

The Dawn

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When Will God Speak?

***"Be still, and know that I am God:
I will be exalted among the heathen [nations],
I will be exalted in the earth."***

—Psalm 46:10

PEOPLE WORLDWIDE WAIT with bated breath in fear of what might occur when the United Nations' date for discussion and peaceful negotiations has reached its extremity in the Kuwait situation, and the use of arms begins. It has been predicted that many, many thousands will be killed and wounded before it is ended, if it is ended. At the present time our country and even our government, as well as other governments, are very much divided as to what should be the proper course of action. Nobody wants war. Not anyone wants this kind of carnage to erupt, neither for our own people, nor for the people of the Arab countries. But if peaceful solutions are rejected by the leaders involved, the use of force seems to be the only alternative. The world community cannot allow one country to prey upon another.

This dilemma is not a new experience for the world. For many thousands of years armed conflict has been the ultimate answer in settling disputes. Looking back over history's savage scene of man's inhumanity to man, we find little outcry against this insane course of human affairs until very recent times. And even within our generation, the various efforts to outlaw war, to limit armaments, to settle international differences at the conference table, and of hearkening to a growing worldwide cry for peace, have proven ineffective against man's great propensity for waging war.

Early in 1990 it seemed the great powers of the world had taken some important steps in the direction toward world peace. After nearly half a century of 'cold war' sprinkled with some very hot spots in Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, the Near

East, and Central America, the new prospects for a more peaceful globe seemed almost too good to be true. And they were! Now the world is again poised for conflict.

Is there No Hope?

But nothing is gained by dwelling too long on the troubles of the world. It is sufficient if we realize that both from the standpoint of reality, and the fulfillment of Biblical prophecies, man has reached his extremity. And this means, also, that the time has come in human experience when divine authority and power will soon manifest itself in the affairs of men. It is this that the LORD refers to in our text, saying, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen [nations], I will be exalted in the earth."

This, then, is the hope of those who put their trust in God! As these look ahead into this new year of 1991, it is with confidence that nothing will happen that will interfere with the ultimate and glorious outcome of the divine purpose. To know this, and to be assured of it, is a great source of courage and strength, and a safeguard against becoming entangled in the countless and meaningless controversies which make up the confusion of this chaotic and dying world.

That the prophecies of the Bible which describe the ending of Satan's world and the time when the kingdom of Christ will be manifested for the blessing of the people are now being fulfilled, there can be no doubt. And happy are those who are able to discern the meaning of the many signs of this momentous era in which we are living. However, to enjoy this knowledge does not mean that we can look ahead into 1991 and foresee in detail just what will happen. We do not know who will be the world's leaders, thrust into the limelight of history. We do not know whether or not war will break out in the Middle East, or somewhere else, or at all. What we do know is, that regardless of what happens, God's kingdom plans will neither be thwarted nor delayed.

In the opening verse of the psalm from which our text is taken David wrote, "God is our refuge and strength, a very

present help in trouble." God has always helped his people in their every trouble; and this text has been a great comfort to all in every part of the age who have put their trust in him. But it comes to us at the present time with even greater meaning, for the verses which follow indicate that the psalmist's use of the term "trouble" is an evident reference to what Daniel described as "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."—Dan. 12:1

Jesus quoted Daniel's prophecy, and indicated that its fulfillment would be at the end of the age, and the time of his second presence. (Matt. 24:21,22) It is descriptive of the very time in which we are living, this time when, as Jesus foretold, the hearts of the people would be filled with fear. (Luke 21:25,26) And as the world now looks ahead into the infant year of 1991, there is nothing in sight to allay their fears, nothing to give assurance that the calamity of war which threatens so ominously, will not come upon them.

But for those who put their trust in the LORD it is different. These find shelter behind the fortress of God's promises, and can say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." (Ps. 46:1,2) The 'earth', as used here, is a symbol of the present humanly constituted social order which the Apostle Paul described as "this present evil world." (Gal. 1:4) It is the removal of this 'earth', with all the calamitous events associated therewith, that is causing the hearts of the people to be filled with fear. But "we will not fear," said David, and the reason we do not fear is that "God is our refuge and strength."

The psalmist spoke of the "mountains" being "carried into the midst of the sea," and then added, "though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." (vs. 3) Jesus used the roaring of the sea and waves to illustrate the restless, discontented attitude of the people in this time of worldwide distress. (Luke 21:25) The Prophet Isaiah also referred to it, saying, "Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the

seas; and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty ["many," *Margin*] waters! The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind."—Isa. 17:12,13

It would be difficult to imagine a more vivid picture than this of the chaotic state of the nations today. There is unrest everywhere, which is apparent here in the United States, for the bloody business of war keeps this country off-balance politically, economically, socially, militarily, and quite divided as to which is the right way. But in other countries it is even worse, particularly in the Middle and Far East, where the masses, seething with unrest, have "crested," as one observer puts it—they are "a war waiting to happen."

Observers who study this situation speak a unanimous warning of the danger this unrest is posing for the western world. Yes, all the great 'mountain' kingdoms and governments are being lashed by the raging seas of human passion. Beginning with 1914, many of them have already toppled over into the 'sea', and the remaining ones are gradually giving way to the strain placed upon them by the demanding 'waves' of the downtrodden masses.

Viewed from the standpoint of human wisdom, this chaotic world situation is a frightening one; but we will not fear because we know that in it all, a divine purpose is being worked out, even that purpose described by the Prophet Haggai when he wrote that Jehovah would "shake all nations," and that then "the desire of all nations shall come." (Hag. 2:7) Certainly we are now in that shaking period, and we can rejoice that in the LORD's own due time he will say to the turbulent masses, "Be still, and know that I am God."

"The Earth Melted"

But the time has not yet come for the LORD to speak peace to the nations. A further 'shaking' is needed in order for the people to be convinced that they cannot, by their own wisdom

and power, establish peace and security in the earth. For this reason the LORD's voice is now being heard in another way. Verse 6 of the prophecy reads, "The heathen (*Hebrew*, "nations") raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted." The 'voice' of the LORD is a symbol of his authority and power; and just as the Prophet Haggai indicates that it is the LORD who is now 'shaking' the nations, so David is telling us the same thing, describing the breaking down of a social order as the 'melting' of the earth. So, whether we think of the earth as being 'removed', or 'melted', or as being 'shaken', the idea is that man's world is coming to an end.

But this does not alarm the people of God. They agree with the Apostle Paul that it is an "evil world." (Gal. 1:4) Taking heed to the Master's assertion that he had called his disciples out of this 'world', they endeavor to follow the instructions of the Apostle John not to love it. Indeed, this 'present evil world' is characterized by sin, by selfishness, by greed, by graft, by oppression, and by war; so the righteous rejoice in their knowledge that such a world is coming to an end, for they know that in its place will be established a new world, even the kingdom of Christ.

It is true, of course, that the LORD's people are in the midst of the 'time of trouble' which is causing the removal of the symbolic earth—"this present evil world"—and are subject to the difficulties confronting the people incidental to the shaking and melting processes all around them. But they do not fear, for as David declares, "The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." (vs. 7) While the LORD is abundantly able to give physical protection to his people when it is his will to do so, our greatest source of comfort and strength is in the understanding he gives us of the meaning of world distress—that it is working out for the people that great destiny of peace and blessing which he has promised so many times throughout his Word.

To God's people, the invitation is extended, "Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he

breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire." (vss. 8,9) Great and widespread are the desolations which already have been made in the earth. David asserts that these have been made by the LORD. It would be difficult to harmonize this with the fact that God is merciful and kind and loving, were it not for the further explanation of the divine purpose in what is being done; for it is by this means, the psalmist explains, that the LORD makes wars to cease unto the ends of the earth.

