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Highlights of **Dawn**

The Nations Healed

**"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations."
"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come, And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."**

—Revelation 22:1, 2, 17

WE ARE living in a sick world. It is a sickness unto death which began more than six thousand years ago, and today has reached crisis proportions. The chief diseases which have brought about this crisis are sin and selfishness. Sin is a flouting of the laws of God, and selfishness is an inordinate seeking of one's own best interests regardless of what the consequences to others might be. Some of the symptoms of these fatal diseases are pride, hatred, and a lust for power which brooks no interference, even at the cost of murder.

Perhaps one of the most vivid descriptions of this fatal sickness of human society is the one given to us by the Apostle Paul when he wrote, "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers

of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.”—II Tim. 3:1-4

At this time when the earth, the sea, the rivers, the lakes, and the atmosphere are all being polluted by man's inability properly to use the resources which God has provided for him, we have this worst of all defilements, which is the pollution of the human mind and heart by sin and selfishness. These pollutants have always been abroad throughout the earth, plaguing mankind and the various societies he has tried to create; but now in these “last days” the situation has become acute, for as we have seen, this disease of sin and selfishness has now reached crisis proportions.

In this “time of the end,” when the prophetic increase of knowledge should be providing not only an affluent life, but a peaceful, happy, and healthy one for the people of all nations, in many respects the very opposite is true. Of what value is it to humanity that men can reach the moon, when countless millions throughout the earth are starving, without homes, and in constant fear of being destroyed by poisons which selfish man is spewing into the air, water, and land in his gross misuse of the natural resources of the earth which the Lord has so bountifully provided.

Of what real satisfaction can it be to know that technology has contrived instruments which can fly to Mars, when that same technology is stockpiling deadly weapons of war with terrifying potentials of destruction in sufficient quantities to destroy the human species a hundred times over? These paradoxes arising out of human selfishness certainly raise the question as to what the great Creator is doing about this dilemma which has been thrust upon an unsuspecting world.

Dilemma Foretold

The present chaos and distress which have come unexpectedly upon the world are not a surprise to the Lord,

for there are many prophecies of his Word which have forecast such a condition. One of them, presented in symbolic language, is found in Isaiah 24:1-5, which we quote (Revised Standard Version):

“Behold, the Lord will lay waste the earth and make it desolate, and he will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the slave, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the creditor, so with the debtor. The earth shall be utterly laid waste and utterly despoiled; for the Lord has spoken this word. The earth mourns and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant.”

Many times the words “earth” and “world” when used in the prophecies of the Bible denote a social structure which may exist on the planet at any given time, one of the important parts of which is the people. However, the literal earth is also often referred to in the prophecies, and sometimes there is an intermingling of the symbolic and literal in the same prophecy. An example of this is Psalm 46:6, 10. Verse 6 reads, “The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; He utters His voice, the earth melts.” (R.S.V.) In this verse the earth “melts,” but in verse 10 the earth still exists, and God’s name is exalted in it. We quote: “Be still, and know that I am God. I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.”—R.S.V.

In this prophecy of the time in which we are now living it is the symbolic earth that melts, whereas the literal earth remains, and by divine decree to the raging nations, peace is brought to the people, and God’s name becomes exalted among the people. So in the prophecy quoted above

from Isaiah 24, we find the symbolic earth "twisted," and we find a leveling of all segments of human society, and finally a polluting of the earth, and certainly this latter is being fulfilled literally today, to the great consternation of the worldly-wise.

God's Remedy

As pointed out in Psalm 46:10, in the Lord's due time he will say to the raging nations of earth, "Be still, and know that I am God." This suggests divine intervention in the affairs of men at a juncture when, if left to their own devices, the sin-sick and selfish people of the earth would utterly fail in their efforts to solve the problems which they have brought upon themselves. Thus, in our approach to the subject, we should keep in mind that the great Creator is still interested in his human creatures, and will deliver them. Man will not be permitted to destroy himself, either by nuclear weaponry or by pollutants.

God's wonderful plan for the salvation of mankind from the result of his own folly and selfishness is presented to us in the Bible in various ways. The outline of one of these begins with the story of the Garden of Eden. We read that in this garden the Lord provided "every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden."—Gen. 2:9, 10

The Original Paradise

The word "paradise" simply means "a garden," and that beautiful spot prepared for man "eastward in Eden" was a most beautiful and wonderful paradise. Mistakenly, the idea of paradise has been associated with some sort of spiritual existence far removed from this planet. But God's intention from the beginning was that the earth was to be man's paradise, and that small section of land which God prepared especially for our first parents was but a sample

of what the whole earth was to be, and yet will be, when God's glorious design concerning man has been fully accomplished.

In the original paradise much emphasis was placed on beauty. In describing the trees of the garden, those "pleasant to the sight" are mentioned first, and then those which were "good for food." We conclude from this that God not only made preparation to sustain the lives of his human creatures, but he wanted them also to enjoy their lives through appreciation of the beautiful things of creation by which they were surrounded. God was delighted with his human creatures, and he wanted them to delight themselves in him by being constantly reminded of his love and care.

How beautiful indeed the earth truly is, or at least was, before man began to pollute it with refuse and poisons. Is there anything more majestic than a range of mountains which pushes its higher peaks at times above the clouds, and which are laden with snow the year around? How beautiful are the rivers, the lakes, and the oceans. Then there is the great variety of trees, each with its own particular type of beauty, and all "pleasant to the sight." Every square mile of the earth's surface has its special type of beauty—all designed by the Creator to add to the value and zest of living.

Even the food-producing trees of the earth are beautiful. And think of the beauty of growing wheat and other grain as it is wafted to and fro by gentle summer breezes. And all this beauty of landscape and foliage as it left the hands of God in the garden "eastward in Eden" must have been beyond words to describe. This was man's home, and he was commanded to "subdue" the remainder of the earth and to fill it with his progeny. It was a glorious outlook, and could have worked to the eternal glory of the Creator and the everlasting joy of man.

Actually this will yet be the case, for while man has failed through disobedience, and has defiled the earth which he was commanded to subdue, God's redemptive plan through Christ is designed to restore his human creatures to their lost home, which, when the plan is completed, will see this whole planet one gorgeous paradise, providing health, joy, and life for humanity which by then will fill the whole earth.

The Forbidden Fruit

The original paradise, in addition to its lifegiving trees, contained one called "the tree of knowledge of good and evil." (Gen. 2:9) It is not necessary that we know the nature of this tree. The important lesson for us is that our first parents were forbidden to partake of it, and the death penalty was attached to disobedience. At the same time, however, during the long centuries since their disobedience, the human race has been acquiring an experimental knowledge of evil, and during the thousand years of Christ's kingdom will have the opportunity to acquire a knowledge of good, which will enable them finally to make a considered choice between the two.

In the Garden of Eden there was also a river. We are told that this river "went out of Eden to water the garden." Thus in that original paradise we have the lifegiving trees, and we have a river. However, because our first parents disobeyed God they were driven out of that garden into the unfinished earth to die. The record is, "The Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."—Gen. 3:23, 24

The Apostle Paul wrote, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) Death was the penalty which was in-

flicted upon man. The "thorns and thistles" and the banishment from Eden and from the trees of life were the means used by the Lord to inflict that penalty. And how efficient these "executioners" have been. For more than six thousand years man has been a suffering and dying creature, unable to overcome the hazards of his environment and keep himself alive.

It seemed that as a result of the industrial age better progress would be made, but again man is failing. The technology which might have lifted him above at least some of the drudgery of an ebbing life is now polluting his environment more than ever before. We have learned to destroy thorns and thistles and other pests, only to poison ourselves, birds, and fish, with polluted air, water, and land. Man made a strenuous effort to lift himself up by his own bootstraps, only to find that human selfishness has him hopelessly bogged down in the pollutants of his own making.

God's Remedy

While throughout the centuries all human plans and efforts to better the condition of the fallen race have failed, God has a plan which will not fail, which is his messianic kingdom. In brief this plan is, through Christ, to re-establish divine authority in the earth. It is suggested in the prayer which Jesus taught to his disciples, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (John 6:10) Man is in his present and worsening dilemma because of disobedience to divine law, and only by obedience to the Creator's law will he be able to survive and to enjoy peace and health and life.

This kingdom remedy for the many ills of man which have been brought on by disobedience is presented to us in various ways in the Bible. One of these is contained in Revelation 22:1, 2. Verse 1 speaks of a "river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God

and of the Lamb." The "throne" of God suggests the exercise of divine authority in the earth. And this is also the throne of the "Lamb," which reminds us that the exercise of this authority will be through Christ, who died for the sins of the world, and thus made possible the re-establishment of the divine will among the world of mankind for whom he died.

The "River"

Flowing out from "the throne of God and of the Lamb" is a "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal." In some places in the Bible water is used to symbolize a cleansing agency in the heart and the mind, a cleansing by the truth, but here it represents life—it is "a pure river of water of life," and it is "clear as crystal." While this is a symbolic river, as we read about it we are reminded of how man is now polluting the natural rivers of the earth, so that instead of being lifegiving agencies quite the opposite is becoming more and more true. How hopeless would be the outlook for man's future on this earth but for the wonderful provisions the Lord has made!

Verse 2 continues: "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life." When our first parents transgressed the divine law they were driven out of Eden in order that they might not be able to partake of the tree of life which the Lord had planted there—"So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."—Gen. 3:24

God saw to it then that man would have no opportunity to perpetuate his life. He had sinned, and now the penalty, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," fell upon him, and there was to be no way of man's getting himself out from under it. But God still loved his earthly creatures, and in due time made a provision of his own for

their escape from death. That provision was Jesus, who in the symbology of the prophecies became the slain Lamb, the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."—John 1:29

And now we find that Lamb empowered with governmental authority, and from "the throne of God and of the Lamb" is flowing the water of life—not a limited supply, but a river—and on either side of this river is the "tree of life." It is as though in the outworking of the divine plan instructions were given from the "throne" that those cherubims should no longer keep the people away from the tree of life, that the time had now come for them to return to paradise where they could have free access to the source of life of which they had been deprived.

An Abundant Fruitage

Concerning that future tree of life, the prophecy states that it will "bare twelve manner of fruits," and that it will yield her fruit "every month." The numerology here involved is interesting, in that it suggests a continuous, never-failing source of lifegiving fruit. It is symbolic language, of course, but again we are reminded of how miserably man has failed to provide the literal necessities of life.

It is true that in certain western countries, such as North America, and in many parts of Europe, food is in plentiful supply, and we are prone to think of the "world" from the standpoint of our restricted surroundings. The truth is that on the earth as a whole many millions starve to death each year, and half of humanity never has enough to eat. We speak of our affluent society, but let us remember that our world is a very small one, which, while it may be well fed, is quite unlike the world at large, so great a part of which is hungry and starving.

