

The DAWN

"NOW IS
CHRIST RISEN
FROM THE DEAD,
AND BECOME
THE FIRSTFRUITS
OF THEM THAT SLEPT."

I CORINTHIANS 15:20



A HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE
APRIL 1950

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THE DAWN

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ERRATUM

On page 3 of the February issue, second paragraph, line six, beginning with comma should read, "but Jesus explained that then he did not know." The word "not" was omitted in error.

The Prophetic Outlook

IT IS no longer news by now that the atomic bomb, with its terrible potential for destruction, has been outclassed by the hydrogen bomb, which, as one scientist has announced, is possibly a thousand times more destructive than the missiles of death that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Mr. Elmore Philpott, a newspaper columnist of Canada, commenting on the announcement that President Truman had given the go-ahead on building the H-bomb, wrote, "One of the most curious features of these weird times is the apathy with which we greet the news that the human race is hell bent to commit suicide."

No less an authority than Albert Einstein has made it clear that the use of the H-bomb might easily result in the total annihilation of the race. A few of these dropped strategically on the larger cities of the United States, and by this country on other continents, in the initial stages of a suicide war, would not only destroy countless millions of people by the original blasts, but the atmosphere would become so radio active, and remain contaminated so long, that human life might well be completely wiped out. So says Mr. Einstein.

In addition to its thousand times greater power of destruction, there is another difference between atomic energy and hydrogen energy. Atomic energy, we were told, could be harnessed for good as well as for evil. It could be turned to productive purposes as well as it could be used to kill. But not so with hydrogen power. The H-bomb, it is said, is a killer, and nothing but a killer—first, last, and all the time. No wonder it is being said by thinking people that we now have maniacs at the wheels of international controls.

Nor is the H-bomb the only menace being held over the heads of the masses, for germ warfare is also in the offing. Commenting on this, Dr. Brock Chisholm, head of the World Health Organization, and a great scientist, asks why all the excitement about bombs, for, as he explains, a jar of germs no bigger than a quart of preserved raspberries on the kitchen shelf, can possess enough killing power

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to wipe out the whole human race. All great powers have such devices in storage, he tells us, and there is no known real protection against them, he explains.

Voices not a few are being raised against a foreign policy which is geared to an armament race. Government officials and world diplomats are being bombarded with warnings that such a policy will not safeguard the peace. It is being pointed out that there is no case in history in which an armament race resulted in anything else than war. Probably those who are making the decisions know this; at the same time, they seem unable to follow any other course. It is as though an invisible hand were shaping world affairs, while those who presumably are doing so, are acting as mere puppets.

Meanwhile, as one Senator expressed it, the forces of communism are closing in on us, and this despite all the publicity that is given to the stockpile of atomic bombs possessed by the United States, and the authority that has now been given to make H-bombs. What will be the end of all this? With all the increased knowledge of the scientists, is the only real know-how of the human race finally to be that of self-destruction? It would seem so; and yet there is a way out, a way that was prophesied thousands of years ago by the inspired writers of the Bible.

These prophecies identify many details of the present chaotic state of the world. They tell us that the world would be turned upside down, and that its inhabitants would be scattered; also that the earth would mourn, and that the leaders of society would—figuratively speaking—stagger like drunken men. How descriptive these statements are of a world that has gone mad!

The Prophet Daniel summed up the meaning of these symbolic utterances, saying that there would be “a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.” (Dan. 12:1) In the New Testament Jesus quotes this prophecy and explains that it would be fulfilled at the time of his second visit to earth, his second advent—that it would, indeed, be a sign of his second presence.—Matt. 24:3, 15, 21, 22

Jesus gave us some details of what would be involved in this foretold great time of trouble, saying that there would be on the earth “distress of nations, with perplexity.” (Luke 21:25, 26) He pointed out that because of this distress and the outlook for worse things to come, men’s hearts would fail them for fear as they looked forward to the things coming upon the earth. How graphic a de-

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scription this is of the present world-wide situation! We are living in a fear-filled world, and apart from the information given us in the Word of God, no one knows what the outcome will be.

And what is the prophetic outcome as set forth by the prophecies of the Bible? It is a very hopeful one. The human race will not be permitted to bomb itself out of existence. Jesus, however, intimated that human selfishness would ultimately lead to this if not restrained by divine intervention. Speaking of the awfulness of this period of distress through which we are passing he said that unless those days be shortened no flesh would be saved. (Matt. 24:22) But to this he added that the days of trouble would be shortened, thus rescuing the human race from the result of its own madness.

But this intervention will mean more than merely the halting of an insane armament race before it leads to the suicide of humanity, for all the prophecies which focus upon our day assure us that this great Armageddon is the final struggle of the ages, and that just beyond will be manifested Christ's kingdom—that divine government of promise which will satisfy the desire of all nations because it will bring lasting peace and prosperity and joy to all the families of the earth.

Speaking of this, the Prophet Haggai wrote that the Lord would shake all nations, and that then the desire of all nations would come. (Haggai 2:7) The world is now passing through this time, and ere it is over, the sovereignty of all nations will be shaken, and the peoples of the world will know that they cannot depend upon their rulers to protect them and give them peace. It will be when they come to this recognition that they will say, as predicted by the Prophet Micah:

“Come, and let us go up to the mountain [kingdom] of the Lord, . . . and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. . . . He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: for nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.”—Micah 4:2-4

In this remarkable prophecy we have outlined for us a genuine

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and workable formula for peace. It is based, not on an armament race, but on a disarmament program—"They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: for nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." As history so accurately reveals, when the nations learn war and prepare for war, they always go to war. But when, under the guidance and discipline of Christ's kingdom, they learn peace, and convert their instruments of war into machinery of peace, they will have peace. And not only will they have peace, but they will have prosperity, for then, as the prophet foretold, every man shall dwell under his vine and fig tree.

We can see from this that all national, international, and economic problems will be solved by Christ's kingdom—that long prayed-for kingdom which soon will put an end to the nation's madness. But that kingdom will do much more than this for a sin-sick and dying world; for the promises of God assure us that it will also destroy sickness and death. How much better is this thought than what the world is fearing today! Instead of A-bombs and H-bombs and germs let loose for the destruction of the people, the healing powers of the divine Life-giver will restore the sick to health and the dead to life.

The way the Apostle Paul expressed it is that Christ must reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and the last enemy to be destroyed is death. (I Cor. 15:25, 26) Because death will be destroyed, the Revelator prophesied that "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. 21:4) This is human destiny as it is pointed out to us in the Word of God. Let us take comfort in the thought that there is a power higher than man, which will prevent him from going the full limit to which his unbridled selfishness would lead him, and that man's extremity will be God's opportunity to lead the race back into the fold of his care, where those who obey the laws of Christ's kingdom will live and rejoice forever.

"We Are Able"

WE CAN merely, therefore, will to do right; and the Lord must needs take us under his care and into his school of affliction and experience, giving us the lessons necessary to prove our loyalty and faithfulness even unto death." —Reprints

The Outlook for Israel

THE hydrogen bomb, and the various developments in connection with the cold war between East and West, dictatorship and democracy, communism and capitalism, have more or less eclipsed news items out of Palestine for a number of weeks. However, the new state of Israel is still forging ahead, and that part of Palestine controlled by the Israeli Government is being developed rapidly in preparation for an ever-increasing number of Jews who reach the Promised Land from various parts of the world, particularly Europe.

It is now estimated that by the end of 1950 the little state of Israel may reach, or even exceed, 1,500,000 in population. This is a goal which Israel, when it proclaimed its independence on May 14, 1948, hoped to reach in five years. At that time there was a claimed population of 750,000. It is estimated that there are now at least 1,200,000 in the country and the figure is going up by the hundreds and often thousands every day.

All the principal cities of the new state are filled with immigrants, and this is creating a housing shortage which confronts Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion with one of his most serious problems. The Jewish Agency officials claim that more than 200,000 of the new immigrants have been "absorbed," which means that they have found permanent homes and work, and have fitted themselves completely into the structure of the Jewish nation.

The number in temporary transit camps varies considerably, with the figure sometimes running over 100,000. Usually more than 15,000 reach Palestine each month, and the number is expected to increase this Spring. Seemingly the only thing that keeps the Jews from flocking to the Promised Land in even greater numbers is inability to arrange for ship or plane travel—they just have to wait their turn.

Many prophecies of the Bible are being fulfilled by the fast moving events of our day, but there is none more outstanding, nor more easily discerned than this mass return of the Jews to Palestine. Not only are the returning Israelites fulfilling prophecy by their return, but the circumstances which led up to and caused their determination to seek haven in the Promised Land are also remarkable evidences of God's foreknowledge and of the accuracy with which he caused his holy prophets to forecast these events.

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Even their timing was foretold. According to the prophecies, Israel's eclipse as a free and independent nation was to cover a period of 2,520 years, beginning with 606 B. C. This long span of years ended in 1914, and there began the world-shaking events which brought about the rebirth of the nation. The first World War released the Holy Land from the domination of the Turks. The Balfour Declaration opened the doors of Palestine to Jewish immigration, and made it possible for them to begin rebuilding their country.

Controversy developed with the Arabs which brought about a temporary cessation of immigration. Meanwhile, persecution of Jews in Europe was stepped up, and millions of them were murdered. On top of this, the second World War created such desolation in Europe—and particularly for the Jews—that there seemed no hope for survival as a people except to go back to the land of their fathers. All of these circumstances are clearly foretold in the prophecies and, as we know, they brought about what we now see to be a mass emigration of this historic people to their Land of Promise. It is an outstanding fulfilment of Bible prophecy, and when recognized should strengthen our faith in the Word of God, and in the divine promises pertaining to events still future in the experiences of Israel and of all nations.

There are those who scoff at the idea that the prophecies of the Bible mean anything to us today. Their claim is that all present-day events are understandable and to be expected, in the light of what has occurred in the past. The rise and fall of nations and civilizations, they say, occur in cycles, and what is happening today, or happens at any time, is merely a matter of history repeating itself. But this is not true. Where is there anything in the annals of history which compares with the experiences of the Jews since 1914?

It will be remembered that the last general session of the United Nations voted that Jerusalem should be made an international city, to be controlled neither by Jews nor by Arabs, but by a governing body set up by the UN. The Jews and Arabs both rejected this plan and, in defiance of the UN, the Israeli Government promptly moved its headquarters to this ancient capital of the Holy Land; and there it continues to function. Just what, if anything, the UN will be able to do about this remains to be seen. A conference of UN representatives in Geneva, Switzerland, will try to work out a solution.

But no solution will meet with the approval of Jewish patriots which does not leave Jerusalem in their possession as a seat for the Israeli Government. Their attitude in this matter is vividly reflected in their oath of loyalty, a quotation from the Prophet David's writings (Psa. 137: 5, 6), which reads,

*"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem
Let my right hand forget its art,
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth
O Jerusalem, If I do not remember thee."*

What this means when translated into action is expressed by one Jewish columnist on the scene who, in referring to the UN's decision to internationalize Jerusalem, writes, "They can't force us to accept their rule except with guns—and if they try that, there'll be one hectic underground here again, and we'll all be in it. This is the fireside talk in Jerusalem these days. The talk is not despairing but determined."

So even though Israel is established as a nation among nations, and the Jews from all over the world are going to Palestine as fast as they can secure travel accommodations, and even in greater numbers than the country can properly absorb them, the problems of this ancient people of God are by no means all solved. And this, too, is quite in keeping with the prophecies. As a matter of fact, their worst troubles are yet to come, when aggressor nations from the north will send their armies against them in the final phase of the prophetic Armageddon of the Scriptures. It will be then that God will deliver his people from their enemies, and for the first time they, as a people, will recognize that all along he had a hand in their restoration to the land, and is now prepared to fight for them as he did in the days of old.

It will be then that Jesus will be recognized as their true Messiah, and his kingdom as their real government, and the government of all nations. (Isa. 9:6, 7) The state of Israel is not to be the representative of Christ's kingdom on earth, but, as a government will collapse, together with all the other governments of this world, when Christ manifests himself as the new King of earth. For more than nineteen centuries the work of God in the earth has been the selection and preparation of the true footsteps followers of the Master to live and reign with him in the spiritual, or invisible, phase of his kingdom. Prior to this age, the visible, or human repre-

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representatives of Christ's kingdom, were also selected and trained for their high position of responsibility in this new government. These were the ancient prophets and other worthy ones of the pre-Christian era.—Psa. 45:16; Luke 13:28; Heb. 11

Both of these groups are, in the divine plan, restored to life in the resurrection that they might take their appointed places in the divine government. The church is brought forth in what the Scriptures describe as the "first resurrection," and the ancient worthies are given, as the Apostle Paul describes it, a "better resurrection."—Rev. 20:4, 6; Heb. 11:35, 39, 40

While the new Israeli Government will not function as the representative of Christ when his kingdom is manifested for the blessing of the people, but will have to give place to the previously prepared agencies of that kingdom, it has undoubtedly been brought into being by divine providence. In order for Palestine to be reclaimed as a homeland for the Jews, and for the Jewish people to return there and be cared for, organization was required, a governmental organization, the authority of which would be generally recognized, at least by the Jews themselves. The Israeli Government serves this needed purpose.

The prophecies indicate, however, that so far as the vast majority of the Jews would be concerned, they would go to Palestine in unbelief. Only a small percentage, particularly of those in control of the Israeli Government, believe in God and have faith in the promises he made to them through their ancient prophets. There is a certain national sentiment attached to the land, but it is not rooted deeply in faith or in religious fervor. They like to quote their prophets, but this is largely because they were Jewish prophets, not because they accept them as inspired spokesmen for God, whose prophecies and promises are to be relied upon as the divine plan for them.

But this picture will quickly change when they discover in the final phase of Armageddon that they cannot defend themselves, that their militarism has failed them in their hour of greatest need, and the God of their fathers delivers them. Then the eyes of their understanding will be opened to behold the glory of the Lord, they will recognize their Messiah and begin to rejoice in the promised blessings of his kingdom.



THE CHURCH SUFFERING AND TRIUMPHANT

Lesson for Sunday, April 2

I PETER 4:12, 13

JESUS was the Messiah whose coming and kingdom had been foretold in the Old Testament. His disciples had accepted him as such and believed that he was destined to be the great King who would rule "from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." (Psa. 72:8) It was a great shock to them, therefore, when their Master was arrested, unjustly tried, and crucified. They were also at a loss to understand why he willingly surrendered to his enemies, offering no resistance at all.

Their belief that Jesus was the great King of promise was confirmed when he triumphantly rode into Jerusalem and was acclaimed ruler by the people. This was but five days before his crucifixion, hence the sudden turn of events which resulted in his death was all the more difficult for them to understand. However, after Jesus was raised from the dead he appeared to two of his disciples as they journeyed to Emmaus and explained the situation to them.

These disciples related to Jesus—who appeared to them as a stranger—their former conviction

that the Master was the One promised to redeem Israel, but that now their hopes had been blasted by his crucifixion. Then Jesus, quoting from Moses and from all the prophets, pointed out to these two bewildered disciples the fact that it was necessary first of all for Christ to suffer and die, and that not until after this would the promises of messianic glory be fulfilled. They saw the light, and afterward said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and opened to us the Scriptures?"—Luke 24:32

Jesus told these two disciples that they were slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had said, and what was true of them has been true of many professed followers of the Master since—not so much with respect to the meaning of Christ's own suffering and death, but particularly concerning the plan of God for his church to suffer and die with him. Just as those early disciples thought Jesus should have established his kingdom while still in the flesh, using military might if necessary, so millions of his professed followers have thought that this has been the work of the church in the flesh, and have attempted to exercise

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authority through church-state unions and otherwise.

Peter was one who opposed Jesus in his course of giving himself up for arrest and crucifixion. "Be it far from thee, Lord," he said to his Master. (Matt. 16:22) But through the guidance of the Holy Spirit Peter later learned that this was the way of love—a love that leads to sacrifice, the means by which both the church and the world are redeemed. Furthermore, he learned that it is the privilege of Jesus' followers to suffer and die with him. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps."—I Peter 2:21

It was difficult for the Early Church to become reconciled to this viewpoint of suffering. Since Jesus was the Messiah, and especially now that he had been glorified, why should not the messianic cause be triumphant in the earth and his followers honored instead of persecuted? So Peter, explaining the matter, wrote, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—I Peter 4:12, 13

In this epistle Peter had already called attention to the prophetic testimony concerning the "sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow," and throughout the epistle he makes it clear that this testimony included the suffering

of the body members of The Christ as well as the suffering of Jesus, the Head. Thus, he explains, it was no strange thing, but rather a part of the plan of God, that Christians should suffer, and that those who are faithful in suffering with Christ will be glad with exceeding joy when the promised glory shall be revealed, for they will share that glory.