No one should have difficulty in understanding this, for all know that one of the chief characteristics of this present evil world has been war; that the final arbiter of all its disputes has been war. It is clear, we think, that the only way to "make wars to cease" is to destroy the system that has legalized, and oftentimes glorified war. So it is that when those who are enlightened by the Word of God accept the invitation to "behold the works of the LORD," and they see "what desolations he hath made in the earth," they also discern the necessity and the glorious objective to which it is leading. Because of this, they do not fear, for they know that the infinite wisdom and almighty power which control the universe are working out a glorious purpose which, when fully consummated will reveal his mercy and love in the promised blessing of all the families of the earth.

"Wait Ye upon Me"

Throughout all the centuries, those who have loved righteousness have often been perplexed as to why the LORD continued to permit iniquitous conditions to flourish in the earth. The proud, the arrogant, and the vile have often been the ones who have flourished, while the meek and the pure have suffered. In every generation, man's inhumanity to man has made countless thousands mourn.

It is, seemingly, in answer to this quandary of his people that Jehovah said, "Wait ye upon me, . . . until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them

mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured by the fire of my jealousy." (Zeph. 3:8) This indicates that at no time has the LORD been unmindful of conditions in the earth which have been so contrary to his will, and that in his own due time and way he purposed to make a 'desolation' of the selfish institutions of man which have been largely responsible for them.


The LORD expressed a similar thought through the Prophet Isaiah, saying "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once." (Isa. 42:14) It was only because God, in his wisdom, knew that greater good would be accomplished by refraining from interference in the downward course of man into sin by waiting for his own due time to intervene, that this present evil world was not destroyed long ago. Satan, the archenemy of God and of man, has been allowed to be its 'god' from the first.—II Cor. 4:4

In Isaiah 42:13, the prophet gave us a partial explanation of the manner in which the LORD would bring about the destruction of Satan's world. He said, "The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies." The 'cry' and the 'roar' here mentioned would seem to have about the same significance as the 'voice' of God which David declared would cause the 'earth' to 'melt'. It is the exercise of divine authority and power in whatever ways and by any agencies the LORD might use.

One of these methods is suggested by the statement that the LORD shall stir up jealousy like a man of war. In a description of the final phase of this great time of trouble, we read that the LORD will call for a sword, and that "every man's sword shall be against his brother." (Ezek. 38:21) The thought of these various expressions seems to be that the LORD, in his own way, and through agencies unknown to us, brings about the destruction of man's world by causing its many selfish factions to rise up in jealousy and fear, and to destroy one another.

And what an effective method this will ultimately prove to be in making wars to cease unto the ends of the earth! For this to be accomplished, more is needed than simply the destruction of the implements of war. Before wars will cease, the entire concept of war must be destroyed in the minds of the people. The glory must be stripped away from it. And man must be made to loathe the very thought of war. There is no better way to accomplish this than for the nations to bring to ruin, by means of war, the very civilization under which they live. Surely this will go a long way toward making the people realize the utter folly of war.

And this is fully in keeping with God's method of dealing with the human race from the very beginning. He has permitted evil so that man might have an opportunity to learn, by experience, its terrible consequences. Moses, in his prayer, wrote concerning God that "thou turnest man to destruction." (Ps. 90:3) Yes, because the 'world' has sinned, God allows it to suffer the natural consequences. And through the desolation which the LORD is now making in the earth, man is having an opportunity to learn just exactly where disobedience to his laws ultimately leads—total destruction. Through this lesson, the people—those who profit by it—will learn that their



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wholehearted obedience to God and his righteous laws soon to be spread abroad in the earth, will lead to an eternity of joy!

Only a knowledge of the divine plan makes it possible to reconcile the thought of God's love with what is occurring in the earth today. After saying that God turns man to destruction, Moses added, "and sayest, Return, ye children of men." (Ps. 90:3) This 'returning' will be in the resurrection, when all the condemned race will be awakened from the sleep of death and given an opportunity to profit from their experience with evil in this age. This includes those who are now being destroyed incidental to the 'melting' of the symbolic earth.

Speaking Peace to the Nations

At the present time, the 'voice' of the LORD—his 'cry', his 'roar'—is stirring up turmoil and confusion among the nations. But how different it will be when he speaks to the raging waves of human passions, saying, as our text declares, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." Just as the LORD has the necessary agencies through which his voice of authority accomplishes the destruction of Satan's world, so when he speaks peace to the nations, it will be with an authority they cannot resist.

"I will be exalted in the earth," Jehovah declares. He has permitted his authority to be flouted by man from the time that Adam transgressed his law. Throughout all the centuries since that time the human race has been in rebellion against him. However, he does not intend this situation to continue forever. The words of our Lord's prayer: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done," indicate that it is God's purpose to reestablish his will in the hearts and lives of men. It is to make way for this kingdom that the present evil world is now being destroyed.

It will require the entire thousand years of Christ's kingdom to establish divine authority in every respect. Paul wrote that Christ "must 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) Among the first enemies to be destroyed are the selfish and unrighteous institutions of Satan's

already in process of being accomplished, and the subduing and destruction of the enemies of God and of righteousness will continue until death itself, man's greatest enemy, is destroyed.

It will be then that God's name will be fully exalted in the earth. The Apostle Paul explained that the task of putting down insubordination to divine rule was to be accomplished by Christ, through the kingdom agencies. He indicated that when this is fully accomplished, Christ himself will become subject to his Father, "that God may be all in all." (1 Cor. 15:25-28) Only then will the prayer, "Thy will be done," be fully answered. But we thank God that the conditions which are now so distressing to the world, causing fear to fill the hearts of all people, are to those who understand the plan of God a token that the LORD is no longer 'refraining' himself from interfering in the affairs of men; that his 'jealousy' against sin and a sinful world is already 'devouring' the symbolic earth, and that soon, through the messianic kingdom, divine authority and power will be manifested in terms of life-giving blessings.

After assuring us of his intention to 'devour' the whole 'earth' with the 'fire' of his 'jealousy', the LORD adds, "then will I turn to the people a pure language [or message of truth], that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:9) Thus again is indicated the full extent to which God's name and authority will be exalted in the earth following the full collapse of this present evil world.

As we begin this New Year, it is with increasing evidence that the time when the LORD will speak peace to the nations is near. May this assurance fill our hearts with comfort and keep out the fear which is everywhere so prevalent. Entering 1991 armed with the strength of this comforting hope, may it be with greater determination than ever before to "seek first the kingdom of God," and to tell the whole world the blessed tidings of that kingdom, that it will soon become apparent in its power and great glory, to the everlasting joy of all who will obey its righteous laws. □

LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 3

For Whom Are You Concerned?

KEY VERSE: *"Which now of these . . . was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."*—Luke 10:36,37

SELECTED SCRIPTURE : Luke 10:25-37

THIS PARABLE WAS spoken by Jesus in response to a question posed by a 'lawyer', probably a Levite, who was tempting Jesus to say something that could be misconstrued as being against the Law of Moses. His question was, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus turned the question back by asking what the Law said. The lawyer, well acquainted with the Law, quoted that portion which reads, "Thou shalt . . . love thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus said, "Thou hast answered right. This do and thou shalt live."

Jesus knew that God had promised life to anyone who could keep the Law inviolate, so by answering the lawyer's question in this way the religious rulers could not ac-

cuse him of setting aside the teachings of Moses. Jesus knew, of course, that the lawyer could not actually gain eternal life by keeping the Law. This was not the fault of the Law, but was due to the imperfection of the people, resulting from original sin. As Paul explained, the Law was designed to give life, but failed only because of the inability of fallen humans to measure up to its requirements.—Rom. 7:10-14

Jesus, who was able to read the hearts of his opponents, knew that the lawyer was not sincerely inquiring the way of life. Had he been, doubtless the Master would have directed his mind beyond the Law as a source of life.