We know not the details of how the Lord will supply an

abundance of food for the countless millions who will ultimately be filling the earth in keeping with the divine decree, but we know that he is fully able to do it. While we need not think of the fruit on the symbolic "tree of life" as representing literal food, we know that man will need food. And then, supplied with all the wholesome food that is needed, through faith and obedience the symbolic fruits of the tree of life will be available and will enable him to live forever.

We are further informed concerning "the tree of life" that its leaves will "be for the healing of the nations." In another prophecy of "the river of life," where it is shown flowing from the temple, or sanctuary of the Lord, we read, "On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing."—Ezek. 47:12, R.S.V.

And how great will be the need of the nations for healing! This will be true of the people of all nations, not only those which exist now, but those who have suffered and died throughout the ages. As the lifegiving reign of the kingdom begins the people of all nations will be, as it were, wounded and bleeding, and only the provision which the Lord has made will heal their wounds, and restore them to health and life. It is this that is pictured by the river of life and its tree of life which are provided "by the throne of God and of the Lamb."

The Nations

Promises and prophecies of the Bible which give assurance of health and life in the kingdom are often misapplied to what it is believed conditions will be like in heaven. For example Revelation 21:4 assures us of a time when there shall be no more death, and when all tears will be

wiped away. Many fail to note the expression "no more death," which implies that this is a provision of the Lord for people on earth where for over six thousand years death has been constantly present.

So when we read that the "nations" will be healed we should remember that the sick nations exist, not in heaven, but here and that it is here on earth where these refreshing blessings of the river of life will flow out to the people. Nationalism will not exist in the kingdom, but all nationalities of earth will have an opportunity to receive the life-giving blessings of the river of life and its tree of life. This, indeed, is one of the beautiful, symbolic pictures of the fulfilment of that original promise which God made to father Abraham when he said to him that through his seed, which is The Christ, all the families, or nations of the earth shall be blessed.—Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:16, 27-29

Abraham could not know when God made this promise to him that by the time it would be fulfilled the earth would be filled, and that the families of the earth would be scattered to inhabit all its continents and the isles of the sea. Indeed, it is doubtful if Abraham had much idea of the broad expanse of this beautiful earth, the earth which God proposes to transform into a paradise for the eternal joy of all the willing and obedient humans who, under the rulership of the messianic kingdom, will turn to him in obedience and faith, and thus be among that multitude who will be healed and who will have their tears wiped away.

The "Bride"

In verse 17 of this 22nd chapter of Revelation there is a further reference to the water of life. We quote, "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let him who hears say, 'Come.' And let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price." (R.S.V.) Revelation 19:10 informs us that "the testimony of Jesus is the

spirit of prophecy," and it could well be that the reference to the Spirit and the bride saying "Come," refers to Jesus and his "bride."

In Revelation 19:7 we are told of the time when the marriage of the "Lamb" is come, and when "his wife hath made herself ready." In Revelation 21:2 we have a reference to the "holy city" coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." And in the 9th and 10th verses of this chapter the Apostle John writes, "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."

There is abundant testimony in the Scriptures to indicate that this prophetic "bride of the Lamb" will be composed of the complete number of Christ's faithful followers from Pentecost to the full end of the Gospel Age. The expression, "hath made herself ready," is an interesting one, and vital to every Christian who aspires to be of this special company of favored ones in the kingdom. It reminds us that those who will be of the bride class have yielded themselves to the molding influences of the Holy Spirit in their lives, and by this means have become like Christ, and suitable to be members of his bride class. Much suffering and many tests of faith have been involved in this; and as all have finished their preparation, having fully laid down their lives in sacrifice as Jesus did, following the raising of the last members in the "first resurrection" they will become united with him as his bride, in that great "holy city" arrangement of the future.

Here, then, is "the Spirit and the bride," who in due time will say to the people of all nations, "Come, . . . and

(Continued on page 28)

The BIBLE ANSWERS

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NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW YORK

Buffalo WKBW-TV Channel 7
Sundays, 8:00 a.m.
Plattsburgh WPTZ-TV Channel 5
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

habitants of these wicked cities were destroyed.

Lot and his wife and family were allowed to escape, but Lot's wife contrary to God's command, "looked back . . . and she became a pillar of salt." In Luke 17:32 Jesus is quoted as saying, "Remember Lot's wife." The lesson for the Lord's people today seems to be one of faithfulness in going forward in the doing of the Heavenly Father's will. The divine will for his people today is, as pointed out in our memory verse, that we be not conformed to this world, but be transformed in our minds and hearts, not only to realize what our vows of consecration mean, but to be determined to carry out what we have covenanted with the Lord to do. In this there should be no spirit of compromise, no turning back.

An interesting sidelight concerning Sodom and Gomorrah is that the Lord made no effort to convert these people before he destroyed them, although he had promised Abraham that through his "Seed" he would bless all the families of the earth. In the New Testament we have some information on this point which is very revealing. Speaking of the city of Capernaum which rejected Jesus and his teachings, the Master said, "If the mighty works, which have been done

in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."—Matt. 11:23

This indicates that the people of Sodom would have been converted had an effort been made to do so. But Jesus explains why this way not done. The explanation is that God has appointed a future time of probation and judgment for all the wicked dead, and that the people of Sodom will then be awakened from death and given an opportunity to believe and to receive the blessings of the Lord—the blessings of restored human life here on the earth.

Jesus continued, "But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." (Matt. 11:24) It will be tolerable, or favorable, in the day of judgment, for the Jews who rejected Jesus and his message, but even more favorable for those who died in sin without being enlightened concerning the true God and his laws of righteousness.

QUESTIONS

Relate the story of Abraham and Lot in the division of the land.

What lesson can we draw from the experience of Lot's wife turning back?

Will the Sodomites have a future opportunity for life?

Television Schedule

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Corpus Christi KCCT 1150 9:30 a.m.

Eagle Pass KEPS 1270

Laredo KVOZ 1490

URUGUAY

Montevideo Radio El Espectador
810 kc. Saturdays, 1:30 p.m.

"FRANK and ERNEST"

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

ALABAMA				IOWA			
Decatur	WMSL	1400	11:15 a.m.	Clinton	KROS	1340	7:15 p.m.
Haileyville	WJBB	1230	12:00 p.m.	KANSAS			
Mobile	WMOO	1550	12:15 p.m.	Goodland	KLOE	730	7:45 a.m.
Sheffield	WSHF	1290	1:30 p.m.	KENTUCKY			
ARIZONA				Bowling Green	WLBJ	1410	12:05 p.m.
Phoenix	KMEO	740	8:30 a.m.	Louisville	WAVE	970	8:15 a.m.
ARKANSAS				Newport	WNOP	740	9:10 a.m.
Jonesboro	KBTM	1230	12:05 p.m.	Winchester	WWKY	1380	10:30 a.m.
CALIFORNIA				LOUISIANA			
El Centra	KICO	1490	10:30 a.m.	Shreveport	KCIJ	980	10:45 a.m.
Los Angeles	KBIG	740	10:00 a.m.	MAINE			
Redding	KVCV	600	7:45 a.m.	Bangor	WABI	910	10:30 a.m.
Sacramento	KGMS	1380	8:30 a.m.	MARYLAND			
San Diego	XERB	1090	9:45 a.m.	Ocean City	WETT	1590	12:05 p.m.
San Francisco	KSAY	1010	10:00 a.m.	MICHIGAN			
COLORADO				Detroit	WQTE	560	10:30 a.m.
Fort Collins	KZIX	600	9:00 a.m.	Grand Rapids	WAFT	1480	8:45 a.m.
Montrose	KUBC	580	8:15 a.m.	Saginaw	WSGW	790	10:15 a.m.
CONNECTICUT				MINNESOTA			
Southington	WNTY	990	12:05 p.m.	Minneapolis	KQRS	1440	11:30 a.m.
DELAWARE				MISSISSIPPI			
Wilmington	WTUX	1290	10:15 a.m.	Biloxi	WLOX	1490	12:00 p.m.
FLORIDA				Meridian	WDAL	1330	2:35 p.m.
Lokeland	WWAB	1330	12:05 p.m.	MISSOURI			
Orlando	WTLN	1520	9:45 o.m.	Farmington	KREI	800	9:00 a.m.
Tampa	WFLA	970	9:30 a.m.	Kansas City	KCMO	810	9:45 a.m.
HAWAII				St. Louis	KWK	1380	8:00 a.m.
Kealakekua	KKON	790	11:30 a.m.	MONTANA			
IDAHO				Baker	KFLN	960	8:00 a.m.
Boise	KATN	950	10:05 a.m.	Great Falls	KKGF	1310	9:15 a.m.
Coeur d'Arlene	KVNI	1240	9:15 a.m.	Miles City	KATL	1340	9:15 a.m.
Lewiston	KRLC	1350	9:35 a.m.	NEBRASKA			
Payette	KYET	1450	9:05 p.m.	Grand Island	KRGI	1430	10:05 a.m.
Sandpoint	KSPT	1400	10:15 a.m.	NEW JERSEY			
ILLINOIS				Newark	WJRZ	970	8:15 a.m.
Chicago	WEAW	1330	10:00 a.m.	NEW MEXICO			
WEAW(fm)	105	Mondays, 12:30 a.m.		Silver city	KSIL	1340	10:05 a.m.
La Salle	WLPO	1220	9:45 a.m.	NEW YORK			
Rockford	WRRR	1330	8:30 a.m.	Albany	WEEE	1300	9:00 a.m.
West Frankfort	WFRX	1300	9:15 a.m.	Buffalo-Niagara Falls	WHLD	1270	12:00 noon
INDIANA				Kingston	WBAZ	1550	9:45 a.m.
Gary-Hammond	WJOB	1230	8:30 a.m.	Mineola (Sat.)	WTHE	1520	9:00 a.m.
Indianapolis	WIBC	1070	8:00 a.m.	New York	WJRZ	970	8:15 a.m.
Muncie	WLBC	1340	8:45 a.m.				