Paul confirms this viewpoint when writing to Timothy: "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." (II Tim. 2:11, 12) This truly was a faithful saying, for it had been confirmed of old by the holy prophets, who gave testimony under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. We still have the privilege of suffering with Christ, and we can still rejoice in the hope of sharing his glory, the glory of his kingdom.

REVELATION 7:9-17

This section of our lesson also presents a picture of suffering on the part of God's people, but not of the class which suffer and die with Christ and in the "first resurrection" live and reign with him. Those who share the kingdom glory with Jesus and reign with him as kings are described by the Master as a "little flock," whereas the group here mentioned is said to be a "great multitude."—Luke 12:32

How large is the little flock? Revelation 7:4 and 14:1, 3, indicate that it will be composed of 144,000. The promises of messianic glory

were made originally to the Jewish nation, but only a few of that nation—a remnant—qualified when their Messiah came to them. The remainder, represented as branches in an olive tree, were broken off. (Rom. 11:17) The symbolic “olive tree,” nevertheless, was not destroyed. Instead, Gentile believers have been grafted in to take the places of the Israelitish branches that were broken off. This explains why, in Revelation 7:4-8, the entire Christ company is represented as being of the twelve tribes of Israel. A nucleus of them are literally of the twelve tribes, and the remainder are Gentile branches grafted into this symbolic olive tree, to make up the spiritual house of Israel.

It was after John saw this “little flock” of 144,000 that, in the progress of the vision, “a great multitude” appeared on the scene, which proves conclusively that this latter class is not the same group—not faithful followers of the Master who will live and reign with him for a thousand years. One of the points which highlights this difference is the fact that they need to wash their robes and make them clean in the blood of the Lamb.

In James 1:27 we learn that one of the earmarks of pure religion is to keep oneself “unspotted from the world.” The “great multitude” evidently do not accomplish this, hence the necessity of washing their robes. They come up “out of great tribulation,” and it is in connection with this that their robes are washed. The implication of the passage is that with these

the tribulation is due partly to their unfaithfulness. Such is not the case with those who suffer with Christ.

This “great multitude” serve God day and night in his temple. In Psalm 45:13-15 we are given a prophetic and symbolic picture of Christ—the King’s Son—and his bride, the church—the King’s daughter. The “daughter,” the church, the “little flock” class, enters into the King’s palace, and is said to have companions who follow her, and they also enter into the palace, the temple of Revelation 7:15.

The logical conclusion to be drawn, when putting these various passages of Scripture together, is that there will be a large group who, during the Gospel age, aspire to a heavenly reward, yet fail to sacrifice themselves in the service of the Master voluntarily as faithfully as they might. Thus these come short of the “prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” and will not be privileged to reign with Christ as kings on his throne.

In our lesson this “great multitude” is shown “before” the throne, not on it, and they “serve him [God] . . . in the temple,” instead of reigning with Christ. The exact number of this company is left indefinite in the Scriptures, which also indicates that it is a different class from the “little flock” of kings, the number of which is definitely stated as being 144,000. It apparently represents a merciful provision God has made for those who come short of being more than overcomers, and in the divine

economy they are given a useful service in connection with the kingdom arrangements.

QUESTIONS:

What great truth of the divine plan were the disciples "slow of heart to believe"?

Why was it necessary for Peter to admonish Christians not to think their trials strange?

Is the "little flock" of 144,000 made up of Jews, or Gentiles, or both?

What are some of the reasons those referred to in Revelation 7:9-17 are not those who reign with Christ a thousand years?

THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THE RESURRECTION

Lesson for Sunday, April 9

I CORINTHIANS

15:1-8, 20, 21, 57, 58

LUKE informs us that Jesus, after his resurrection, showed himself "by many infallible proofs" and witnesses, and Paul lists these for us in today's lesson. (Acts 1:3) "Last of all," writes the apostle, "he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." When Jesus showed himself to the other witnesses he materialized in a body of flesh to enable them to see him and commune with him, but a miracle of a different character was performed in the case of Paul.

The Apostle John wrote, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he [Christ] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (I John 3:2) The entire church, including Paul, was promised exaltation to the divine nature, and association with Jesus, sharing his heavenly glory. It is this that is involved in being "born" of the Spirit, Spirit birth being preceded by Spirit begetting.

It will then be possible to see "Jesus as he is."

But Paul explains that he saw Jesus as one "born out of [or, before the] due time." In other words, Paul caught a glimpse of the divine Jesus even though he had not himself attained to Spirit birth. It was only a momentary view of the Master in his glory, and this was possible only by a miracle. Even so, the brightness of the divine Being blinded Paul. It was a convincing testimony to him that Jesus had been raised from the dead, a testimony which, by supplementing that of the other "infallible" witnesses, served to substantiate this fundamental truth in the minds of all who had "ears to hear."

Thus, with no uncertain sound, Paul's assurance has reached down through the centuries even to our day that "now is Christ risen from the dead." (I Cor. 15:20) This is a blessed truth and belief in it is fundamental to being a Christian. Strange though it may seem, however, there have been some professed followers of Christ associated

with the church who have not believed in the resurrection of Jesus.

There were some of these in the church at Corinth, the group to which this wonderful chapter on the resurrection was written. By implication they denied that Christ had been raised from the dead. Paul indicates that these did not believe in the resurrection at all, and while possibly they had not applied their unbelief to Jesus, he shows that it would mean just this, for if in the plan of God no provision is made for the resurrection of the dead, "then is Christ not risen." (I Cor. 15:13) This is a good example of how the entire plan of God stands together. We cannot reject a part of it without doing violence to the whole.

The fact that Jesus was raised from the dead is in itself a marvelous truth, but its fulness of meaning is emphasized by Paul in the statement that he has "become the firstfruits of them that slept." Simply stated, this means that because Jesus was raised from the dead, all others who are asleep in death will be awakened—both the church and the world. When discussing the hope of a future judgment day which necessitates an awakening of the dead—Paul declared, "He [God] hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him [Christ] from the dead."—Acts 17:31

Paul says that Jesus became the "firstfruits" of them that slept. This is a very significant term—one that is borrowed from the Old Testament. It is a harvest expression, and by its use in this connection the loving plan of God to

restore the dead to life is likened to a great work of harvest, and truly it will be a wonderful and joyous harvest.

In the use of this symbolism we have a further important truth of the divine plan brought to our attention, for in God's arrangements with typical Israel, the firstfruits of every harvest were given to the Lord—offered as a sacrifice. So in the antitype, Jesus the "firstfruits" was also offered to the Lord. It was, in his case, the offering of himself, and in connection with this offering it was the divine will that he should die as the Redeemer of both the church and the world.

Jesus was "planted" in death. As a grain of wheat he fell into the ground. Jesus explained that unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone. (John 12:24) Jesus, because of being planted in death, did not remain alone. He was raised from the dead and became the "firstfruits" of them that slept. Because he was planted in death there is to be a glorious harvest of all who are in their graves, for in due time they shall hear his voice and shall come forth.

In some Old Testament pictures reference is made to the "first of the firstfruits." (Exod. 23:19) This also has a parallel in the antitype. Antotypically Jesus is the first of the firstfruits, for his true church is spoken of as also being of the firstfruits class. (James 1:18) And, like Jesus, these offer themselves to God, and are "planted together in the likeness of his [Christ's] death." (Rom. 6:5) The entire

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firstfruits class is exalted to immortality in the resurrection—the “glory of the celestial.”—I Cor. 15:40

As we have noted, the term firstfruits implies afterfruits, so the apostle makes it plain that Jesus and his church are not the only ones raised from the dead. “As in Adam all die,” he writes, “so in Christ shall all be made alive.” However, there is a divine order in the resurrection. Naturally, the firstfruits are the first, and “afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” (Verse 23) In this text the word “coming” is a translation of the Greek word **parousia**, meaning presence—the entire thousand years of Christ’s second presence, not the moment of his arrival.

The expression, “They that are Christ’s at his coming” does not mean those who have been converted before he returns. As noted, the statement refers to the entire period of Christ’s second presence—the time of his kingdom. (Verse 25) And the full thought of the text is that during that period all we do not compose the “firstfruits” of the resurrection will be given an opportunity to accept Christ and to obey the laws of his kingdom and live forever.

But in order for this to be so, it will be necessary for mankind to be awakened from the sleep of death. Paul writes that God “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” (I Tim. 2:4) The salvation here referred to is simply an awakening from the sleep of death which resulted from Adam’s transgression. They will be awakened

for the purpose of being enlightened. This will take place during Christ’s second presence. Those who become his during that time, through belief and obedience, will be restored to perfection of life and live forever.

Thus the “victory” over death for both the church and the world is possible only through Christ, and because he gave himself in death as a ransom for all. This victory is manifested in the resurrection, and it is by the sacrifice of the “Man Christ Jesus” that the resurrection of the dead is made possible; just as it was by disobedience of the man Adam that death was brought into the world.

How wonderfully inspiring are these simple truths of the divine plan! And how important it is that we continue steadfast in them. And not only should we remain “unmovable” in the doctrines of Christ, but we should also “abound in the work of the Lord”—that glorious work of reconciliation in which we have the privilege of being “co-laborers together with God.”—I Cor. 3:9; II Cor. 6:1

True, there are not many today who will give heed to this beautiful and simple message. But this was true in Paul’s day also. It has always been true, and will continue thus until Satan is bound and the blessings of the kingdom begin to flow out to the people. But even so, we know that our “labor is not in vain in the Lord.” His designs are being accomplished, the chief of which is our own preparation to be associated with Jesus in the work of the kingdom by proving worthy to become a part of the

"firstfruits unto God" of his creatures.—Jas. 1:18; Rev. 14:4

QUESTIONS:

In what way did Paul see Jesus differently from the other "infallible" witnesses?

Are there professed Christians today who do not believe in the resurrection of the dead?

What is meant by the term "firstfruits" as applied to Jesus?

Is Jesus the only "firstfruits unto God"?

Who are the afterfruits?

How important are these fundamental doctrines of the truth?

What is the work of the Lord in which we are to "abound"?

AMOS THE PROPHET AND HIS PROGRAM

Lesson for Sunday, April 16

AMOS 7:7-15; 8:1-3

AMOS was a native of Tekoa, a town about six miles south of Bethlehem. Originally he was a shepherd, and a dresser of sycamore trees. He traveled from Judah into the northern kingdom of Israel and there delivered his prophetic message to the people. He served as prophet during the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam, king of Israel. Nothing is known of the time and manner of his death.

The chief peculiarity in his style of writing consists of the number of allusions to natural objects and agricultural occupations. This is natural in view of his experience in life prior to being called as a prophet. While God inspired his prophets to deliver messages according to his will, he did not necessarily change their natural methods of expression nor disassociate their ministry from the background of their experience. Note, for example, the writings of David, particularly The Twenty-third Psalm.

The prophecy of Amos is largely one of condemnation against Israel and Judah—particularly Israel. It shows that because of their sin they would certainly be destroyed as a nation and be taken into captivity. However, the prophet does not leave them without hope, for beginning with the 11th verse of the last chapter, he promises their restoration. In Acts 15:14-17 we learn that this part of the prophecy of Amos will be fulfilled in the next age; that is, following this present time during which the Lord is taking out from among the Gentiles "a people for his name." Thus does Amos prove himself to be one of God's holy prophets who foretold the "times of restitution of all things."—Acts 3:19-21

A plumbline is used in the Scriptures to symbolize a standard of righteousness. Describing the application of kingdom laws, the Prophet Isaiah tells us that judgment shall be laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet. (Isa. 28:17) This is a very definite way of saying that the people will then be required to bring their

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lives into accord—make them line up—with the righteous laws of Christ's kingdom.

In a somewhat similar way the plumbline is used by the Lord in his instructions to Amos concerning the nature of the message he was to deliver to Israel. Israel was living in sin. Idol worship had supplanted the worship of the true God. Their sanctuaries had been polluted. For a while the Lord seemed to overlook their sin, to pass it by unnoticed. But now he tells Amos that he will not do this any longer, that he will set a plumbline in the midst of Israel, and if they do not square up with it in their conduct, they will be dispersed from the land and sent into captivity.

As is so often the case, those who deliver a message from the Lord which indicates that calamity is coming upon a people, are accused of being responsible for the trouble. Instead of heeding the warning and reforming in order to avert disaster, the people blamed the Lord's prophets for it. Thus it was in the case of Amos. Amaziah, the priest, urged Amos to return to Judah and deliver his message there. He even blamed Amos for conspiring against the king.

Amaziah hinted that Amos was prophesying as a means of making a living, and told him to return to Judah and prophesy and eat his bread there. Amos replied to this, saying that he had been a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit before the Lord called him to be a prophet, implying thus that he didn't need to prophesy in

order to eat bread. But, explained Amos, the Lord had called him, and had said to him, "Go, prophesy unto my people Israel"; and while Amos didn't bluntly say so, his implication was that since he had been given this commission by the Lord he would pay no heed to Amaziah's request to return to Judah. He had a message to deliver, and he intended to deliver it.

Thus does Amos give all of the Lord's people a good example of faithfulness. All who are anointed by the Holy Spirit during the Gospel age are commissioned to proclaim the truth, but there are always those who present reasons why we should not obey our commission. But like Amos, let us endeavor to obey the Lord rather than man.

The basket of summer fruit shown to Amos in the vision would seem to illustrate the perishing condition of Israel. Summer fruit does not last. If picked when fully ripe it begins to perish almost at once, and so the message Amos delivered to Israel was, "The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more."

QUESTIONS:

What was the birthplace of Amos, what was his occupation before becoming a prophet, and what is one of the peculiar characteristics of his writings?

Was Amos a prophet of restitution as well as of destruction?

In the prophecies, what is symbolized by a plumbline, and how is this symbol used in the prophecy of Amos?

What is symbolized by the basket of summer fruit mentioned in chapter 8, verses 1 and 2?

AMOS ATTACKS SOCIAL INJUSTICE

Lesson for Sunday, April 23

AMOS 4:1, 2

ONE of the efforts of the great organized systems of churchianity has always been to make it appear that the Bible and the teachings of Christianity support their politico-religious ideologies, thus debasing the true teachings of Christ to the level of a mere moral philosophy and, through the various man-made organizations, an influence in the direction of righteousness. The title assigned by the Sunday School Committee to this lesson is in keeping with this viewpoint. It is intended to give the impression that the Prophet Amos was no more than a moral and political crusader who campaigned in the name of the Lord.

It is true, of course, that social injustices of all kinds are contrary to divine law, and this was especially so within God's chosen nation of Israel; but the prophets of God who ministered to Israel were much more than moral reformers. The people of Israel were chosen of God to be his "royal nation." Through Amos God said to them, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) God dealt with this people in a special way. He gave them his Law, and promised that if they would obey that Law, they not only would have life, but also would be to him a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. The

Israelites had agreed to keep this covenant, hence they were responsible to God, and he had a right to demand an accounting from them and, if they were found wanting, to punish them.

Thus seen, Amos was in quite a different position in warning Israel of the result of their sins than that of the ordinary crusader for social justice. Injustice and unrighteousness is a detriment and a shame to any nation; but to the Israelites, who had entered into a covenant to keep God's Law, the deliberate and continued practice of these and other sins was bound to lead to tragedy in the destruction of their kingdom and the captivity of the people.

Amos was commissioned by God to sound a warning in Israel and to tell the people of the dire calamity that would come upon them if they did not reform. In doing this he presented his message to various groups prominent in the life of the nation. In this section of today's lesson he addresses particularly the "kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor."

"Kine" literally are heifers, but evidently there is a symbolical meaning intended. It is quite possible that the reference here is to the influential women of Israel, the implication being that these willingly were co-operating in and even fostering the practices of in-

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justice in the oppression of the poor and needy. If they were not actually participating, they could have used their influence in preventing their "masters" from going to such excesses along this line.

Verse 2 speaks of the Israelites being taken away into captivity with "hooks," and their posterity with "fishhooks." Ultimately they were taken into exile by the Assyrians, and on ancient Assyrian monuments can be seen illustrations of captives with hooks through their noses. Evidently this part of the prophecy was fulfilled in a quite literal manner.

