

# The Dawn

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

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*The cover page of the June 10th edition of Time magazine, except for its name and two lines of white print, was, at first glance, simply a large rectangle of ominous black. Closer scrutiny, however, revealed one large word superimposed in even darker black. The word was E V I L.*

*The article it announced was intriguing, and presented well a description of the myriad shapes, and sizes, and intensities of evil that have dogged the heels of man since the very dawn of history, and still continues to do so.*

*The question of the ages – WHY? – was reiterated in its many forms, couched in the writings of philosophers and theologians, past and present. Should Evil – morally and catastrophically – be considered a normal or an abnormal experience? Is Good or Evil a human responsibility, or God's? If "God is all-powerful," and "God is all-good," why do "terrible things happen"?*

*The author projected well the rationale that, since man does not understand the problem, he cannot see the answer. How strikingly the cover page depicted this fact. Behind the large word, "E V I L," was nothing but blackness . . . .*

### Why Does God Permit Evil?

*"Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." – Genesis 2:17*

**W**HY DOESN'T GOD do something about all the suffering that is in the world today? This question is asked in time of war when cities are destroyed, and the young, the old, the infants, the righteous, the wicked, the believers

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and the unbelievers perish because of man's inhumanity to man. It is asked by those who experience or observe suffering on beds of sickness. Why does God allow an innocent baby to sicken and die? Why does he permit the unrighteous to prosper, while his own faithful people often experience hardships?

Then there are those who are killed or maimed by upheavals of nature such as tornadoes, cyclones, typhoons, and earthquakes and, most recently, the Bangladesh horror—cannot God do something about this? When we read of hundreds being killed in automobile accidents over a single weekend, the question arises concerning this terrible loss of life, "Has God no pity?" There are countless situations in which man, who was created in the image of God, experiences suffering, and, of course, finally death.

And as we know, this situation is not limited to our generation, nor is it confined to one part of the earth; it is universal. As far back as history reaches, man has suffered and died in war, in pestilence, in famine, in calamities. And all in every generation have finally died, having been beaten down by the great enemy, Death. Abel, a son of Adam, whose sacrifice was pleasing to the LORD, was the first to suffer and die, being murdered by his brother, Cain. Today, nearly two hundred thousand humans die every twenty-four hours. Our hospitals and mental institutions are filled with the suffering and dying. No wonder many are wondering where God is, and what he is doing about the distresses of his human creatures.

### **Job Seeks the Answer**

The question of why God permits evil is not a new one; it has been asked by thinking men and women throughout the ages. Thousands of years ago a faithful servant of God, named Job, became personally concerned with discovering the meaning of his own suffering. The record of this is found in a book of the Bible which bears Job's

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name. The first verse of this book informs us that Job was an upright man who feared God and shunned sin.

To begin with, Job was a prosperous man, abundantly blessed by the LORD along material lines. The record is that "his substance . . . was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east." (Job 1:3) Job was also blessed with a large family, and he desired that they too should be blessed by the LORD. Job prayed for his family, and offered sacrifices, because, as he said, "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." (vss. 4,5) Job felt, apparently, that in the event that his sons had sinned, his prayers on their behalf would be heard and favorably answered.

But experiences were ahead for Job for which he was not wholly prepared. Satan, the great adversary of God and men, charged that this servant of the LORD was loyal to God only because his loyalty had been bought by the abundance of good things with which the LORD had blessed him. In answer to this charge God permitted Satan to inflict calamities upon Job to test his fidelity. God had no doubt about the outcome of this trial, and in his wisdom knew that any temporary suffering he permitted to come into Job's life would, in the end, prove to be a great blessing to him.

And Job did experience great trouble. The record states: "There was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath

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burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."—Job 1:13-19

### **Job Still Loyal**

Job's reaction to these evil tidings was: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." We read that "in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." (vss. 21, 22) Then God permitted further troubles to come upon Job. His health was taken away. He was smitten with "boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes." Then Job's wife turned against him and said, "Curse God, and die." To this Job replied, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"—Job 2:9,10

Job did not turn away from God when trouble came upon him, as so many throughout the ages have done. His chief concern was to know why God permitted him to be afflicted with such bitter experiences, and throughout his book we find evidences of his search for this understanding. After Job was stricken down with disease, three of his friends visited him for the purpose of giving com-

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fort. Later in the book we are informed that these three did not speak the truth concerning God, implying that the viewpoints they expressed to Job were not correct.—Job 42:7

There is chapter after chapter of philosophizing on the part of Job and his three friends. But what it all amounts to is that, according to Job's friends, he was suffering because he had committed some gross sins which he was hiding from them, and for which he had not repented and sought God's forgiveness. Job, of course, knew that he was not perfect, but he also knew that he had not willfully transgressed God's laws, so he was not willing to accept this explanation.

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### *Why do evil men prosper?*

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Besides, Job knew that, while as a servant of God he was now suffering, frequently evil men prospered, and apparently escaped the evils that come upon so many. So in answer to his friends he said: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf. They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth [*Margin*, 'in mirth'], and in a moment go down to the grave [without suffering a long, painful illness]."—Job 21:7-13

While Job knew that the explanation offered by his friends was not the true one, yet he did not understand why God was allowing him to suffer so severely. In a beautiful, poetic manner he describes his search for an understanding of God in the light of his own experiences,

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saying, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him; but he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."—Job 23:8-10

Job realized that there was a divine purpose for his being tried so severely, but he had not yet discovered that purpose. He also knew that if he maintained his integrity before God he would pass the test successfully, and would "come forth as gold." Job's wife wanted him to curse God, but he knew this would be foolish. In all ages there have been those professed believers who, when affliction came upon them, have wondered where God was, and what he was doing to protect their interests. Many such have even turned against God.

### **God's Reply**

Beginning with Chapter 38 of the remarkable Book of Job we find the LORD's answer to Job's searching. This answer is couched largely in question form. The many questions were designed to remind Job that he really knew very little about God, and because of his limited knowledge in every field where the LORD manifests himself, he should not be surprised at failing to comprehend fully why he was being permitted to suffer.

And is this not an important viewpoint for us to keep in mind? When we ask why God doesn't do something about human suffering, are we not assuming that if God had the intelligence we possess he certainly would do something? And then, perhaps, if we do not see our wishes carried out, we may tend to doubt that there is a God. Should we find ourselves guilty of such unreasoning, it would be well to consider the questions which God asked Job.

There are four chapters of these questions. They all concern the wonders of God's creation. God asks Job if he was present when he laid the foundations of the earth;

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if he understood the laws by which the tides of the sea were controlled. He asks him about the instincts and habits of the various birds and animals, and even of the great monsters of the sea. Then Job is asked if he can explain the wisdom and power that are represented in these marvels of creation.

As the questioning proceeds, Job interrupts and says, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further." (Job 40:4,5) In Job's expression, "Behold, I am vile," the meaning of the Hebrew word translated vile is, according to Prof. Strong, literally, 'swift, small, sharp'. Apparently Job was acknowledging to the LORD that he had spoken too quickly; that his viewpoint was too limited, and that it was voiced too sharply.

### **Important Lesson for All**

Job was already beginning to understand his own proper position before the LORD; that it was not for him to judge God according to his own limited understanding, and then so freely to speak his opinions when he really knew little about the matter. This is also a good lesson for all of us. The basic fact is that the world is filled with evil. It is not for us to lose faith in God because of this, or even to criticize him. Our proper attitude should be one of humility, and of earnestly seeking the answer to our questions from the only proper source, which is the Word of God.

God's questions continued, and eventually Job spoke again, and said, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

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I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.”—Job 42:2-5

Job finally learned the meaning of his severe trial. He learned that its loving purpose was to give him a clearer understanding of God, that he might serve him more faithfully and with greater appreciation. He speaks of this clearer understanding as ‘seeing’ the LORD, instead of merely having heard about him. Since he had gained such wealth of understanding, Job’s brief period of suffering must have seemed to him to have been a most valuable experience.

Besides restoring Job’s health, we read that “the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. . . . And in all the land were no women found as fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.”—Job 42:12-15

### **An Illustration**

God’s design in the general permission of evil throughout the ages was, and is, the same as in the case of Job. He created Adam a perfect human, in his own image. Being in the image of God implied an ability to reason. One of the questions which God asked Job was, “Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?” (Job 38:36) It was the Creator who had endowed Adam with the ability, through the process of reasoning, to attain knowledge and wisdom. This was in contrast to what we call instinct, which had been given to the lower animals.

But God did not miraculously implant knowledge upon Adam’s brain cells with the intention that he would arbitrarily be governed by this knowledge. God did not desire his human creation to be like robots, which move about mechanically and without any sense of under-

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standing. Man was given the ability to learn, and was free to govern himself by the knowledge he attained. What man would do with this knowledge was ultimately to determine his eternal destiny.

Man acquires knowledge through his five senses. He learns from observation, which is the exercise of his sense of sight. He learns from what he hears. Here the sense of hearing is the 'antenna', which collects information. Man feels pain when he comes in contact with boiling water, and learns by experience to temper the water he uses for internal and external purposes. Man smells the fragrance of a rose and is delighted by it, but turns in revolt when his sense of smell detects the presence of unpleasant odors. Man rejoices in the taste of wholesome food, but learns to avoid the eating of unpalatable things, even though his sense of sight might indicate they are beautiful.

Thus we see that in the exercise of his five senses man learns from information communicated to him through observation, and through experience. According to the dictionary, man also acquires knowledge through 'intuition', but this is not strictly true, because the so-called intuition of man is based upon information already at hand. God alone possesses the ability to acquire and develop knowledge entirely independent of all outside sources. The knowledge acquired by man through his claimed intuitive ability is trifling and worthless.