Radio Broadcast Schedule

NORTH CAROLINA				WASHINGTON			
Elizabeth City	WGAI	560	12:05 p.m.	Bellingham	KPUG	1170	9:30 a.m.
Leaksville	WLOE	1490	12:05 p.m.	Centralia-Chehalis			
OHIO							
Cincinnati	WNOP	740	9:10 a.m.	Olympia	KELA	1470	10:35 a.m.
Cleveland	WHK	1420	9:45 a.m.	Quincy	KGOR	1370	10:35 a.m.
Columbus	WBNS	1460	10:15 a.m.	Seattle	KAYO	1150	10:30 a.m.
Piqua	WPTW	1570	11:30 a.m.	Spokane	KUDY	1280	9:30 a.m.
Zanesville	WHIZ	1240	6:40 a.m.	Tacoma	KMO	1360	9:45 a.m.
OKLAHOMA				WISCONSIN			
Oklahoma City	WNAD	640	8:10 a.m.	Fond du Lac	KFIZ	1450	11:05 a.m.
OREGON							
Lebanon	KGAL	920	9:00 a.m.	Milwaukee	WEMP	1250	8:45 a.m.
Portland	KLIQ	1290	9:30 a.m.	Milwaukee	WYLO	540	7:45 a.m.
The Dalles	KODL	1440	9:15 a.m.	Neillsville	WCCN	1370	9:15 a.m.
PENNSYLVANIA				WYOMING			
Allentown	WHOL	1600	10:45 a.m.	Cheyenne	KVWO	1370	10:05 a.m.
Connellsville	WCVI	1340	12:05 p.m.	Sheridan	KWYO	1410	12:00 noon
Pittsburgh	WARO	540	12:00 noon	CANADA			
Pottstown	WPAZ	1370	12:45 p.m.	Calgary, Alta.	CKXL	1140	10:30 a.m.
PUERTO RICO				Corner Brook, Nfld.			
Aguadilla (Fri)	WGRF		8:00 p.m.		CFCB	570	10:30 a.m.
SOUTH DAKOTA				Dauphin, Man.			
Yankton	KYNT	1450	9:15 a.m.		CKDM	730	10:30 a.m.
TENNESSEE				Oshawa, Ont.			
Clinton	WYSH	1380	12:45 p.m.		CKLB	1350	9:45 a.m.
TEXAS				Portage La Prairie			
Lubbock	KDAV	580	9:45 a.m.		CFRY		
Pampa	KPDN	1340	12:00 p.m.	Prince Albert, Sask.			
Pleasanton	KBOP	1380	7:15 a.m.		CKBI	900	10:30 a.m.
San Antonio	KMAC	630	12:00 noon	St. Thomas, Ont.			
Shamrock	KBYP	1580	10:00 a.m.		CHLO	1570	10:45 a.m.
Sherman	KRRV	9:10	11:45 a.m.	VIRGIN ISLANDS			
Wichita Falls	KWFT	620	10:15 a.m.	St. Croix	WSTX	970	9:00 a.m.
Woodville	KVLL	1220	8:45 a.m.	MALDIVE ISLANDS			
UTAH				Radio Maldives 4740 9:00 p.m. Tue.			
Logan	KBLW	1390	10:06 a.m.	AUSTRALIA			
Ogden	KVOG	1490	10:35 a.m.	Geelong	3GL	222m.	10:00 a.m.
Salt Lake City	KSOP	1370	9:30 a.m.	CYPRUS			
VIRGINIA				Nicosia (Mon.) 602 kc. 10:00 p.m.			
Richmond	WLEE	1480	10:05 a.m.	EUROPE - AFRICA - SO. AMERICA			
				Shortwave (Fri.) 3:15 p.m. (E.D.T.)			
				15,440 MHz; 17,845 MHz			
				PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA			
				Lourenco Marques (Thurs.) 10:15 p.m.			

RADIO TOPICS FOR AUGUST

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2—"Blessings of Christ's | 16—"Paradise Without Pollution" |
| Coming Kingdom" | 23—"Hope for the Unsaved Dead" |
| 9—"Today—Tomorrow in Prophecy" | 30—"The Divine Permission of Evil" |

Bible Study

LESSON FOR AUGUST 2

The Fruit of Hate

MEMORY VERSE: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."—I John 3:15

GENESIS 4:1-15

WHEN Cain, the firstborn son of Adam and Eve, was born, his mother said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." When passing the sentence of death upon our first parents the Lord said to "that old serpent," "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. 3:15

This is a vague reference to the fact that God would provide a "Seed," one which would bruise the head of the "serpent," symbolic of Satan. Eve did not know that this promised "Seed" would not put in an appearance for thousands of years. She could well have thought that since it was to be a Seed of the woman that it would be a child of hers, hence her statement when Cain was born, "I have gotten a man from the Lord."

Abel was Eve's second son, and when the two boys ar-

rived at manhood they brought offerings to the Lord. Cain's offering was of the fruit of the field, while Abel brought a lamb. Cain's offering was not accepted by the Lord, but Abel's was. Hebrews 11:4 reads, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous."

And we can see why God desired a flesh and blood sacrifice. He had said that the "Seed" of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. This implied that the terrible result of the tragedy of disobedience would one day be set aside; that in some way sin would be remitted. The New Testament explains that without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin. (Heb. 9:22) So having made the statement which implied that sin would be remitted, God was beginning to illustrate the manner in which this great boon to humanity would be accomplished;

that it would be brought about through the shed blood of Jesus, the Redeemer.

God said that he would put enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. This explains the persecution of the Lord's people throughout the ages. It is not unreasonable to conclude that Satan stirred up hatred in the heart of Cain which led to the murder of his brother, Abel. Jesus said of the scribes and Pharisees of his day that they were of their father the Devil. In other words, Jesus here identifies the seed of the "serpent," and we know how these wicked men persecuted Jesus even unto death.

When the Lord asked Cain about Abel, Cain replied, "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" The Lord said to Cain, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." In giving a preview of various aspects of the messianic kingdom and its blessings, and stating that by faith we have approached unto these things, Paul alludes to the blood of Abel when mentioning the blood of Jesus, which he describes as "the blood of sprinkling" — "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." —Heb. 12:24

Abel's blood testified that a murder had been committed,

but the blood of Jesus will testify that the way has been opened for the dead and dying race to return to God's favor and to life, for it will cleanse the people from their sin. What a happy consummation that will be to God's great plan of salvation!

Cain was banished from the presence of God, and a mark placed upon him as a protection from those who might think that immediate action should be taken against him for his sin. We have no way of knowing what that mark may have been.

Our memory verse is a heart-searching one. There are doubtless many in the world who would not think of murdering another, but on the other hand go through life with a bitter hatred in their hearts against one or more of their fellow men. But John reminds us that this hatred is murder, even though it does not lead to the actual killing of a brother. Let us indeed cleanse our hearts from hatred.

QUESTIONS

What may have inspired Eve's great appreciation of Cain?

Who is the Seed of the woman, and who is the seed of the serpent?

What is "the blood of sprinkling" which speaks better things than that of Abel's"?

Judgment and Promise

MEMORY VERSE: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

—Hebrews 11:7

GENESIS 6:5-8, 13, 14; 7:1, 4, 5; 9:8-13

IT WAS between fifteen and sixteen hundred years from the creation of Adam until the time when God announced to Noah that because of the great wickedness of the people he proposed to destroy the human race by a flood of waters. The record states, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Genesis 6:4 reads, "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." In Jude 6 we read of these "sons of God" as being "angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," and Jude explains that the Lord has reserved these in

chains of darkness "unto the judgment of the great day."

The Apostle Peter refers to these angels as "spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." (I Pet. 3:19, 20) Thus what Genesis refers to as "sons of God" Jude describes as "angels," and Peter as "spirits."

The disobedience of these was in leaving their first, or created estate as spirit beings, materializing as humans, and marrying the daughters of men. This took place prior to the Flood, Peter indicates, and the Genesis record is that the offspring of these angels were "giants," and men of "renown." It seems reasonable that the excessive violence in the earth at that time was due to a considerable extent to the activity of these "giants."

The record states that it "repented" the Lord that he had made man. We are not to think of the word "repented" here as signifying the acknowledgment of guilt, and feeling sorry for it. Rather, in this instance the word simply has the connotation of changing, and the great Creator of the universe is indeed capable of changing his course of action.—Jer. 18:1-10

When God first told Noah about the coming Flood he said that man's days would then be one hundred and twenty years. (Gen. 6:3) This has been taken to mean that Noah was one hundred and twenty years building the ark, but the record does not say so. It has also been supposed that Noah was a preacher of righteousness for one hundred and twenty years, but the account does not say this either. The record simply is that from the time the Lord announced the coming of the Flood, until it came, would be one hundred and twenty years.

In the last section of our lesson we are told of the covenant which the Lord made with Noah, assuring him that he would never again destroy all flesh with a flood of waters. This could well be taken as an assurance that never again would God destroy all flesh in any way. This disproves the theory of the Dark Ages that one day the earth will be de-

stroyed by literal fire.

With the return of Christ there comes a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21,22) This trouble is symbolized in the prophecies as fire, earthquakes, etc., but the earth will not be destroyed, for it abideth forever. (Eccl. 1:4) And, as Jesus declared, the "tribulation" upon the people will be brought to an end before all flesh is destroyed. God created the earth to be man's everlasting home.

Noah was one of the faithful heroes of ancient times. He took God at his word, and although there was no evidence of rain, he built the ark as commanded. This faithfulness, as our memory verse indicates, condemned the world, but it made Noah an "heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Noah's work demonstrated his faith, and through his faith-justification he became a friend of God, and will be brought forth in the "better resurrection" to be one of the "princes in all the earth."—Ps. 45:16; Heb. 11:35, 40

QUESTIONS

What was one of the contributing causes of the great violence in the earth just prior to the Flood?

Will all flesh ever again be destroyed?

Pride and Arrogance

MEMORY VERSE: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."—Proverbs 16:18

GENESIS 11:1-9

THE story of the Tower of Babel, and of how God confused the language of the people, is always interesting. The first verse of our lesson states that "the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech," which was true at that time. This was not a great time removed from the Flood.

The Revised Standard translation of the 30th verse of the preceding chapter reads, concerning the descendants of Noah through Shem, that the place in which they lived "extended from Mesha in the direction of Sephar to the hill country of the east." According to this same translation the second verse of chapter 11 informs us that when "men migrated in the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and settled there."

These, according to our lesson, are the ones who decided to build what today is referred to as the Tower of Babel. Clearly, this was displeasing to the Lord, and in defiance of him,

and we could hardly think of Shem and his family as participating in any such project. These descendants of Noah through Shem, and the progenitors of Abraham, and the nation of Israel, revered the Lord, and were never in open defiance of him. They settled in a hill country, and the Tower of Babel was erected by people living on a plain.

This plain was called Shinar, and is now identified as the ancient land of Babylonia. It is thought by many that the ill-famed Nimrod may well have been the leader of these insurrectionists. While the record emphasizes more of the details concerning the tower and its destruction, together with the confusion of tongues, the 8th verse of the lesson informs us that "they left off to build the city." From this we gather that the over-all plan included, in addition to building a tower, the building of an entire city (see also verse 4).

The general view of scholars now is that while the building of the city at that time was

halted on account of the language difficulties, later this work was resumed, and the city which was built was ancient Babylon. The word "Babel" or "Babylon" means confusion, this meaning deriving from the confusion of tongues which the Lord brought about to hinder their plans for the great tower and city.