The lawyer found no fault with the reply. He had been referred to the Law, and he was of the group which professed great loyalty to the Law. But wishing, perhaps to justify himself in the sight of his friends, he asked Jesus for a clarification of the commandment, saying, "Who is my neighbor?"—Luke 10:29

It was in response to this question that Jesus related the parable of the good Samaritan. The priest and the Levite of the parable were two people who, according to their standing as religious servants, should have shown compassion for the robbed and beaten man, regardless of who he may have been. But they did not. They "passed by on the other side," as though to ease their conscience by not getting too clear a look at the suffering man.

In the parable there was also "a certain Samaritan," who, "as he journeyed," also came across the man who had been robbed and beaten, and was close to death. The Israelites despised the Samaritans, who, so far as they were concerned, were

not God's people at all. This made the lesson of the parable all the more pointed to those to whom it was first addressed, for this despised Samaritan did show compassion for the nearly dead man lying by the roadside. He bound up the man's wounds, "Pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." He even arranged for the innkeeper to continue caring for the injured man, promising to pay the bill.—vss. 33-35

After relating the parable, Jesus asked the lawyer which one of these three men was "neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves." There was only one answer the lawyer could give, which was that the man who showed mercy was the real neighbor. Then Jesus said to the lawyer, "Go, and do thou likewise." In other words, Jesus told the lawyer that if he manifested the same spirit of compassion and helpfulness toward those in need, as the Samaritan did, he would be fulfilling the commandment to love his neighbor as himself. □

Does God Care?

KEY VERSE: *"For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him who knocketh it shall be opened."*—Luke 11:10

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Luke 11:5-13

THIS PARABLE FOLLOWS the well-known outline of prayer which Jesus gave to his disciples when they requested that he teach them to pray. Unmistakably, the lesson is *perseverance* in prayer. Since Jesus preceded this particular parable with the outline of his model prayer we can take for granted that when he stressed the importance of continuing to ask in order to receive the blessings for which we stand in need, he is speaking of the things which the Heavenly Father is pleased to give us.

Prayer is communion with God, and Jesus would have us remember that we need this communion. We should not suppose that the blessings he is pleased to give us need be requested only once, at the beginning of the Christian life, or even at the beginning of each day. Think of the request, "Thy kingdom come."

How many times this petition has gone up to our Heavenly Father during the Gospel Age! This prayer is still in the hearts and on the lips of God's consecrated people, but his will is not yet being done in earth as it is in heaven.

When we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," we do not expect that this one petition will suffice for weeks to come. Although the LORD understands our daily needs, he wants us to realize those needs, and to become more conscious of our source of supply, by the repeated request of things which our Heavenly Father promises to supply.

Immediately following the parable, Jesus raised the question, "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Of if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? Or if

he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"—vss. 11-13

Verses 5-9 give an encouraging lesson based upon the parable. The man of whom bread is asked was indifferent; he did not wish to inconvenience himself to get up in the night to give bread to a friend who is in need. He was not a wicked man—but his own comfort seemed more important than his friend's need. Eventually the man, "evil," or imperfect, though he was, did bestir himself to answer his friend's repeated petition. "How much more," Jesus said, "shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Our Heavenly Father is not moved in any sense by self-interest, nor is he indifferent. He is wholly unselfish and is interested only in what is best for his children. We can never go to our Heavenly Father at a time when it is inopportune to him. He never

sleeps; he is never weary. If it seems that he does not grant our petitions immediately, it is because in his wisdom he knows what is best for us as New Creatures, and because he wants us the more earnestly to seek the blessings which he has promised.

In this lesson the Holy Spirit is referred to as being a necessary gift from God. Jesus reminds us that all our needs as New Creatures are of a spiritual sort—blessings which come to us through the Word of God and our understanding of the precious truths of his divine plan.

The Apostle Paul speaks of the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 5:5) If we have the Holy Spirit, we have the love of God blessing our lives. God's love is evident as he provides for all our needs. We can always be certain that our needs will be supplied, according to the abundance of his grace in Christ Jesus!

Jesus concluded with these words: "I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."—vss. 5-9 □

How Forgiving Are You?

KEY VERSE: *"Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?"—Matthew 18:33*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 18:21-34*

THE ACT OF forgiveness is an expression of mercy, and mercy is a quality of love. Jesus' instructions to Peter to forgive 'seventy times seven', must be understood as reflecting Jesus' own attitude toward erring ones, and also the attitude of his Heavenly Father.

"The kingdom of heaven," Jesus said, "is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants." The principal lesson of this parable is that the LORD is desirous that every member of the "little flock" to whom it is his good pleasure to give the kingdom will possess the same disposition of mercy as that which he himself exercises. Mercy is one of the aspects of true holiness, and we are admonished to be holy as God is holy.

While the parable pertains particularly to the kingdom class now being developed,

we may take a broader view of the LORD's mercy than that which is seen in his dealing with his servants of the present age. Divine justice called for the condemnation of the human race to death because of sin, but the love of God provided a way of escape from this condemnation. Thus we read that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16

Divine mercy could not operate toward the fallen race apart from the satisfaction of the debt by means of the ransom, but it was the attitude of mercy, or of forgiveness, that prompted the Heavenly Father to give his Son. Paul wrote, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. 5:8

It was this love of God expressed through Christ, which constrained us to present ourselves in consecration to do his will. (II Cor. 5:14,15) Thus we became the "servants," in the parable, and our appreciation of divine mercy and love should influence us to be merciful.

In reckoning with his servants, one is brought before the king who owes him a huge debt. The situation for this servant is hopeless unless the king exercises mercy toward him. The king was "moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt."

This servant to whom so much had been forgiven, did not show mercy toward a fellow-servant who owed him but a small debt. His colleagues, and the king also, were displeased with this ungrateful attitude, and the man was properly punished. The purpose of this parable is to emphasize the importance of mercy in our dealings with one another, especially in our relationship with fellow Christians.

This basic lesson is clearly set forth in the Master's

teachings. He taught us to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." . . . If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matt. 6:12, 14,15

There is no limit to the number of times we should forgive those who trespass against us; for there is no limit to the times we need the LORD's forgiveness.

And it is essential that we have the spirit of forgiveness in our hearts even before forgiveness is asked. This was illustrated by our Heavenly Father's attitude toward the sin-cursed race. It was his spirit of mercy and forgiveness that prompted his gift of our dear Redeemer. Had God waited for the world to repent and seek forgiveness, a Redeemer would never have been provided.

Now that the way has been opened for the sinner's return to favor with God, the divine plan provides for an opportunity in Christ's kingdom for all to know about this provision and to accept it, to repent and to believe.

"Shouldst not thou also have had compassion?" ☐

How Do You Serve Christ?

KEY VERSE: *"Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."*—**Matthew 25:40**

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: **Matthew 25:31-46**

WITH THE FAITHFUL Overcomers of the Gospel Age exalted in glory and with Jesus on his throne, the divine plan of redemption and restoration moves into its final phase—the offering of restitution blessings to "all the families of the earth." The parable states that the people of all nations are gathered before God for judgment.

We are informed that the Judgment Day will be a time when the people will learn righteousness. (Isa. 26:9) But those who are evil at heart, who willfully persist in continuing in the way of disobedience, will not learn righteousness in that "land of uprightness," nor will they "behold [recognize] the majesty of the LORD." (Isa. 26:10) These are the ones in the parable who are represented by the 'goats'.

To the 'sheep' class of the parable, the king said, "I was

an hungered, and ye gave me meat: . . . I was an stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me." (vss. 35,36) The 'sheep' were surprised at this, and inquired when had they rendered all these good services?

The king's reply is: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (vs. 40) The expression, 'these my brethren', denotes that the king referred to those on the scene. They are the restored world of mankind at the close of the 1000-year Judgment Day.