If man was to continue as a faithful child of God it was essential that he receive a knowledge of evil as well as of good, that he might be able to make an intelligent choice between the two. God desires those to worship him who "worship him in spirit and in truth," Jesus said. (John 4:23, 24) God does not desire blind worship, but a fidelity to, and trust in him which is based upon understanding and appreciation. The accomplishment of this in connection with Adam and his offspring is one of the major objectives of the permission of evil in the great divine plan of human salvation from sin and death.

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## *Experience . . . the all-important factor*

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Right and wrong, as principles, are established by divine law. The world today is filled with crime, chaos, and suffering because God's laws, his standards of right and wrong, are ignored and denied. While man was endowed with a conscience, the conscience itself is not aware of what is right and what is wrong unless it is furnished with this information from an authoritative source, which in the world today is the Word of God, the Bible.

Knowing that Adam possessed the ability to understand facts which were communicated to him, God placed a test of obedience upon his human son, defining the law which was involved. The Creator had provided our first parents with a wonderful home "eastward in Eden," possessing "every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food." (Gen. 2:8,9) There were the trees of life, and another which is described as "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." The LORD commanded Adam not to partake of this particular tree, and informed him that the penalty for disobedience would be death—"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The Creator had a right to demand obedience of his human creature, and to sentence him to death if he disobeyed.

This demand of obedience was a divine law, and since God informed Adam that death would be the penalty for disobeying, we can say that by information he knew the result of transgression. True, Adam could not look down through the ages and visualize all the suffering and death that would be brought about by human sin and selfishness which had their beginnings in his own disobedience. However, he did know that his disobedience would lead to his own death.

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But this information was not sufficient to deter him from taking the wrong course. He lacked a heart understanding of what was involved in his disobedience, because his knowledge was based, not on experience, but merely on what he had been told. Doubtless Adam loved his Creator, but somehow he falsely reasoned that since Eve had already transgressed, and would die, it would be better to die with her than to live without her. So, not having the strength that experimental knowledge would have given him, Adam transgressed divine law and was plunged into death.

### **A Knowledge of Good and Evil**

But in the divine plan it was Adam's freewill disobedience that was to lead ultimately to his acquiring a fuller knowledge of God and of his standards of right and wrong. The tree of which he was forbidden to partake was "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." It followed that having partaken of this tree he would gain the knowledge implied by its name, even though in the process he would need to suffer and to die.

After both Adam and Eve had partaken of the forbidden fruit, the LORD said concerning them, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." (Gen. 3:22) This does not mean that the forbidden fruit had some magical effect upon our first parents, enabling them at once to have a full knowledge of good and evil. We do read that soon after their disobedience they became ashamed of their nakedness, but this was no doubt due in part to the sense of guilt they felt in having disobeyed their Creator's command.

We think the LORD's statement means, rather, that because of disobedience man was now destined to know both good and evil, and that he was to gain this knowledge through experience. And the education of our first parents soon began. They were driven out of their garden home into the unfinished earth to die. They were to be

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plagued with all sorts of unfavorable elements, spoken of as 'thorns' and 'thistles', which the earth would bring forth to them, and against which they would have to struggle until, in death, they would return to the earth from which they were taken.

God's design in the creation of our first parents was that they should be the progenitors of an entire race. And God knew that in order for Adam's children to really know him and have a true appreciation of his standards of right and wrong they, even as Adam, would need to learn by experience the terrible results of disobedience, and later, by contrast, the blessings which would be showered upon them by his love. So the Creator designed that all of Adam's offspring should be carried into death with him. Paul wrote, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that [*Margin, 'In whom'*] all have sinned."—Rom. 5:12

### **Death Plagues All**

For more than six thousand years the human race, having come under condemnation to death because of sin, has been exposed to evil, and by experience has been learning the terrible results of disobedience. The seeds of death have manifested their presence in humans, young and old, and by myriads of infirmities and diseases of both mind and body. Neither the young nor the old have escaped the plague of death, infants often falling before the enemy at a tender age with no understanding of what is taking place in and around them. Perchance, some live to 'a ripe old age', only to succumb finally to the ravages of death which prey upon all.

And not only by disease are the people brought down to the grave, but upheavals of nature in an unfinished earth contribute to the process, as do accidents, and men's own cruelties to one another in war and in crime.

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Throughout all the ages God has not interfered with the great enemy Death. Paul informs us concerning the people as a whole, that "God gave them over to a mind void of judgment." (Rom. 1:28, *Margin*) This implies that he has not restrained the human race from taking its own course, selfish and sinful though that course has been. Neither has he interfered with the carrying out of the death sentence, in the sense of protecting some and not protecting others.

But God's great design does not end with the human race prostrate in death, for through Jesus, the Redeemer, he has made a provision for all to be awakened from death and to be restored to perfection of life. Paul wrote, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:21,22) This provision of life through Christ is based on Jesus' own death and resurrection. He said, "My flesh . . . I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:51) It was for this reason that Jesus was born into the world as a human.—Heb. 2:9,14

In describing the arrangement by which Jesus became the Redeemer of the world through his death, the Bible uses the word 'ransom', which, according to the Greek word from which it is translated, means 'corresponding price'. Jesus was a perfect man, even as Adam was a perfect man before he sinned. Thus in death Jesus became a corresponding price for the forfeited life of Adam. And as all mankind lost life through Adam, so all mankind is redeemed from death through Christ.

### **Just and Unjust**

This means that in God's due time all will be awakened from the sleep of death. Paul informs us that there is to be "a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts 24:15) Yes, throughout the ages, while sin and selfishness has predominated, there have been noble

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men and women who, by virtue of their faith and obedience to God's laws of righteousness, are spoken of by Paul as 'just'. But these also have been allowed to suffer, even as did Job—not to punish them, but to test and prepare them further for exalted positions which the Creator has designed for them in his arrangements for the future.

There have also been millions of noble, unselfish people throughout the ages who have had no faith in God. One reason for their unbelief has been their observation that the innocent suffer as well as the guilty. They have not been able to understand why an infant is allowed to die. They have not been able to reconcile the idea of a loving, powerful God with the fact that so many, through no willful fault of their own, have suffered for years on beds of sickness, while others have been afflicted with blindness, and many with insanity, and other cruel maladies. Had the unbelievers known the full plan of God they would have understood these situations.

Moreover, throughout the ages, the true God of the Bible has been flagrantly misrepresented. Many of the professed believers in Christianity, who bemoan the suffering they see taking place around them, try to believe that all who die in unbelief will be tortured eternally in a burning hell of fire and brimstone. This blasphemous teaching has helped to create many unbelievers, for a properly reasoning mind cannot believe that a God of love would thus torture his creatures. Such cruelty is even contrary to the laws of civilized men.

### **The First and Second Lessons**

The fact presents itself that few in all the ages have as yet profited by their experience with evil; indeed many, as noted, have been turned to unbelief by it. This is understandable, and if we were to base our conclusions on man's limited abilities and his restricted viewpoint, there would be no satisfactory answer as to why God permits

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evil. In the limited viewpoint of many, death is the end of existence; to others it is the end of all opportunity to learn and to profit from past experiences. But these viewpoints are not supported in the Bible.

As we have seen, according to the Bible, those who are asleep in death will be awakened from that sleep and given an opportunity to profit from the experiences of the present life. Just as it often happens now, the difficulties and distresses of a certain day are often understood and appreciated at a later day. So it will be on a grander scale, as those who are now sleeping in death are awakened and they enter another term, as it were, in their school of experience.

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### *There will be 'Joy in the Morning!'*

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In Job's case, while he could not understand at the time why God allowed him to suffer, yet when the experience was over he could say, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee." And so it will be with the world of mankind. When the experience of suffering and death is over and they are awakened from death, their faulty vision or understanding of God will be corrected, and they will rejoice to learn of the gracious and loving provision the Creator has made for them through Christ, the Redeemer, to ransom them from death. They will be restored to perfection of life if, in the light of this true knowledge of God, they obey him, by conforming their lives to his standards of right and wrong.

The psalmist wrote, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Ps. 30:5) This 'nighttime' of sin, sorrow, and death began with the disobedience of our first parents. And it has indeed been a night of weeping. The sorrow that has borne down upon

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The fact presents itself that few in all the ages have as yet profited by their experience with evil; indeed many, as noted, have been turned to unbelief by it. This is understandable, and if we were to base our conclusions on man's limited abilities and his restricted viewpoint, there would be no satisfactory answer as to why God permits

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evil. In the limited viewpoint of many, death is the end of existence; to others it is the end of all opportunity to learn and to profit from past experiences. But these viewpoints are not supported in the Bible.

As we have seen, according to the Bible, those who are asleep in death will be awakened from that sleep and given an opportunity to profit from the experiences of the present life. Just as it often happens now, the difficulties and distresses of a certain day are often understood and appreciated at a later day. So it will be on a grander scale, as those who are now sleeping in death are awakened and they enter another term, as it were, in their school of experience.

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### *There will be 'Joy in the Morning!'*

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In Job's case, while he could not understand at the time why God allowed him to suffer, yet when the experience was over he could say, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee." And so it will be with the world of mankind. When the experience of suffering and death is over and they are awakened from death, their faulty vision or understanding of God will be corrected, and they will rejoice to learn of the gracious and loving provision the Creator has made for them through Christ, the Redeemer, to ransom them from death. They will be restored to perfection of life if, in the light of this true knowledge of God, they obey him, by conforming their lives to his standards of right and wrong.

The psalmist wrote, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Ps. 30:5) This 'nighttime' of sin, sorrow, and death began with the disobedience of our first parents. And it has indeed been a night of weeping. The sorrow that has borne down upon

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the human race has been bitter, and many in their distresses have wondered whether or not God has any pity.