The purpose of those who attempted to build the tower was that they might make a name, "lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." The scheme seemed to call for a sort of centralized control over the people through a display of grandeur and accomplishment. Certainly in this they were leaving the Lord out of their plans, and this apparently was the cause of his displeasure.

Because of its background of association the name "Babylon" is used in the prophecies of the Bible to symbolize the confusion in the worship of God which results from ignoring the precepts of his Word. Thus the great and imposing church system which dominated the old Roman world for so many years, and still does to some extent, is called "Babylon."

Symbolic Babylon's confusion is not only represented in her contradictory and blasphemous doctrines, but also, and more importantly, in the manner in

which that unholy system has confused the worship and service of God with the worship of man. The system emphasizes the importance of approaching God through human channels. The Bible, on the contrary, encourages us to worship God directly, through his beloved Son. We are bidden to go boldly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Our memory verse might well harmonize with what occurred in connection with the destruction of the Tower of Babel. However, it is a timely warning to any and all of the Lord's people. We are all so inconsequential that it ill behoves us to be proud of ourselves or of our accomplishments.

To be proud and to have a "haughty spirit" ruins one's influence for good in the community, and especially among our brethren in Christ. Besides, these characteristics inevitably lead to disaster, just as our memory verse reminds us. Let us endeavor to keep humble and unassuming in our relationship to one another.

QUESTIONS

Why was God displeased with the effort to build the Tower of Babel?

What is the meaning of the word "Babylon," and how is it used symbolically in the Bible?

Adventuring Faith

MEMORY VERSE: "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

—Romans 4:3

GENESIS 12:1-3, 7; 22:1-8

ABRAHAM is often referred to as "the father of the faithful," and indeed he was a man of great faith. God promised him that his "seed" would bless all families of the earth, and this no doubt rejoiced his heart. However, from the very beginning his faith was tested with respect to this promise. In the first place, his wife, Sarah, was barren.

But Abraham did not let this deter him from obeying the Lord in connection with the promise. He was to go into a land which the Lord would show him, which was the land of Canaan, and he went to that land. But years passed by and no child was born to him, so he concluded that perhaps the Lord would be pleased if he took his trusted servant, Eliezer into his household, and make him his heir.

Thus, when the Lord said to Abraham, "Fear not, . . . I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward," he replied, "Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and

the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abraham said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir."—Gen. 15:1-3

We are not to think of Abraham as doubting the Lord, but sincerely endeavoring to find out what he intended to do about his promise of a seed. Abraham had taken the matter into his own hands, but his solution was not pleasing to the Lord, who said to him, "This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir."—Gen. 15:4

But again time went on, and no child was born. By now Sarah, in addition to being barren, was too old to bare children. Being sympathetic with Abraham, and herself desiring to see the promise fulfilled, Sarah suggested that her husband take their bond maid to wife, and have a child by her. This he did, but again the Lord was not pleased, and Abraham was to learn that not only was he to be the father of the

promised seed, but that Sarah was to be the mother.

"And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her, . . . and she shall be a mother of nations: kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell on his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?"—Gen. 17:15-17

To this God replied, "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." (Gen. 17:19) Here Abraham was given the additional information that the name of his son would be Isaac.

In due course Isaac was born. Thus Abraham's faith was being rewarded, but it also continued to be tested. There was the long wait for Isaac to mature, and even then he was not used of the Lord to extend blessings to "all families of the earth." Instead of receiving further instructions in this regard, God appeared to Abraham and asked him to offer up his beloved son, his miracle child, as a burnt offering.

By now, however, Abraham's faith had grown to the point that he could fully trust the Lord, so he willingly proceeded to obey his instructions. As the account indicates, however, Abraham did not have to go completely through with this harrowing test of his faith, for the Lord provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac.—Gen. 22:13

Isaac, we believe, foreshadowed Christ. Christ is the One through whom all families of the earth will really be blessed. (Gal. 3:16) In order for Jesus to bless the people with life it was essential for him to be the slain Lamb, to give up his own life as a sacrifice, and this he gladly did on Calvary.

Paul explains further that those who suffer and die with Jesus are also a part of the promised seed of blessing. (Gal. 3:27-29) He also wrote, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." (Gal. 4:28) What an incentive to faithfulness it should be to realize that we have the opportunity of being associated with Jesus in the future work of blessing all the families of the earth.

QUESTIONS

Explain the ways in which Abraham's faith was tested.

According to the New Testament, who is the Seed of promise?

The Danger of Compromising with Evil

MEMORY VERSE: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."—Romans 12:2

**GENESIS 13:8-13; 18:20-22;
19:24-29**

ABRAHAM was not only a man of great faith, but apparently he was an unselfish man, and a man of peace. When strife arose between the herdsmen of Abraham and the herdsmen of Lot, Abraham suggested that the flocks be divided, and that Lot choose the section of land which he preferred and that he would take what was left. "Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other."

"Abram dwelled in the Land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Lot chose the land of the plain "toward Sodom" because he recognized it would be best for his flocks, and the fact that his neighbors would be the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrah did not seem to concern him.

We note in passing that Abraham's magnanimity in this matter led to a reaffirmation of the covenant which God had made with him (see Genesis 13: 14-18). And what a blessing this must have been to the faithful patriarch! He was told by the Lord to lift up his eyes and look "from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward," and he was assured that all the land which he saw would be given to him and to his seed forever.

GENESIS 18:20-22; 19:24-29

When the three "men"—materialized angels—visited Abraham about a year before the birth of Isaac, they announced to him that it was the Lord's intention to destroy the wicked city of Sodom. They assured Abraham that the city would not be destroyed if ten righteous people could be found among its inhabitants, but these were not found, and the city, together with Gomorrah, was destroyed. All the native in-

(The Nations Healed—continued from page 13)

take the water of life freely." Many have mistakenly supposed that this invitation has been going out to the world ever since the first advent of Christ, but this could not be, because during all those centuries there has been no "bride" of Christ to say "Come," for this age has been set aside in the plan of God as a period in which the bride makes herself ready.

This making ready of the bride will not be completed until the last member has finished his course in death. Then the marriage of the Lamb will take place. Then there will be a bride, and then the "Spirit and the bride will say, 'Come.'" This is a bright prospect for the future. Not only will "the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come,'" but all who hear that blessed invitation will have the privilege of joining in the blessed work of extending this invitation until all the families of the earth are reached.

This will be the work of Christ's millennial kingdom. Satan will then be bound, and no longer able to pollute men's minds with all sorts of hallucinations concerning God. The one who has deceived all nations will no longer be permitted to deceive, and thus, forthwith, the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.—Rev. 20:12; Isa. 11:9

This is the divine remedy for all the problems which have been created by human sin and selfishness, including the problem posed by the hydrogen bomb, and the pollution of our environment which now threatens the very existence of the human race. And what a wonderful solution it is! When fully activated, it will lead to peace, happiness, and everlasting life among all nations, for the nations will be healed, and the refreshing waters of the river of life will restore the people to that God-provided heritage which, through sin, they lost awhile, but because of God's love, will have been regained.

Christian Life and Doctrine

Visions from the Lord

"I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

—Acts 26:19

DURING the time when the Bible was in course of preparation much of God's instructions and warnings to his people, as well as the revelation of his plans and purposes, were imparted by means of "visions." These visions were frequently, if not always, of a miraculous nature, and so impressive that they left no doubt in the minds of those to whom they were given that the Lord had spoken to them.

These visions were not given to satisfy curiosity, but in order that those receiving them might be equipped to cooperate with the Lord in the outworking of his plans, either for themselves or for others, or for both. In many instances visions are referred to in the Scriptures as the "voice" of the Lord speaking to his people, and a glance through a concordance is sufficient to impress one with the importance which the Lord placed upon obedience to his voice, and the dire consequences which would result from disobedience.

God spoke to Noah, not merely that he might know of the coming Flood, but in order that he might warn the people and make preparation for the saving of himself and his family.

God also spoke to Abraham in Ur, told him of his purpose to bless all the families of the earth, and gave him in-

structions to leave his own people and his father's house and go to a land which he would show him. The blessings to be derived from this contact with the Lord depended upon Abraham's obedience to these instructions.

God revealed himself to Moses at the burning bush and commissioned him to be a great deliverer of his people. Even the ground on which Moses was standing at the time the vision was given to him became holy, or sanctified, for God was using it as the place where he was imparting information to his servant as to what he wanted him to do. If Moses from then on was to enjoy the continued favor of the Lord he had no alternative; he must obey the vision.

The Prophet Isaiah was given a vision in which he saw the Lord "high and lifted up." (Isa. 6:1, 8) In this vision Isaiah heard the Lord asking, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" The prophet's response was, "Here am I; send me." This, in reality, was the meaning of most of the visions with which the Lord favored his people in ancient times, although not always so plainly stated.

In every age of the divine plan there are certain things which the Lord desires accomplished, things which can be done—with his help—by human hands; messages which can be given by human tongues; errands which can be run by human feet, and happy are those to whom he gives these opportunities and who are faithful to the responsibilities he entrusts to them; those, that is, who when God reveals his will to them are like Isaiah and respond, "Here am I; send me."

New Testament Visions

The most notable vision mentioned in the New Testament was the one given to Jesus at the time of his baptism, when the heavens were opened to him. Here, at the age of thirty, Jesus was beginning his earthly ministry. He had come to perform the will of his Heavenly Father—all that

had been written in the volume of the book, the Old Testament. (Ps. 40:6-8; Heb. 10:5-9) All the instructions written in the Old Testament for the guidance of the Master were recorded under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit. There had been no one to interpret their meaning, and even for the perfect mind of Jesus to comprehend their import it was necessary that he be given a special revelation, a vision, and it was this with which he was blessed when the heavens were opened unto him.

Jesus had come to do the things which had been written concerning him, and when their meaning was revealed, he unhesitatingly entered upon the task of performing them. And at what great cost did Jesus obey the heavenly vision! The period of his ministry was short, and every day was a tiring one. He was rebuffed by his enemies, misunderstood by his friends, and the great "contradiction of sinners" finally resulted in his arrest, trial, and cruel crucifixion. (Heb. 12:3) But this was the meaning of the vision. Jesus was to be led "as a lamb to the slaughter." (Isa. 53:7) He was to give his flesh for the life of the world. (John 6:51) He was to be "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3); and he was obedient to his Heavenly Father in all these difficult experiences. He learned what it meant to be obedient even when passing through severe experiences of suffering.—Heb. 2:10; 5:8

But to offset the cost of obedience, the Master experienced also a rich reward even while he was laying down his life. His heritage of peace and joy more than compensated for the sacrifice he was making. Indeed, it was this that enabled him to obey—"for the joy that was set before him" he "endured the cross, despising the shame." (Heb. 12:2) True, this was a future joy, but the anticipation of it, and his complete confidence that he would receive the promised reward, gave Jesus a present peace and joy

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(Continued from page 31)

which the world could neither give nor take away. So while he was "a man of sorrows," he was undoubtedly also the happiest man on earth; and the joy of the Lord was his strength.