While Jesus will be instrumental in awakening the dead world of mankind from the sleep of death, and in restoring the willing and obedient to human perfection, the Heavenly Father will become the 'Father' of the restored world of mankind when the kingdom is turned over to

him at the close of the Millennial Age. He is also Jesus' Father. From this standpoint the 'sheep' will be the 'least' of Jesus' brethren, while his followers of the present age, exalted to divine glory with him, will be the 'greatest'.

The 'sheep' of the parable demonstrate their worthiness of everlasting life by their loving interest in and solicitude for those about them. Hunger, thirst, loneliness, nakedness, sickness, and imprisonment, symbolize a fairly complete cross-section of human needs. The 'sheep' sense these needs of their fellows, and do what they can about them. This becomes part of their character, and they do not realize they are performing deeds so pleasing to the king. They practice the way of love, and so discover that they are worthy of inheriting the dominion of earth which our first parents forfeited through their disobedience.

The 'goats' do not display the qualities of divine love. Their outlook is entirely selfish; they do not enter into the spirit of the kingdom age, nor cooperate with the kingdom agencies for the general wel-

fare of all people. They do not "learn righteousness," but continue in the evil ways of the selfish world in which they had formerly lived, and so they are cut off from life.

Jesus is the 'great king' of the parable, who, together with his bride, will administer the just laws of the kingdom—the future Judgment Day. We know there will be justice for all individuals then. No mistakes will be made. The Prophet Isaiah wrote:

"The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might; . . . and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth."—Isa. 11:2-4

The 'sheep' of the parable hear the king say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (vs. 34) This is the kingdom mentioned in Genesis 1:26-28, that was lost because of sin. □

THE GOSPEL SERIES—PART 2

The Gospel of Mark

"Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations."

—Isaiah 42:1, NIV

EACH OF THE four Gospel writers described Jesus from quite different perspectives. Matthew wrote for Jewish readers, presenting Jesus as a king—the long-awaited Messiah. Luke presented Jesus as a perfect man, one who loved even the despised classes of humanity. John described Jesus as the Son of God, God's personal representative on earth.

The Prophet Isaiah provided the right setting for Mark's presentation of Jesus: "Here is my servant," which is quite a different viewpoint than that taken by the other three writers. Mark's Gospel is considered the best for young people because it is the shortest Gospel, and it is a book of action—many more miracles are here described than in the other Gospels. Mark recorded few of Jesus' discourses, and only four of his parables. There are four "Branch" scriptures in the Old Testament that characterized Jesus in four different ways. Zechariah provided the one that characterizes Mark: "Behold, I will bring forth my **Servant**, the **BRANCH**."—Zech. 3:8

How many views of a building would we want to see before judging it? Certainly more than one. We would prefer to see it from all of its sides. The four Gospels are like four views of Jesus' life. They have similarities, but they also have differences. Their composite accounts result in a word-picture of Jesus that is lifelike and three-dimensional.

Who was Mark?

First of all, Mark was not one of the Twelve Apostles. From the eight references to Mark, or Marcus, we learn several things about him, which we will deal with as we go on. No doubt both names, Mark and Marcus, refer to the same person—the one who wrote the Gospel of Mark, since it is a single Greek word in the New Testament that is translated five times as 'Mark' and three times as 'Marcus'.

In addition to the Roman name, Mark, he also had the name John, which is a Jewish name. (Acts 12:25) This was not unusual at that time, since Israel was under the control of the Romans. We notice the same thing in the Apostle Paul's case—Paul is a Roman name; Saul is a Jewish name.—Acts 13:9

After Peter was thrown into prison in Jerusalem by Herod, he was miraculously released by an angel. He went immediately to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where a prayer meeting was taking place. (Acts 12:12) This shows us that Mary and her son, Mark, were early believers in the Gospel message. Peter was so impressed with Mark that he called him his "son." (1 Pet. 5:13) The term does not imply that he was Mark's father by blood, but that he may have been instrumental in bringing him to the Lord through his personal ministry.

Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on a missionary journey, but before the trip was over he left them. (Acts 13:13) Because Mark did not accompany them to the end of the journey, some time later Paul and Barnabas had a "sharp contention" about taking Mark with them a second time. (Acts 15:39) Paul was upset because Mark had previously left them, no doubt resulting in a more difficult journey. Because they could not agree, Paul and Barnabas separated over this issue—Barnabas went in one direction with Mark, Paul went in another with Silas.

Barnabas was related to Mark, either as a cousin or a nephew. Colossians 4:10 says Mark was "sister's son to Barnabas." However, although Wilson's *Emphatic Diaglott* says

Mark was "nephew" to Barnabas, most translations say he was Barnabas' "cousin." Because they were kinsmen, Barnabas may have taken a more charitable view of Mark's actions. But the Apostle Paul later changed his mind about him, stating that Mark was a great help to him. See II Timothy 4:11.

So Mark was a man who came to a knowledge of the truth early in the Gospel Age. Although not an apostle, he could have heard Jesus speak at Jerusalem. His mother is spoken of as one of the Early Christians, quite possibly learning the truth through the ministry of Peter.

Some Bible scholars claim that Mark received the information described in his Gospel from Peter. Certainly Peter would have had a great influence on Mark's mind, because he could speak from first-hand knowledge. But Mark also had contact with many others who attended the meetings in his mother's home who had been with Jesus and learned of him, and who could also have given first-hand accounts of Jesus' life, ministry, and death, and all the many events concerning which Mark wrote.

The Gospel Itself

Mark wrote for Gentile readership. Therefore, because genealogies would be of no interest to them, he included none. Any Old Testament references given are generally those that Jesus himself quoted, or that others quoted when speaking to him. Since he assumed that his readers did not know the Aramaic language, he often defined the Aramaic words. For two examples: "If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is **Corban**, that is to say, a gift. . . ." (Mark 7:11) "At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, **Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani**, which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—Mark 15:34

In contrast to Matthew, who showed Jesus in the highest of earthly positions—as a king, Mark showed him as a lowly servant. Jesus was, of course, the perfect servant, and is the model we must copy. There are no preliminaries in this Gospel. Jesus, as God's servant, went about his ministry quickly

and effectively. Several words which Mark uses frequently denote this idea of quickness: "Straightway coming up out of the water he saw the heavens opened. . . . Immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness."—Mark 1:10,12

Mark used the words meaning 'straightway' and 'immediately' in the Greek language, 26 times in connection with Jesus and his acts—three times more often than the other Gospel writers combined! Because Mark described a man of action, his account is the most complete concerning the miracles of Jesus. Of the 27 miracles performed by Jesus described in the four Gospels, two-thirds of them can be found recorded in Mark, six of which are only found in his Gospel. One of these concerns healing one who not only was deaf, but who also had a serious speech impediment:

"Some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged him to place his hand on the man. After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, Ephphatha! [This was an Aramaic word which Mark proceeded to define] (which means, Be opened!) At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened, and he began to speak plainly."—Mark 7:32-35, *NIV*

There is one important word which the other Gospel writers used 73 times, but of which Mark completely avoids the use. This is the title *Lord*. The word does occur twice in his writings—once when a Gentile woman addressed Jesus as *Lord*. (Mark 7:28) And the other time is when the word appears in the King James, but it is not found in the oldest Greek manuscripts. (Mark 9:24) Why did Mark choose to avoid the title *Lord*? Possibly because Mark elected to emphasize Jesus' special role as God's *servant* during his earthly ministry, and considered it inappropriate to his purpose to address him as *Lord*.

Unique Passages

Many events that Mark wrote about can also be found recorded in the other Gospels. Of the four parables included in

Mark, one was unique. "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it because the harvest has come." (Mark 4:26-29, *NIV*) In the parable of the sower (Matt.13:3-9), the kind of soil determines what happened to the seed. But in Mark's unique account, the mysterious power of the seed itself is emphasized. In this parable Jesus showed that the Gospel message itself [the seed] contained its own power to grow and produce fruit, and would eventually result in a time of harvest. This is an important lesson.