AMOS 6:1-6

This passage levels the charge of injustice against still another group in Israel which shared responsibility for the evil that existed within the nation; namely, those who were "at ease in Zion." The description of this group indicates that it was made up of those who had become rich through the exploitation of the poor.

There is a hint in the prophet's message that these idle and selfish rich were quite aware of their sin, and knew that ultimately there would come a day of reckoning, but did not bestir themselves to make any change in their way of life. Amos wrote, "Ye . . . put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near." That is to say, they were enjoying themselves and tried to believe that the time of their punishment was far away, and that they would reform before it arrived. But they did not realize that this very attitude of being at ease in Zion and selfishly enjoying lux-

uries at the expense of the poor, was helping to bring the "seat [margin, habitation] of violence near." Their habitation of violence later was Assyria.

AMOS 8:4-7

Here again the reference is to those in Israel who oppressed the poor. In this case it is not the women, neither those who were at ease in Zion—the idle rich. It is rather those who outwardly made some show of respecting the Law and its ordinances, but who at heart were not in harmony therewith. These observed the restrictions of the "new moon" and the "sabbath," but impatiently so, and were hardly able to wait until these observances were ended, so anxious were they to continue their exploiting of the poor.

As Amos journeyed up and down through the land of Israel observing these conditions of unrighteousness in high places, he must have realized how timely was the message the Lord had given to him to deliver to the nation. Perhaps he also marveled at the mercy and patience of the Lord in permitting his people to go so long unpunished. The lesson to us is that the Lord's message is always timely, and that his people are always blessed when they are faithful in delivering it.

QUESTIONS:

Was Amos a moral crusader within the usual meaning of that term?

Who were the "kine of Bashan," and what was their sin?

What was the sin of those who were "at ease in Zion"?

How are the Israelites, who gave outward obedience to the Law of God, identified by Amos?

AMOS TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Lesson for Sunday, April 30

AMOS 4:4

ONE of the gross sins of Israel against which Amos warned the nation was the worship of gods other than Jehovah. This was a direct violation of the commandment, "Thou shall have no other gods before Me." (Exod. 20:3) But when the ten tribes of Israel separated from the two tribes and chose their own king, they almost immediately began the worship of heathen gods.

This was done under the direction of their new king Jeroboam. He set up two golden calves at Bethel and commanded the people to worship them, saying, "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." (I Kings 12:26-33) The Israelites had great respect for the God who delivered their nation from Egyptian bondage, hence Jeroboam's claim that the golden calves he set up represented the "gods" which accomplished this miraculous feat was a clever way of diverting their minds from Jehovah.

This false worship was established at Bethel, therefore when Amos said to the Israelites, "Come to Bethel, and transgress," it was somewhat in the spirit of irony, reminding them of their sin in turning away from their God. It is like saying, Let your transgressions come to the full.

AMOS 5:4-9, 14, 15, 21-24

Here the prophet admonishes the Israelites to seek the Lord, and not Bethel, nor Gilgal, nor Beer-sheba, for the gods they worshiped at these places could not help them. "Seek the Lord, and ye shall live," is the message Amos gave to Israel. This was true of Israel as a nation, and it is true of individuals. The Law promised the Israelites life if they could keep it perfectly. Nevertheless, it served to emphasize the need of a Redeemer, and now those who seek the Lord through Christ can thereby obtain life.

Centuries before this, Moses had set before Israel the great issue of life and death, saying, "choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." (Deut. 30:19) The only way they could choose life was by deciding to serve the Lord with their whole heart. It is interesting to note that the Israelites were never asked to choose between life and eternal torture. Death is the antithesis of life.

Some advance the false argument that if there is a heaven there must be a hell, but this is not the scriptural proposition; for in the Bible the alternatives are life and death. True, some—the church, who prove their faithfulness during this age—will be given life in heaven; others will enjoy everlasting life on the earth. But

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those who fail, through wilful disobedience, to gain life at all, will go into what the Bible terms, the "second death." They will be "destroyed from among the people."—Rev. 20:6, 14; 21:8; Acts 3:23

The only hope of life the Israelites had in the days of Amos was through obedience to the Law. Being members of the fallen race they could not have kept the Law perfectly; but had they tried earnestly, they would have gained for themselves a "good report," and proved worthy of a "better resurrection." (Heb. 11:39, 35) They would also have preserved the life of their nation. As it was, the nation was destroyed, and as individuals they will come up in the resurrection as those who "have done evil," and will be subjected to the stripes and disciplines of that day of trial and judgment.—John 5:29

"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live." (Verse 14) This is the simple law of God which all will have to obey in order to gain life on any plane. We call it a simple law, and it is, but when it is put into practice it affects every viewpoint and activity of life. To seek good means that our motive in life is to do good, and not evil. It may not always be possible to accomplish all the good we seek, but if

our motive is to do good, our course of life will be in that direction, and will lead eventually to life.

When the Lord told the Israelites that he despised their "feast days" and their "burnt offerings," it was not with the thought of condemning these ceremonies which he had instituted for them through Moses. What the Lord despised was the people's attitude in connection with them.

The typical sacrifices and the feast days, etc., were intended by the Lord to be outward expressions of an inner righteousness and godliness. When this was true, they were pleasing to him, but when they were observed to cover up their corrupt deeds, the Lord hated them. Thus in admonishing Israel to return to the worship of the true God, he stressed that the desire for such worship must issue from their hearts, and that their lives must be brought into conformity with their professions.

QUESTIONS:

What was one of the gross sins of Israel against which the nation was warned by Amos?

Why is Bethel mentioned in connection with Israel's transgressions?

Is there any way to gain life except through obedience to the Lord?

Why did the Lord hate the burnt offerings of the Israelites, and their observance of feast days, etc.?



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Joseph Made Ruler

GOD'S PLAN IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Chapter Forty-one

41:1-8 We are not to suppose that dreams are always revelations from the Lord of things to come to pass, particularly the dreams of those who are not in covenant relationship with the Lord. As a matter of fact, since the completion of the inspired Word of God, the Bible, the Lord has not guided even his own people by means of dreams, for it has not been necessary. We now have the inspired Scriptures which are all-sufficient for every time of need.—II Tim. 3:16, 17

In ancient times, when God gave dreams to others than his own people, it was not for their benefit particularly, but in order to influence their course in life as it related to those whom he was guiding and blessing. Thus the "wise men" were warned by a dream not to return to Herod as they had planned, for to do so would have endangered the life of the boy Jesus. And so with Pharaoh. God was not so much interested in preserving his life and the lives of the Egyptians in general, as he was in making a provision for the children of Israel. For this reason he caused Pharaoh to have dreams which eventuated this way.

41:9-13 In the forgetfulness of the "chief butler" to speak a good word for Joseph as soon as he

was released from prison we can see the overruling providence of the Lord. Had he spoken immediately, perhaps Pharaoh would not have been in a receptive attitude of mind, and nothing would have been accomplished. Indeed, he might have made Joseph's prison life even more difficult.

The Lord's people should endeavor to view all of their experiences in the light of being the providences of God. We may be inclined to blame what seems to be the immediate cause of trial—the unfriendly attitude of those around us, perhaps—but this is a mistake. God is able to shield us from all such unfavorable circumstances, and if he does not, it is because his wisdom sees that there is a needed lesson for us to learn, or some larger purpose of his which he is working out through us. Thus Jesus did not blame his accusers and persecutors, but said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"

41:14-24 When Pharaoh discovered that his trusted wise men and magicians were unable to interpret his dreams for him, he was greatly distressed. The circumstances reminded the "chief butler" of Joseph and of the promise he had made to him. Here, then, was an ideal opportunity, not only to do a good turn for Joseph,

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but also to solve a problem for Pharaoh, so he related to the king the experience he had had with the prisoner Joseph.

Pharaoh was impressed and had Joseph "brought hastily out of the dungeon." Although some authority had been given to Joseph over the other prisoners, apparently he still had to suffer the hardships of prison life, which at that time were often cruel. That he was in the dungeon when sent for by Pharaoh indicates that life was not made easy for him in prison.

When Pharaoh told Joseph why he had sent for him, that he had been told he was an interpreter of dreams, Joseph was quick to deny any special ability of his own; but, as on former occasions, gave the credit to the Lord. He said to the king, "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." The additional two years Joseph had languished in prison after the chief butler had been released and had promised to speak a good word for him had not embittered Joseph. He still trusted in the Lord and was quick to give the glory to him for any ability he might possess in the way of interpreting dreams.

41:25-36 Pharaoh related his dreams to Joseph, telling him of the seven fat kine (cows) and the seven lean kine; also the seven full ears of corn and the seven thin ears. Seemingly with the thought of impressing upon Joseph what truly difficult dreams these were to interpret, he explained that the magicians had failed to reveal what they meant.

Joseph's approach to the problem

was direct, and in a single sentence he simplified his answer by explaining that both dreams meant the same thing, that they were "one." "The seven good kine are seven years," he said, "and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one." In the dreams of his fellow prisoners, the chief baker and the chief butler, the things they saw represented days, but in Pharaoh's dreams things represented years.

The dream foreshadowed a period of fourteen years—seven years of plenty—represented by the fat kine and the full ears—and seven years of famine—represented by the lean kine and the thin ears. The dream was doubled, explained Joseph, because the things were assured by God, and he would shortly bring it to pass. This method of establishing a truth was in keeping with the Lord's arrangement that every great truth must be confirmed by the mouth of two or three witnesses. So both the "kine" and the "ears" testified concerning the seven years of plenty to be followed by seven years of famine. Thus there could be no doubt about the coming fourteen years in the land of Egypt.

Joseph not only interpreted Pharaoh's dreams for him, but added some excellent advice. This also was timely. When Pharaoh learned what was about to occur in the land over which he was king, he was doubtless greatly disturbed. Joseph, noting this, offered his well-timed and wise counsel concerning the appointment of a food administrator, one who would see to it that during the fat years

surpluses were stored and preserved, that thus there would be a provision to see the nation through the seven years of famine.

41:37-45 Pharaoh listened to Joseph's advice, and was impressed. It was obvious to him that if Joseph could interpret his dreams, and then frame a plan so quickly to meet the emergency they portended, he would be the best choice to fill the position of food administrator. So Joseph was given the position, with dictatorial powers to act in accord with what he thought would be best.

Nor was this assignment of power to Joseph made privately, for Pharaoh arranged that this new ruler in the realm should be paraded before the people, and that they should be made to bow to him. This was doubtless quite an embarrassing experience for Joseph. Those with less love for the Lord and less desirous to give glory to him, might have had their perspective of life distorted by such sudden exaltation, but it did not thus affect Joseph.

Joseph was made a virtual dictator, but it was for the good of the nation. It illustrates that the form of government is often not so important as the personnel that governs. There is no form of government which will prevent evils from being inflicted upon the people if its laws are administered by selfish and corrupt men. On the other hand, when rulers are wise, just, and benevolent, the people under them will be blessed regardless of the form of government involved. No one could move in Egypt without Joseph's consent,

yet there is no record that the people ever complained of oppression under his rulership.

41:46-57 Joseph was still a young man when he became ruler in Egypt, being only thirty years of age. At this age he embarked upon a mission that was to preserve the life, not only of his own people, but of the Egyptians as well. Jesus was thirty years of age when he entered upon his ministry, a ministry which also was destined to give life to God's people, and to the whole world—not a temporary extension of the present life, but life everlasting.

Leaving the presence of Pharaoh, the young ruler immediately entered upon his duties. Apparently he made a personal survey of the whole land. While doing this, he probably made a record of possible storage houses and made the necessary arrangements to have the surpluses put in them. It was a gigantic undertaking for those days, and Joseph did not have much time for preparation, as the first year of plenty was already upon them.

We read that during those seven years of plenty the earth brought forth by "handfuls." Apparently this was an expression used in ancient times to denote an abundance, an overflowing supply. One of the promises of the bounteous blessings which will be provided for the people during the thousand years of Christ's kingdom uses this expression, saying, "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city

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shall flourish like grass of the earth."—Psalm 72:16

While Joseph was made dictator in Egypt, seemingly he had little choice as to the selection of his wife, Pharaoh giving him Asenath, daughter of Potipherah, priest or prince of On. "On" means city of "the sun," called in Hebrew, Own, and Bethshemesh, and in Greek, Heliopolis. It was the university of Old Egypt.

During the seven years of plenty, two sons were born to Joseph—Manasseh and Ephraim. Manasseh means "forgetting," and Joseph gave this name to his firstborn, for, said he, God "hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house."

Ephraim means "fruitful," and Joseph gave this name to his second son because, as he explained, "God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." These sidelights on Joseph's attitude toward his experiences emphasize that with him the Lord came first in everything.

Manasseh and Ephraim were later adopted by Jacob into his family and made heads of tribes in Israel. For some reason—not given in the Scriptures—Jacob named

Ephraim first, although actually Manasseh was Joseph's firstborn.

When the seven years of famine settled down upon the land of Egypt, the people soon began to clamor for food. They appealed to Pharaoh; and he in turn referred them to Joseph, who of course was prepared for the emergency. The famine not only affected Egypt, but all the surrounding country, and before it was over people were coming to Egypt from all around seeking for food.

The foreknowledge of God in the care of his people anticipated this situation, and had in mind the care of the children of Israel when he permitted Joseph to be sold into Egypt. There is a wonderful lesson in this for all who put their trust in the Lord. We should not lose faith because of the difficulties which may confront us today, for in the experiences which the Lord is permitting, circumstances are being shaped for a larger purpose he plans to accomplish in us tomorrow. That "tomorrow" may be beyond the veil, when, if faithful here, we will be exalted to reign with Christ, and have the privilege of giving health and life to all mankind.



ONLY by the eye of faith, and with vision enlarged by the promises of God, is it possible to look ahead and see the ultimate outcome of these distressing times in which we live. Happy are those who are blessed with such a viewpoint, for it means that they can enjoy freedom from fear, and can bear witness to those around them that a new King stands at the door and soon will make manifest His authority and power for the eternal blessing of all mankind.

—Selected

The Greatest Thing in the Universe

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”—JOHN 3:16, 17

“Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way.”—I CORINTHIAN 12:31

ALL who claim to be followers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, members in particular of his body, should be deeply grateful to the “Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning,” for his “every good and perfect gift,” and particularly for the gift of his beloved Son. Because of this gift, and based on the merit of his redemptive sacrifice, consecrated believers can have hope in the promises of God pertaining to their own future inheritance, and for the recovery of humanity from the thralldom of sin and death.

No other religion on earth abounds in the glorious promises of the great God of the universe for those who here devote their lives to do his will as their Master did before them. No other religion, no matter how well-intentioned or idealistic in its appeal to those who have embraced it, can even remotely approach Christianity with its message of hope for the sin-cursed and dying race. And certainly other religions do not offer a day of deliverance for the human race from all its enemies, even death itself! (Luke 4:18; I Cor. 15:25, 26) The Christian religion alone outlines for us the pathway to glory, and also affords a preview of the history of the nations so that we might be able to determine where we are on the stream of time, and what the future holds for humanity.

Our key texts indicate that the greatest thing in the universe is the love that is of God, for it was God's love that provided the only means of escape from the bondage of sin and death. This pro-

vision is in his only directly created Son. (John 1:3; I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16) "Covet earnestly the best gifts," wrote Paul, "and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." (I Cor. 12:31) Then the apostle explains just what he means by a "more excellent way." It is the way of love. (I Cor. 13) He outlines its characteristics so that we can determine for ourselves whether this greatest thing in the universe is being manifested by us; whether we have cultivated it to the extent of our ability and thus reflect the divine likeness, even as did Jesus, to whose image we are to be conformed.—Rom. 8:29

If it were not for God's love for the rebellious and sin-cursed human family, there would be no divine plan of the ages for their recovery and blessing. True, the other qualities of wisdom, justice, and power of his righteous and benevolent character must be employed to this same end. But it was his love for us, the church of Christ, and for all mankind, that provided the "unspeakable gift" of his only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior, as the "Way, the Truth, and the Life." And this provision was made "while we were yet sinners," without our first having shown a disposition and desire for reconciliation, for at-one-ment with him.—II Cor. 9:15; John 14:6; Rom. 5:8

If our Heavenly Father were merely exercised by his inexorable justice, our lives would be forfeited and we truly would be without hope in this world. His power we could not doubt, but knowing him to be a God of love supreme, what could we think of his wisdom in permitting us thus to have these innate desires for the right and the truth, and to exercise ourselves benevolently and sacrificially, only to be blotted out of existence? Our desire to know righteousness and truth would avail us nothing, and our personalities, our egos, our entities would be without meaning, could we not see and realize the fruition of our hopes and desires. What benefit would we personally derive if the only result of our living was to leave "footprints on the sand of time."