Paul's Vision

Saul of Tarsus had always been a zealous servant of God, although at first he had been wrong in his understanding of what the Lord wanted him to do. It was on an errand of misdirected service that he was favored with that revealing vision mentioned in our text, and concerning which he later testified that he had not been disobedient. It was this vision that halted Saul in his wrong course, and revealed to him the place he was to occupy as a fellow sufferer with Christ, and the task he was to perform as the apostle to the Gentiles.

So far as Paul's earthly service for Christ was concerned, perhaps the briefest summary of its deep implications for Paul is given in the statement made to Ananias when the Lord commissioned him to tell Saul what great things he was to suffer for his name's sake. Yes, obedience to the heavenly vision did mean much suffering for Paul, and in this he rejoiced, for the vision revealed that he had the privilege of suffering with his Master in the great messianic cause.—Col. 1:24

And these sufferings were to come, and did come, as a result of his obedience to the vision—obedience, that is, in making known to others what the Lord had miraculously revealed to him. After declaring to Agrippa that he had been disobedient to the vision, Paul added, "But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." (Acts 26:20) It was for "these causes," Paul explained to the king, that he was accused

by his fellow Jews, and it was for "these causes" that he continued to be persecuted by both Jews and Gentiles until finally he finished his course with joy, being executed at Rome.

Because Paul had implicit faith in the Lord and knew that nothing would be permitted to come into his life that was not for his highest spiritual welfare, he enjoyed rest of mind and heart; but he had no rest from the impelling urgency of laying down his life in obedience to the heavenly vision. Whether in Jewish synagogues, in heathen temples, on shipboard, or in prison, the one consuming passion of his life was to impart to others the meaning of that heavenly vision, the vision which had revealed to him that Jesus was the Christ and that the hope of both the church and the world centered in him as the Redeemer, and the One who was to reign until all enemies were put under his feet, even the great enemy death.

Paul's faithfulness did not end with bearing witness to the Gospel of Christ. He was zealous in his service of the brethren, shunning not to declare unto them "all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:27) He was a faithful defender of the faith among the brethren, and outspoken in his opposition to the spirit of carnality in the church, emphasizing upon all needed occasions that Christ is the true Head of the church, and that for the brethren to say, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," is wrong.

A Falling Away

Paul also prophesied that there would come a great falling away from the faith, that "grievous wolves" would enter in among the sheep, not sparing the flock, and that a great antichrist system would develop and flourish throughout much of the age, continuing until destroyed by the bright shining of the Master's second presence at the end of the age. (II Thess. 2:3-8; Acts 20:29) Paul foretold that in the day of the Lord at the end of the age sudden and

unexpected destruction would come upon "them," while "ye brethren" would not be in darkness "that that day should overtake you as a thief."—I Thess. 5:1-4

The Apostle Peter also prophesied that at the end of the age—the "last days"—there would be those who scoffed, saying, "Where is the promise of his coming [parousia, presence]?" and who would fail to understand the significance of the time in which they were living, being "willingly ignorant."—II Pet. 3:3-5

The Book of Revelation reveals unmistakably, and in greater detail, the facts of the great falling away; that is, the apostasy which developed in the church subsequent to the death of the apostles. This prophetic vision which was given to John on the Isle of Patmos also makes it clear that at the end of the age the Lord's own people, his faithful followers—the ones who would be taking heed to "the sure word of prophecy"—would be blessed with increased light on the Word, appropriate and needful for the time.—II Pet. 1:19

These prophecies by Paul, Peter, and John all assure us that the Lord's people at the end of the age were to be blessed with an effulgence of light with respect to the plans and purposes of God. The Master's own testimony is to the same effect. In describing the manner of his return and second presence Jesus said that it was to be as a bright shining coming out of the east and shining even unto the west. (Matt. 24:27) While this is an assurance that ultimately, and as a result of the Master's presence, the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea, the Master's own disciples are the first to be illuminated by the light of his presence.

Using a different illustration of the truth which would be given to the household of faith at the end of the age, Jesus explained that when he returned he would sit down with his people and would serve them with "meat in due

season." (Matt. 24:45-47; Luke 12:37) Explaining the manner in which this would be done Jesus said that he would appoint a steward, a servant, whom he would use to dispense the "meat," the spiritual food, the truth, which would be given to the "household" at the time of his return.

The combined testimony of Jesus and the apostles leaves no doubt that the Lord's people at this time should expect to be blessed with another outstanding "vision" of truth. However, there is nothing in the Scriptures to indicate that this latter-day "vision" would be given by God in a miraculous manner such as in the past when he illuminated the minds of the prophets, the apostles, and our Lord Jesus. Further visions of this sort are not now necessary, for all the plans and purposes of God were then revealed and recorded in the Scriptures.

Do we, then, have reason to believe that a special understanding of the Word of God has been given to his people in this end of the age and in the manner indicated in the prophecies, particularly by the prophecy of Jesus concerning the "meat in due season," and the method which would be used to serve this food to the household of faith? We believe so. What we must discover is whether or not that which we call the truth—"present truth"—is in fact the plan of God which had been lost sight of during the hundreds of years of the apostasy, and that it is in harmony with and is the sum total of the promises and prophecies of the Word of God. If this is so, then there will be no alternative but to recognize not only the fact of our Lord's second presence, but also the instrumentality he used to impart to us the meaning of the "vision," the bright shining of the Master's presence.

God's Plan—Man's Failure

Do we, then, have the truth? When it comes to an understanding of the entire plan of God for human redemption

and salvation, we cannot properly judge truth from error simply by examining one, or even several, individual points of doctrine. First of all, what we must identify is the central theme of the divine plan and the great objective to which every detail of the plan is leading. And what is it that comes to light as we look into the prophecies and promises of the Word of God? It is the fact that God purposes to establish a kingdom here on earth which will quell the rebellion of fallen man against his sovereign will, and that man, by accepting God's provision of life through Christ, may be restored to perfection and live forever.

Jesus summed up this great theme when he taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) The Prophet Isaiah reveals that the accomplishment of this divine purpose is not dependent upon the frail arm of flesh, but that "the government shall be upon His shoulder," and that "the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9:6, 7

Translating into our own language this great theme which permeates the Word of God, it simply means that the divine plan is the outline of what God will do for man, and not what man tries to do for God. It was from this fundamental truth of the Bible that the apostate church fell away. Instead of praying and waiting for the kingdom of God to rule and bless the world, there was gradually set up a counterfeit kingdom by uniting church and state. This was called Christendom, and while the failure and corruption of that apostate system is now generally recognized, the underlying principle upon which it was based still governs the thinking and action of those who are not enlightened by present truth. That principle seems to be that unless we do God's work for him it will not be done at all. The result of this is that the professed Christian world in general today is as blind to the fact that God has a plan for the blessing of the nations, and will carry out that plan

regardless of human help, as was the papacy in the darkest days of the Dark Ages.

Because of this blindness to the truth, the churches to-day are bewildered and confused, having no anchor of assurance to which they can tie their organizations in this time when the angry nations of earth are destroying one another and dragging down the nominal churches with them. Frantic efforts are being made to unite for strength. Eloquent sermons are preached in an effort to rally the confused and fear-filled membership; a membership which continually is losing faith in their churches, and in thousands of cases, even in the existence of God.

Throughout the age one false doctrine led to another, until, in addition to losing sight of the main objective of the plan of God as centered in Christ the Redeemer, nearly every precious teaching of the Bible was largely supplanted by heathen philosophies which were made to appear Christian by attaching to them the language of the Bible. This blindness continued, with only a faint glimmer of light breaking through in connection with the various Protestant movements, until the end of the age was reached.

The Vision of Present Truth

Then came the "vision!" This occurred nearly a hundred years ago. Students of the prophecies previously had discovered by the signs of the times, and by certain prophetic measurements, that the end of the age and the return of the Master were imminent. But they suffered disappointment because of a failure to understand the manner of Christ's return, supposing that he would come as a human with nail prints in his hands and feet. They had overlooked the fact that he had given his flesh for the life of the world and had been raised from the dead a glorious divine being, invisible to human eyes, hence that when he re-

turned he would be present "as a thief" (Rev. 16:15; Matt. 24:43), unrecognized by all except those who discovered him by noting the fulfilment of the prophecies.

A group of earnest students of the Word had, over a considerable period of time, studied the prophecies. One of the great truths which became clear as a result of that study was the object of the Lord's return; that he came to restore mankind to life, not to destroy the earth, and that the prophetic end of the world was in reality the end of the present evil social order. In Acts 3:19-21 the Apostle Peter tells us about the second coming of Christ and the plan of God which was to be accomplished through and by him during his second presence. He describes it as "times of restitution," and adds that it was this which God had testified by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. This is the voice of God as heard and relayed to us by the prophets.

This, perhaps, as much as any other feature of present truth, was the "meat in due season" which Jesus promised to serve to the household of faith when he returned. It was due season for this truth to be made known because the return of the Lord marked the nearness of the time when "restitution" was to be accomplished. It is true that a few individuals throughout the age knew about restitution, but at the end of the age it was due time for the household of faith in general to have it restored as one of the precious doctrines of our most holy faith.

The Vision Complete

This vision of truth which has reached us in God's appointed way, and in which so many of us today are rejoicing, is complete and all-comprehensive. It embraces the meaning of all the great visions which God gave to his people in ancient times.. It was a blessed thing for Noah to be informed of the coming Flood and the privilege of

service which was to be his in connection with it, but Noah did not know, as we understand today, that his experiences and the ending of that world prefigured in some respects the "days of the Son of man" in which we are now living, and the end of this present evil world.

How Abraham must have rejoiced when God informed him of his purpose to bless all the families of the earth through his seed! But he did not know that this "Seed" of blessing was to be a faith seed made up of Jesus and his body members who suffer and die with him that they might live and reign with him.

Moses was awe-inspired when he saw the burning bush and heard the voice of God instructing him to take off his shoes, for the place on which he stood was holy ground. He learned that he was to be the deliverer of his people from Egypt, and to be their lawgiver; but he was given little conception of the greater deliverance that was to come to all mankind, and of the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles to God under the terms of the New Covenant. True, Moses prophesied that one greater than he was to come, but like the other prophets of the Old Testament it is doubtful if he understood very clearly the implications of this and others of his prophecies.

Isaiah saw the Lord "high and lifted up" and he was inspired with the sight to do the bidding of such an exalted and holy One, but his vision of God did not fully reveal the glories of the divine character as we see them today. He did not understand, as we are privileged to do, the marvelous harmony of Jehovah's attributes—his wisdom, justice, love, and power.