Many Bible scholars have stated that the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel are spurious, based on the opinion of Prof. Tischendorf. He discovered that the texts were omitted from what is understood to be one of the oldest Greek manuscripts available today. Therefore, it is unnecessary to explain these verses which might be difficult, but not impossible, to explain.

Son of Man Vs. the Son of God

Whose son was Jesus? There are many correct answers. In Mark 6:3, when Jesus preached to his neighbors in the synagogue, they were astonished and said, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary." In Mark 10:47 a blind beggar, hearing that Jesus was passing by, cried out, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." And in the very first verse of his Gospel, Mark said, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

But the title Mark made most use of was, "Son of Man." This title was first used by Jesus of himself, "That ye may know that the **Son of man** hath power on earth to forgive sins."—Mark 2:10

The phrase, 'Son of God', appears only four times in Mark; whereas the title, 'Son of Man', occurs 14 times. Matthew and Luke also use both of these expressions in about the same

proportion; John uses each about the same number of times. However, the phrase, 'Son of man', occurs 84 times in the four Gospels. Sometimes Jesus almost insisted on the use of this title: "The High Priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? [*"Son of God,"* Matt. 26:63] *And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man* sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:61,62) Why did Jesus emphasize the use of this title? Should we think of him as the Son of man, or as the Son of God? To understand the importance of these designations, let us first look at the title, Son of David.

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." (Matt. 1:1) Matthew used the title, Son of David, 9 times in his Gospel, emphasizing it by mentioning it in the very beginning words of his Book. He did this because he wanted his readers to see Jesus as the heir of David, the prophetic fulfillment of the prophecy God gave to David through the Prophet Nathan: "When thy [David's] days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever."—II Sam. 7:12,16

Matthew's Gospel showed Jesus as king, the rightful descendant of David's royal house. Therefore, by saying, Son of David, Matthew was essentially saying that Jesus was the 'inheritor' of what was David's. David had had a dominion. The Jews were living under Roman occupation and certainly knew that dominion had been lost. But they looked for David's heir who would reestablish that dominion.

When God created the first man, Adam, he gave him a dominion. "God said . . . have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28) "What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest

him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet."—Ps. 8:4-6

Because of disobedience, Adam and his children lost their original right to dominion. Who could rightfully claim it? Who would be Adam's rightful inheritor? The 'Son of Adam'—'Son of man', could rightfully claim this title. In Hebrews 2:8,9, the apostle quoted Psalm 8, and then continued, saying: "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."—Heb. 2:8,9

Jesus, as the 'Son of God' was the "heir of all things." (Heb. 1:2) As the 'Son of man' he was the heir to the dominion of earth originally entrusted to the first man, but forfeited by him. He was the great kinsman of mankind who possessed the ransoming power to redeem them from sin and death. His miracles manifested his divine origins. Yet Jesus stressed his kinship with humanity. When asked if he were the Son of God, Jesus answered the High Priest, indicating that what he associated with the title, Son of God, actually belonged to the one who rightfully held the title, Son of man. He echoed the prophetic words of Daniel: "I saw in the night visions and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days."—Dan. 7:13

In John 1:14 we read, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." He did not *materialize* in a human body, as angels had done before him. He was *actually* flesh because he had a human mother; he was perfect because his father was God. In this way, it was possible for him to inherit Adam's dominion, without inheriting the condemnation that passed upon Adam's posterity.

John stressed the importance of acknowledging that Jesus was truly human, saying, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that

confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God."—I John 4:2,3

It is amazing that in spite of such a clear statement, so many Christians continue to insist that Jesus was really divine—part God and part man. He was not divine at his First Advent—he was made human flesh, the Son of man. And even though he is now divine, he still retains this title, and the rightful dominion to which he is entitled. Note Stephen's words: "Behold I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."—Acts 7:56

Concluding Thoughts

The Gospel of Mark is one of four views of Jesus and his ministry. In Mark's presentation we see Jesus as the perfect servant of God. We likewise should consider his life a model for our own. Let us, as he did, do all our tasks quickly, without hesitation.

The last 12 verses of Mark are spurious.

The title, 'Son of man', refers to Jesus as the inheritor of Adam, one who is worthy to inherit the dominion lost by the first man. In like manner he is the 'Son of David', and inherits the throne and dominion of his Father David. But to us, his footstep followers, he is the 'Son of God'. If faithful, we will be with him in heaven as members of his body and joint-heirs in the 'all things' that have become his.

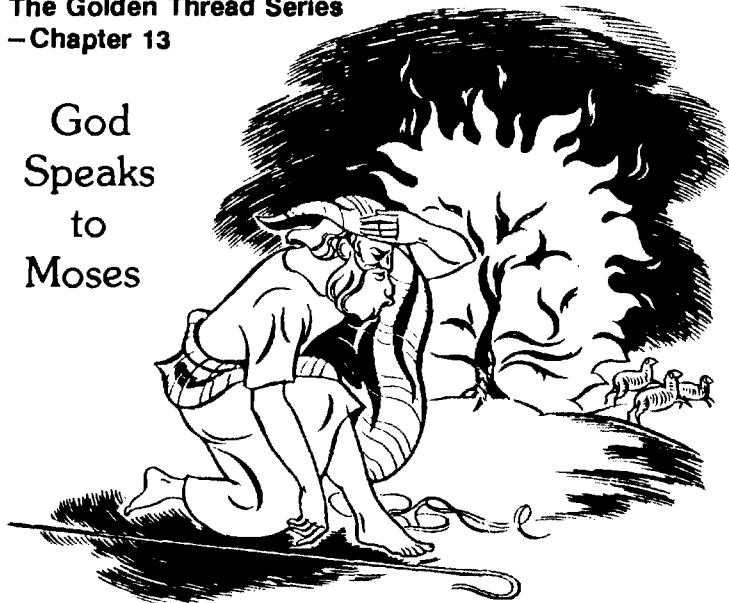
May the example given to us in Mark's Gospel energize us to greater faithfulness and zeal in the service of our Heavenly Father. □

"HATH THOU ENTERED into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail? . . . Out of whose womb came the ice and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it? The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen. Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?"
—Job 38:22,30,31

The Golden Thread Series

—Chapter 13

God Speaks to Moses



WHEN MOSES WAS forty years old, he began to feel an urgent need to do something about freeing his people from Egyptian slavery. Not a day passed that he did not see the cruelty and injustice suffered by the Hebrew slaves. As Pharaoh's adopted grandson, he himself was not suffering with them, although he was a Hebrew. He lived in Pharaoh's palace under his protection, enjoying all the privileges of a prince. (Acts 7:22) But his heart and mind were in great pain every day, until he could stand it no longer.—Acts 7:23; Hebrews 11:24-26

One day, when he was watching some of the work being done, he saw an Egyptian master beating his Hebrew slave

without mercy. Moses became so angry that he plunged head-long between the two men and struck the Egyptian, hitting him so hard that he killed him. After looking all around to make sure he was not being watched, he hid the body in the sand. The next day he was again observing the progress of the work when he saw a fight between two of the Hebrew slaves. When he tried to bring peace between them, one of them rudely asked him, "Who made thee prince over us and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" Moses was shocked and frightened when he realized that the murder was discovered; perhaps he had even been seen hiding the dead Egyptian's body in the sand. (Exodus 2:11-15; Acts 7:26-28) Pharaoh soon heard about this matter, and he decreed that Moses must die for his rash, angry act. Pharaoh had no pity, however, for the many Hebrews who had died at the hand of the Egyptians.

Moses was forced to flee quickly from Egypt to escape Pharaoh's punishment. How would he be able to deliver Israel now? This had become his overwhelming desire—to break the bonds of slavery in which the Egyptians held the Hebrews. This whole strange chain of events began because Moses decided it was time for him to stand up for his people. He had confidence that God would deliver them from Egypt, and return them to Canaan.