A happy recollection of the past will serve to illustrate how we can be impressed by what others may say or do. The incident occurred in the days of Brother Russell. It was Thanksgiving morning, and the question raised at the breakfast table was: "For what am I grateful today and can give thanks?" The responses, as can be well imagined, were many and varied. One brother expressed thanks for the truth of the divine plan; another, for the privilege of

service; another, for the happy relationship he had with so many of like precious faith; another, that he could be there in such a glorious work; and still another, that he had been permitted to enjoy a sufficiency of health and strength to labor with others as one big family in the Lord. It finally came to Brother Russell for his expression. All he said was—and it left a lasting impression on the writer—“I am thankful for the love of God.” Surely that was a comprehensive, conclusive, and all-embracing comment!

Sanctified by the Truth

Recently our attention was called to the fact that error can have no sanctifying effect on the called of God, that only the truth of God's Word can have this effect; hence, that throughout the Gospel age there were those who had God's Word of truth with no admixture of error. Whether others of a darker past had the same opportunity for knowing the scope of the divine plan that we enjoy today is unimportant; but there is one factor in that connection which is very likely to be overlooked, and that is that very few in the Early Church, and even until more recent times, could read and write, thus were totally dependent upon those who did enjoy this advantage. That was a very fundamental reason why it was vitally important for them to assemble to gain knowledge and understanding.

But lest some should suppose that because compulsory education is in effect nowadays and most people can read and write and therefore find out things for themselves, it is now less important to assemble with others of like precious faith, the Apostle adds to his exhortation to assemble, “And so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” (Heb. 10:25) Do we see the day approaching? A person must be singularly blind spiritually not to be able to recognize these times of transition. And why is it so important that we assemble now? Because during these more or less chaotic times, with all the various and sundry influences abroad, we need the help and encouragement which our coming together affords, that our faith, our confidence in the outworking of his purpose in us may be strengthened and fortified against the besetments of this “evil day.” (Eph. 6:13) Satan doesn't like to see God's people strengthened and fortified and united in their “most holy faith.” (Jude 20) He would like to see them scattered and distraught, as many have been in recent

times; and many are his agents, often unwittingly, to accomplish this end.

It might be reasoned, What has this to do with the greatest thing in the universe, the love that is of God? It has this to do with it: that in every period of the church's experience, God, in his infinite mercy and wisdom, has arranged for the enlightenment and protection, of his people if they will but heed the instructions he has provided through our Lord and his apostles. It was because Brother Russell had the Word of God deeply impressed upon his heart and life that the Lord used him so extensively for the enlightenment and spiritual blessing of his people in these days when everything is being put to the test of survival in the light of the incoming day of Jehovah and his Christ.

Special Gifts

In harmony with our text in I Corinthians 12:31, the prophecy of Psalm 68:18, and the statement of James 1:17, the Early Church was given certain miraculous gifts, the purpose of which was to establish their own faith in God's promises for them, and to convince the unbeliever—the latter being explicitly stated in I Corinthians 14:22. But while these gifts were essential and desirable for their day and time, the apostle points out that there was something vastly more important and desirable than even the best of those gifts; namely, the acquiring and manifestation of the divine quality of love, not only by thinking upon it, but being controlled by it, manifesting it on any and every occasion. These gifts were to vanish away and to fail, but this kind of love would never fail. (I Cor. 13:8) Because the translators of the King James Bible could find no other word suitable, they translated the Greek word *agape* in this instance, "charity."

As we have come to know, the love herein disclosed is not the ordinary love of human nature as at present constituted, with more or less of the earthly element of self-interest attached to it—no, not even the love of a mother for her child, self-sacrificing as that might be, could compare with it. The Prophet Isaiah raised the question of a mother forgetting her offspring, and wrote, "Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee," referring to his people Israel and Zion. He did not forget them, but they forgot him, and cast aside obedience to his Law which promised life and blessings to anyone who might keep it.

Although unable to keep the Law inviolate because of their weaknesses and imperfection, and by keeping it to gain the promised reward of life, as only the perfect Man Christ Jesus was able to do, their endeavor to keep it brought them blessing and favor, while their rejection of it brought the penalties it prescribed, until, as it plainly showed, they would be dispersed among the nations. Had a sufficient number of them endeavored to keep the Law and to have seen in Jesus its living fulfilment, then the Gentiles would never have had the blessed opportunity of running for the "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3: 14

The love which is of God, disclosed by the Apostle Paul in the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians, transcends all other loves, for it is the very nature and being of God. As the Apostle John puts it, "God IS love (Greek, *agape*). " As we are controlled by it, we, too, indicate our Godlikeness. That we could ever reach its fulness and perfection while still in these imperfect vehicles of expression, these frail, perishable bodies, is unthinkable; but we have it ever before us as the criterion, the standard toward which we are ever to strive; for if we do not thus strive to attain it, how can we expect to be in fellowship and association with our Heavenly Father and his now divine Son, to share with him in "the dispensation of the fulness of times"?—Eph. 1: 10

The apostle suggests that we might have every proper gift, even all knowledge and mountain-removing faith and a totally self-sacrificing disposition, and yet fail to achieve this goal of Godlikeness in thought, word, and deed. If we can succeed in attaining some measure of this divine attribute of love, then we need not fear failure, but can have the full assurance of faith that God will supply our every essential requirement both now and forever.

In our desire thus to qualify for a place in the divine kingdom of our Lord, we might be inclined to place the emphasis on study. Study is very essential, to be sure, but to what end is that study? Is it that we might be the most brilliant people of earth, or to be able to confute the opponents of truth and right? No, surely not! The Apostle Paul makes it plain when he writes to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." (II Tim. 2: 15) If approved of God, why need we be concerned about the trivialities of this fleeting, human existence?

Self-sacrifice Not Sufficient

We might think to place the emphasis on self-sacrifice. Ah, yes, that is good indeed, but the apostle warns us on that score; for he says we might give our bodies to be burned and we might give everything we possess in order to feed the poor and thus show our generosity, our benevolence, as God is benevolent, and still we may be found lacking. Why does not such sacrifice alone qualify us for the divine favor and blessing and a place in the kingdom to come? Because to recognize in connection with our self-sacrifice and our desire to use our means to a good purpose, it is the motive which prompts us that counts with the Lord. Is the motive a desire to make a good showing before our friends and relatives, or the world—in other words, to make a name for ourselves? Or, is the primary object the reflecting of the divine likeness and love, appreciating the fact that when he gave his only begotten Son to die for us we were yet sinners, having made no effort at reformation, nor possessing any desire to seek and learn the “Way, the Truth, and the Life,” which reside in the Master and his words of “Spirit and life.”—John 14: 6; 6: 63

Then, too, this kind of love involves demonstration under trial and test, under suffering and adversity. We might be ever so willing to do good with our means and it might not cost us any more than the material loss involved. Even this, of course, if done with the proper motive as unto him, would be richly blessed in due time by our benevolent God and Heavenly Father, especially if done for the benefit of those in the divine employ. But when this sacrifice entails not only material loss, but additionally, persecution, suffering, ignominy, and reproach because we are his and for his name’s sake and righteousness’ sake, then we can be happy indeed, as our Lord indicated in the last of the Beatitudes in his Sermon on the Mount.—Matt. 5: 11, 12

There is still another great objective we need to bear in mind in considering the development of this divine attribute of love, and that has to do with a little four-lettered word—S E L F. Surely, if we have reached the mark of perfect love, self should not enter into our consideration; but strive as we may, it will obtrude itself at times. Think how much is involved in this little word! All the besetments of our fallen humanity, the influence of the world and the wiles of the Adversary are focused on us. If we resist our natural impulses and bring all our thoughts into subjection to the

Frank and Ernest Radio Schedule

Sundays unless otherwise indicated

ATLANTIC TIME

	STA.	KC.	P.M.
Bermuda	ZBM	1240	1:30
St. John's, N. F. (Thurs.)	VOCM	1006	9:00

EASTERN TIME

	STA.	KC.	A.M.
Akron, Ohio	WADC	1350	11:15
Albany, Ga.	WALB	1590	11:15
Allentown, Pa.	WAEB	790	9:30
Ann Arbor, Mich.	WHRV	1600	11:15
Atlanta, Ga.	WCON	550	10:30
Augusta, Ga.	WGAC	580	11:15
Binghamton, N. Y.	WENE	1450	11:15
Boston, Mass.	WCOP	1150	11:15
Brockville, Ont.	CFJM	1450	10:30
Charleston, W. Va.	WKNA	950	11:15
Charlotte, N. C.	WAYS	610	10:45
Columbia, S. C.	WCOS	1400	11:15
Columbus, Ohio	WCOL	1230	9:00
Daytona Beach, Fla.	WMFJ	1450	11:15
Detroit, Mich.	WXYZ	1270	11:15
Erie, Pa.	WIKK	1330	11:45
Jacksonville, Fla.	WPDQ	600	10:15
Johnson City, Tenn.	WJHL	910	11:45
Johnstown, Pa.	WCRO	1230	11:45
Knoxville, Tenn.	WBIR	1240	9:00
Lynn, Mass.	WLYN	1360	10:00
Macon, Ga.	WBML	1240	11:15
Miami, Fla.	WQAM	560	11:15
New York, N. Y.	WJZ	770	11:15
Niagara Falls, Ont.	CHVC	1600	10:30
Norfolk, Va.	WGH	1310	11:15
Orlando, Fla.	WHOO	990	11:15
Palm Beach, Fla.	WWPG	1340	11:15
Philadelphia, Pa.	WFIL	560	11:15
Pittsburgh, Pa.	WWSW	970	9:30
Port Huron, Mich.	WTTH	1830	11:15
Portland, Me.	WPOR	1450	11:15
Rochester, N. Y.	WARC	950	9:15
Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.	WSOO	1230	7:45
Savannah, Ga.	WDAR	1400	11:15
Scranton, Pa.	WARM	1400	11:15
Toledo, Ohio	WTOL	1230	10:15
Utica, N. Y.	WRUN	1150	11:45
Washington, D. C.	WMAL	630	11:15
Waterbury, Conn.	WATR	1320	11:45
Woodstock, Ont.	CKOX	1340	10:30

			P.M.
Albany, N. Y.	WXKW	850	3:15
Altoona, Pa.	WRTA	1240	1:00
Asheville, N. C.	WLOS	1380	12:15
Atlantic City, N. J.	WFPG	1450	12:00

Baltimore, Md.	WFBR	1300	12:00
Bangor, Me.	WABI	910	1:15
Bay City, Mich.	WBCM	1440	1:15
Charleston, S. C.	WHAN	1340	3:00
Chattanooga, Tenn.	WDEF	1370	12:00
Chillicothe, Ohio	WBEX	1490	12:15
Columbus, Ga.	WGBA	620	12:15
Covington, Va.	WKEY	1840	12:00
Danville, Va.	WBTA	1330	12:00
Dayton, Ohio	WING	1410	12:45
Durham, N. C.	WDUK	1310	12:00
Elmira, N. Y.	WELM	1400	1:15
Fayetteville, N. C.	WFLB	1490	1:00
Flint, Mich.	WFDL	970	1:15
Florence, S. C.	WJMX	970	12:15
Fredericksburg, Va. (Thurs.)	WFVA	1230	10:45
Goldsboro, N. C.	WGBR	1400	1:30
Grand Rapids, Mich.	WLAY	1340	12:15
Greensboro, N. C.	WCOG	1320	12:00
Greenville, S. C.	WMRC	1440	12:00
Harrisburg, Pa.	WHGB	1400	12:15
Lancaster, Pa.	WLAN	1390	12:15
Lawrence, Mass.	WLAW	680	12:00
Lynchburg, Va.	WLVA	590	12:00
Plattsburg, N. Y.	WEAV	960	12:15
Providence, R. I.	WFCL	1420	10:45
Raleigh, N. C.	WNAO	850	1:00
Richmond, Va.	WRNL	910	1:00
Roanoke, Va.	WLSL	610	12:00
St. Petersburg, Fla.	WSUN	620	12:15
South Boston, Va.	WHLP	1400	3:15
Suffolk, Va.	WLPM	1450	3:00
Sunbury, Pa.	WKOK	1240	10:45
Tallahassee, Fla.	WTNT	1450	3:00
Wheeling, W. Va.	WKWK	1400	12:15
Wilmington, N. C.	WMFD	630	12:00

CENTRAL TIME

	STA.	KC.	A.M.
Alexandria, La.	KALB	580	8:15
Ardmore, Okla.	KVSO	1240	11:15
Beaumont, Tex.	KFDM	560	11:45
Birmingham, Ala.	WSGN	610	10:30
Columbia, Mo.	KFRU	1400	8:30
Corpus Christi, Tex.	KSIX	1230	11:15
Duluth, Minn.	WDSM	1230	9:15
Fargo, N. Dak.	KFGO	790	11:15
Florence, Ala.	WJOI	1340	10:15
Fort Smith, Ark.	KFSA	950	10:15
Fort Wayne, Ind.	WOWO	1190	11:15
Indianapolis, Ind.	WISH	1310	11:15
Iron Mountain, Mich.	WMIQ	1450	7:45
Kansas City, Mo.	KCMO	810	11:15

new will in Christ, we are fortified and prepared for any contingency. Then, whatever pressure might be brought to bear upon us from without to overthrow our faith and our confidence in the outworking of God's providences in our behalf, Satan will meet the same rebuff that he met when he tried to tempt our Lord after his forty-day fast at the beginning of his ministry.—II Cor. 10:5

"Resist the devil," writes James, "and he will flee from you." (James 4:7) Pride, conceit, arrogance, earthly ambition, and the fallen deeds of the flesh can be readily comprehended in this little word, self. Divine love, if fully controlling our hearts and lives, will enable us to triumph where other qualities might fail in overcoming the fallen propensities which are in conflict with our spiritual lives and interests.

If this divine attribute of love, (*agape*) the pinnacle of character development (II Pet. 1:7), motivates us in everything we think, say, or do—which is not impossible if we are set and determined to have it so—then whatever material loss we might suffer, or however intense the physical or mental pain we might be called upon to endure, will be seen to be a means to an enduring end: to refine, polish, and prepare us for "the glory that excelleth," the "glory and honor and immortality, eternal life" beyond this veil of tears.—II Cor. 3:10; Rom. 2:7

A "Tree of Life"

We may not always be successful in maintaining this degree of perfect love that has no fear. At times we may become discouraged with ourselves, the progress we have made along this line, our environment, and almost everything in general. (II Tim. 1:7) We may lose heart because the divine purpose for this old earth and its inhabitants may appear to lag; the prophetic forecast for these days may appear to lack the complete fulfilment expected, and we may feel, as the wise man stated it, that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." (Prov. 13:12) Though we often hear this expression of the wise man, it is seldom in relation to the remainder of the passage, which reads, "But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life." This would tend to show that our desires have a very important bearing on our attitude toward life and its interests, and that God intends to fulfil all those legitimate desires of his people in harmony with his purpose for them.

If, while endeavoring to maintain our position at this mark of perfect love, thoughts contrary to our spiritual interests and desires

obtrude themselves, then we may know that our patient endurance is being tested, and we may recall with particular profit the statement of our Lord in his wonderful prophecy applying to the end of both the Jewish age and the Gospel age: "Because iniquity [unrighteousness, wickedness, lawlessness, *Diaglott*, vice] shall abound, the love [*agape*] of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end shall be saved." (Matt. 24:12) Saved, ah yes, not only from the condemnation of sin and death, but to the highest form of life eternal—the divine, with its glory, honor, and immortality.

Again, the Apostle Paul, after showing wherein Israel of old failed, and warning us not to follow their example of wrongdoing, writes: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (I Cor. 10:12) And then, to reassure us, adds (verse 13): "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

In II Corinthians 6:3-10, we have the indications of an approved ministry in the following language, using the Greek prepositions: "Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all things commending ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfeigned, by the Word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as being ignorant, and duly appreciated; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (See *Diaglott*)

In the last expression, "possessing all things," we are reminded of our Lord's words in Luke 12:15: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." Perfect love is not concerned with the possession of the "abundance of things" of this earth, but with possessing the fruitage of the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 5:22) We note, too, that the sixth verse indicates that it is possible to be mistaken in this *agape* love, that it may be simulated and not the real thing.