But there is to be a morning of joy for the human race! That morning of joy will be ushered in by what the Scriptures refer to as the rising of "the Sun of Righteousness," who will have "healing in his wings." (Mal. 4:2) Jesus is this glorious Sun of Righteousness. The new day of blessing he will cause to dawn will be brought about through the establishment of his kingdom, which is the government of righteousness foretold by all God's holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:19-21

Associated with Jesus as rulers in his kingdom will be his faithful followers—those who have suffered and died with him. Jesus died the Just for the unjust, and his followers voluntarily suffer and die unjustly with him, and will be exalted to the highest of all spiritual realms of life, to be associated with Jesus in the rulership of his kingdom. Jesus said to his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2, 3) The Scriptures also declare that these will live and reign with Christ a thousand years, being brought forth from death in "the first resurrection."—Rev. 20:6

Christ and his followers, a "little flock," will be the invisible rulers of the world during the thousand years of his kingdom. (Luke 12:32) They will be represented here on earth by another group of God's faithful servants, each one of whom proved loyal to God under adversity during the ages preceding the coming of Jesus. These, as the Bible tells us, will be made "princes in all the earth." (Ps. 45:16) This group will consist of the ancient and worthy servants of God of past ages, beginning with righteous Abel. It will include such outstanding figures as Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Daniel, and all God's holy prophets.

These 'princes in all the earth' will be awakened from death to human perfection, and for a thousand years will

be the representatives of the divine Christ among men. What a wonderful governmental arrangement this will be! It will establish universal and lasting peace, which man in his selfishness has been unable to do. The divine Head of this government, who is Christ, is referred to in prophecy as "The Prince of Peace," and we are assured that "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."—Isa. 9:6,7

### **The House of the LORD**

In Micah 4:1-4, the kingdom of Christ is referred to as God's ruling "house"—this ruling house consisting of Jesus and those who, through faithfulness in following in his footsteps, are also exalted to heavenly glory as sons of God. This prophecy reads:

"In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it."

The ancient nation of Israel, to whom this prophecy was first addressed, was governed from a mountain. It was Mount Zion in Jerusalem, so the LORD uses this background in presenting this prophecy of Messiah's kingdom, and his promises of the blessings that it will assure to the people. The 'mountain' of the LORD is the kingdom

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of the LORD, represented by the symbolic 'Zion' of this prophecy.

And notice that under the rulership of this kingdom the people learn the LORD's way. The entire period of Christ's kingdom will be one of learning, of education. In this prophecy one of the results of this education is that the people will learn war no more. It will be then that the angels' message of 'peace on earth' will be translated into reality. The Prince of Peace will then reign supreme.— Luke 2:13,14

### **Under Vine and Fig Tree**

And besides, there will be economic security. This is symbolized in the prophecy by the assurance that every man will dwell under his own vine and fig tree. Much of the suffering in the world throughout the ages has been due to lack of food, clothing, and shelter. Even today the majority of the human race is existing on subnormal supplies of food, and millions have but little clothing and no roof over their heads. But this will be corrected through the agencies of Christ's kingdom.

Nor will peace and security be the only blessings guaranteed to the people under the rulership of "the mountain of the house of the LORD." Isaiah wrote, "In this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the LORD God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, . . . we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25:6-9

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In addition to the 'feast of fat things' which this prophecy assures us will be spread for mankind in the kingdom of the LORD, we are also informed that 'the covering' and 'the veil' now covering the faces of the people will be removed. This clearly refers to a symbolic curtain which hinders the people from seeing and knowing God in his true light. Another prophecy says that then "the eyes of the blind shall be opened." (Isa. 35:5) Those literally blind will then have their sight restored, and those spiritually blind will acquire a true vision of God and his glorious character.

### **All Evil to Be Destroyed**

Of this same time of Christ's kingdom we read, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9) Then there will be no more suffering and death as a result of Adam's transgression. It will be the time when Adam's children are being made alive through Christ. Killing calamities will no longer be permitted. The peaceful and prosperous conditions which men and women today would like to see throughout the earth will then exist, because "the knowledge of the LORD will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea."

The LORD assures us further that he "will swallow up death in victory," and that he will wipe away tears "from off all faces." What blessed assurances these are! Paul wrote that Christ would reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and that "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (I Cor. 15:25,26) The result of this is described in Revelation 21:4, which reads, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

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## First Experience with Good

It will be during the reign of Christ that Adam and his children in general will receive their first real experience with "good." It will be this that will complete their education with respect to the validity and importance of the standards of right and wrong established by God. Though perfect when created, Adam did not then have sufficient knowledge to prevent his transgression. Job maintained his integrity before God under test, yet he also needed to experience evil and to be delivered from it in order to 'see' God. Adam and his race will likewise 'see' God as a result of their experiences.

And the God they will then 'see' will be the one they have longed to know and to serve. They will recognize the value of the experiences through which they have passed. Understanding real values, they will realize that the few short years of hardship through which they passed while under condemnation to death were as nothing compared with the eternity of joy then stretching out before them under the panoply of divine love. No wonder they will then say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, . . . we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

At the conclusion of the harrowing experiences through which Job passed, he was restored to health, and his family was also restored to him. This partially illustrates the great blessing which lies ahead for all mankind during the reign of Christ. Peter speaks of this period as "times of restitution of all things," which, he declares, had been spoken "by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21

Peter's declaration concerning the restoration of the human race to health and life was based on the miracle he had just performed of healing a man who had been lame from the time of his birth. In "the times of restitution," all the lame will be restored to soundness of limb, and all other human maladies will be cured by the "Sun of

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Righteousness," who will then rise "with healing in his wings."—Isa. 35:6; Mal. 4:2

As we have seen, this loving provision for the human race includes those who have fallen asleep in death. This is, in reality, the key to an understanding of why God permits evil, for it means that his viewpoint of human experience is not dependent upon man's present short span of life. God is viewing this, rather, as a lesson in experience which in the resurrection can be compared with all the 'good' which will then be showered upon the people, that 'feast of fat things' which the LORD will then spread before all nations.

### **A Time of Learning**

This future period of blessing is also described in the Bible as one of judgment, or trial. Isaiah wrote that when the LORD's judgments are abroad in the earth, "the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9) All the inequalities of the present will then be righted. Those who now willfully oppose God and his laws, and unjustly treat their fellows, will then receive appropriate discipline designed to correct their wrongdoings. All the present circumstances relative to every individual will then be taken into consideration, and the people dealt with, and blessed or punished accordingly.

Even those who have died in infancy will be awakened, mature to adulthood, and have an opportunity to enjoy God's blessings. In a comforting promise to mothers who lose their children in death we read, "Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not [they were dead]. Thus saith the LORD: Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come

again to their own border [they shall return to life on earth].”—Jer. 31:15-17

Having had real experience with both good and evil, each individual will be able to decide intelligently whether or not he wishes to choose the good and live forever, or choose evil and again be sentenced to death—a death from which there will be no resurrection. Christ will then be King supreme in his kingdom, and he will be Judge supreme. Peter also refers to him as a great “Prophet,” and informs us that it shall come to pass “that every soul which will not hear [or obey] that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.”—Acts 3:22,23

During the present nighttime of sin and death, all die—believers and unbelievers, the innocent and the guilty, the righteous and the unrighteous. But during the reign of Christ only those who willfully disobey the laws of God will be destroyed. All others will continue to live and to mature toward perfection. If these continue faithful, they will enter as perfect humans into the everlasting future ages of happiness and life “with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”—Isa. 35:10

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### **ONLY WAITING**

**ONLY WAITING** till the dawning is a little brighter grown,  
Only waiting till the shadows of the world's dark night are flown,  
Till the shadows all shall vanish in the blessed, blessed day,  
For the morn, at last, is breaking through the twilight, soft and gray!  
—Hymns of Dawn, No. 214

**LESSON FOR AUGUST 4****Claiming Our Heritage**

**KEY VERSE:** "They read in the Book in the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." — *Nehemiah 8:8*

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Nehemiah 8:1-3,6-9,14,17*

**T**HE KNOWLEDGE WHICH we have of the Bible and of the divine plan of the ages, is the key of knowledge concerning the Father, his Son, and eternal life. When we search the Scriptures, we search for knowledge, not merely the verification of our own wisdom. One of the most beautiful avenues of life is the path of learning, especially when it leads to the knowledge of God.

One cannot be handed knowledge, nor can knowledge be given away; but it can be shared with those willing to accept it, and who have the Holy Spirit of God as their teacher. Now that does not mean that all must or can have the same degree of understanding. We all know that is not the

case. We all have special abilities, and we all have limitations, and the grasp that each has of the truth will vary according to our several abilities, and our diligence in their application. But the LORD will see to it that each faithful child of God will grasp enough spiritual truth to accomplish its sanctifying work.

The psalmist says, we should cleanse our way "by taking heed thereto according to thy Word." (Ps. 119:9) Truths unfold as beautiful flowers develop from buds to full grown blooms. Truth is exciting as it unfolds! As it transfuses us with spiritual vitality, it keeps us young in spirit. And thus we live a rich and rewarding spiritual life.

During this harvest time we have been blessed with an appreciation of fundamental truths, which never change. These truths have revealed to us the divine plan of the ages. They have made us 'truth people'. Let us value these basic doctrines, and the servants and the helps that have assisted in laying the foundation of our faith. These fundamentals become ever clearer as the details of truth come into better focus through our study of God's Word.

II Peter 1:1-12 contains many valuable lessons along this line. According to this passage, we cannot have love without knowledge. Peter was responsible for some of the sweetest expressions we use today. One of these is, 'like precious faith'. Another is, "exceeding great and precious promises."

The degree of faith may vary, but its objective—justification and sanctification—is common to all the LORD's children. For Christ is made to all of us, "wisdom, and righteousness,

and sanctification, and redemption."—I Cor. 1:30

In II Peter 1:2, the apostle introduces us to the "knowledge of God." He tells us it is the medium through which grace and peace are multiplied unto us. So, again, we are impressed with the power that knowledge exercises in our lives.