This was the promise his God had made to Jacob when the Israelites first came to Egypt to escape the great famine, hundreds of years earlier. Joseph said, "God will surely bring you out of this land of Egypt unto the land of Canaan which he promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." (Genesis 50:24) But, although Moses had thought it was time for him to take action against the oppressors, it was still not God's time. Forty long years would pass before God did begin his work through Moses to return the Israelites to the Promised Land.

When Moses escaped from Pharaoh's anger and fled into the desert, he came at last to the land of Midian. This dry country was several hundred miles southeast of the Egyptian

city of Rameses—east of the Red Sea. There he met a nomad, Jethro, and his family of seven daughters and one son. It was not long before Moses was working for Jethro as a shepherd of his large herds of animals. During this time, Moses married one of his daughters—Zipporah—and they had two sons. (Exodus 2:15-22; 18:4) God was teaching this prince of Egypt how to survive in a wilderness condition. This knowledge would be very useful later on in his life, as we shall see. He also learned patience—to “wait on the LORD.”—Proverbs 20:22

Many times during those forty years Moses must have thought about Egypt and the family he had left behind—an older brother, Aaron, and an older sister, Miriam. They were still feeling the whip of the Egyptian tyrants. How he longed to see them, and to help them. And God had not forgotten his people either, nor his promise to free them. “It came to pass in the process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.” (Exodus 2:23-25) Yes, the old Pharaoh who wanted Moses to die, was dead. As history states, Rameses II took the throne of Egypt and now Moses could return safely.

So now God’s time had come at last! The first step taken by Jehovah was to instruct Moses, his chosen leader, to leave the land of Midian and return to Egypt. The call of Moses was very unique, and dramatic, in order that Moses would be sure to realize that this call was truly from the LORD.

Moses was watching Jethro’s flock, just as he did every day. He had taken them to the far side of the desert, up into Mount Horeb—the Mount of God. Suddenly, an angel of the LORD appeared to 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.” And Jehovah God called to him out of the midst of the bush, and

said, "Moses, Moses." And he answered, "Here I am."—Exodus 3:1-4

What an astonishing way the LORD used, to speak to Moses! God said, "Put off thy shoes for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Then, when Moses became fearful, he assured him that he was the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and that he would bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt.—Exodus 3:1-10

But the once forceful man-of-action had changed during those forty long years in Midian! He was no longer eagerly ready to suddenly leave his home to avenge his people. He was now an eighty-year-old shepherd, rather than the vigorous forty-year-old prince he had been! But very patiently and firmly, God told him that he was indeed his choice to be the great leader of his people, and that he would have God's authority and power behind him.—verse 11

The LORD, Jehovah, outlined the plan of action that Moses should follow, and he gave him amazing signs to use to convince the Israelites and Pharaoh. (Exodus 4:1-9) He also told Moses that Pharaoh would stubbornly refuse to cooperate, making it necessary for God "to smite Egypt with all my wonders" before Pharaoh would let them go.—verse 20

Still Moses was very unsure that he would be able to handle such a great responsibility. So God told Moses that his older brother, Aaron, was already on his way to meet Moses. Aaron would go with Moses and be his spokesman with the people and before Pharaoh. This was the final support Moses needed to convince him. Immediately, he took his family and set off for Egypt. (Exodus 4:10-21) On the way, just as God had fore-told, he met Aaron at Mount Horeb—his dear brother whom he had not seen for forty years—and in God's strength and power, together they embarked on the accomplishment of the great and grand deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt!

(Continued on Page 37)

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ALBERTA

Brooks CIBQ 1340 9:00 a.m.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Duncan CKAY 1500 9:00 a.m.

Duncan CKAY 1500 7:30 p.m.

Nanaimo CHUB 1570 9:30 p.m.

Qualicum-CHPQ 1370 9:30 p.m.

Pasadena

MANITOBA

Winnipeg CKJS 810 9:00 a.m.

QUEBEC

Montreal CFMB 1410 5:15 p.m.

SASKATCHEWAN

Weyburn CPSL 1190 8:45 a.m.

Estevan CJSJ 1280 8:45 a.m.

Overseas Broadcasts

BRITISH ISLES

Radio Caroline (Trans.) KHZ 819-AM 8:45 p.m.

BRITISH WEST INDIES

Grand Cayman Radio Cayman 9:30 a.m.

Trinidad Radio Trinidad 610 10:30 p.m.

ECUADOR (Spanish)

Quito Radio Anconima (Sat.) 99.7-FM 8:45 a.m.

HONG KONG

Radio Villa Verde (Fri.) 6:00 p.m.

ITALY (Italian)

Europe Radio Milano 85.3-FM 11:30 a.m.

Esso Tele Radio Calabria (Fri.)

MHz 102 5:30 p.m.

Radio Corsica Centrale

FM-88-500 FM-92 11:00 a.m.

MEXICO (Spanish)

Caliscén Ranchero XEQC 8:30 a.m.

NEW ZEALAND

Dunedin 4XD 11:15 a.m.

NIGERIA

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

PANAMA (Spanish)

Panama City HOQ 1250 10:30 a.m.

PHILIPPINES

Manila (Sat.) DZAM 1026 KHz 7:15 p.m.

SOUTH AFRICA

Johannesburg (Thurs.) SWAZI Music

Radio 1400 & shortwave 49 & 60 9:00 p.m.

SRI LANKA

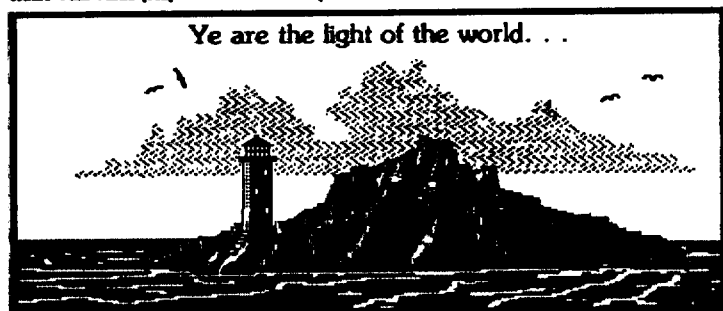
Columbo (Sat.) Radio Sri Lanka 7:15 p.m.

TONGA

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

URUGUAY (Spanish)

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



THE BIBLE ANSWERS – TV Programs

ALABAMA	Channel	MAINE	Channel	Channel	
Montgomery	56	Portland	57	Ashland	59
ARIZONA		MARYLAND		Delaware	56
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CALIFORNIA		MICHIGAN		Fremont	2
Arroyo Grande	66	Detroit	26	Youngstown	20
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Yucca Valley	20	MINNESOTA		Broken Bow	28
FLORIDA		Minneapolis	13	Oklahoma City	7
Daytona	42	MISSISSIPPI		Tulsa	33
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Jupiter	9	McComb	36	Harrisburg	40
Naples	9	Philadelphia	20	Johnstown	9
St. Petersburg	35	Starkville	5	Pittsburgh	63
Tallahassee	9	Tallahatchie	11	TENNESSEE	
Tampa	57	MISSOURI		Harrogate	18
GEORGIA		Cameron	35	Heiskell	12
Columbus	16	Columbia	2	Murfreesboro	27
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DeKalb	7	NEVADA		Mt. Pleasant	54
Plano	30	Las Vegas	33	Sulphur Springs	18
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Urbana	1	Hammondon	8	Killington	18
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Indianapolis	11	Glens Falls	8	Gloucester	51
IOWA		Jamestown	8	Norfolk	68
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Des Moines	33	Rochester	40	Wenatchee	27
Marshalltown	39	Syracuse	14 & 18	WEST VIRGINIA	
KANSAS		NORTH CAROLINA		Huntington	55
Junction City	6	Charlotte	15	* Logan (Mon)	12
KENTUCKY		Henderson	34	WISCONSIN	
Morehead	10 & 7	Raleigh	63	Wausau	43
Mt. Sterling	6 and 2	Wilmington	10	PUERTO RICO	
LOUISIANA		OHIO		Mayaguez	42
Jennings	13	Akron	29		
New Orleans	61				

"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.