When the heavens were opened to Jesus there was revealed to him the meaning of the Old Testament instructions concerning the purpose of his earthly ministry; that he was to suffer and die for mankind. It was not possible then to impart that knowledge fully to his disciples, for,

as Jesus said, they were not able to "bear it." When later Jesus did open up the Scriptures to them concerning the meaning of his death, their hearts burned within them.
—Luke 24:32

Even so, it was not until Pentecost, when the meaning of the vision was enlarged to include the church that they learned more fully of their privilege to suffer and die with the Master, thus to share in the "better sacrifices" of this age—the sin-offering feature of the divine plan. (Heb. 9:23) This precious truth was also lost sight of as the apostasy developed, but it is part of the glorious vision with which we have been blessed today.

The vision to which Paul was not disobedient was glorious in all its implications. In it he saw that the plan of God had progressed to include the Gentiles, and the offering to them of the opportunity to become fellow heirs with the Jews in the kingdom promises. Later Paul was given other visions. He was "caught up" to the "third heaven" and to "paradise" and saw things which he was not permitted to utter because it was not then the due time. (II Cor. 12:1-7) Today we also can see the "third heaven," and know what Paul saw in "paradise"—that he saw God's purpose of restitution accomplished, and the entire human race living in a world-wide Eden of perfection of life and peace. And instead of our not being permitted to declare what we see, we are bidden by our "vision" to tell the whole world these blessed tidings!

Truth Brings Responsibility

As we have noted, when in ancient times God gave visions to his servants they were in the nature of commissions for service. So it is in connection with the vision of truth with which God has favored us. There is something for us to do about it. It is to us also a commission of service, and a commission, moreover, which is hedged about with conditions and qualifications which must be met in

order for our service to be "holy, acceptable unto God."
—Rom. 12:1

We will want our hands to be used in God's service. We will want our feet to be swift in carrying the message of divine love to "comfort all who mourn." We will use our lips and our tongues to tell of his love. Indeed, if we catch the proper inspiration of the vision we will want all that we possess to be used in God's service. "Nothing, Lord, would I withhold," is what we will say to him who has opened the eyes of our understanding to behold his glory. Yes, we will gladly devote our all to him.

All of this is included in our full obedience to the heavenly vision. Paul wrote that we should bring "every thought" into obedience to Christ. (II Cor. 10:5) Nothing short of this will be wholly pleasing to the Lord. Christ said that we should let our light shine, and in addition, outlined the many qualifications of righteousness which will make our light-bearing acceptable to God. Let us, then, yield ourselves fully to the power of the truth, and in our obedience to the "vision" rejoice in whatever experiences may result. The time is short; let us be faithful while the opportunity is still ours.



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

AUGUST 6—"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."—James 4:7 (Z. '00-30 Hymn 323)

AUGUST 13—"We are ambassadors for Christ."—II Corinthians 5:20 (Z. '04-72 Hymn 164)

AUGUST 20—"Whom therefore,

ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."—Acts 17:23 (Z. '03-29 Hymn 283)

AUGUST 27—"Henceforth know we no man after the flesh."—II Corinthians 5:16 (Z. '03-170 Hymn 23)

Sowing to the Spirit

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."—Galatians 6:7-10

IN THE above text Paul makes a very practical application of what is involved in sowing to the Spirit. "As we have therefore opportunity," he writes, "let us do good." The connecting word "therefore" indicates that what follows is the climax of the thought which precedes. The complete lesson then is plain; namely, that if we do not become weary in "well doing," but continue doing good unto all as we have opportunity and especially to the household of faith, we shall reap "everlasting life."

This seems to be a simple formula for sowing to the Spirit, yet when all its implications are considered it tells us concisely what it really means to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. The "Spirit" referred to by Paul is, of course, the Holy Spirit of God. It is by his Spirit that God leads his people in the way he would have them go. To "sow to the Spirit" means to conduct our lives in harmony with God's divinely revealed purposes for us.

God's Spirit reflects the qualities of his character, hence when we sow to the Spirit we are endeavoring to be like God, to be motivated by the principles which govern his conduct. There is an opposing spirit which is very dominant in the affairs of men; that is, the spirit of Satan. The

spirit of Satan is selfish, causing those under its influence to seek first their own interests irrespective of how others may be affected. The Spirit of God is one of unselfishness, prompting those who are under its influence to sacrifice themselves that others may be blessed. It is this disposition which ultimately will rule in the hearts of all mankind when restored to the image of God.

The followers of Jesus are now in training for the task of restoring mankind to harmony with God during the Millennium, hence the necessity of their becoming enthusiastic about the divine viewpoint of love which they are to impart to those with whom they deal in the kingdom. Self-seeking is entirely foreign to the true Christian viewpoint. Those who are governed by the "self first" outlook are sowing to the flesh, even though their characters may appear to be above reproach, and even though they may also be earnest in Bible study and prayer.

When the Spirit of God fills our lives we will think of others first, and ourselves last. This does not mean that we will not give all diligence to make our own calling and election sure, but it does mean that we will give this "all diligence" in God's way, which is the way of unselfishness. To work out our own salvation means that we will be zealous in doing and being what God wants, and when we realize that God wants us to be unselfishly interested in others it becomes plain that the whole divinely approved method of working for ourselves is by working for others. Certainly it is obvious that the best method of attaining to the standard of love is by practicing love, and we cannot practice love without seeking to promote the welfare and interest of others.

Thus we see that "sowing to the Spirit" and "doing good," as these expressions are used in our text, are practically synonymous. This does not mean that a frenzy of activity in "working for the Lord" is sowing to the Spirit.

An unselfish viewpoint of the Christian is the point of first consideration. If our viewpoint is one of unselfish desire to pass the joys and blessings of the truth on to others, then we will be looking for opportunities to do so, and especially unto the household of faith.

Paul says that we should not be "weary" in well-doing. It is contrary to the tendencies of the fallen flesh to sacrifice time, strength, and means unselfishly for the good of others, and if we listen to the will of the flesh we would not continue in such a course. But to yield to the flesh in this, as in other matters, would be sowing to the flesh, with a corresponding disappointment in reaping. This is in keeping with Jesus' words to his disciples, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 16:25) In keeping with this is the statement by Paul in Hebrews 13:16, which reads, "But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

—oOo—

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"All Things New"

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful."

—Revelation 21:5

HOW natural for us to like to have things "new"—to have new things. But alas, how soon they become old! True are the words, "Change and decay in all around I see," as we view and apply them to the works of fallen men.

How different will be the case when the promise of our text is fulfilled. Speaking of God's "new things," Isaiah in chapter 66:22 says, they "shall remain before me, saith Jehovah."

What then is the significance of this "newness" as promised by God? In our present experience and order

of things, "newness" does not always indicate "perfection," but our Heavenly Father is the Creator and Maker of "new and perfect" works; nothing less or short of this can be attributed to him. It is recorded in Deuteronomy 32:3, 4: "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God, . . . His work is perfect: all his ways are . . . just and right."

We should also notice that our text does not say "Behold I make all NEW THINGS," for that is not God's intention. The process of "renewing" as concerns mankind in particular, is by "resurrection," and, of course, this implies pre-existence. So we learn from the Scriptures that the whole race of Adam, condemned through his transgression, will, if they render the required obedience to their Redeemer in the judgment day (Acts 17:31) experience a renewing of body and mind which shall fit them for their perfect earthly home.

How good it is to know that, unlike the promises of fallen men, God's promises are sure! (Josh. 21:45; 23:14; I Kings 8:36) What assurance these scriptures give us that every promise of God will be fulfilled!

The things to be "made new," according to our text, all come within the scope of the "new heavens" and the "new earth." (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; Rev. 21:1; II Pet. 3:13) Here we must be careful to distinguish between the literal and symbolical application of these expressions. The heavens in these scriptures clearly do not refer to God's dwelling place or throne; nor does the earth refer to this terrestrial planet, which is to abide forever, and eventually is to be made glorious.—Eccles. 1:4; Isa. 60:13; 66:1

Rather we should understand the heavens and earth of Revelation 21 and II Peter 3 to apply in a symbolical sense to the rulers or governments of the present arrangement and the society over which they rule. This is the sense in which they are referred to in Isaiah 1:2, 10 and Psalm 96:11. By considering present conditions in the

world, we shall appreciate more clearly the need for the establishment of the new heavens and earth. If we could see at close view the conditions prevailing over the whole earth—the state of humanity spread out before us—what a deplorable, terrible picture it would present, with its turmoil, vice, unrest, distress, pain, sorrow, and death!

As we travel about in our small circles we see abundant evidence of the result of the rule of the present heavens, whose prince and chief ruler is Satan. All the depravity, wickedness, and injustice with which mankind is afflicted are traceable to the great Adversary, "the god of this world," and are perpetuated by those in authority, who have been largely influenced and blinded by him. (II Cor. 4:4; John 14:30) The Apostle Paul says in Romans 8:22, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together,"—a very apt description of earth's inhabitants, especially at this end of the age in which we are living.

What a contrast this is to the "new earth" conditions described by the Apostle John in Revelation 21:4, where he

declares that "God shall wipe away all tears . . . and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." This will be the grand result when he [Christ] shall have put down [overthrown and destroyed] all opposing rule and authority, including both sin and death. (I Cor. 15:24-26) The Prophet Isaiah gives a very remarkable but true picture of the new earth society in chapter 65:17-25

The same prophet says in chapter 26:9, "When thy [Jehovah's] judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." And it will be only those who do learn righteousness, by a willing obedience to the requirements of earth's new King, that will reap the benefit and blessings, and eventually become sharers in the "new earth." (Acts 3:19-23) The Scriptures reveal that it will require the whole of the "thousand-year" reign of Christ to complete the new earth "wherein" dwelleth "righteousness." It will be composed of resurrected members of Adam's race, who will

have been individually regenerated by the "age-lasting Father" [Christ Jesus] and individually made new [perfect].—Isa. 9:6, 7; Ezek. 36: 25-28

How will this great work of renewing the earth be accomplished? We are not given in the Bible all the details concerning this immense work, but we are provided with much information, which helps us to some extent. For example, we learn from the Scriptures that the new earth conditions will come into existence by means of the operation of the New Covenant which will be made with the house of Israel and Judah, and the blessings of the New Covenant will become available to whomsoever will of all the families of the earth. This covenant is described by the Prophet Jeremiah (31:31-34). When that covenant has accomplished its purpose, Isaiah, the prophet, tells us that "nothing [that has hitherto been a curse] shall hurt nor destroy in all my [God's] holy mountain [kingdom]." (chapter 65:25) A still fuller prophetic description of the blessed and enduring condi-

tion of the new earth is to be found in Psalm 145.