The knowledge of God is the first step toward eternal life through true piety. Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) Our very calling out of darkness into light is dependent upon knowledge, for through the knowledge of him we are called to glory and virtue, to be like Christ.—II Pet. 1:3

One does not progress far unless he grows in the knowledge of God. The knowledge of man's wisdom does not sanctify. The knowledge of God and spiritual truth does. "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth."—John 17:17

## Confessing Wrongdoing

**KEY VERSE:** "Thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly." —Nehemiah 9:33

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** Nehemiah 9:1-3, 32-37

**T**HIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF God's justice on their behalf was made by the nation of Israel after Nehemiah and Ezra had pointed out that God had made them a subject nation as punishment for their wickedness against his Law.

The basic principles of God's Law are unchangeable, even as he changes not. Moses said to the generation of Israelites living in his day, "What doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear [reverence] the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul." —Deut. 10:12

Hundreds of years later Solomon wrote, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole

duty of man." (Eccles. 12:13) Still later, it was written, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" —Mic. 6:8

The tendency of fallen humanity frequently has been to complicate the simple message of divine truth, to make mysteries out of those revelations of the divine plan and will, to which no mystery by right should be attached. The plain teachings of the Word of God are often confused by human philosophy, misnamed theology.

As Moses said to Israel, all the LORD wanted of them was their reverence, obedience, and love. And even their love for God, as manifested in their obedience to his command-

ments, was for their own good. God had loved their fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—and had made wonderful promises to them. Moses further explained, “He chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.”—Deut. 10:15

God was just in his dealings with the Israelites, and cared for the fatherless and the widows, and loved even the stranger in their midst, “giving him food and raiment.” (vs. 18) The LORD set a wonderful example, and wanted them to follow it. If they were faithful, a rich reward was in store for the nation, for they would be made a kingdom of priests. — Exod. 19:5,6

The standards of God’s perfect Law were too high to be reached by any member of the fallen race. No doubt many Israelites sincerely tried to keep the Law, but all came short of full attainment. Since the animal sacrifices of that age were not able to actually take away sin, the Law brought the Israelites under just condemnation, from which the mercy of God

made no immediate provision for release. The way of escape was not provided until Jesus came to be the Redeemer and Savior of Israel and the whole world.

Speaking particularly of himself and other Israelites under the Law, Paul wrote, “When we were yet without strength [unable to keep the Law], in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom. 5:6) Jesus also died for the ungodly Gentiles, but only the Israelites had been under the Law, thus proving that no imperfect man could keep it.— Rom. 3:19

Because of Jesus’ sacrifice as a ransom, the time is soon coming when the Jews of Nehemiah’s day will, with the entire world of mankind, have another opportunity to make this confession under circumstances which will lead them to everlasting life. All men, including the Gentiles, will know that only through Christ’s death is life provided. Thus, the Scriptures explain how God can be just, yet the justifier of all who believe in Jesus. — Rom. 3:25, 26; I John 2:2

## Making Commitments

**KEY VERSE:** *"Because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it."* — *Nehemiah 9:38*

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Nehemiah 10:28-31, 35-37*

**W**HILE THE ISRAELITES were sincere at the time they renewed their commitment to God's Law, history reveals that it was short-lived. Less than forty years later, the Prophet Malachi described the religious conditions in Israel. He wrote that the people made an outward show of righteousness, but at heart they seemed little different from what they were before their captivity in Babylon.

Not only were they lax in their worship of Jehovah, manifested, for example, in their offering sick and blemished sacrifices on his altars, but they also lacked proper consideration for one another. "Have we not all one father?" Malachi asks. (Mal. 2:10) They were all the children of Abraham, to whom belonged the promises of God, yet they

dealt "treacherously" against their brethren. They were all God's creation, and as a nation had made a covenant with him, yet by their desecration of his altars, and their betrayal of one another, they profaned, or broke, that covenant.

The people complained that they were not being blessed by God, yet they seemed not to realize that their poverty was due to their unfaithfulness to the LORD and to the covenant which their fathers had made with him. "Ye are cursed with a curse," the LORD said to them, "for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Then the LORD added, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you

the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."—Mal. 3:8-10

Like the other prophets, in addition to reprimanding Israel for her sins, Malachi forecast coming events in the plan of God. He spoke of another covenant in the future which would be effective in purifying the people. The Messenger of this covenant, the Messiah, the prophecy said, would purify the sons of Levi—the priestly class, "that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness."—Mal. 3:1-3

Under the Old Law Covenant arrangement the tribe of Levi were the religious servants of the people, the priests being of this tribe. Beginning at the First Advent, at which time Israel under the Old Covenant was rejected, there began the work of preparing the priestly class to administer the affairs of the New Covenant. The calling of these from both Jews and Gentiles, and their refining and purifying and offering of sacrifice, has been the work

of the Gospel Age.—Heb. 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:5,9

These will be associate 'messengers' of the New Covenant. This covenant will become operative first with Judah, at Jerusalem. Then, as the prophet declares, "The offering of Judah and Jerusalem" will "be pleasant unto the LORD." Many throughout the ages have thought that it was "vain to serve the LORD." (Mal. 3:14) It is also frequently true that "now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea they that tempt God are even delivered." (vs. 15) But this will continue to be true only while the Devil remains the 'prince of this world'. When the New Covenant is inaugurated, with Jesus and his joint-heirs as its 'messengers', evil will be cut off, and righteousness rewarded.

Only under the environment of Christ's kingdom will people be able to keep their commitments to God and his law of righteousness, thus making their covenant 'sure'! □

## Living As God's Community

**KEY VERSE:** *"I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath Day."*—Nehemiah 13:22

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Nehemiah 13:1-3,10-12,15-19*

THERE IS A far greater significance attached to the Fourth Commandment than simply to refrain from labor during the seventh 24-hour period of each week. The LORD said to Moses that the Sabbath was made holy because he, himself, had rested on the seventh day. But there is a better, more comprehensive viewpoint to be had. Paul gives us this, saying: "He that is entered into his [God's] rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."—Heb. 4:10,11

Obviously the apostle is not referring to the ordinary idea of Sabbath keeping. He implies that God, having finished the creative

work, 'rested', and that he has been enjoying that rest ever since. We are to enter into a similar rest, ceasing from our own works, as God did from his. A Christian ceases from his own works by resting in the finished work of Christ on his behalf.

When God crowned his work with the creation of man, and then saw man fall into sin and death, he placed the work of recovering this "lost sheep" into the hands of the *Logos*, his only begotten Son, Jesus. Through redemption, the human race will be restored to "that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) This work will ultimately be completed at the close of the *greater* seventh day, when God's original purpose for mankind will have

reached fruition. The Jewish Sabbath was a picture of this larger cycle of time.

Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27,28) There are two important thoughts in these verses. The first is, that when the LORD enjoined upon Jews the keeping of one day in seven as a day of rest, it was not done with the idea of imposing a ritual upon the nation which would be burdensome, to which the people should become slaves. Rather, it was to be for their good, since the LORD knew that they would need this rest from labor in order properly to maintain their health and their dignity as individuals as well as nationally.

The second thought is that the Sabbath, of which the Son of man is Lord, is a larger period during which, in the service of the Creator, Jesus is the Lord or director of the work of restoring mankind to righteousness, to health, and to

eternal life. This larger Sabbath was also "made for man," for he will be the beneficiary of the great plan of redemption so faithfully executed by the Lord of the Sabbath.

Jesus illustrated the larger viewpoint of the Sabbath when he performed a miracle in a synagogue on the Sabbath Day. There he found a woman who had an infirmity eighteen years; she was so bent over that she could not lift herself up. "He laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God." (Luke 13:11-16) It was especially appropriate, we think, that this work of restoration was done on the typical Sabbath Day; for it is a wonderful reminder of the divine plan to restore all the sick—even to awaken the dead—before the true Sabbath, of which Jesus is Lord, shall have ended.

We who have dedicated ourselves to have a part in this great work of the future, are indeed sanctifying the Sabbath Day, as God desires. □

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Tehachapi	KTFI-FM 103.1	10:15 a.m.
Yuba City	KOBO 1450	3:30 p.m.

### FLORIDA

Jacksonville	WXTL 1010	7:45 p.m.
Orlando	WVCF 1480	4:30 p.m.
Tampa	WTMP 1150	8:30 a.m.

### ILLINOIS

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

### INDIANA

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

### KANSAS

Goodland	KLOE 730	7:15 a.m.
Coffeyville	KGGF 690	9:05 p.m.

### KENTUCKY

Bowling Green	WLBJ 1410	8:00 a.m.
Winchester	WHRS	10:30 a.m.

### MICHIGAN

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

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

### NEW MEXICO

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

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

### OHIO

Cincinnati	WNOP 740	9:00 a.m.
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### OREGON

Portland	KKEY 1150	7:00 a.m.
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### PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown	WHOL 1600	10:45 a.m.
Jenkintown(Wed)	WIBF-FM 103.9	12:30 p.m.
Pittsburgh	WCXJ 1550	3:00 p.m.
Pottstown	WPAZ 1370	12:45 p.m.

### SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston	WOKL 1340	7:06 p.m.
Beaufort (Sat.)	WVGB 1490	1:00 p.m.

### TENNESSEE

Nashville	WLAC 1510	7:45 p.m.
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### VIRGINIA

Richmond	WGGM 820	7:45 a.m.
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### WASHINGTON

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

### WISCONSIN

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

### PLEASE TAKE NOTE . . .

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

# . . . . WORLDWIDE RADIO BROADCASTS

## Canada

### **ALBERTA**

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

### **BRITISH COLUMBIA**

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

### **MANITOBA**

Winnipeg	CKJS 810	9:00 a.m.
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### **ONTARIO**

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

### **QUEBEC**

Montreal	CFMB 1410	5:15 p.m.
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### **SASKATCHEWAN**

Rosetown	CJYM 1330	10:00 a.m.
Weyburn	CPSL 1190	8:45 a.m.
Estevan	CJSL 1280	8:45 a.m.