QUESTIONS

1. How old was Moses when he realized he must do something to help his people get free from their bondage of slavery?
2. What did he do? What were the results of his actions?
3. Where did Moses go to escape Pharaoh's anger?
4. What caused Moses to return to Egypt?
5. What was Moses' mission?
6. Was he eager to be the leader to free Israel from Pharaoh's grip?
7. Whom did God give Moses as an assistant? What was his chief duty at this time?
8. What lessons can we learn from this portion of Moses' life? ☐

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TALKING THINGS OVER

Financial Report for 1990 for the year ending September 30, 1990

	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
General Fund	\$251,201.43	
Advertising	1,400.00	\$ 90,801.22
Publications	37,474.98	399,490.96
Radio & Television	24,886.42	169,224.86
Traveling Speakers (USA & Overseas)	1,933.50	54,319.50
Audio-Film-VCR Services	3,403.03	100,482.11
Overseas	5,000.00	43,955.78
Investment and Interest Income	<u>267,659.00</u>	<u> </u>
Total before Bequests	\$592,958.31	\$858,274.43
Bequests Received	<u>1,122,939.01</u>	<u> </u>
	\$1,715,897.32	\$858,274.43

During the fiscal year reported above, the Dawn had a loss before bequest of \$265,316.12. Bequests received in the total amount of \$1,122,939.01 produced a fiscal surplus of \$857,622.89. This surplus was credited to our reserve account. Since our reserve continues to be strong, we are looking forward to another year of continued vital participation in the witness work.

Crumbs from the Master's Table

HEROD HAD BEHEADED John the Baptist under the most bizarre circumstances and his conscience, what was left of it, was assailed by superstitious remorse. At this time Jesus went about preaching the kingdom, and performing wonderful miracles of love and mercy, and the people flocked to him. They even considered taking him by force to make him a king!

This growing popularity of Jesus disturbed Herod. We read in Mark 6:14, "Herod heard of him, for his name was spread abroad; and he said that John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him." Jesus knew what was going on in Herod's warped and depraved mind. He knew there was a possibility that Herod would seek to kill him. Jesus was not afraid to die. This was the very purpose for which he had come to earth. But he knew that it was not the due time for him to die. He had a work to do; a ministry to perform; and only when that was finished, at a certain predetermined and prophesied time, he would be offered up, and not before.

So it was because of prudence and not because of fear that he left Galilee temporarily. Together with a few of his disciples, he journeyed about 45 miles toward the Mediterranean. It was a two-day journey in those days. Today, by jet, it would take about five minutes. This brought Jesus to what is called in our lesson, the borders of Tyre and Sidon, an area within the boundary of the land called Phoenicia, of which Tyre and Sidon were the principal cities. Apparently, he merely crossed the borders of Galilee, thus freeing himself, for a time, from the authority of Herod. By so doing he was by no means abdicating his ministry. It was an interlude he would profitably

utilize for necessary physical recuperation, meditation, prayer, and the private instruction of his disciples.

He would have preferred that no one recognize him in Phoenicia. Mark 7:24 tells us that he "entered into an house, and would have no man know it. But he could not be hid." Of course he could not be hid! Can you picture the contrast there must be between a perfect man, and a fallen and depraved man? At that time mankind had fallen for 4,000 years, each succeeding generation born in sin, and shapen in iniquity (Ps. 51:5), every generation with its cumulative effect of physical disfiguration. In 4,000 years man had become miserable caricatures of a truly perfect man. And it is even more so today.

We can picture Jesus arriving in Phoenicia, accompanied by his very ordinary-looking disciples. Being a replica of the beautiful and physically perfect Adam, with the grace and regal bearing of the king of earth, he, by sheer contrast caught the attention of everyone who saw him. So he was quickly identified as Jesus, and the news of his arrival was rapidly passed from mouth to mouth—the great prophet and healer of Israel, about whom they had heard so much, was in their midst!

We read in Mark 7:25,26 that, "a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet. The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter." One can scarcely imagine the heartbreak which that poor woman had to endure! A devil had taken possession of her sweet little girl! The specific manifestations of such an obsession are too horrible to describe in detail. Matthew's account says that she was "grievously vexed with a devil" (Matt. 15:22); which the **Weymouth Translation** renders, "cruelly harassed by a demon."

This unclean spirit, was, no doubt, one of the fallen angels who had been instrumental in corrupting the earth in the days of Noah. This was one of the powerful spirit beings who, allied with Satan, had tyrannized and degraded mankind; so that, as

is written in Genesis 6:5,11, "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." Under the domination of Satan, these fallen angels used their superior powers to influence mankind to wickedness, pulling them down to the depths of corruption.

Now here was one of these evil beings who had seized control of the brain of a helpless little girl. He expressed himself through the lips of that innocent child, using the most foul and profane language. That is why he was called an unclean, or impure spirit. And he, no doubt, sometimes controlled the girl's body to viciously attack anyone who came near. The poor mother could have had many scars from encounters with her own daughter. She may even have thought that the poor girl could eventually be driven to attempt suicide.

The mother must have been at her wits' end, but when she heard about Jesus, the great healer of Israel, who was doing such wonderful things in distant Galilee—frequently casting out devils from those possessed—it must have given her a glimmer of hope. However, her daughter was in too bad a state to take the necessary two days' journey to Galilee. And besides, she probably had heard, also, that this Jesus would not have dealings with any but Israelites. So she may have had only a very small hope of reaching Jesus with her dilemma.

We can imagine her elation as we perhaps picture in our minds a neighbor running to her home and breathlessly saying, "A most wonderful thing has happened! Jesus, the great prophet and healer of Israel is here in our village! He arrived just a little while ago with his disciples, and I know the very house he is in right now!" A hope, almost dead, revived and surged in her heart!

There is really no accounting for the love of a mother for her child. There is nothing logical about mother love. It is a blind and driving force of pure, unselfish devotion. It rejects cold, calculating reason, and gladly attempts even the obviously impossible for the child's welfare. So, casting aside every logical objection, this mother lost no time in going to Jesus. We

are told in Mark 7:25, that she "came and fell at his feet." In Matthew 15:22 we read that "she cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David! My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil!"

Then Jesus did something which seems so unlike him. The 23rd verse reads, "But he answered her not a word." But you may be sure that this was not because of a lack of compassion. Jesus was never insensitive to grief or pain. He was the most compassionate man the world has ever known. We read in Matthew 9:36 that when he saw the suffering multitude, "he was moved with compassion on them." His heart went out to them in love and sympathy; and it is written of him that he healed "every sickness and every disease among the people." When Lazarus died, and Jesus saw the sorrow of Mary and Martha, his heart melted in sympathy, and he wept.

He certainly knew the situation of this unfortunate woman even before she told him. Why then did he turn away in silence? Perhaps it was because he saw in this woman a faith of unusual magnitude, a faith worthy of testing. And this seeming indifference on Jesus' part did not deter the woman in the least. She continued her earnest entreaty, "Have mercy on me, O Lord!" over and over again.

A former American Consul at Jerusalem has written, "To one who has ever held a prominent or official position in the East, the persistency of pleading women is a fact one will never forget! They will not be driven from their purpose in a rough manner. Severe language does not deter them. They are not wearied by delays. They will sit and wait, hour after hour, and come day by day, ignoring all kinds of refusals. They are importunate beyond anything that I ever experienced in our Western life." In addition to this natural characteristic of Eastern women, this mother who pleaded with Jesus was driven by a more powerful incentive than most. She was pleading for the life of her daughter.