And now having considered the wondrous prospect of the "new earth," what does the Bible teach concerning the new heavens? As mentioned earlier in this article, the present "heavens," or ruling powers, are made up of the "god of this world," the Adversary, together with those who have come under his power and influence. So the new heavens will consist of our glorified Lord Jesus, upon whose shoulders the government of earth will rest (Isa. 9:6); and, also, the Scriptures tell us that those of his disciples who having faithfully followed his example of obedience to the Father's will even unto death, will be granted joint-heirship with him in his reign and rule.— Rev. 3:21; Rev. 20:6; Rom. 8:17

As the original curse pronounced upon Adam has been perpetrated through the rule of the Adversary, Satan, the usurper of the present "old heavens," so the blessings of life promised under the New Covenant will be realized through the righteous rule and power of the "new heav-

ens." This authority and power to rule and bless is the distinguishing feature of the new heavens.

How aptly the relationship of the literal heavens and earth illustrates this principle! We all know that our planet and everything upon it depends absolutely upon the influence and power of the solar system for its very life and existence. But we may enquire, how are these future heavens, consisting of Christ and his followers, to be "made new"? They will be made new in the sense that perfect divine beings will be in control of earth's affairs.

In Hebrews 2:9, 10 we are told that our blessed Lord Jesus was crowned with the glory and honor of perfect manhood for the purpose of suffering and death as man's Redeemer, and also that to become the captain [or Prince, leader] of our salvation he was to be made "perfect" through suffering. (See also Heb. 5:8, 9) The preparation of Jesus as the "Sun of Righteousness" in the new heavens is described prophetically by Isaiah in chapter 11:1-5

It was after this great and important work of perfecting

him that Jesus declared "all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. 28:18) How glad we are to know in these perilous days this claim is still true! Yes, we know from God's Word that our glorified Master and Lord is even now King of kings and Lord of lords, seated at the Father's right hand of authority and power.—Ps. 110:1; Phil. 2:8-11

This, then, is the explanation as to our Lord's being made "perfect." And now what is the process by which those who have been invited to become his joint-heirs in these new heavens are made perfect? We who have been thus favored know only too well, and the Scriptures repeatedly admonish, that we must be "renewed," transformed. Paul in II Corinthians 5:17 says that being in Christ, the Anointed, constitutes us "new creatures." See also Gal. 6:15; Eph. 4:22-24; Rom. 12:2

Our Lord never needed to "put off the works of evil," as we have to do, for he was never contaminated by the weakness with which we and all men are beset; but he, by virtue of his sacrifice and

High Priest work on our behalf, has made it possible for us, by faith, to put off the old disposition, and to be renewed in the spirit of our minds. If, then, we would seek for a place in the "new heavens," it is of the utmost importance that this process of being "made new" is accomplished in our lives. This great work of transformation is only possible through the power of God's Holy Spirit working in us as the apostle indicates in II Corinthians 3:18, Diaglott: "We all, beholding the glory of the Lord in a face unveiled, are transformed into the same likeness, from glory to glory, as from the Lord, the Spirit." All such changed ones will receive the "new name" (Rev. 3:12) and be able to sing the "new song," which only the little flock can sing.—Rev. 14:3

When these "new heavens" are complete, then will come the time for the establishment of the "new earth" society. But before this great event, the present heavens and earth, the present evil order, must be removed as is described so vividly by the Apostle Peter in II Peter 3:7-14. The

evidence of the fulfilment of this prophecy is to be seen all around us in this our day: the dire distress of nations, bitterness, animosity and strife, social unrest, and contentions of race and religion are all indications that we are indeed in the Day of the Lord, during which he is shaking all nations in preparation for the kingdom of righteousness which shall abide forever.—
 Heb. 12:26-29

The Prophet Joel also refers to this same time of trouble to precede the new day, and his descriptions of the signs which are to accompany this great distress of nations are very remarkable and significant.—Joel 2:30

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness!—
 II Pet. 3:11

BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Latchford	A. BOYCE	Aug. 2	Latchford	Sept. 27
Dewsbury	C. A. CORNELL	(Sat.) Sept. 26	Dewsbury	E. T. NADAL (Sat.) Aug. 8

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Vineyard Echoes

“Ambassadors” at Portrush

THE unsettled conditions in Northern Ireland made it more desirable than ever for as many as possible of the Lord's people to gather together for the annual convention held from Saturday, 23rd, to Monday, 25th May, 1970, under the sponsorship of the brethren in Londonderry. The admonition of the apostle to “draw near with a true heart . . . not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together . . . so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:22, 25), was no doubt in the minds of those who were able once more to avail themselves of the joys of fellowship as guests of the dear ones in Ireland whose warm-hearted hospitality has become a byword among the Lord's people in this part of the harvest field. Actually the number assembling for the convention was slightly smaller than usual, but not greatly so, and the Sunday attendance of about fifty was well up to expectations.

The Opening Session

After tea together on Saturday, we gathered for the first session of the convention, and were invested, as it were, with the insignia of our office as “ambassadors for Christ.” Based on the apostle's words in II Corinthians 5: 20, the wonderful privilege and honour of being our Father's representatives here on earth was emphasised as

a very real part of the great work of reconciliation which, Paul says, is entrusted to us who have already been reconciled through the precious blood of Christ, and are thereby fitted to be his ambassadors, or special messengers—workers together with him in the great divine plan for man's redemption.

Unlike the ambassador of the world who is looked up to and lavishly entertained because of his authority and dignity in the eyes of men, Christ's ambassadors live in a world alienated from God and hostile to righteousness. Their work is to carry into effect the ministry of reconciliation, and proclaim the good news of the coming kingdom, a wonderful honour and privilege which God has entrusted to those who are prepared through sacrifice and suffering to be "workers together with him."—II Cor. 6:1

Our Heavenly Father himself has laid the foundation of this great work of reconciliation by giving his only begotten Son as a sacrifice for sin, a ransom for all. And now, says the apostle, he has committed, or entrusted, to us the word or ministry of reconciliation. This, the speaker suggested, meant that our convention in Portrush was a gathering of ambassadors, unrecognised by the world, but of supreme importance in the outworking of the divine purpose finally to bring back into harmony with God's will all who, in due time, shall hear and obey the terms of reconciliation.

God in the Midst

Sunday brought a welcome improvement in the weather, which had been somewhat stormy and cold, and we gathered soon after 10 a. m. to read and discuss the Manna for the day, and to hear messages of greeting from other classes and individual brethren. This was followed by a most encouraging discourse based upon our Lord's words in Matthew 18:20, "Where two or three are gathered to-

gether in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Why, asked the speaker, had we met together? Was it just from habit, or for companionship? If our Lord could be seen among us, thousands would flock to hear him. Yet to us, by faith, his invisible presence was completely real. In the Word of God we have many assurances of our Lord's presence; for example, in the messages to the churches recorded by John in Revelation his presence is clearly manifested to all the churches as he walks "in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" which, we are told, are the seven churches. (Rev. 1:13, 20; 2:1) There is, and has been, among God's people, throughout the Gospel Age, great comfort in the knowledge that he is in their midst, and that wherever his people are found, he is there present with them to help and to bless. We are accepted in the Beloved, all on one level, all called in the one hope of our calling, and with this in mind we must not neglect our opportunities for fellowship. Where there are two or three gathered together there could be two or three others who stay at home. Unless circumstances make our absence from fellowship unavoidable, much blessing will assuredly be missed if we neglect the assembling of ourselves together, especially as we see the day approaching.—Heb. 10:25

Prayer, Praise, and Testimony

The entire Sunday afternoon session was devoted to testimonies, the singing of favourite hymns, and to prayer. Most of the brethren find these meetings of great spiritual help, and certainly there was no lack of willing tongues and hearts anxious to tell of blessings received, and to express in praise their devotion to the Lord and the brethren. Prayer was not forgotten, but it was not brought in as freely as many would have liked, nor as its importance deserves, for surely the privilege of prayer is a priceless gift that cannot be too highly prized.

Sunday evening was devoted to two discourses, the first of which took us back to Samson who, we were reminded, was of godly parentage, but who "went down" and took a wife from amongst the Philistines. It is sad to see some "go down" and lose their first love for the Lord instead of seeking to walk higher and higher in spiritual life. So far from pleasing the Philistines by his action, Samson only became more estranged from them, and a source of danger to his own people, and eventually the Israelites themselves bound him and delivered him into the enemy's hands. His great strength enabled him to break loose, and finding the jawbone of an ass, he used this as a weapon and with it slew a thousand men, after which he threw the jawbone away.

This somewhat unusual episode was quoted to remind us that God is able to use any weapon, however humble and seemingly unsuitable, to accomplish his purposes—frequently, as we are told, making use of foolish things to confound the wise. The jawbone of the ass was in the right place at the right time, and the lesson was drawn that if we are ready and willing to be used of the Lord, we too can be lifted up as instruments in his hand for whatever purpose he may desire to achieve. Just as the jawbone had to be reached for and lifted by Samson before it could be used effectively as a weapon, so we are dead and useless until we are lifted by divine power from the place where we lie, and are used in God's strength for the accomplishment of his will.

In contrast to the picture presented by Samson, we next had a discourse entitled, "Coming Boldly to the Throne of Grace." This was a very helpful presentation of the great privilege enjoyed by the Lord's people in having access to their Heavenly Father through the merit of their Advocate, Jesus Christ. Paul, in the third chapter of Romans, points out that none is righteous—all coming short of the glory

of God—and consequently direct access to God's presence in such a condition is impossible. Those who maintain reverence for God and seek after him are drawn by the Holy Spirit, much as a magnet attracts steel filings, and through the merit of Christ's ransom sacrifice they are granted access at all times to the Father's presence by means of prayer. It is important to remember that such prayer is in no sense a command, but is a precious privilege reserved for those called of God to joint-heirship with his Son, the firstborn among many brethren whose position in this present evil world makes it imperative that they have access to the throne of grace continually, there to find grace to help in every time of need.

Just as our High Priest was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and was tempted as we are, yet remained loyal to his Heavenly Father, so we must similarly be faithful to our covenant of sacrifice. There are two reasons for our coming to the throne of grace: (1) to obtain mercy, for all need forgiveness continually, and (2) to seek and obtain help for our every need. Living as we do in the midst of evil, we must have on the whole armour of God and additionally maintain constant communication in prayer if we would stand against the wiles of the Devil and the forces of darkness which assail us.—Eph. 6:11, 12, 18

God's Unchangeable Love

The last day of our convention came all too quickly; but we gathered in joyful anticipation of continued blessing, and we were not disappointed. The first discourse was entitled, "God's Unchangeable Love," the brother's thoughts being based upon Malachi 3:6. How comforting is the knowledge that nothing can go wrong with God's arrangements! Isaiah emphasises this in chapters 55:10-11, and 14:24 and 27. In Psalm 89:34 the same important truth is clearly stated and, in fact, we are assured throughout the

Word that nothing can thwart or frustrate our Father's purposes.