A similar statement is made with regard to *philadelphia* or brotherly love in I Peter 1:2, which reads (Greek): "Having purified your lives in obeying the truth [showing how the washing of the water by the Word (Eph. 5:26) is affected in obedience thereto] unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love each other from the heart, intensely."

Let us not hastily assume that this divine attribute of love can be attained without continued and unremitting application and endeavor. Some may reach the mark of perfect love more quickly than others. St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr of record, reached it very early in his Christian life, and so can we if we make it the ruling factor of our lives.

Brother Russell, in Volume Six, pages 369 to 371, shows the progressive manner in which the mark is reached, by using the illustration of the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 9:24-27 and Hebrews 12:1 of a racecourse, divided into four quarters. After entering the race (no outsider can run in it) by consecration to the divine will, being baptized into Christ's death and being raised to newness of life, the first impulse or reaction is to reciprocate the love of God in making possible this way of life through Jesus' sacrifice. It is a sort of duty love. We love God because he first loved us.

But we do not stop there. We go on to the halfway mark by loving the things that God loves. We love righteousness because it is now the principle of our new lives in Christ and because it is the disposition of our Heavenly Father. It was because our Lord loved righteousness and hated iniquity that he was so highly exalted to the right hand of the throne of God, there to make intercession for us, his church.—Heb. 1:9; 7:25; 12:2

Upon reaching this second quarter, or halfway mark in the race for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus, we realize that our love must be shown toward our brethren and associates in the body of Christ, that we must love them even more than the Golden Rule demands, and that we must be willing to lay down our lives for them even as our Lord set us the example in laying down his life for us and all men. The Apostle John states that such a love indicates that we have passed from death to life. (I John 3:14, 16) It also will lead us to cover their unintentional weaknesses and failings with the mantle of love and compassion. This is shown by the correct rendering of I Corinthians 13:7 which reads,

"Beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." The word translated "beareth" in this text should have been rendered "covereth." It would be repetitious to have it read as it does in the Common, or King James Version, "Beareth all things, endureth all things." Moreover, according to Dr. Strong, the primary meaning of the Greek word, *stego*, is "to roof over," or "to cover."

Passing on from this third quarter mark of "love [*agapao*] of the brotherhood," the mark of divinity is reached when we are able to love (*agapao*) our enemies. (I Pet. 2:17; Matt. 5:44) This love for our enemies is not in the same way nor to the same extent that we are to love the brethren, but it is with the desire to do them good should the occasion arise. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Rom. 12:20, 21

Many who are now the enemies of the new creation, the enemies of righteousness and truth through mental blindness and obstinacy, will have that blindness removed when once the work of regeneration begins, and they are raised from the dead, enlightened to a realization of what has been done for them in the sacrifices of our Lord and his church, and afforded the opportunity to attain human perfection in a world-wide paradise. All this will come to pass because God so loved a world of sinners lost that he gave his only begotten Son to suffer and to die for them, that the way might be opened up both of "life and immortality" through the good news of the incoming kingdom.—Matt. 19:28; II Tim. 1:10

Let us then encourage and help each other in the divine service and in the cultivation of this greatest thing in the universe, the divine attribute of "love divine, all love excelling," making it possible for us now to be raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. And let us ascribe "blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, . . . unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen."—Eph. 2:6, 7; Rev. 5:13



"Songs in the Night"

APRIL 1

But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.—Matt. 26:29

WHEN the kingdom shall come all the sufferings and trials of the present time will be past, the treading of the winepress, the wine making, will all be over, and instead the wine shall be that of joy and exhilaration, representing the joys and the blessings beyond imagination or expression that will be the portion of all those who truly have fellowship with our Redeemer in the sufferings of this present time and also in the glories that shall follow. The kingdom time is very close at hand now—certainly 1,800 years and more nearer than it was when our Lord spoke these words—and the evidences of its steady inauguration are multiplying on every hand. Our hearts should be proportionately rejoicing in anticipation, and we should proportionately be faithful in the present time in the drinking of the cup of sorrow, suffering, shame, and contumely, and thus testifying of our love and our loyalty.—Z '04-143 (Hymn 225)

APRIL 2

Likewise shall My Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.—Matt. 18:35

FORGIVENESS in your hearts is the condition which is always to obtain there: we should never harbor any other feeling than that of forgiveness and good will toward all, no matter how seriously they may have trespassed against us; and if this be the case, we will be longing and anxious to exercise the forgiveness outwardly and to express it to the repentant ones. Hence we will not seek to compel the most elaborate statement on the part of the penitent, but like the father of the prodigal, to see the repentant one coming in an attitude of humility will touch

our hearts and prompt us to go out part way to meet him, and to forgive him, and to put on the robe of fullest fellowship and brotherhood.—Z '98-126 (Hymn 183)

APRIL 3

By love serve one another.—Gal. 5:13

ANY service done or attempted to be done in love, with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people, we may be sure has the divine approval and blessing. Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example; let us, like our Master, not merely assume humility or pretend it, but actually have that humility which will permit us to do kindnesses and services to all with whom we come in contact, and proportionately enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the Lord's body—the church.—Z '05-120 (Hymn 23)

APRIL 4

Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.—John 16:24

IN THE cultivation of the spirit of praise, thanksgiving, and loving appreciation of all the manifest goodness of God is the Christian's secret of a happy life. And in order to the cultivation of such a spirit it is necessary that we continually call to mind his acts of mercy and of grace; that in our prayers we frequently tell him how all his goodness is remembered, how every fresh evidence of his love and care causes faith to take deeper root and makes the sense of his presence and favor more fully realized; and how through such experiences our love and joy are made to abound more and more. We love him because he first loved us; and every time we see some new mark of his love, our love, if we have truly appreciative hearts, is called out more and more, and we are made to rejoice in God, in whose presence is fulness of joy. It is to this end that our Lord encourages our frequent coming to God in prayer with large requests for his favor, say-

ing, "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."—Z '96-211 (Hymn 115)

APRIL 5

Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.—Acts 13:38

THE apostle does not refer to something that was done by our Lord as the Archangel before "he was made flesh," nor does he refer to any work to be done by him in his new, highly exalted condition, "set down with his Father in his throne" and partaker of his divine nature; but he here refers to the work done by "the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." Thus the apostle again emphasizes the fact that "as by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead." Yes, this is the center of the Gospel proclamation that the failure of the first perfect man was fully offset by the sacrifice of the Man Christ Jesus, and that it was to this end that it was needful for our Lord to leave the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, to become poor (in the sense of taking our lower nature—but not its blemishes, for he was "holy, harmless, and separate from sinners"); and yielding up this human nature a ransom-price or corresponding price for the life forfeited by father Adam for himself and his race. This is the basis upon which every offer to grace is presented by the Scriptures. And now, he who was the Father's agent in the redemptive work is to be the Father's agent also in the work of "blessing" all the redeemed with ample opportunities for return to divine favor—the first step of which is the forgiveness of sins.—Z '97-138 (Hymn 68)

APRIL 6

Consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.—Heb. 12:3

THE narrative of our dear Redeemer's shame, endured so patiently on our behalf, is most touching, and perhaps the relating of it and the reading of it brought more hearts to repentance than almost any thing else. Nor does it lose its power with those who have

already accepted our Lord and the redemption which his blood affected; it mellowes our hearts every time we consider him who endured such great contradiction of sinners against himself, when we remember that it was unmerited by him, and that it was a part of his sacrifice on our behalf. The apostle points one of his most forcible lessons with this subject, urging that all of the Lord's followers should consider the meekness, patience, and sufferings of Christ, endured most unjustly, lest we should be weary or faint in our minds, when enduring comparatively light afflictions while seeking to walk in his footsteps.—Z '98-164 (Hymn 212)

APRIL 7

Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.—Isa. 53:12

WELL did the Father know that his Son's faith and obedience would be abundantly rewarded. Well did he know that the soul of Jesus, his being, would constitute the sin offering for Adam and his race, and well he knew that ultimately the Son should see a reward from this travail of his soul which would satisfy him, which would more than compensate every trial, every tear, every pain. And is it not wonderful that in God's providence the called ones of this Gosepl age may apply these same consolations and assurances each to his own heart, and know that all things are working together for good to them that love God—to the called ones according to his purpose? Is it not wonderful that we also have the assurance that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, that if we experience travail of soul in following in the footsteps of our Redeemer we shall have more than compensating satisfaction, and that the Word of the Lord so guarantees it? To all who accept the Lord's promises in faith, the matter becomes a certainty—"Faith can firmly trust him, come what may."—Z '05-207 (Hymn 111)

APRIL 8

Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.—I Cor. 15:20

OTHERS have been awakened from the sleep of death temporarily merely to relapse into it again subsequently, but our Lord Jesus was "the firstborn from the dead," the "firstfruits of them that slept"—as the apostle declares, he was the first that should rise from the dead. His resurrection was the life resurrection—to perfection on the spirit plane. In that he was the firstfruits of them that slept, the implication is that the others slept similarly and are to come forth in the resurrection as spirit beings after the same manner. To be the firstfruits implies that the others will be of the same kind, for although our Lord was the firstfruits of all that slept in the sense that his resurrection preceded all other resurrections, in another sense he is the firstfruits of the church, which is his body. It is in a still larger sense that the Christ, Head and body, is the firstfruits brought up to life of the whole world; as the Apostle James expresses the matter, "Of his own will beget he us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."—Z '04-172 (Hymn 285)

APRIL 9

The Word of God is quick, and powerful.—Heb. 4:12

THERE is much need that this lesson be thoroughly learned by the Lord's people. Nothing can take the place of the Lord's Word, and all teachings, whether oral or printed, should be recognized as secondary to the inspired Word, and should be received only as corroborated by the Scriptures. Or rather, they are to be appreciated only as they unlock the treasures of wisdom hidden in the Bible—riches of which the world in general is ignorant, and of which even the majority of Christian people, although they have Bibles by the million, know comparatively little. Indeed, as Bibles become more numerous the great Adversary seems to be permitted to have the greater power to deceive and to mislead respecting its teachings, so that today, with its greatest opportunities, is witnessing a general

decline of faith in the Scriptures—"a great falling away," led by some of the principal luminaries in the nominal systems—falling from their steadfastness of faith, falling into skepticism and into the radically anti-biblical theory of evolution, under the lead of so-called "higher criticism" and scholasticism. The more the Lord's people shall be able to discern that we are already in the "evil day" mentioned by the apostle in which many shall stumble and fall from their steadfastness of faith, the more should they give earnest heed lest they should let slip the precious things of the divine Word, which is a lamp to their pathway, and through which God supplies the needed aids for walking the narrow way which leads to the kingdom.—Z '99-248 (Hymn 311)

APRIL 10

Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.—Psa. 89:15

OUR text implies that in order to be of the people who will know the joyful sound it will be necessary to "walk in the light" of God's countenance. Or, reversing the statement, the thought is that all who walk in the light of God's countenance shall be his blessed people, and shall know the joyful sound. What a lesson of holiness is here: not a lesson of human perfection and self-commendation to God, but a lesson of abiding in Christ under the robe of his righteousness, and of walking continuously with him and in the path of the just, which "shineth more and more unto the perfect day." And whoever would walk with Jesus in the light of divine favor, in the smile of divine approval, must needs walk the narrow way of self-control and self-sacrifice—"even unto death." Whoever delights in sin and sinful practices cannot walk in the company of Jesus, cannot be recognized as a member of his body or under his robe—can have neither part nor lot in this matter, whatever may be done with him or for him in the future age. As the apostle expresses it, those accepted of Christ, and who would maintain affiliation with him, must remember that all of the "royal priesthood" are given the truth, not to make them vain or boastful, or heady and

high-minded, but to purify them, and to sanctify them. He declares that "he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."—Z '00-37 (Hymn 315)

APRIL 11

Patient in tribulation.—Rom. 12:12

OUR word tribulation is derived from the Latin *tribulum*, the name of a roller or threshing machine used in olden times for cleaning wheat, removing from it the outer husk or chaff. How appropriate the thought when applied to the Lord's consecrated people, who in the Scriptures are symbolized by wheat. Our new natures are the kernel, the real grain; yet this treasure or valuable part is covered with the husk of earthly conditions. And in order that the wheat may be made properly ready for the "garner" and for usefulness, it is necessary that each grain shall pass through the tribulation necessary to separate those qualities which, until separated, render us unfit for the future service to which we are called by the Lord. In proportion as we are able to realize our own imperfections, and the perfect will of God concerning us, we will be enabled to bear patiently, and even with a certain kind of rejoicing, all the tribulations which the Master shall see best to let come upon us. "We glory in tribulations also."—Z '97-265 (Hymn 67)

APRIL 12

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing.—Mal. 3:10

IT BEHOOVES us, dear friends, to look about us to note to what extent we have been faithful to our covenant of sacrifice and to remember that it is not a sacrifice for a day or a year, but "even unto death." A little while and the trials will be over, but until that little while is past we are in the trial time, and it is proving us either worthy or unworthy of the glorious favors which we seek, the chief blessing, joint-heirship. If we appreciate it let us seek it in the Lord's way, let us see to what extent there are other things in our lives that we might ren-

der unto the Lord and which he will accept, not through the worthiness of the deeds or the sacrifices, but through the merit of Christ. Let us see if the days and hours as they pass are spent in a consecrated manner; let us note to what extent moments and days are spent in some selfish manner, or wasted upon others beyond the reasonable requirements of duty as marked out in the divine Word. Let us see to what extent we perform our vows unto the Lord; let us take note of what of time or influence or money we are using in the divine service and what proportion this bears to the whole.—Z '05-380 (Hymn 177)

APRIL 13

Blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it.—Luke 11:28

IT IS important that we should hear the Word of the Lord, that we search the Scriptures, that we have them well at our command, that we be able to give an answer to him that asketh us a reason for the hope that is in us, and we need more than all this. We need to obey the Word, to practice it to the extent of our ability. True, we cannot come up to the demands of perfection, for God's law is perfect, but we can have the perfect attitude of heart, and nothing less than this will be acceptable to the Lord. We can show him and to some extent show to others the endeavor of our lives in the direction of righteousness and all the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. If we had all knowledge and zeal and had not the spirit of obedience it would evidence a lack of the spirit of love, and prove us unworthy of the divine favor and blessings promised to those who are rightly exercised by the message from above.—Z '05-366 (Hymn 267)

APRIL 14

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 5:10

OUR text is especially appropriate and should always be remembered, not only in severe persecutions but also in the lesser ones, when our names are cast out as evil, when men "shall separate you from their company," when they make all kinds of misrepresentations against you falsely because of

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your faithfulness to the Lord and to his Word and to the principles of righteousness. Then remember this text, and assure your heart in harmony with it and with other statements of the Lord's Word, that all these experiences of opposition the Lord is willing to overrule for your highest welfare, causing them to work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. All who will be of the kingdom of heaven class must pass through some such experiences for the development and testing of their characters.—Z '05-254 (Hymn 299)

APRIL 15

Continuing instant in prayer.—Rom. 12:12

PRAYER, communion with God, is indispensably necessary to our spiritual welfare; and the appreciation of the privilege of communion with the most High and with our Redeemer, or the lack of such appreciation, as the case may be, indicates tolerably clearly our fervency or our coldness with reference to the things of the Lord. People may be fervent in serving schemes or plans of their own, or human systems and theories, and have little desire for prayer, but those who serve the Lord and his truth from a hot, fervent heart, will so realize their imperfection and their own inability in the divine service, that they will desire and will continually seek the Master's guidance and direction with reference to the service they are rendering to him.—Z '97-265 (Hymn 239)

APRIL 16

Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.—Psa. 16:11

THIS blessed joy which so wonderfully lifts the soul above all the vicissitudes of the present life is, as the prophet expresses it, joy in the Lord, not a joy in earthly possessions, or earthly hopes or ambitions. These earthly things are all so transitory and so changeable that a single blast of adversity may sweep them all from us; but not so is it with those whose hearts are centered in God and to whom he has shown the path of life. These have learned to estimate the things of this

present life according to their true values; they see that all of its joys are both transient and unsatisfactory and that the only real value in it is in the opportunities it affords for experience and discipline and education in the things of God and for hearing the call of God and making our calling and election sure. In thus making the proper use of the present life—walking in the path of life which God shows us through his Word—we have the present joys and hope and faith in the things unseen, but sure and eternal; knowing also that by and by in the immediate presence of God we shall have fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore at his right hand—the chief place of favor.—Z '96-54 (Hymn 306A)