## Argentina (Spanish)

Buenos Aires (Sat.)	FM Malvinas	91.5 MHZ	10:00 p.m.
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## British West Indies

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

## Chile (Spanish)

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

Hong Kong	Radio Villa Verde (Fri.)	6:00 p.m.
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## Equador

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

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

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

## Mexico (Spanish)

Culiacán Ranchera	XECQ	8:30 a.m.
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## New Zealand

Whakatane	IXX	7:00 a.m.
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## Nigeria

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

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

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

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

## Sri Lanka

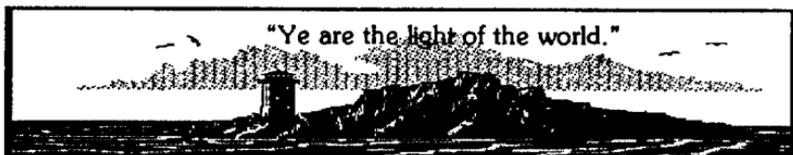
Colombo (Sat.)	Radio Sri Lanka	7:15 p.m.
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## Tonga

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

Montevideo	Radio El Espectador 810	8:30 a.m.
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# THE BIBLE ANSWERS – TV Programs

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

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

### “What Is that in Thine Hand?”

***“Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.”***

**—Exodus 3:1-3**

**T**HIS LESSON CONCERNS the point in Moses' life, forty years after he had fled from Egypt. Moses had been reared as a member of Pharaoh's family, and had received the benefits of education and position which would be available to such. Stephen, the martyr, reported this in his speech before the Sanhedrin when he stated, "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds."—Acts 7:22

However, in spite of the position and honor Moses enjoyed as a member of Pharaoh's family, his interest and sympathies were with his people—the Hebrew people. So strong was this feeling that it prompted him to slay an Egyptian whom Moses saw brutally mistreating an Israelite. Realizing the seriousness of his act, he sought to conceal it by hiding the body. But the slaying became known, and we read in Exodus 2:15 that "Pharaoh . . . sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled . . . and dwelt in the land of Midian: and sat down by a well."

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While resting at this desert oasis, Moses watched seven young women bringing a flock of sheep to the well for watering. But when they started to fill the troughs, certain shepherds began to interfere. Their actions aroused the ire of this just man, and he successfully interceded on behalf of the young women. Then he also assisted them in the task of watering the sheep, performing the most difficult part—that of filling the troughs with water.

Because of this help, the seven grateful and impressed young women returned home much more quickly than usual. When their father, Jethro, learned of all this he insisted that Moses be brought to his home as a guest. And as one would expect, in time, Moses took to wife Zipporah, one of the young women.

How different was Moses' life in Midian from what it had been in Egypt! From the comforts of the civilization and the 'rich life' of Egypt he was suddenly transferred to the raw desert, and to the humble task of herding sheep under primitive conditions. Broken, too, were the tender ties of family and friends which had meant so much to him. In the forty years between the incident at the well and the scripture which opens our lesson, Moses must have wondered much and often about his people, Israel, yet enslaved in Egypt.

But we know Moses had not been forgotten by God. These forty years had been developing a rich growth of character. He had been learning well the lesson of humility which would be very necessary for the one whom God would lift to a high position among the children of men. And in a practical way he had been roaming over the very wide expanse of desert which God knew would be the route to Canaan that Israel later would tread, learning how to survive under such difficult conditions. We can receive untold benefit by observing the hand of God working in the lives of the Ancient Worthies.

We also have 'desert' experiences. By force of circumstance we may be set aside for a while, and to outward

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appearances, be forgotten by God. But the hand that led Moses to the burning bush in the wilderness of Midian continued with him the entire forty years he served there as a shepherd. And God's gentle leadings for us may be from triumph to testing, from abundant fellowship to lonely days, but in it all he will be there to direct, however strange the circumstances.

The particular day in Moses' life which is recorded in Exodus 3:1 must have begun in what seemed to him to be just 'another' one in that long succession of lonely years. In our mind's eye we can visualize him as he arose that day to begin his normal activities. As he stood outside his tent how different he appeared than when in Egypt. His garments were of rough homespun cloth—adequate, but not necessarily appealing to the eye. His feet were shod with sandals that, in all probability, his own hands had fashioned. In his hand was the shepherd's rod, which was later to become so important in his life. As he stood gazing over the vista before him, he little realized how momentous would be that day, and many yet to follow. That day, in a special sense, he was to begin a career as an highly honored servant of God.

We, too, who are children of God, can look back to a similar point of time in our lives. Once we were in the world, just flowing with the tide of men, and quite unmindful of our God or of his plan. But there came that day—that special day—when we heard a discourse, read a tract, talked with our neighbor, heard a *"Frank and Ernest"* radio program, watched *"The Bible Answers"* TV program, or in some other way, God's message of truth reached our hearts, and our lives were changed forever. We heard the voice of God!

As Moses walked with the sheep on that unique day, he was startled by the appearance of a burning bush. And as he looked he realized that, although burning furiously, the bush was not consumed. When he went closer to inspect it, he heard, coming from the bush, a deep,

resonant voice speaking his own name: "Moses, Moses." Instinctively he answered, "Here am I."—Exod. 3:1-4

Then it was that he heard the voice identify itself by the majestic words, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."—vss. 5,6

Fear gripped Moses, and he covered his face with his hands, turning away from the strange sight! But then Moses heard God recount the sad plight of his people in Egypt, and also the welcome assurance that they were to be delivered from bondage and guided into their own land, which was a land flowing with milk and honey. Then the voice of God spoke to Moses in a most direct manner saying, "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." These words must have shocked Moses, but when he recovered he attempted to argue with God against the suggestion.

No doubt Moses recalled the pomp and grandeur of Pharaoh's court, and just as quickly contrasted his own rustic appearance. The long years of menial work under primitive conditions, had taken away Moses' youthful self-assurance and he felt inadequate for the task God had given him. "Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" We can sympathize with Moses, for was not this our attitude when we were first invited to become a son of God, to be used in delivering the world from bondage? As we realized the grandeur of the call, its lofty purpose, the holiness of our God, did not we say, "Who am I that God should call me?"

God told Moses that Pharaoh would resist, but that he, the LORD, would force compliance by a demonstration of wonderful power. Moses replied, "Behold, they will not

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believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.”—Exod. 4:1

Suddenly God asked Moses an unusual question: “What is that in thine hand?” Moses knew what he had in his hand—it was a shepherd’s rod, useful in herding sheep, killing harmful snakes, or in climbing difficult places. His rod represented nearly all Moses possessed. The sheep he tended belonged to his father-in-law. What an abrupt change in thought was introduced by this question! God had been outlining his plan for freeing Israel from slavery, and now he asked Moses, “What is that in thine hand?” Puzzled, Moses answered simply, “A rod.”

Moses finally agreed to return to Egypt as God desired. We read, “Moses took his wife and his sons, . . . and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand.” (Exod. 4:20) Notice the latter part of the text—now, it was *the rod of God*. Indeed, such is the case with us who have become disciples of Jesus. That which we had in our hands at the time of consecration—great or small—that which represented all we had and were, now belongs to God. And, as Moses used the rod thereafter at God’s direction, so we, as stewards, are to use our time, talents—our all—as God directs.

If we do this, God will bless our efforts. The results of his blessing our efforts may not be as readily seen, or be as great, as was the case with Moses. We may need to wait until the kingdom to see all that is accomplished by this power on our behalf. But whether results now are great or small, matters not. What does matter is our willingness to be used.

### **In Gideon’s Hand**

In looking back over the long history of God’s dealings with his servants, we can see many instances which illustrate how God’s power blessed some small item in the hand of a servant. Our minds go to a long-ago time in Israel’s history. The Israelites were cowering fearfully in

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mountain hideaways. They had been driven there by a ruthless enemy who was wantonly plundering the farms of the defeated people. Israel's position seemed hopeless because the conquering nation greatly outnumbered them, and were warlike by nature. From the heights above one could look down upon the enemy's well-disciplined and well-equipped army numbering one hundred and thirty-five thousand. (Judges 8:10) Israel had no army at all at this time, and there seemed no possible solution for the hopeless situation, unless one would look to God obediently with faith.

If we were there at that time we would see a young, determined man of Israel in earnest conversation with a few men. We would draw near to hear what they were discussing. The young man was asking them, "What is that in thine hand?" They replied, "An earthenware pitcher, a lamp, and a trumpet." How strange that the young man insisted that with just such meager implements he and the three hundred men with him could rout the mighty host below! Such was the case when Gideon and his band of three hundred defeated the Midianites.

We read that during the night the young man, Gideon, deployed the three hundred Israelites in the hills, surrounding the Midianites who were in the valley below. At a given signal from their leader each blew a trumpet, then shouted the words, "The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon." (Judges 7: 18, 20) Then they broke their pitchers to reveal the lamps inside, and panic broke out among the enemy, which had bedded down for the night.

It appears that the enemy mistook each light to be the leader of a troupe, holding up the torch for his men to follow him. Historians indicate it was the custom in that day for each torchbearer to represent six thousand warriors. The Midianites had concluded they were surrounded by a force larger than their own. In the darkness, confusion reigned, and the Midianites' swords were turned against each other, and they were defeated.

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All that Gideon and his men had in their hands were a pitcher, a lamp, and a trumpet. But in their hearts was a willingness to serve God, and faith that he would provide the victory. And he did. Once more the question comes to us, "What is that in thine hand?"

### **In David's Hand**

We leave the memorable time of Gideon's defeat of the Midianites and travel down to another troubled point in Israel's history. At this time Israel had an army, well-trained and ready for battle. A valley separated them from a formidable army of Philistines, and the Israelites were afraid.

In addition to being fearful, the Israelites were being daily humiliated by a personal challenge from a monstrous giant. His daily taunt was, as recorded in I Samuel 17:10, 11, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid."