God's love for his people Israel has never changed; his dealings with them today are as sure and right as in the days of old, and we now see the sons of Jacob established in the land promised to them in exact accord with the foreordained divine purpose. In Hebrews, chapter 3:1-6, we have made plain the difference between natural and spiritual Israel. Here we have the assurance that if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of hope which has been given to us, firm unto the end, we shall be found worthy to share in the greater glory which belongs to the spiritual house of which our Lord is the Head. The house of Jacob will undoubtedly be blessed at God's hands, but Zion, the house of sons, will be the channel of blessing both to Israel and to all mankind when our Father's unchangeable love is fully manifested in fulfilment of his gracious purpose to bless all the families of the earth.

Increasing in Knowledge

The second discourse in our Monday morning session was entitled, "Increasing in the Knowledge of God." (Col. 1:10) Knowledge, said the speaker, was essential to Christian judgment and unity. Paul says in Colossians 3:10 that we "have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him," while our Lord himself said, "And this is life eternal, that they [his followers] might know thee the only true God." (John 17:3) Many despise knowledge, or at least underrate it, but it should be remembered that ignorance is no safeguard against pride and complacency. True love for God can come only where there is true knowledge concerning him. The Word of God feeds both heart and mind. In the text chapter there is shown a progression of knowledge; first a knowledge of the grace of God, then of the will of God,

then of God himself. Knowledge of his saving grace is a first step in our approach to God; then we progress to a knowledge of what God can do for us, and so to an understanding of his will for us, without which understanding we cannot serve him acceptably. We must know what God requires of us or we are in danger of falling short in our faithfulness to him, or of misunderstanding our instructions. This is shown in the case of Uzzah, who forgot his instructions and put forth his hand to steady the ark, and died in consequence. Peter also at first thought that the message of the Gospel should be confined to the Jews, but he was wrong. He lacked knowledge.

For us to know God is to know his person, his wonderful character. Paul said, "I know whom I have believed" (II Tim. 1:12), which is vastly different from saying, "I know what I have believed." Finally the words of the Apostle Peter, in II Peter 1:2 and 3 were quoted from Rotherham's translation: "Favour unto you and peace be multiplied, in the personal knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; as all things suited for life and godliness his divine power unto us hath given, through the personal knowledge of him that hath called us."

The final discourse of the convention followed in the afternoon, and was entitled "Hallelujah," the speaker's remarks being based upon Revelation 19:6: "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Here was a vision of the triumph of divine power over evil, manifested in the establishment of the kingdom under the power and authority of our Lord and his church. The darkness and turmoil of the Adversary's counterfeit kingdom here gives place to the introductory phase of the millennial reign of peace and righteousness, "for the marriage of the Lamb is come." Running through the Scrip-

tures like a silver thread is the hope of a resurrection, and as each great feature of God's plan of salvation is revealed, so this silver thread of promise emerges as an all-important factor in the ultimate fulfilment of divine design; namely, "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." (Eph. 1:10) The meaning of the word "Hallelujah" in Hebrew is "praise ye the Lord," and in an ecstasy of thanksgiving, the psalmist sees this glorious culmination as he shouts aloud, "Hallelujah! . . . let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord. Hallelujah!" —Ps. 150

Testimony Meeting for Absent Ones

To bring the convention to a close, we devoted an hour of prayer, praise, and testimony to those who had not been able to meet with us by reason of illness, age, or other unavoidable circumstances. The friends were invited to bring into their testimonies special reference to any whom they might know were with us in spirit although not in person. The privilege of ministering to others in this way seemed to be very generally appreciated, judging by the readiness with which testimonies were forthcoming, and the hope was expressed that those who spoke on behalf of absent brethren and sisters might feel it an additional privilege to convey to these dear ones the sincere love and greetings of the convention as a whole, with the earnest prayer that they, with us, might be kept faithful to the end of the way when, by God's grace, we shall meet in that great assembly of the "church of the firstborn which are written in heaven."



Encouraging Letters

Understanding Increased

Gentlemen: I have finished the first volume of "Studies in the Scriptures," and have started the second. I have never before understood so much of the Bible as I do now. The reading is so interesting I cannot seem to put it aside. I have read quite a few of the booklets, and still have many more to read. I look up every Bible reference, and it is so easy to understand. I enjoy The Dawn Magazine. The articles are so interesting and inspiring. God bless you and your great work. It is doing so much good for me. Sincerely yours.—Minnesota

From a College Student

Gentlemen: In our chapel service today your film, "Archaeology Proves the Bible" was shown to the student body, and at the end of the presentation a free book by the same title was offered to anyone who wished to write for it. I am very interested in obtaining a copy, and would appreciate your sending one to me very much. I would like to thank you also for the production of such a film. In these modern times of doubt in the Bible's truth such facts are very helpful in bolstering the faith of

Christians. God bless you in his ministry.—Minnesota

Helped in Many Ways

Dear Sirs: Thursday I received your publication, "Archaeology Proves the Bible," and I have enjoyed it very much, and I will always keep it near my Bible. Thank you again for the publication. It has helped me in many ways.—Pennsylvania

Learned Much

Gentlemen: Please send me the booklet, "Our Lord's Return," as per your broadcast Sunday. I have learned more through your broadcasts than I ever though possible. Please keep up the good work. I thank you.—Delaware

Ring of Truth

Dear Friends: Our family would really appreciate having your booklets "Life After Death," and "Science and Creation." In this day of many voices and every wind of doctrine your TV programs with their ring of truth mean much to us, especially since we are a divided family. The theory of evolution has been a source of contention. Thanks so much.—Ohio

Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

These speakers are associated with the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their services are furnished free upon request. Address your request to Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, N. J. A visit will be arranged when possible.

O. D. DEIFER		Indianapolis, Ind.	4
Catawissa, Pa.	Aug. 23	Muncie, Ind.	5
		Bloomington, Ind.	8-13
		Detroit, Mich.	16
		Pontiac, Mich.	17
		Bay City, Mich.	18
		Grand Rapids, Mich.	19, 20
		West Newton, Pa.	23
		Monessen, Pa.	24
		Lonaconing, Md.	25
		York, Pa.	26
		Pottstown, Pa.	27
		Allentown, Pa.	30
		Catawissa, Pa.	31
PANTEL HATGIS			
Mytelene, Varia	Aug. 1-5		
Plomarion	8-9		
Megalochorion	10-12		
Crete, Chania	14-16		
Rethymnon, Crete	17-20		
Eracleon	21-23		
Xilocastron, Corinth	24-26		
Athens	27-31		

G. O. JEUCK		HARRY PASSIOS	
Charlotte, N. C.	Aug. 30	Bloomington, Ind.	Aug. 8-13
Greensboro, N. C.	31	Milwaukee, Wis.	16
		Withee, Wis.	17
		Minneapolis, Minn.	18
		Winnipeg, Man.	20
		Canora, Sask.	23
		Middle Loke, Sask.	24
		Tarnopol, Sask.	25
		Prince Albert, Sask.	26
		Luseland, Sask.	27
		Kelowna, B. C.	30
A. H. KRUMPOLT			
Hartford, Conn.	Aug. 2		
R. J. KRUPA			
Baltimore, Md.	Aug. 23		
Philadelphia, Pa.	23		

KENNETH M. NAIL		E. K. PENROSE	
St. Louis, Mo.	Aug. 2	Bloomington, Ind.	Aug. 8-13
Zeigler, Ill.	3	Knoxville, Tenn.	18

Nashville, Tenn.	19	H. J. TIEMEYER	
Lake Charles, La.	21	Paterson, N. J.	Aug. 30
Shreveport, La.	23		
Orlando, Fla.	25		
Miami, Fla.	27	F. S. WASSMANN	
St. Petersburg, Fla.	30	Sayville, N. Y.	Aug. 2

LEO POST

New Haven, Conn.	Aug. 23	W. N. WOODWORTH	
Waterbury, Conn.	23	Cincinnati, Ohio	Aug. 16



A NEW BOOKLET

Paradise Without Pollution

The article appearing in last month's issue of The Dawn, "Paradise Without Pollution," together with the preceding article in this issue, "The Nations Healed," are now available in a booklet. As will have been noted, these two articles deal with one of the great dangers now threatening the world, and give assurance from the Bible that the Lord will solve this, as well as all other problems created by human selfishness.

The new booklet, "Paradise Without Pollution" is priced at ten cents a copy, 12 for \$1.00.

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Conventions

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Aug. 2—
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Newham, 678 40th Ave., N. E.

SILOAM, TEX., Aug. 7-9—Mrs. E. D.
Westfall, Route One, Box 142, Dub-
lin, Tex.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Aug. 16—
Brotherhood of Railway Clerks Bldg.,
Court and Vine Sts. Mrs. Edith M.
Harp, 3908 S. Madison Ave.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Aug. 16—
IOGT Hall, 2922 Cedar Ave. Mrs.
Edna Durand, 4016 16th Ave. S.

CHICAGO, ILL., Aug. 23—Masonic
Temple, 5352 W. Chicago Ave. Mr.
Leonard Jezuit, 10742 S. Talman
Ave.

BUFFALO, N. Y., Aug. 30—Unity
Temple Lodge, 1940 Niagara St. Mr.
Stanley Koszka, 670 Union Rd.,
West Seneca, N. Y.

JACKSON, MICH., Sept. 5-7—YMCA,
127 W. Wesley St. Mrs. Ray Lum-
ley, 2531 Ashton Rd.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Sept. 5-7—
Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, 50th St. and
Park Ave. Mr. G. M. Jeuck, 81
Blauvelt Road, Nanuet, N. Y.

SAN DIEGO, CALIF., Sept. 5-7—
Aztec Center, San Diego State
College, 5402 College Ave. Mrs.
Gilbert L. Rice, 4005 Olympic St.

SEATTLE, WASH., Sept. 5-7—Norway
Center, 300 Third Ave. W. Miss Mary
Stevens, 2317½ N. 45th St., Apt. 15.

PITTSBURGH, PA., Sept. 19, 20

ST. LOUIS, MO., Sept. 19, 20

COLUMBUS, IND., Sept. 20

AGAWAM, MASS., Oct. 4

POTTSTOWN, PA., Oct. 11

CLEVELAND, OHIO, Oct. 18

NEW LONDON, CONN., Oct. 18

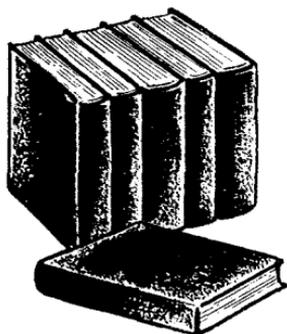
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To us the SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH...

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

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

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

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

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

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