APRIL 17

To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice.—John 18:37

ALL who are of the truth hear the truth, and love to bear witness to the truth. Yet in our case, as in the Master's case, the world knoweth us not. It knows us not because it knew him not. The world, especially the religious world of Christendom, is disposed to crucify us as it crucified him, only we are living in a more civilized time, and the scribes, the Pharisees, and the doctors of the Law apparently find it more difficult today than of old to incite the people to destroy our lives. But by God's grace we will continue to bear witness to the truth until the dark night comes "wherein no man can work," should our lives be spared till then.—Z '16-151 (Hymn Appendix H)

APRIL 18

The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.—John 6:63

OUR text shows that however dark and parabolic were our Lord's teachings, nevertheless, rightly understood, his message is one that is spiritually helpful and life-giving to those who can and do understand it. It is this quality of the Lord's message which makes the religion of the Bible different from that of all the heathen. It is a message of

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life as well as a message of holiness. It is a message of forgiveness as well as a message of condemnation. It is a message of love as well as a message of justice. His wonderful words of life—they are charming, beautiful, forceful! We may read them over year after year and we see still more beauty in them, still deeper significance, and that in proportion to our own growth in grace, our growth in knowledge, and in the Spirit of our Master.—Z '10-219 (Hymn 49)

APRIL 19

God . . . hath made us able ministers of the New Testament.—II Cor. 3:6

OUR position is that of ambassadors for God, explaining to men his mercy and his provision of the New Covenant, through which all may be blessed and recovered if they will. So many as receive our message with joy and turn from sin to follow our Lord may be invited to become members of the body of Christ, the body of Messiah, the great Prophet, the body of the great Priest, the body of the great King of the millennial age. So, then, we are ministers of the New Covenant in that we are laying down our lives in its service, in its interest, although it is not yet a covenant, but merely a promise. We are not only laying down our lives, but seeking out fellow-members of the body of the Anointed One and assisting them in the laying down of their lives, under the assurance that these better sacrifices will soon be finished and their application be made by our glorious Head, and we with him in glory.—Z '09-51 (Hymn 148)

APRIL 20

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.—Psa. 34:7

OUR text is a symbolical statement illustrative of the divine guardianship of all those who are truly his, the thought is the continual supervision of our affairs by the Lord. Whether we think of the angel of the Lord as one of the heavenly host specially appointed on our behalf, or whether we think of him from the standpoint of the various powers of nature, the levers of which are all in the divine care, it

matters not. We have the assurance that the Father himself loves us and that all the heavenly powers are pledged to those whom he has accepted in Christ Jesus, and these unitedly guarantee blessings to all those who abide in God's love. This means to abide in faith in the Redeemer. It means to abide loyal to our consecration, to do the Father's will to the extent of our ability. That will is declared to be that we shall love the Lord supremely, our neighbor as ourselves, and all the members of the household of faith, as Christ loved us.—Z '09-75 (Hymn 294)

APRIL 21

Faith without works is dead.—James 2:20

SELF-EXAMINATION along this line is very proper. If we have heard, seen, tasted, of the grace of God and enjoyed it, and if no desire to serve our gracious Father or to assist others to the same blessings that we enjoy has been manifested, it implies that our spiritual vitality is very weak and in danger of perishing. But if, on the contrary, we find ourselves burning with fervency of love for the Lord, and with appreciation of his great plan of salvation, and are consumed with a desire to tell the good tidings to others for the blessing, strengthening, upbuilding, and participation in the divine faith, it should encourage us. We should notice, too, that Jesus specially loved and favored the more zealous, vigorous, and energetic of the apostles, Peter, James, John, and we may be sure, Paul also.—Z '09-121 (Hymn 210)

APRIL 22

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.—John 15:4

OUR Lord gives us an intimation that the growing of much fruit is not wholly dependent upon ourselves, and that even while we abide in him as fruit-bearing branches the quality and quantity of the fruit is to be improved by our having proper ideals before our minds, and earnestly seeking their realization. Thus he says, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye

shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." The intimation is that the desire and the asking of the Father at the throne of heavenly grace is a means by which we may more and more receive of the sap of the vine, the Holy Spirit, and be enabled to develop the fruits of the Spirit. It will be noticed that nothing here implies the seeking or finding of earthly good things. These are to be left wholly to the Lord's wisdom and providence, and his people, the true branches of the vine, are to desire and to seek for the Holy Spirit, which the Father is more willing to give to them than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children.—Z '99-111 (Hymn 91)

APRIL 23

They . . . went everywhere preaching the Word.—Acts 8:4

SOME dear Christian people make the mistake of preaching on sociology, the beauties of nature, the things of the world. Others continually dabble with errors and errorists. Such things may have their time and place in connection with the message; but all who would serve the Lord should remember that we are commissioned to preach the Gospel of Christ only. Christ and his message constitute the light which came into our minds—the light which we are to let shine for the blessing of others. The darkness hateth the light and battles against the light; but the light is to keep on shining. Thus said our Lord, "Let your light so shine before men that, seeing your good works, they may glorify your Father which is in heaven." The light is not merely the message which we bear upon our lips, but also the influence which emanates from our daily lives. More and more we are convinced that the will of the Lord is that his message shall be borne by those who are pure of heart. "Be ye clean that bear the message of the Lord's house."—Z '09-46 (Hymn 154)

APRIL 24

Beloved, . . . keep yourselves in the love of God.—Jude 21

LET us remember that this is not a matter that God attends to, but a matter which requires our own attention.

God has made all the provisions whereby we may know of his love, and may be constrained by it, and may be accepted into it, but it devolves upon us to keep ourselves in the love of God, and we can only thus keep ourselves in his love by seeking to practice in the daily affairs of life the principles of his love, permitting the love of God to constrain us daily to sacrifice ourselves in the Lord's service, for his honor, and for the spread of his truth; permitting the love of the brethren to so fill our hearts that, as the apostle expresses it, we may be glad to "lay down our lives for the brethren"; permitting a sympathetic love for mankind in general, the "groaning creation," in all of its trials and difficulties, to exercise our hearts so that we shall more and more feel kindly and generously toward all with whom we have contact and to make us helpful to them as we have opportunity; permitting this love even to extend to the brute creation under our care, so that we will not be negligent of their interests; all this seems essential to our keeping ourselves in the love of God. Let us more and more practice, and thus become more and more perfected in this love, which is the spirit of our Father, the spirit of our Lord, and the spirit of all who are truly members of the body of Christ.—Z '00-184 (Hymn 166)

APRIL 25

Who is a God like unto thee, that . . . retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy.—Micah 7:18

THE heathen Gods are all vengeful. The God of the Bible alone lays claim to being a God of love "whose mercy endureth forever," as one of the Psalms repeats again and again. Alas, how terribly our God of wisdom, justice, love, and power has been misrepresented to the world, and to the church, as a God delighting in the eternal torture of the vast majority of his creatures; for if such were his provision for them, and he knew the end from the beginning, it would surely prove that he delighted in, and intended their torture. But when our eyes open to a proper interpretation of God's Word, how his character becomes glorious before our eyes and commands our love

and our devotion! As the apostle declares, it is the divine love which constrains us to be faithful and obedient.—Z '11-381 (Hymn 296)

APRIL 26

The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.—Nahum 1:7

WHILE appreciating very gratefully this special love and care for us as his people, in the comfort, encouragement, and protection afforded us by our Heavenly Father in the midst of the world's great tribulation, we would come far short of having his spirit if we would regard the matter with self-complacency, forgetful of his great love for the whole world also, which, veiled behind the clouds of his righteous indignation against their sins, in wisdom strikes the heavy blow which will shatter all their idols and humble their pride in the dust. . . . If God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, . . . he loves them still, and it is his love that wields the rod for their correction. So also he would have his people regard his judgments, and while rejoicing in the sunshine of his favor, . . . he would have them share his spirit toward the world; and while the blows of his righteous indignation fall heavily upon them, he would have us point them to the cause of their calamities, and to the only remedy.—Z '95-72 (Hymn 171)

APRIL 27

With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.—Acts 4:33

OUR text tells us that this witnessing was done with power, great power. It was not made secondary to politics, to social questions, to evolutionary theories or higher critical dissertations. It, and it alone, constituted the apostolic theme. And so it should be with us. The resurrection of the Lord and its value and signification to the church and the world through the divine plan should be ever prominent in our witnessing. Not only by their words and logical presentations did the apostles witness, but their lives were witnesses. As the apostle said, "Ye are our epistle, . . . known

and read of all men." The lives of the early church were the special witness to the Lord. Without the consistency of their lives and their consecration to the Lord and to the truth, it is evident, the message would have had no such import as it bore. So it is with us today. It is well that we preach the Word. It is still more important that we live it. But it is the ideal thing to both preach and live the truth.—Z '09-141 (Hymn 267)

APRIL 28

Thy saints shall bless Thee. They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy power; to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom.—Psa. 145:10-12

THE prophet intimates that all the saints shall have the privilege of thus declaring the kingdom, and of thus honoring the name of our God; and this seems to be literally fulfilled today, for the Lord seems to be bringing to the attention of all his saints (his consecrated people everywhere) the present truth; to the intent that they may have its light upon their pathway, making manifest unto them the glorious character of our God, through a knowledge of his great plan of the ages. Moreover, the Lord seems to be putting it within the power of every one of his saints to thus glorify his name and to speak forth the truth to others. To some he has granted the talent of oratory and opportunity to use it and to speak forth his praises in this way; to others he has granted a talent for private conversation, that they may thus tell of his kingdom and speak of his glorious majesty and make known his plans to such as have hearing ears. To others still he has given the privilege of declaring his message through the circulation of the printed page; and to some he seems to have given opportunities for using all of these various methods of singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. And we may rest assured that none can be of the company of the Lord's saints in this time, and know of his goodness and his wonderful honor and majesty, and not have a desire to tell the good tidings of great joy to all who have an ear to hear; and those

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who are most earnest, most zealous in proclaiming the message are sure to have the most blessing in their own hearts, and in their own experiences, and to grow the most in grace, in knowledge, and in love.—Z '00-313 (Hymn 118)

APRIL 29

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.—Luke 14:11

OUR Lord's beautiful and perfect humility and obedience demonstrated that he was loyal to the core to the Heavenly Father, and it also demonstrated that in him the Father's Spirit, love, dwelt richly, for he shared the Father's love for the race he redeemed. On this account also he is found worthy to be the divine agent in the blessing of all the families of the earth, as per the terms of the divine covenant made with father Abraham. Thus he has become the head of the "seed of Abraham," which is to bless the race redeemed; and hence it will be to him that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, when Jehovah's due time shall come for the pouring out of divine blessings upon the redeemed world—that all may come to a knowledge of the truth and, if they will, into full harmony with God, and to eternal life. The apostle not only holds up the Lord Jesus as the great example of a proper humility, self-abnegation, and obedience to God in the interest of others, but he would also hold up before us the reward, the high exaltation of our Lord by the Father, the result

or reward of his obedience, that we also might be encouraged, and realize that, if faithful in following the footsteps of our Redeemer and sacrificing the advantages of the present to serve the Lord and his cause, then, in due time, we also may expect to be glorified with him and to share his name and throne and work, as members of his anointed body, his joint-heir.—Z '97-299 (Hymn 229)

APRIL 30

These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.—John 20:31

THE only faith that will stand the test and bring us off conquerors over the spirit of the world, the flesh, and the Adversary, is the hope set before us in the Gospel, of which Jesus as the Messiah is the center. That is the hope of the world—the hope that Christ having redeemed the world with his precious blood will grant, in due time, a blessing of opportunity to every creature, that whosoever will may come through knowledge and obedience to life eternal, and that the disobedient shall be destroyed in the second death. A further part of this hope of which Jesus, the Messiah, is the center, is that those who are now called, the obedient through faith, shall be joint-heirs with the Master in the great kingdom which shall bless the world. No wonder the apostle said of this messianic hope, this kingdom hope, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."—Z '05-188 (Hymn 215)

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

APRIL 6—"If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."—I Peter 4:16 (Z. '96-166. Hymn 118)

APRIL 13—"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood,

ye have no life in you."—John 6:53 (Z. '99-51. Hymn 191)

APRIL 20—"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."—Luke 16:10 (Z. '03-407. Hymn 242)

APRIL 27—"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Philippians 2:5 (Z. '02-265. Hymn 198)

Peace Through the Blood

Our Sunday School class is studying the topic, "Peace." In Romans 5:1 we are told we "have peace with God"; in Colossians 3:15 we are told to let the peace of God rule in our hearts. Please tell me how the power of these truths can be used by Christian people to establish real peace in the world?

TOPICAL Bible study can be very profitable. The Bible says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." (II Tim. 2:15) In order to understand the texts quoted in our question, we must first know the difference between having peace "with" God, and having the peace "of" God.

Those referred to in Romans 5:1 are no longer under the condemnation which came upon all men through father Adam's disobedience. They have attained peace with God, through reconciliation. Reconciliation with God is dependent upon full consecration to him, and faith in the blood of Jesus Christ. The complete verse reads, "Therefore being justified [reconciled, made right] by faith, we have peace with God [we are no longer under divine condemnation, but are in fellowship with God], through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Only those who have attained peace with God, through being

reconciled "by the death of his Son," can enjoy the peace "of" God, the same peace that God possesses. Our Heavenly Father knows the outcome of his plan for man; he knows that his kingdom will, accomplish what man's feeble, and often selfish efforts cannot do, and therefore he is never disturbed, never upset.

One of the promises to those who are reconciled to God is found in Philippians 4:7. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." What an advantage the Christian has over his fellows! With the peace of God ruling in his heart, he can be thankful for all the experiences of life; he knows that God is directing his providences for his ultimate good. As Romans 8:28 expresses it, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Real peace is coming to the world. It will be everlasting, because it will be established upon Christian principles. Jesus Christ has provided the way for all men, in due time, to be reconciled to God; and as "The Prince of Peace" he will be a "Mediator between God and men." The world of mankind will no longer be under divine condemnation, but reconciled through his blood and obedience to the principles of his kingdom, "that God may be all in all." (Isa. 9:6;

I Tim. 2:4-6; I Cor. 15:25-28) Then man will be at peace with God as he was in the Garden of Eden, and led by the spirit of peace, he will "learn war no more." (Isa. 2:4; Micah 4:3) To the extent that you can instill these truths into the minds of your study class, you are preparing them for the coming kingdom.

The Home of the Righteous

It is rather astounding to hear a minister on the radio declare that the earth and not heaven will be the abode of the righteous. Where in the Bible is your authority; and when the world is destroyed, where will they go?

YOU misunderstood us. The Bible does not teach that none will go to heaven; some will. Many texts testify to the truth of our Lord's words in John 14:2, 3, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." These promises are for the true followers of Christ, those called to sonship during the Gospel age.

The mistake made by many is in thinking that those during this Gospel age who are rewarded for their faithfulness by a heavenly resurrection, are the only ones ever to receive eternal life. The Bible teaches differently. After the church is complete and with her Lord in heaven, the record is

that they will "reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6) The result of that reign will be the establishment of a righteous kingdom upon the earth. It will be the answer to the prayer our Master gave to his disciples.

We wish that all could comprehend this great truth, for when understood, the Bible becomes a new book. God's promise to bless all the families of the earth becomes a real hope; the resurrection of the dead takes on new meaning. Those not good enough to go to heaven, not having been called during this Gospel age, but far too good to be forever lost, will, through the awakening from the dead, be returned to the earth and by obeying the righteous laws of his kingdom they will grow to human perfection; for "when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness," declares the Prophet Isaiah.—Isa. 26:9

In Ecclesiastes 1:4, we are plainly told that the "earth abideth forever." Worlds pass away—one did at the time of the flood (II Pet. 3:6), and this "present evil world" of corrupt society will also pass away before the "time of trouble" that is now plaguing humanity runs its course—but the earth will abide. After the time of trouble a new order of society will be established, and God's will "done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Gal. 1:4; Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21; 6:10) Heaven is God's throne, the earth is his footstool, and in the millennial age the place of his feet shall be made glorious.—Isa. 66:1; Matt. 5:35; Isa. 60:13

The Truth About Hell

I have heard many definitions of the word, "hell." Some have described it as a place of literal fire, some as the torment of the conscience, and now you have a different idea, which interests me. Please give proofs for your opinion.