Biblical history records that at the time when Israel was being subjected to the taunts of evil Goliath, the boy, David, came on the scene. This boy was shocked to see the army of Israel flee from the presence of the giant, and in dismay he proclaimed, "Who is this . . . Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (I Sam. 17:26) David's very statement does much to reveal his faith. To him this was not Israel's army, or Saul's army, but it was the army of 'the living God'. This active faith in the heart of youthful David prompted him to speak of his willingness to accept Goliath's challenge.

When word reached Saul concerning one in the camp willing to battle for Israel in single combat, David was called before him. "David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him [Goliath]; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou

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art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." (I Sam. 17:32, 33) But young David was not to be denied his opportunity to exercise his faith. With enthusiasm, and displaying great faith, he recounted previous deliverances he had had by the hand of God while doing battle with wild beasts. In conclusion he said, "The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."—I Sam. 17:37

It appears that David's strong faith in God so impressed King Saul, to the point that he agreed to David's fighting as a representative of God and of Israel. Saul's sympathies were with David to such an extent that he made arrangements for the youth to wear his own armor. However, after David tried on the helmet and coat of mail, and had placed the sword on his side, he decided against wearing the protective gear. He said concerning the armor and the sword, that he had "not proved them." He felt untrained to wear Saul's armor because he had not previously tried them in combat.

If we had been present at that time we would have wondered greatly as David began to remove the coat of mail. Especially would we have been concerned because it was apparent that David actually intended to do battle. We would have watched as the unarmed youth, with only his slingshot in his hand, headed down the valley and toward mighty Goliath.

We would have been interested to see him stop at the brook and, for a moment, busy himself. And as he arose we would have seen that he had gathered five smooth stones. He had with him his staff, a shepherd's bag, and a slingshot, and five smooth stones, and he was walking toward a huge, fierce giant to do battle. But in his heart was faith in God—he knew the battle was the LORD's.— I Samuel 17:40

The account indicates that Goliath disdained the youth, and said, "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with

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staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.”—I Sam. 17:43, 44

But young David, with complete faith in God, was unafraid. Note the courage in his words that he flung at the approaching giant: “Thou comest to me with a sword, and a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.”—I Sam. 17:45

So the boy, with merely a few stones and a sling in his hand, marched out as the opposing armies watched, and with his sling he hurled just one stone, which slew mighty Goliath. This demonstration of faith in God has, throughout the centuries since, stirred many hearts. May we who are now servants of God keep it well in mind. As we engage the hosts of evil in battle, let us not think of their might, or of our own weakness. Instead, let us think as did David, whose final words to Goliath were, “All this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with the sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD’s.”—I Sam. 17:47

Yes, that which we have in our hand may be only a smooth stone and a slingshot, but if the LORD indicates it is acceptable in his service, it will be blessed abundantly. Just what do we have in our hand?

### **In Mary’s Hand**

In reverie, let us once more go back the many years to the time of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Imagine ourselves in a home in Bethany where Jesus and his disciples are gathered at a meal. We behold this scene, and among those at the table we note Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead. As we stand watching, we see a woman in the doorway, manifesting great agitation of spirit, as though uncertain about a decision. We reach her side and notice something in her hand, but before we can inquire

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concerning it she moves quickly toward our Lord. When she reaches him, we see that it is Mary. She anoints Jesus with the costly ointment from the alabaster box we had previously observed in her hand.

Some of the disciples expressed indignation, saying, "To what purpose is this waste?" (Matt. 26:8) But Jesus defended her, saying that she had poured this ointment on him in preparation for his burial. Of course this was meaningless to them at that time; they did not know that he was shortly to die on the cross. Nevertheless, the tone of his remarks was such that she felt commended, and the disciples felt reprov'd. All Mary had in her hand was the 'alabaster box of very precious ointment'. (vs. 7) Probably this was Mary of Bethany, so desirous of showing her love for the Lord, because he had awakened her brother, Lazarus, from the dead.

Did the Lord bless this simple act of devotion? Indeed he did! When the alabaster box was broken the perfume quickly filled the room. Its fragrance is with us to this day, wherever we are, as we recall her act of devotion at this very moment. This is true because Jesus said, as recorded in Matthew 26:13, "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."

How beautifully this illustrates the LORD's approval of our serving one another. But one may ask, in doubt, "What can I do to be a blessing to my brethren?" To such we would reply, "What is that in thine hand?" If the LORD so appreciated Mary's act of simple devotion that he decreed it should be told wherever the Gospel was preached, would he not be mindful of each thought of love one of us has toward another? And if an attempt is made to express this love, asking the LORD's blessing, it shall surely be blessed.

How often a pen in the hand of a saint has been used by the LORD to bring blessings to someone. We can so

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easily, without much expense of time or money, be the source of encouragement to our isolated brethren. It matters not if our hands are gnarled with arthritis. Our aching fingers can reach out to others with messages of love and encouragement, which the LORD will surely bless. It may be that in our hand is just a stick, or stone, perfume, or pen, but by the LORD's grace these can be used to bless others if our hearts are willing. What is that in thine hand?

### **In Paul's Hand**

Once again our minds go back to the period of the Early Church. In Corinth we walk close by the water's edge and there behold men at their several tasks. Fishermen are coming in from their night of toil. Laborers are bending their backs as they unload the ships from distant ports. And then we note two men in animated conversation while still hard at work. Of the elder we inquire, "What is that in thine hand?"

The hand held out for us to inspect had, grasped between the thumb and forefinger, a needle strung with cord. We ask of him, "What kind of work do you do?" The answer, clear and forthright, comes back, "I serve God with this needle and cord." This imagined conversation could have taken place if we had there talked to the Apostle Paul. Because, when he was called of God and had to leave his high position as a Pharisee, all he had in his hand was the needle and cord which he had learned to use as a sail and tentmaker. It was all he possessed at the time, but he was willing to use it to earn the money with which he paid for his pilgrimage. And how wondrously God blessed him in the service of the church.

In Acts 18:1-3 we read, "Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; and found a Jew named Aquila. . . . Because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers." Paul's time and talent was consecrated to

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God, and he considered himself merely the steward of these things which God could and did bless. His trade, which could be a laborious one, was, nevertheless, a means of livelihood. By engaging in it, his ministry to the Early Church could be financed by himself, without putting a burden on anyone else.

Note well Paul's love for, and dedication to, his brethren as we read I Thessalonians 2:7-9: "We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the Gospel of God."

### **In Our Hands**

What is in our hands? Some of us may be salesmen, mechanics, gardeners, homemakers, or one of many other occupations. But do we consider it a means of serving God? Have we prayed that God open our eyes to our privileges, and seeing them, have we joyfully attempted to fulfill God's will? To a true child of God, only such a course can bring full joy and peace of heart.

To Moses of old, God blessed a stick in his hand; and with Gideon it was the earthen pitcher and lamp. God blessed young David's efforts with the pebble from the brook; and Mary used her precious perfume. Faithful Paul wrought 'night and day' with his needle and cord, so that he could preach the Gospel. We must have something in our hand which we can use to praise the LORD.

Our prayer is just this: "Dear LORD, Help us to recognize what tools or talents we possess, with which we can serve and praise thee. And, humbly, we ask thy blessing to be upon our efforts to faithfully use these tools that you have put into our hands, to serve thy people, and thy truth, and thus to serve thee. Amen." □

Brother S. Koska, Buffalo, NY, 1974 Convention Talk

### Our Vision of Hope

THE APOSTLE PAUL tells us in Galatians 5:25, that if we live in the Spirit we are to also walk in the Spirit. This is the desire of every consecrated Christian. With this desire, and by the grace of God, we have been given a vision of hope centered in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 4:6,9), a hope that is the driving force of every Christian life, based upon faith in the Word of God.

The more we appropriate the benefits he has provided, the more we learn to appreciate God's greatness and glory—and, thus, the more will be our endeavor to be like him. We will strive to emulate the great character attributes—his zeal, and certainly his love—we see in his Word of truth through his gracious and merciful plan of redemption revealed therein. Exceeding great and precious promises have been given to us enabling us, by faith, to receive still further glimpses of his purposes, and thus to have understanding of how to cooperate with, and to seek to please him.

The Prophet Isaiah was favored with a spectacular vision which revealed the glory of the LORD. Beginning with Isaiah 6:1, we read, "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the Temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved

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at the voice of him that cried and the house was filled with smoke.

“Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

“Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.”—Isa. 6:1-10.

In the preceding chapters of Isaiah, we are given an account of how the nation of Israel continually gravitated toward a condition of sin and idolatry, losing their favor with God. But when corrected, punished, and brought back into favor with God, they enjoyed seasons of prosperity. We find, however, that their situation of favor with God lasted only for short periods of time before, once again, they were found delving into the same sinful conditions from which they previously had repented.

As we read these accounts it is interesting to recognize the method that God used in his dealings with Israel. First, he would chide them. For example, through the prophet he told them, “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” (Isa. 1:3) The LORD here reminded the nation of Israel that they did not remember nor appreciate the favors that he had given to them—they forgot so quickly. He contrasted them to animals, who

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know by whom they are fed, and are quick to look for food in its usual place.

He then instructed them saying, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well." Finally, God issued a plea to them saying, "Come now, and let us reason together saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—Isa. 1:16-18.

In these verses we see the attitude that God maintained toward his people. Although *he* was always concerned about *their* welfare, we find that these divine offers to accept repentance frequently fell upon deaf ears. Consequently the LORD deemed it necessary to send a different message to them through the Prophet Isaiah, to encourage not only the nation of Israel to mend their ways, but also to honor Isaiah's faithfulness by allowing him to be the bearer of God's message.

