlanta, GA	6
Macon, GA	7
Orlando, FL	10-12
St. Petersburg, FL	14
Louisville, AL	17, 18
Bowling Green, KY	20
Cincinnati, OH	22
St. Louis, MO	24, 25
Gary, IN	26
Grand Rapids, MI	27
Detroit, MI	28

D. Bruce

Portland, OR	November 14
Sacramento, CA	16
Palo Alto/San Francisco	18

(D. Bruce, Continued)

San Luis Obispo, CA	19
Los Angeles, CA	21
Phoenix, AZ	28
Salt Lake City, UT	30

L.B. Post

New Haven, CT	November 4
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E.K. Penrose

Macon, GA	November 1
Atlanta, GA	2

W. Vrooman

Atlanta, GA	November 5
Oak Ridge, TN	6
Allentown, PA	8
Washington, D.C.	13
Raleigh, NC	14
Morehead City, NC	15

Psalm One Hundred



1. Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.
2. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.
3. Know ye that the LORD he is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
4. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.
5. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed at the request of the classes who sponsor them. In order to ensure your convention being accurately placed in these columns, please make your request IN WRITING and mail it to this address at least two or three months before the date of the convention: The Dawn, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

NEW HAVEN, CT, November 4—Italian-American Club, 85 Chase Lane, West Haven. Contact: Cindy Mason, 19 Burr St., Branford, 06406. Phone: (203) 481-9935

ALBUQUERQUE "FALL WEEK-END," November 17-19. Contact Tim Thomassen, 402 Bryn Mawr S.E. 87106. Phone: (505) 268-8170

JERSEY CITY PRE-THANKSGIVING CONVENTION, November 17,18—Masonic Temple, 1912 Morris Ave., Union, NJ. Write: Mrs.

Charlotte Teklinski, 84 Arthur St., Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660 for information and accommodations. Phone: (210) 440-0925

SAN DIEGO THANKSGIVING CONVENTION, November 22-25—LaJolla Village Inn, 3299 Holiday Court, LaJolla, CA. Phone: (800) 854-2900. *Reservations must be made by October 31st.* Write for information and reservations: Mrs. Anna Karavas, 6758 Mineral Drive, San Diego 92119. Phone: (619) 464-6774

1990 GENERAL CONVENTION AUDIO TAPES

AUDIO TAPES OF the 1990 General Convention at Houghton, NY are available now. If you wish to order the entire set for this year, the price is \$30.00; or you can order individual tapes at \$2.00 each. Send for a free listing of available subjects.

THE VESPERS tapes are especially nice to have, and include the choral groups which we enjoy listening to so much.

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