HELL is not a place of eternal torment in literal fire, neither is it a place of eternal torment of the conscience. In the Bible, "hell" is the word used to describe the condition of the dead. The doctrine of eternal torment is a product of the Dark Ages. It slanders God our Father, and keeps many from believing in his Word, for they rebel against any God who would permit such fiendishness. How glad we are that we have learned it is not supported by the Bible, but stems from an improper understanding of its message.

The word "hell" is an old English one; originally, it meant "to conceal" "to hide," "to cover." It was used synonymously with the word "grave." In the Authorized Version, the English translators used the word "hell" and "grave" interchangeably to translate the Hebrew word "sheol" and the Greek word "hades." The words "sheol" and "hades" as they were used in the old manuscripts simply mean the "condition of death."

Sheol is translated "grave" thirty-one times in the Old Testament. It is also translated "hell" thirty-one times, and "pit" three times. If you compare these texts—and they are easily found through the use of any good Con-

cordance of the Bible—you will quickly see that the hell-fire and torment theory is a fallacy, a product not supported by the Word of God.

In the New Testament, hades has exactly the same meaning as sheol in the Old Testament; they both mean the "condition of death." In proof of this please compare I Corinthians 15:54, 55, with Isaiah 25:8 and Hosea 13:14.

To us the Scriptures clearly teach that the condition of the dead is one of unconscious sleep, in hell, in the tomb. Let us remember that the "wages of sin is death," not eternal torment. (Romans 6:23) A biblical description of death is found in Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave [sheol], whither thou goest." The truth expressed in these verses is supported by many other scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments.

The sleep of death will end when Christ uses the "keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:18) to bring about the resurrection of the dead, the purpose of which is to give man an opportunity to return to harmony with God. Through conditions that have prevailed on the earth since he was thrust out of Eden, man has learned the lesson that disobedience to God's law means sorrow and death. When the dead awake under the right-

eous reign of Jesus Christ, the vast majority will want to obey the law of God. They will rejoice in the opportunity to bow their knees in worship, and use their tongues to confess their allegiance to One who has proven to be not a God of torment, but a Heavenly Father who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Listen to the words of the Prophet Isaiah (25:9), "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: . . . we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

Other Greek words translated hell are **Gehenna** and **tartaroo**. Space forbids their discussion here. Those interested should write to The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey, and ask for the book, "**The Truth About Hell.**"

An Unproved Theory

My son, now a university student, left home a Christian boy, and now after two years is almost an infidel. He says that evolution disproves the Bible account of man's creation, and that salvation through Jesus Christ is a superstitious fable. Will you please help me save his faith in God?

MANY teachers in our various institutions of learning who have accepted the responsibility of instructing our children, have much to answer for. Some do not believe in the Bible as the Word of God, and some do not believe in the existence of a supreme intelligent Creator, and as educated

worldly-wise ones they declare that there is no God. They attack the scriptural declaration that man is the special creation of God, and ridicule the truth that Jesus Christ is the world's hope of salvation. These false teachers are found in sectarian, nonsectarian, and state schools. Because our youth look to these instructors for knowledge, the faith of many is undermined.

The theory of evolution is not a proven science; it is merely a theory, based on human guesswork, with insufficient evidence to establish itself in the minds of true scientists. Instead of evolution disproving the Bible, the Bible disproves evolution, and will continue to be a beacon of truth long after the evolution theory is forgotten.

The sooner Christians realize that belief in the theory of evolution results in the rejection of the entire system of divine truth furnished us in the Bible; the sooner they will classify it as a strong delusion. It is in conflict with every proposition of the Word of God respecting our creation and our redemption; so violently in conflict that we do not hesitate to say that if one is true the other is false.

One's children cannot be protected from coming in contact with this theory, but we can protect them through instructing them in the Bible upon this subject. Too many of us leave to others this personal responsibility.

As an aid to understanding the Bible upon this subject, we suggest that you write to The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey, and ask for the "Creation" book, enclosing 10 cents in stamps.

The Power of the Resurrection

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of his power, to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.”—EPHESIANS 1:17-20

IN THE Spring of the year all nature bursts forth in new life. This is symbolic of the resurrection of the dead. Appropriately, it was in the Spring that Christ was raised from the dead, and thus in the minds and hearts of all true believers in him, this season is one of renewed hope and courage resulting from a vivid reminder that not alone is God working to clothe the earth in new beauty, but also that more than nineteen centuries ago his “mighty power” reached down into hades and raised him from the dead who to us is the “chiefest among ten thousand,” the One who is “altogether lovely.”—Cant. 5:10, 16

We marvel at the “mighty power” of God which was employed to raise our Redeemer and Advocate from the dead! All creation testifies to the fact of his power to create life. Since it has become possible to release some of the pent up energy of the atom, we are impressed more than ever with the “mighty” power of the One who created the atom—not a few merely, but all the atoms of which the countless millions of universes are built. Yet in all this use of creative power everything that was made was on a lower plane than the Creator himself.

But with the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead something new was achieved, for he was exalted to God’s own right hand in “heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” (Eph. 1:20, 21) Another text tells us that Jesus became “the express image” of his

Father's person. (Heb. 1:3) In other words, he was not only raised from the dead, but exalted to the divine nature, the nature of the Creator himself.

We humans have a certain degree of creative ability. Some can create or build machines, others can make clothing, etc., but obviously it is quite beyond our ability to build, or create, that which is equal to ourselves, yet this is what our Heavenly Father did when he raised Jesus from the dead and exalted him to his own right hand. We cannot grasp the thought of such power! We simply accept the fact by faith because the Scriptures assure us that it was done, while we continue to marvel at the "mighty power" employed to accomplish it.

"To Us-ward"

However, the fact of the resurrection means more to the Christian than merely something which causes us to marvel. The apostle informs us that this power is enlisted on our behalf to guarantee our victory through Christ, and that when victorious we too will be exalted and will share his heavenly glory. "The exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward" means that no matter how weak we are in our efforts to do his will, nor how powerful our foes from without may be, the Lord is able to keep us from falling and to bring us off more than conquerors through him who loved us and died for us.

This is one of the important lessons of Jesus' resurrection to every true follower of his. As we note the springtime surging of life in the trees and in the flowers, and recall that the Creator of all life awakened his beloved Son from death and caused him to sit down at his own right hand in the heavenlies, and then realize that it is this power which is working in us to will and to do his good pleasure, what confidence it should give us! To the extent that our faith can lay hold upon this thought it will be as though we had already been raised from the dead with him, and thus we will be able to "walk in newness of life."—Rom. 6:4

Miraculous When Necessary

We are not to suppose, of course, that the power of God is necessarily working in his people in a miraculous manner, although we should have faith to believe that he will deal with us thus if and when it is necessary. He has provided his written Word for our strength and encouragement, and by making proper use of it—feeding upon his "exceeding great and precious promises"—we be-

come strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. (II Pet. 1:4) However, miracle-working power was used by God to provide his Word. His Spirit inspired its writers. This being true, it means that the power of his Spirit fills our lives when we yield ourselves to the blessed influences of the written Word.

God's providences play a vital part in the guidance and strengthening of his people. The importance of these should not be discounted. We should watch his leadings, and endeavor to interpret the meaning of our experiences in the light of his written Word. Any Christian who does this faithfully will be strengthened in his determination to serve the Lord faithfully in every detail of his blessed will. Care should be exercised not to misinterpret God's providences, and we can only be sure that we are not doing this by viewing them in the light of the divine will as revealed in his written Word. Through his Word, God has revealed that the way of the cross is narrow and difficult; that it is a way of sacrifice and suffering; that we should seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness. His providences should be interpreted in the light of these basic truths concerning the Christian life.

If, for example, we are confronted with an opportunity to better our position in life from the standpoint of the flesh, along whatever line it might be, our first consideration should be how the accepting of this opportunity would affect our spiritual life. Would it deprive us of the privilege of attending meetings with those of like precious faith? Would it lessen our privileges of service in the harvest field? Would it mean that we would have less time to study the Word and to become thus better acquainted with the precious truths of the divine plan?

If our privileges as a new creature should be curtailed along any line by accepting an opportunity to advance ourselves in life along physical lines, we should view such a providence as a test of our devotion to the covenant of sacrifice into which we have entered with the Lord. Placing this interpretation upon it, and acting accordingly, an increase of spiritual strength would result; and in honoring our loyalty to him, the Lord would more than compensate us by the rich increase of spiritual joys which would be ours.

If, on the other hand, we were presented with an opportunity for increased material prosperity which would not interfere with our privileges as new creatures in Christ Jesus, we should accept it. In this event, our faithfulness would be tested along the line of how

well we discharged our increased stewardship. We would need to remember the divine principle that where much is given much is required.

God's providences should always be interpreted in the light of our covenant of sacrifice and our best spiritual interests, not upon the basis of how we might better our position in life from the fleshly standpoint. Paul did this in order that he might know the "power of His resurrection." (Phil. 3:7-11) It takes faith, but the rewards of faith are rich, particularly from the standpoint of the increasing spiritual strength which becomes ours as we succeed in each circumstance to sacrifice the interests of the flesh.

Meat in Due Season

God's providences are manifested on behalf of his people as a whole as well as individually. How greatly we have been strengthened by the "meat in due season" which has been served to the household of faith by the returned Lord through "that faithful and wise servant"! (Matt. 24:45, 46; Luke 12:42, 43) How necessary is the truth we have thus received if we are to be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." (Eph. 6:10) But if the power of present truth is to be operative in our lives as it can and should be, we must make it our own through the study of the Word and the use of the helps which have been provided, the "keys" to the Scriptures.

Let us not deceive ourselves with the mistaken notion that we know the truth simply because we have read parts of "Studies in the Scriptures," or even if we have read all the volumes through carefully once or twice. It is true that the outline of the divine plan is simple and easily grasped, but if the power of the simple truths which make up this outline is to work in our lives to make us meet for "the inheritance of the saints in the light," we should become familiar with more and more of the promises and prophecies of the Word which buttress the truth, and should feed upon them.

One of Satan's deceptions by which he seeks to lead us away from the truth, and thus away from the Lord, is to induce us to think that we have advanced beyond the simple truths of the divine plan and should be giving our attention only to "advanced truth." Those who have been led away by this error seem not to have any clear notion of just what constitutes advanced truth—at least there is no agreement along this line. Some think they are "digging deep" into the Word when they succeed in working out some fanciful

interpretation of a prophecy, or imagine that this or that in the Bible is intended to be a time prophecy with an important bearing on our day. Thus, imagination and guesswork are supposed by them to be the "deep things of God."

Others "progress" beyond the simple doctrines of the divine plan and specialize in devotionalism. These may even be led to believe that they are on "higher ground" than many of the brethren, especially those who still find in the glorious truths of the divine plan that which satisfies their longings as nothing else could do.

We are not discouraging the idea of making progress in the truth. We should grow in knowledge, but genuine progress will give us the strength to remain humble and not to consider ourselves more advanced than our brethren. If the alleged progress we are making gives us the thought that we are appreciating certain advanced truth because we are more brilliant than others, and look upon our brethren with sympathy in that they are less favored mentally than we, then we may know that we have been temporarily snared by the Adversary. In such an event, the remedy is to return to a renewed study of the great fundamental doctrines of the truth and let their grandeur and beauty impress upon our minds and hearts how trivial our own deductions and speculations have been.

The "power of the resurrection" is the power of God and as we have seen, his power reaches us in no small way through his Word and through the glorious doctrines of the divine plan revealed therein. Paul wrote that the "Gospel of Christ" is the "power of God unto salvation." (Rom. 1:16) Let us get better acquainted with these doctrines by reviewing them again and again, both individually and in our study meetings. Let us familiarize ourselves with all the various scriptures which reveal and support the truth—and this means the entire Word of God. Let us become real students of the Bible, and not students in name only.

The power of the resurrection is enlisted on our behalf to protect us as new creatures and to keep us from falling, but we will not benefit from it if we neglect any of the means the Lord has arranged whereby he shows himself strong on our behalf. We should not minimize God's ability and willingness to strengthen us directly and miraculously, if and when it is necessary. We can take comfort in the thought that he will do this, but only if we have utilized all the means of grace which he has provided; and very important means of grace are the doctrines of the divine plan.

THE DAWN

The Holy Spirit is the channel whereby divine power reaches the Christian, but the infilling of the Holy Spirit results largely through our study of the Word and through prayer for guidance in our study. To be filled with the Spirit we must be emptied of self, and this, too, is brought about through our obedience to the Word and to the doctrines therein set forth.

Another means of grace provided by the Lord for many of his people is the privilege of association with others of like precious faith. If the Lord has extended this opportunity to us, are we availing ourselves of it as we might? Or is attending meetings a matter of more or less indifference?

In order not to be lacking in spiritual vigor, nor to be lukewarm with respect to our privileges as new creatures, let us be sure that we are making full use of all the provisions the Lord has made to extend his grace and strength to us. These include prayer; earnest and continued study of the great fundamentals of the truth; fellowship with the Lord's people whenever possible; faithfulness in fulfilling our vows of consecration by continuing to sacrifice the flesh and its interests in the service of the Lord, the truth, and the brethren; and a careful watching of the Lord's providences that we might be guided and strengthened thereby.

Thus will it be that with the Lord giving us strength as unlimited as the "exceeding greatness of his power" which he used to raise Jesus from the dead, we will be able as new creatures to "mount up with wings as eagles," also to "run [in the narrow way], and not be weary"; and to "walk [in the footsteps of Jesus], and not faint." (Isa. 40:31) This is the present heritage of the people of God who put their trust in him and daily walk in his counsels. May this, then, be a springtime of renewed hope and strength and courage for us all, and may the power of the resurrection continue to be our portion, that we may be conquerors, yea, "more than conquerors through him that loved us" and died for us!—Rom. 8:37



*"I know that my Redeemer lives;
What joy the blest assurance gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead;
That all the world his life may share."*

Encouraging Letters

Love, Not Fear

Gentlemen: I listened to your broadcast Sunday, and was very much impressed with your discussion of the judgment day. . . . There is small wonder that we live in a world of fear when our churches teach fear. Fear brings distrust, and then hatred, and finally wars. . . . I have been criticized for my belief by the people within my own church, and until I heard your program I was beginning to think that I would never find others who believe as I do, that God is love, not fear. I would very much appreciate hearing from you, as I believe there is a great deal that I could learn from you. I would also greatly appreciate a copy of "God and Reason." Yours very truly, Mr. T. W. S., South Carolina.

A True Explanation

Dear Friends: What a program—yours of yesterday! To us it was a true explanation of the Bible hell. Mrs. N. and I had been members of an organized religion since 1907, but some five years ago, after hearing your program, we discovered by reading God's Word that we had entirely the wrong idea of his dealings in the affairs of men. Now we read the Bible almost hourly, and listen to your program regularly. Yours for the truth, Mr. O. N., Illinois.

Searching Thirty Years

Dear Sirs: I wish to thank you for the book, "God's Plan." I have finished studying it along with my

Bible. Believe me when I say that I enjoyed it more than any literature I have ever read, and I have read a lot, because I have been seeking for the truth for thirty years and have read everything I thought would help. Now I have found what I wanted and needed. Please send me a copy of "God and Reason" and "The Divine Plan of the Ages. Sincerely, Mrs. D. P., Tennessee.

Getting Proof

Dear Brethren in Christ: A brother loaned me one of your booklets, "When Pastor Russell Died." Now I would like to have one for myself, also a few for friends. I feel that I have been a "mourner in Zion" for a long time, and just beginning to get the proof of same. Sincerely, Mrs. P. P., W, Virginia.

Wants to Help

Dear Friends: What a wonderful thing is the radio! To my mind it is a means provided by the Master Provider for the proclaiming of the wonderful biblical truths as he has enabled you to interpret them. . . . I want to help with the Lord's work. I keep searching for ways and means within reach. I have your broadcast schedule and it has the cities listed where my dearest loved ones are living. I have written them concerning the time of your broadcasts in their respective cities, requesting them to tune in. I have also sent them some of your literature. As soon as I can I want

to order The Dawn Magazine for them. I consider it a most outstanding publication. Last, but not least, I can pray every day for my loved ones and for the Lord's faithful servants wherever they may be, to be strengthened and upheld by his righteous, omnipotent hand. His will be done. Praying for your success more and more in your glorious mission, and thanking the Lord and you for the wonderful good your inspiring literature and radio programs have done for me, I remain, Sincerely your friend, Mrs. A. H. M., Oklahoma.