The next vision seen and recorded by Isaiah showed the superlative majesty of God. It spoke of his greatness and his glory. His holiness is also most markedly brought to our attention by the acclaim of the seraphim who declared, "I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up. . . . Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts." (Isa. 6:1,3) We recognize immediately that the prophet is portraying the same vision that we see: the great Creator of the universe has been revealed to us as everlastingly high and lifted up, even as is our glorified Lord Jesus, who is referred to as 'sitting upon his great white throne' in glory.—Rev. 20:11

Continuing, the seraphim said to one another, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." We understand that this particular prophecy tells of the future time when the glory of the LORD shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together. (Isa. 40:5) This will be a time when blessings shall pour forth—a time when the majesty of Jehovah's righteous character and

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government shall be fully revealed and appreciated. The great Creator of the universe will be revered not only by Israel, but all the world of mankind. It is only from this future prophetic standpoint that we can understand the truth of these words of the angel. The whole world has never in history been *filled* with the glory of the LORD. On the contrary, the earth is full of sin and violence, and every evil work continues to prosper under the dominion of the great Adversary, the prince of this world—Satan.

The Apostle Peter in I Peter 1:12 tells us that the prophets wrote especially for the benefit of the church class. God wanted them to know that this evil world would not prevail forever, but, as expressed in our Lord's model prayer, that eventually God's kingdom would come and his will would be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven. Only then—with evil destroyed and the knowledge of the LORD filling the earth—will this prophecy be fulfilled. The whole earth will then, indeed, be full of the LORD's glory!

In the meantime, we as the LORD's people are to patiently wait for this day to come. It *will* come in due time, as the LORD has promised. While in ignorance the world also waits for the manifestation of the sons of God, we have the knowledge that it will surely come. (Rom. 8:19) Some grow weary in waiting for this promised time, but though it seems to tarry, we are told to wait for it, for it will surely come. (Hab. 2:1-3) Yes, in the meantime, we are always to be ready to serve him who so much deserves our worship and our service, and to endure any opposition which might come our way, for his name's sake.

In this particular vision which Isaiah was given, we recognize how the holiness and the greatness of God is emphasized. We notice the effect the repetition of the word 'Holy, holy, holy!' had upon Isaiah. Immediately he began to lament his unworthiness, saying, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell

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in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." What effect does it have upon us, as we consider this scripture as it tells us of the ultra-holiness of Almighty God!

The account tells us that the doorposts shook at the sound of the seraphim's voice as he delivered this message, which so deeply thrilled the prophet. As we see and hear and recognize this same vision of our wonderful God, we are also thrilled by it. We feel, even as Isaiah felt, unworthy to see or hear such a great sight, or to speak in the divine presence.

One of the most important traits of character in the heart of the earnest Christian is that of humility. If we do not possess this trait of humility and meekness, the LORD simply cannot use us. Progress in the narrow way will be very slow and difficult, if *any* can even be made. We cannot evaluate another individual's progress, but we can recognize our own imperfections. And if we ourselves fight a good fight along the line of overcoming pride, there are many promises that tell us God will help us, by his grace.

This was the case with Isaiah. He was humble and meek enough to be objective concerning his imperfections. He recognized his condition of utter helplessness and sinfulness, and he said, "Woe is me." To paraphrase his thoughts, we might say with him, "Our lips are not worthy nor clean enough to join with you, O seraphim, in praising the great king, even as much as we would like to." We can, at times, feel the same way as Isaiah, as we picture him in this repentant condition. How many of us have gone through the same experiences of helplessness and insufficiency? But, if God finds this condition of humility in us, as we intensely deplore the imperfections within ourselves, and notes, also, how much we rejoice in divine perfection, he knows as he sees this condition of our hearts, that eventually we may be ready for usefulness in his service. This is our great vision of hope!

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As Isaiah lamented his imperfection and that his lips were inadequate for telling the message of divine glory, one of the seraphim brought a live coal from off the altar. With it, he touched the prophet's lips. Symbolically, we would understand this to mean that the LORD is saying to Isaiah, "Since you have realized your own blemishes and you recognize divine goodness, you, by this act, shall now be granted special powers of speech and given words which are beyond your natural ability. Inspired by Me, your lips will be eager to tell of the great message of salvation and divine love. And what grand results will flow from your efforts!"

Isaiah was cleansed from sin. The seraphim said: "Lo, this [coal] hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." The vision had its designed effect upon the prophet, and his heart was quickened with a desire to further engage in serving his God. Consequently, in the vision he heard the LORD inquire for a faithful servant, saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" Quickly Isaiah responded, saying, "Here I am, send me."—Isa. 6: 6-8

As we seek to understand the lesson of this vision given to Isaiah, we believe it would be wise to use caution concerning its proper interpretation. In the vision, the prophet was considered by God to be cleansed after his lips were touched by the coal. He then received divine inspiration to speak and write the words of the vision. The anti-type of this symbolic prophecy is now, during this Gospel Age, when the cleansing of our lips, and of our whole being, is accomplished in a very different way. Our reckoned cleansing, or justification, is accomplished through faith in the blood of Christ. We remain in this condition of justification by continually making use of the cleansing effect of the Word of truth—the water of truth.

Although our understanding of God's plan comes through the guidance of God's Holy Spirit we are not 'divinely inspired', as was the Prophet Isaiah. The power

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granted to him by the Holy Spirit, to speak and to write under divine inspiration, is not ours to receive.

We realize, as the Apostle Paul tells us in I Corinthians 12:4, that there are many different kinds of gifts given by the LORD, during different dispensations, but they are all bestowed through the same Holy Spirit. They work in different ways, but are given by the same LORD, for the same purpose—the blessing of his people. These gifts have diverse operations, but it is all the same God which worketh all in all, and they are manifestations of the Holy Spirit operating in the lives of God's people, which is given to them for their spiritual profit.

We understand that miraculous gifts were common in the Early Church. But, the Apostle Paul instructed them that the day would come when there would be no more need for divinely inspired prophets to bring messages to the church—that speaking in tongues would cease—and that special inspiration of knowledge would vanish away. (I Cor. 13:8) For a number of reasons, all these gifts were necessary for the establishment of the Early Church.

These were new and startling truths which it was necessary to communicate in an authoritative manner. Besides this, many in the Early Church could not read nor write, and certainly could not speak foreign languages; and this Gospel message was to be preached “unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) But once both the Old Testament and the New Testament were available to the people, these special ‘gifts of the Spirit’ would cease to be necessary for the edification of the church. Paul tells us, the Scriptures were all sufficient “that the man of God may be perfect [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”—II Tim. 3:17

In our day, ‘speaking in tongues’ has once again become quite popular in some church groups, but those who properly understand the subject know that the gift of speaking in tongues is no longer operative, and certainly would be of no value if none could interpret the mes-

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sages. There are many admonitions given in the Bible to guide us, and to guard the church living in this time of the end. The Apostle Paul tells us that Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, attempting to deceive even the very elect, if possible. (II Cor. 11:14) Our Lord's own words along this line should put us doubly on guard when we read, "They [false Christs and false prophets] shall show great signs and wonders insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect."—Matt. 24:24

When Isaiah replied to the LORD's question, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" by saying, "Here am I, send me," it eventuated that the message which he was to deliver was a very unpleasant one. Divine wisdom had foreseen that all the warnings, the threats, and the chastisements which had been prophesied to come upon the nation of Israel would fail to reach their hearts to bring them into a repentant attitude. Because of this, Isaiah was commissioned to bring the nation a message that their land would be made desolate and the people carried into captivity. This was an extremely difficult message for Isaiah to deliver to his own people. Many trials came to him as a result of his faithfulness in presenting it to Israel, and these trials eventually led to his death.

Our Lord Jesus gave a similar denunciation of the faithlessness of the nation of Israel, in these words: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. 23:37,38) Jesus spoke these words just before his crucifixion. Israel as a whole had rejected their Messiah, and as a result was cast off by the LORD and scattered among all the nations of the earth. Only a remnant of Israel accepted Jesus as the Messiah. Through the favor of God, these were the first to receive an opportunity to become

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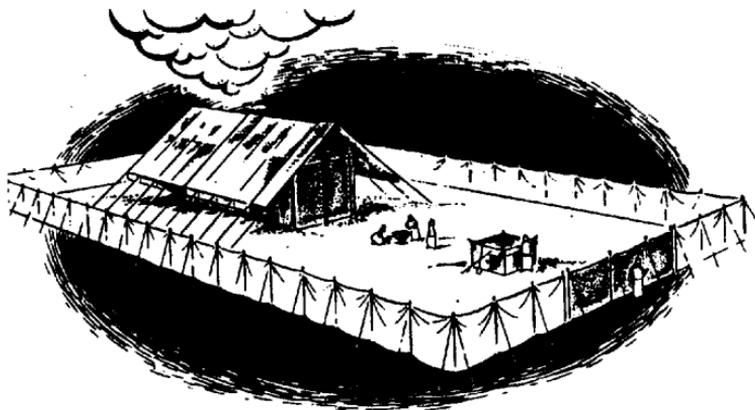
sons of God and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. Later, the invitation was extended to the Gentiles.

We, as the LORD's people, also have a work to do. We too have been given a vision—it is a vision of God's wonderful plan of the ages! The Prophet Habakkuk spoke of it in these words: "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie." (Hab. 2:2,3) The LORD is still seeking out messengers willing to declare his gracious offer of salvation, and many have responded. These also, as did the Prophet Isaiah, say, "Here am I, send me."

Our Heavenly Father has done marvelous things for us because we have agreed to spread this message far and wide! There is still much work to be done! We are living in the harvest period of the Gospel Age, and our present Lord is conducting the harvest work. There is a reaping work to be completed, and in the words of the hymn, we say: "Few are the reapers; LORD, we will join and share in the work of the harvest time. O who will not help to garner in the grains of wheat from the tares of sin!"

God has given us this vision, this enlightenment, this knowledge of present truth, by his Holy Spirit! Through this understanding, we, like Isaiah, see the LORD high and lifted up. We see God's majestic and righteous attributes—wisdom, justice, love and power—and how they have been working harmoniously throughout the ages, furthering his divine plan. Soon the sinful and dying race will be restored to that perfection and fellowship with God which was lost in Eden.