From an Arab

Dear Sirs: I am a regular listener to your Sunday morning broadcasts, and have been for two years. Your explanations of the work of God are most delightful. You are the best I have heard in this country. I am an Arab. Please send me the gift book, "Spiritualism." I will be most thankful. I hope to remain your regular listener. Yours, Mr. B. M., Ohio

Wants to Share

Dear Sirs: Just a few words to you in appreciation and thankfulness for your Frank and Ernest broadcasts over the radio every Sunday. About four months ago I heard your program for the first time. Now I listen in every Sunday. Thanks to Jehovah for his wonderful plan of salvation, and for his promise made to Abraham concerning the blessing of all the families of the earth. What joy it gives me to think of these blessings which God has in store for the groaning creation. I would like to have a part in the distribution of this glorious message. Will you

please send me particulars in regard to this matter. Yours respectfully, Mr. H. G. C., West Virginia.

From India

Dear Brethren of The Dawn: Greetings to you! We are happy to inform you that the light of the Lord's presence has shined into our hearts. We thank our Almighty Jehovah God who has caused his face to shine upon us through his beloved Son, King Jesus. We believe that we are one with him, and will be glorified with him and appear with him in glory. Until such time the world must wait for the manifestation of the "sons of God." . . . The "sickle" you sent us in one of your issues is working splendidly—many are turning to the present truth. We have taken full advantage of your literature, engaging ourselves in the harvest work. At present we are meeting by twos and threes, and are continuing as suggested in Romans 12:1, 11, 12. One Reverend R. Solomon of the Lutheran Church and Pentecostal Assembly has received the present truth. He has served well over thirty years according to their faith. After he received the truth he joined with us in the harvest work and he is causing convulsions and earthquakes in the various assemblies and churches in Madras. Yours sincerely, J. R., India.

(A later letter from this brother advises that an ecclesia has been established in Madras [English language]. He is a doctor by profession, and is giving up his practice in order to spend all of his time in the service.—Editors)

"Thy Love Is Better Than Wine"

"We will make mention of Thy love more than of wine."—Song of Solomon 1:2, R. V.

AMONG the symbols of the Bible, wine seems to be used to represent doctrine, teaching. For instance, mystic Babylon is represented as making all nations intoxicated, befuddled, confused, with the wine from the cup she holds in her hand. (Rev. 17:2, 4) This thought is corroborated by the Prophet Isaiah who, speaking of a certain class in nominal spiritual Israel under the symbol "The drunkards of Ephraim," says, "They are swallowed up of wine, . . . they err in vision, they stumble in judgment."—Isa. 28:1, 7; 29:19

Just as false doctrine is misleading and confusing, causing us to err in our vision of heavenly things, and to misunderstand the kind of work the Lord requires Christians to do, so the true doctrines of the Word of God (also symbolised by wine) are enlightening and stabilising, giving more and more of the spirit of a sound mind to those who receive them. Hence we speak of "the new wine of the kingdom"—the doctrines relating to the coming kingdom of Messiah for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Those who have been blessed with the light of present truth, and who, prior to this, probably appreciated only a few simple teachings relating to their own personal salvation, find set before them truly an abundance of doctrine; not only the fundamental truths of the divine plan, but in addition, a very full understanding of the prophetic Word relating to world history, with a special focus of prophecy upon the times in which we live—the transition period between the Christian dispensation and the millennial age—an understanding of the types of the Law and other ceremonies performed by the nation of Israel; also the many scriptures relating to the work of the "times of restitution."

Hence, as we meet together for fellowship, how much there is to discuss relating to all these wonderful teachings of the divine plan, as well as concerning the almost daily happenings fulfilling the sure Word of prophecy! So much is this the case that there is a danger that the love which provided these wonderful things for the blessing, guidance, and upbuilding of the Lord's people, may fail to have first place in our minds and hearts and conversation.

Thus we do well to consider the suggestion of our text: "Thy love is better than wine." Yes, it is far more important than any mere head knowledge which may come to us. And so, while we may say

with Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Rom. 11:33) the love of God which provided and is carrying out every feature of the plan of salvation is more important still.

We often hear exhortations to love God more, to love him with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength: and while the importance of such an attainment cannot be overemphasised, it is, perhaps, even more encouraging and important to realise God's love for us. "The Father himself loveth you." (John 16:27) "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."—Eph. 5:25

When cast down or discouraged at our inability to do the things that we would, or at our own failure to overcome to the extent we feel we should have done, exhortations telling us to seek to love God more may not be the most helpful at such a juncture. But to have brought home to us the assurance that "the Father himself loveth you," and that "Christ loved the church" to the extent of giving himself for her, how cheering and solacing such assurances may become! Hence, while seeking to enter into all the deep philosophy contained in the divine plan of the ages, let us continually keep in mind the suggestion of our text, "Thy love is better than wine."

What joy comes to us through the love of the Father, who gave up the dearest treasure of his heart; the love of our Lord Jesus, who not only was willing to leave the glory he had with the Father,

but was even willing to risk his eternal destiny as a result of coming to earth to undertake the redemption of mankind; the love which has followed us like a continuing stream all our life long, providing us with many temporal blessings, and in the due time drew us and invited us to joint-heirship with Christ, and henceforth has caused all things to work together for our good! Truly, "Thy love is better than wine, . . . therefore do the virgins love thee." (Song of Sol. 1:2, 3) The beloved apostle echoes the same sentiments, saying, "We love him, because he first loved us."—I John 4:19

BROTHER MORTON EDGAR
His Race Course Finished

BROTHER MORTON EDGAR reached the end of his earthly pilgrimage on February 6, passing away at his home in Glasgow. He was well-known by the brethren throughout Great Britain, Europe, and America, and was loved by all. He is survived by his sister, Minna Edgar, with whom he lived.

Brother Edgar was a staunch defender of present truth in all its phases, particularly along the lines of chronology and time prophecies. Along these latter lines he made effective use of his thorough knowledge of God's stone witness in the land of Egypt, the Great Pyramid. Brother Edgar had visited the pyramid on several occasions, and some of these visits were made in company with his Brother, Dr. John Edgar, who passed away in 1910. Both brothers are well-known for their lectures and writings on the pyramid. Brother Morton's last extensive lecture tour was in America in 1930.

The many thousands who knew Brother Edgar will rejoice to learn that he has won the victory in his good fight of faith and has heard the Master's "well done." Their sympathy, meanwhile, will go out to his sister, and let us all remember her in our prayers.

THE BRITISH SECTION

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

C. E. DICKINSON	
Leigh (Afternoon)	April 16
Warrington (Evening)	16
J. E. HUMPHREY	
Anerley	April 30
Ipswich	May 7
J. H. MURRAY	
Yeovil	April 23
Leigh (Afternoon)	May 14
Warrington (Evening)	14

W. E. PAMPLING

Luton	April	23
Pontypool		30
Lincoln	May	14
Anerley		21

C. W. SCHOLEFIELD

Dewsbury	April	2
Eastleigh	May	7

A. SPAIN

Maidstone	May	14
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“Who need faint while such a river
 Ever flows their thirst to assuage?—
 Grace, which like the Lord, the Giver,
 Never falls from age to age!”

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Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

W. A. BAKER

Victoria, B. C., Can.	April	1, 2
Vancouver, B. C., Can.		3-5
Aldergrove, B. C., Can.		6
Langley Prairie, B. C., Can.		7
Bellingham-Lynden, Wash.		8, 9
Seattle, Wash.		10, 11
Wenatchee, Wash.		12
Spokane, Wash.		14-16
Lewiston, Idaho		17, 18
Boise, Idaho		20, 21
Ogden, Utah		23
Salt Lake City, Utah		24, 25
Lincoln, Neb.		28-30

W. T. BAKER

Cincinnati, Ohio	April	1, 2
New Albany, Ind.		3, 4
Salem, Ind.		6, 7
Bicknell, Ind.		8, 9
Worthington, Ind.		10, 11
Indianapolis, Ind.		12, 13
Muncie, Ind.		14-16
Mooresville, Ind.		17
Bloomington, Ind.		18
Champaign, Ill.		19, 20
Mattoon, Ill.		21
St. Louis, Mo.		23
Hannibal, Mo.		24
Quincy, Ill.		25, 26
Canton, Ill.		27
Albany, Ill.		28
Clinton, Iowa		30

J. BEDNARZ

Lancaster, Pa.	April	16
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F. A. BRIGHT

Allentown, Pa.	April	2
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O. D. DEIFER

Port Crane, N. Y.	April	16
Brooklyn, N. Y.		30

W. J. HOLLISTER

Paterson, N. J.	April	9
Boston, Mass.		30

L. JACOBS

Paterson, N. J.	April	9
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G. O. JEUCK

Miami, Fla.	April	9
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P. KOLLIMAN

Paterson, N. J.	April	9
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R. A. KREBS

Broadbent, Ore.	April	1-3
Newport, Ore.		6, 7
Salem, Ore.		8, 9, 11
Lebanon, Ore.		10
Portland, Ore.		12-16
The Dalles, Ore.		17, 18
Yakima, Wash.		20, 21
Spokane, Wash.		23, 24, 27-30
Lewiston, Idaho,		25, 26

A. H. KRUMPOLT

Wallingford, Conn. (Morn.)	April	2
Hartford, Conn. (Afternoon)		2
Paterson, N. J.		9

L. P. LOOMIS

Paterson, N. J.	April	2
Reading, Pa.		9

J. Y. MAC AULAY

Electra, Tex.	April	1, 2
Bowie, Tex.		3, 4
Dallas, Tex.		5
Fort Worth, Tex.		6, 7
Durant, Okla.		8, 9
Ada, Okla.		10
Muskogee, Okla.		13, 14
Stigler, Okla.		15, 16
Fort Smith, Ark.		17
Little Rock, Ark.		18, 21-23
Monroe, Ark.		19, 20
Marianna, Ark.		24, 25
Paragould, Ark.		26, 27
Jonesboro, Ark.		28
St. Louis, Mo.		30

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

M. C. MITCHELL		W. N. WOODWORTH	
Paterson, N. J.	April 16	Miami, Fla.	April 7-9
		Orlando, Fla.	10
J. H. MOORE		Jacksonville, Fla.	11
Augusta, Ga.	April 1, 2	Augusta, Ga.	12
Riverhills, Fla.	4, 15	Greensboro, N. C.	13
Jacksonville, Fla.	5, 16	Richmond, Va.	14
Miami, Fla.	7-9	Baltimore, Md. (Morning)	16
Sarasota, Fla.	11	Wilmington, Del. (Afternoon)	16
St. Petersburg, Fla.	12	Paterson, N. J.	23
Orlando, Fla.	13	Boston, Mass.	30
Melbourne, Fla.	14	H. L. YOUNG	
Mobile, Ala.	18-30	Wilkes Barre, Pa.	April 9
Silverhill, Ala.	May 1, 2	Mahanoy City, Pa.	23
L. H. NORBY		C. W. ZAHNOW	
Philadelphia, Pa.	April 2	New Haven, Conn. (Morn.) April	2
H. PASSIOS		Waterbury, Conn. (Afternoon) ..	2
Duquesne, Pa.	April 2	Naugatuck, Conn.	3, 4
F. W. RICE		Wallingford, Conn.	5
Santa Ana, Calif.	April 23	Hartford, Conn.	6
G. P. RIPPER		Lynn, Mass.	7
Riverside, Calif. (Morning) April	16	Boston, Mass.	9
Pomona, Calif. (Afternoon)	16	North Brookfield, Mass.	10, 11
W. P. TWELKER		Worcester, Mass.	12
Whittier, Calif.	April 16	New Bedford, Mass.	13, 14
C. R. WEIDA		Groton, Conn. (Evening)	15
Easton, Pa.	April 9	Groton, Conn. (Morning)	16
Lehighton, Pa.	23	New London, Conn. (Afternoon)	16
G. M. WILSON		Springfield, Mass.	17, 18
East Liverpool, Ohio	April 9	Port Crane, N. Y.	20, 21
Washington, Pa.	16	Binghamton, N. Y.	22, 23
Detroit, Mich.	30	Wilkes Barre, Pa.	24
		Lewistown, Pa.	25
		Pittsburgh, Pa.	26
		East Liverpool, Ohio	27
		Newark, Ohio	28
		Cincinnati, Ohio	29, 30

Continual Need for Devotion

THE qualities of devotion are found in all mankind in a greater or less degree of development. These mental qualities are called veneration and spirituality, and they summon to their aid the organs of conscience, hope, tune, etc. If these be neglected, the result will be that interest in and love for the truth will degenerate; so that instead of our hearts being led to the Lord with greater desire to please, honor, and serve him, we will find the lower organs joining more in the controversy, taking the places of these higher ones, and the investigations will come to be more in the light of mental philosophies, into which will enter combativeness and destructiveness, ambition, strife, and vainglory.

—The New Creation

Conventions

For Mutual Fellowship, Edification, and Service

MIAMI, FLA., April 7-9—All sessions in Simpson Memorial Hall, 55 S. W. 17th Road. For reservations write the secretary, Mrs. Ruth Roark, 1107 Alhambra Circle, Coral Gables, Florida.

PATERSON, N. J., April 9—Convention opens at 9:45 A. M. in the Y. M. C. A., Ward and Prince Streets. It is expected that Brothers Peter Kolliman, Arthur Krumpolt, William Hollister, and Levi Jacobs will serve.

SAGINAW, MICH., April 9—Woman's Club, 311 N. Jefferson Street.

CHICAGO, ILL., April 23—910 N. La-Salle Street.

BOSTON, MASS., April 30—Parish Hall of the Arlington Street Church, 353 Boylston Street.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., April 30—All day gathering, 104 Clark Street.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, April 30—Morning session at Finance Building, 4th floor, 616 Walnut Street. Place of afternoon session to be announced from platform.

DETROIT, MICH., April 30—Maccabees Building, Woodward Avenue at Putnam.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF., April 30—Regular 5th Sunday convention, starts 10:00 A. M. All sessions at Foresters Hall, 1329 South Hope Street, Los Angeles. For further details or programs write class secretary, A. W. Abrahamsen, 2816 West 83rd Street, Inglewood, California.

WEATHERFORD, TEXAS, April 30—Zion Hill Schoolhouse near Weatherford.

PIQUA, OHIO, May 7—Y. W. C. A., 418 N. Wayne Street. Saturday evening arranged for friends arriving on that day.

WALLINGFORD, CONN., May 14—All day gathering. Masonic Temple, 50 North Main Street, next to the Library.

KANSAS CITY, MO., May 27, 28—Opens 1:30 o'clock on Saturday in the Y. M. C. A. Building, 10th and Oak Streets. For reservations write the secretary, Mr. John Bacher, 5808 Oak Street.

VANCOUVER, B. C., Can., May 27-29—Hastings Auditorium, 828 East Hastings Street. For reservations write the secretary, Mrs. Henry Burdett, 2591 E. 20th Avenue, Vancouver, B. C.

CHICAGO, ILL., May 28-30—Details will appear in May issue. Room reservations may be made by writing the secretary, Mr. Edmund Jezuit, 4327 S. Christiana Avenue, Chicago 32, Ill.

OAKLAND, CALIF., May 28-30—Welsh Presbyterian Church, 18th and Castro Streets. Opens 2:30 Sunday afternoon. For reservations write the secretary, Mr. William T. Barfield, 1527 (rear cottage) 8th Street, Alameda, Calif.

PHOENIX, ARIZ., May 28, 29, 30.

ALLENTOWN, PA., June 3, 4.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., June 11.

General Convention—August 12-19

BRETHREN in all parts of the country are already making their plans to attend the General Convention at Bowling Green, Ohio, this year. Full details concerning rooms, meals, program, etc. will be published as the time approaches. Keep the date in mind and plan to enjoy this period of spiritual refreshment.

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ORDERS NOT ACKNOWLEDGED UNLESS REQUESTED

THE DAWN

East Rutherford

NEW JERSEY

To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach

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

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

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

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

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

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the fully wicked will be destroyed.—Act. 3:19-23; Isaiah 35