Through the vision, we like the prophet, see the time when the whole earth will be filled with God's glory, and when all mankind will join us in singing the words: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. 4:11     □



## Building a House for God

**T**HE TABERNACLE WHICH God commanded the people of Israel to construct in the wilderness was a “shadow of good things to come.” (Hebrews 8:5; Colossians 2:17) So, it is not simply to get a historical knowledge of Jewish forms and ceremonies that we study the Tabernacle. This ‘shadow’ tells us a great deal about God’s plan of the ages, and how he works with his people today. But let us become acquainted with the various parts of the Tabernacle.

When Jehovah spoke to Moses, he gave him detailed instructions for building the Tabernacle. God named two men who would be especially used for this purpose. “And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the LORD hath called by name Bezaleel . . . and . . . Aholiab. . . . Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer in blue, and in purple,

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in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of those that devise cunning work.”—Exodus 35:30,35

It took nearly a year for Bezaleel and Aholiab and their helpers to complete all the parts that made up the Tabernacle. Since the Israelites were not settled permanently in one location, every item of the Tabernacle had to be portable. And so we discover that although it was very beautiful, it was made entirely of lightweight materials—wood overlaid with thin layers of gold or brass—interlocking pieces, curtain walls and ceilings which could be taken down and folded. All of these parts were designed by God to be carried from place to place, and eventually into the Promised Land of Canaan, as the children of Israel followed the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night wherever it would lead them.

The Tabernacle was set up in the center of the camp of Israel, with the various tribes placed in certain definite positions around it. The Court of the Tabernacle was one hundred and fifty feet long, and seventy-five feet wide. This Court was separated from the camp by a fence of white linen curtains held up by wooden poles. The posts stood in heavy copper sockets; at the top of each pole were silver hooks, from which the curtains were hung. The courtyard had only one entrance called the Gate, on the eastern side. It, too, was a linen curtain, but it was intricately woven with a splendid pattern of blue, purple, and scarlet.

Toward the back of the Court stood the Tabernacle. It was a structure fifteen feet high, fifteen feet wide, and forty-five feet long, which took up about one-third of the space inside the Court. The Tabernacle had two rooms: the first was thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide, and was called the Holy. It was entered through a door on the eastern side, called the First Veil. It was separated from the second, smaller room, by a curtain called the Second Veil. Both the First and Second Veils were made from white linen fabric with figures of angels exquisitely woven

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into the material in blue, purple, and scarlet. The second room was entered by bending down and passing under this Second Veil. The room was a perfect square: fifteen feet high, wide, and long.

The building itself was cleverly made from wide boards which fitted together, one next to the other. Each board was completely covered with a thin layer of gold. But since the wood used was very light, the gold-plated boards were still easily carried. How beautiful this structure was, with a floor of white sparkling sand, walls of gold, and the lovely embroidered door curtains!

The Tabernacle also had several layers of curtains thrown over it for a roof. They covered the Tabernacle, hanging down to the ground so that from the outside the beauty of the golden walls could be seen. The roof was waterproof since the outer layers were made from sheepskins, goatshair, or other leather cloths.

If we had been permitted to visit the Tabernacle, we would enter into the Court from the camp of Israel under the embroidered curtain, or Gate, on the east side. There we would be surrounded by the fence of white linen curtains. Directly in front of us, as we passed under the Gate, we would see the Tabernacle covered with animal skins, and facing us, its beautifully patterned door, the First Veil.

Just in front of the Tabernacle we would see only two things. Closest to the Tabernacle was the laver, which was a huge copper basin filled with water for washing. Between the laver and the Gate of the Court was an altar. It was made of wood covered with copper, and was about seven-and-a-half feet square, four-and-one-half feet high.

Inside the Tabernacle itself, there was very little furniture. But each piece had great importance. In those ancient days it was important because of the part it played in the ceremonies and services; and today each piece has symbolic meaning to the Christian. Passing under the first

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curtain, or First Veil, to our right would be a small golden table. On it were stacked twelve cakes of unleavened bread in two piles, with incense sprinkled on top of both stacks. To our left would be a tall golden candlestick with seven branches. Each branch had a lamp which burned with an especially fine oil. This candlestick supplied the light for the Holy, burning constantly. Directly in front of us, just before the Second Veil, stood a small golden altar. It was an incense altar, and its coals were burned in a small bowl, or censer, placed on its top. A fragrant smoke from this incense altar burned continuously in the Holy.

By going under the Second Veil we would find ourselves inside the Most Holy. Only one article of furniture was placed in this room, but what a magnificent and unique piece it was! The Ark of the Covenant was its name, and to the Jewish nation it represented the Tabernacle, and God's presence with them. The Ark was a large, rectangular box, covered in gold. The cover was called the Mercy Seat, and it was made of solid gold. On it, and part of the Mercy Seat were two golden angels with their wings spread out—one on each end, facing toward each other but looking down at the Mercy Seat. And out from between the two angels there shone a miraculous light called the Shekinah Glory. In Psalm 80:1 we read, "Thou [God] that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." This glow was the only light in the room, and it reflected and sparkled on the golden cherubim without ceasing.

Inside the Ark there were placed three significant objects: the two tables of the Law, Aaron's rod that budded, and a Golden pot filled with manna.—Deuteronomy 31:24; Numbers 17:8-10; Exodus 16:32-34

After Moses had inspected everything they had finished building connected with the Tabernacle, he was very pleased. The LORD spoke to Moses and told him to set it up completely on the first day of the first month. In Exodus 40, verses 17-38, we read just how Moses followed

God's instructions. "So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle.

"And when the cloud was taken up from over the Tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in their journeys; but if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD was upon the Tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys."—Exodus 40:34-38

For the detailed meaning of symbols of the Tabernacle we refer you to the book, "*Tabernacle Shadows*," available from Dawn Publications.

## QUESTIONS

1. How long did it take to build the Tabernacle?
2. Describe the Tabernacle: Where was it located? What was the Court? How large was it? Which direction did the Gate face? How large was the Tabernacle and how many rooms did it have; what were their names and sizes? How many "veils" were there? What were they made of and what was their purpose? How were the walls of the Tabernacle constructed, and what did they look like? The floors? From what materials was the roof constructed? What furniture was in the Court? the Holy? the Most Holy?
3. When the Tabernacle was complete, was Moses pleased with it? Was God pleased with it?
4. What filled the Tabernacle at the time of its dedication?
5. Were all these details in the Tabernacle symbolic? If so, what did they picture in general?

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## SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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**W. Blicharz**  
Seattle, WA August 30-Sept. 2

**R. Gorecki**  
Seattle, WA August 30-Sept. 2

**W. Harp**  
West Newton, PA August 14  
New York, NY 15

Middletown, NY 16  
New York, NY 17,18

**G. Tivador**  
London, Ont. August 11



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## OBITUARIES

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Sister Margaret Kelps, Detroit, MI—May 18. Age, 86.

Sister Sophia V. Kovach, Nanty Glo, PA—June 17. Age, 95.

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## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

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**AUGUST 1**—"Death and life are in the power of the tongue."—Proverbs 18:21 (Z. '99-75 Hymn 360)

**AUGUST 8**—"Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the Son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again."—Luke 10:5, 6 (Z. '04-108 Hymn 233)

**AUGUST 15**—"Now we exhort you, brethren, . . . be patient toward all."—I Thessalonians 5:14 (Z. '03-24 Hymn 344)

**AUGUST 22**—"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"—Luke 2:49 (Z. '03-52 Hymn 28)

**AUGUST 29**—"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss."—James 4:3 (Z. '03-204 Hymn 274)

## CONVENTIONS

**BIBLE STUDENTS' GENERAL CONVENTION, July 27-August 1**—Hope College, Holland, MI.

**INDIANA/OHIO CONVENTION, August 8-11**—Hurstbourne Conference Center, 9700 Bluegrass Parkway, Louisville, KY. Contact Secretary: R. Chastain, 10004 E. 550 N, Columbus, IN 47203 before July 25 to register.  
Phone: (812) 546-5466

**CINCINNATI, OH**—At the Home of the Harps, 2609 Merritview Lane, 45231  
Phone: (513) 825-4112

**JACKSON LABOR DAY CONVENTION, August 31, September 1, 2**—American Legion Post, 3200 Lansing Ave. Contact: Mrs. Ray Lumley, 2531 Ashton Rd. Jackson, MI 49203  
Phone: (517) 782-7252

**NEW YORK LABOR DAY CONVENTION, August 30, 31, September 1**—Holiday Inn, 334 Route 46, East, Wayne, NJ Phone: (201) 256-7000. Contact: Mrs. A. Lange, 76 Longview Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605  
Phone: (914) 948-5428

**SEATTLE LABOR DAY CONVENTION, August 30-September 2**—Holiday Inn of Bellevue, WA. Contact: Ginger Brann, 20 1/2 East Intercity Avenue, Everett, WA 98208  
Phone: (206) 353-8983

**PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, September 14, 15**—Sewickley Grange, Route 136, West Newton, PA. Contact: Mr. Charles Martig, 730 Dunster Ave., Pittsburgh PA 15226  
Phone: (412) 563-6110

**MILWAUKEE, WI, October 5, 6**—For information, contact: Debbie Farchione, 8344 W. Forest Hill Ave., Franklin, WI 53132  
Phone: (414) 529-3485

**CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA, October 5, 6, 7**—Pensioners Clubrooms, Barry Drive & Marcus Clark St. Contact: Graeme Smith, 4 Cataract St., Kaleen, ACT 2617  
Phone: (06) 241-4863

**RICHMOND, VA, October 11, 12, 13**—Roslyn Conference Center, 8727 River Rd. Contact: K. R. Warren, 2805 Stonewall Ave., 23225.

**BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA, October 11, 12, 13**—For information, contact: Jos. Panucci, Dawn Bible Students Association, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073

**GRAND RAPIDS, MI, October 12, 13**—Kenowa Hills Jr. High School, 4252 Three Mile Road, NW 49604. Contact: J. Highway, P.O. Box 1546, 49601  
Phone: (616) 897-4249