Finally, the disciples could not stand it any longer, and went to Jesus about it. We read in Matthew 15:23, "His disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth

after us." The disciples were sympathetic to her cause. Their words, "Send her away," did not mean for Jesus to send her away empty. They, no doubt, meant, "Grant her request, and let her go. It is such a simple thing for you to do. You have healed thousands in Israel. You have cast out legions of demons from others. Cast out this demon also, from her daughter, and send the poor woman away in peace."

We read that Jesus "answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 15:24) In other words, Jesus said, "My ministry is confined exclusively to the nation of Israel. This woman is a Gentile; an outsider. Do you not remember, when I sent you forth to preach and heal, that I told you, 'Go not in the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel?' This woman has no claim upon us."—Matt. 10:5,6

At this point, it seems that the woman herself came into the presence of Jesus, having followed closely upon the heels of the disciples. She probably heard what Jesus just said. Now she prostrated herself before Jesus, in an attitude of worship, "saying, Lord, help me! But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." This seems a very harsh thing for Jesus to have said, but it really was not. His answer to her was not one of disdain or contempt; nor did it indicate indifference to her great misfortune. Our Lord had no such feelings toward any. On the contrary, he was greatly moved by her predicament. But it was necessary for him to give her a reason for his position in the matter. He was further testing the great faith he saw in her.

We must remember that, at the time, the term 'dogs' was commonly applied to all Gentiles by the Jews as signifying their inferiority in the sight of God. God's dealings were exclusively with the house of Israel, and dogs were generally kept *outside* the house. Thus, it was a symbolic term, common in his day, which the Gentile woman understood perfectly. Even here, the Lord mercifully softened the expression, giving the woman a ray of hope. It seems that he used a word for dogs

which signifies, not ferocious, **outside** dogs, but **house** dogs, well-loved pets which were companions of their children.

In Mark's account, Jesus gave the woman still another tiny ray of hope, "Jesus said unto her, Let the children **first** be filled. For it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs." (Mark 7:27) This implied that once the **children** had had enough, then some bread might be spared for the dogs. We see how loving and merciful Jesus really was. Far from discouraging the poor woman, he was leading her on to the strong declaration of faith which she then made.

She saw her opportunity, and grasped eagerly at it. She said, "Truth, Lord. Yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." (Matt. 15:27) Or, as Mark recorded it, "Yes, Lord. Yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." (Mark 7:28) Jesus was greatly touched with this response. He saw in this Gentile woman many excellent traits of character—a great love, a humble spirit, a persistence in seeking after blessing, and above all, a magnificent faith, which even the most devout Jew might emulate.

He took her by the hand and gently raised her from her knees, and said to her, "For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter." At that very moment, at the home of the woman, the demon was expelled from the little girl. The woman hurried home, without any doubt in her mind that her request had, indeed, been granted. "When she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed." (Mark 7:30) Her little girl was evidently peacefully sleeping, for the first time in many years.

Let us consider some of the lessons to be derived from this incident. First, we can learn something from the prudence which Jesus exercised by leaving, briefly, the jurisdiction of Herod. Unless principle is involved, we should avoid trouble in every way we can. Although we may sometimes feel the enmity of the world, we should never incite it. As we are told by the Apostle Paul, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." (Rom. 12:18) And in II Timothy 2:24 we read, "The servant of the LORD must not strive, but be

gentle unto all men." In this way our usefulness to the LORD, and our influence for good in the world, will be prolonged.

In the special intensity of violence which is prevalent in the world today, we should act prudently, not exposing ourselves recklessly with the thought that God will take care of us. Of course he will. He would have taken care of Jesus, too. He said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53) But Jesus acted prudently, just the same, until his time had come. And so with us. We will get all the help we need, when it is necessary, just as Daniel and all the ancient prophets received it. Daniel, for the sake of principle was **cast** into the den of lions; and the Hebrew children were **thrown** into the fiery furnace. But let us not make the mistake of **jumping** into the den of lions, or into the fiery furnace!

The great love the Syrophenician woman had for her child reminds us of God's love for us, his children. Mother-love is an apt illustration of God's love, except that his love is even more intense. This was emphasized by Isaiah when he said, "Can a woman forget her sucking child? . . . Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee!" (Isa. 49:15) And the same thought is expressed in Psalm 27:10: "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up."

There is a lesson in the fact that this Gentile woman ignored every logical reason why she should **not** go to Jesus with her problem, and went anyhow. Do we sometimes have problems which we hesitate to lay before the LORD? Do we wonder whether they are too great? Or too small? Or too intimate? Or too complicated? Or too simple? Or too worldly? Or too 'something else'? Are we afraid of being ignored or rebuffed? It should not be so if we are God's children.

Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) To which Hebrews 4:16 adds, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." And again, "Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee. He shall

never suffer the righteous to be moved." (Ps. 55:22) No stipulations are made here concerning the *kind* of burden, or problem, or need—*any kind* may be cast upon the LORD.

Another valuable lesson for us is the manner in which the Syrophenician woman approached Jesus, which the LORD approved and rewarded. She was not brazen or assertive. She did not reproach Jesus for his partiality toward the seed of Abraham, and did not claim to be just as good or just as deserving. She was not demanding. She did not even express a specific wish. She merely told the Lord the nature of her trouble, and said, "Lord, have mercy on me! Lord, help me!" She did not tell the Lord what to do. She left it entirely to his wisdom as to how or when the help and mercy should be bestowed.

From her actions we certainly learn how we may approach the Lord acceptably. Are we not dealing with the very same Lord, who is now our Advocate at the right hand of God? So, as Philippians 4:6 instructs us, "Let your requests be made known unto God," and then simply say, "LORD, help me!" You may be sure his way will be the very best way.

When the woman had made her earnest plea, we read that Jesus answered her not a word. Does it sometimes happen that the LORD answers us not a word? Do we ever go to him with problems which seem very important and urgent to us, and apparently receive no response? This can be a severe test of faith. Questions may arise in our minds, "Am I a child of God, or am I not? Has my consecration been accepted? Am I in covenant relationship with God? Have I, perhaps, lost favor with the LORD? Has he turned his face from me?" Then, with continued delay, sometimes discouragement comes.

We might decide, "It is no use to ask any more. The LORD evidently does not hear my prayers. And if he does, he does not intend to answer." These are suggestions from the Adversary, and should be instantly rejected. We should have no doubt that the LORD does hear our prayer, because the Scriptures tell us that he does. "The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." (Ps. 34:15)

Reassured, we should next consider Jesus' own words, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John 15:7

These are positive statements, firm promises. Then let us ask ourselves, "Am I abiding in Christ? Am I carrying out my consecration as a member of his body?" If so, the next questions are, "Does the LORD's Word abide in me? Am I seeking to be always guided by his Word of Truth?" Then, the most important question, "Is the blessing I am seeking in harmony with God's Word and Plan?" If it is, then we should persist in our request just as did the Syrophenician woman. And we will obtain the same result she did! Our prayer will be answered, in the LORD's own way and time. And, because of our patient persistence, he will say to us also, "Great is thy faith!" And with those words, the delay will not be too long!

This is the very lesson Jesus taught in his parable of the importunate widow. (Luke 18:1-8, *Weymouth*) He summed it up by saying, "Will not God avenge the wrongs of his own people who cry aloud to him day and night, although he *seems* slow in taking action on their behalf? Yes, he will soon avenge their wrongs!" Let us emulate the positive faith of Paul, as expressed in his words: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him."—II Tim. 1:12

When Jesus answered the Syrophenician woman 'not a word', he was testing the woman's strong faith. Let us learn from this that the LORD ***tests our strength, not our weaknesses***. So when the LORD subjects us to a test of faith, let us take it as an indication that he considers our faith strong enough to endure his testings. Such trials then will not discourage us, but will encourage us.

Even when the woman pleaded with him, Jesus withheld his blessing, and said to her, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." We were all at one time as that woman was. Our former condition is well described as "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and

without God in the world.” (Eph. 2:12) Yes, at one time we, too, were ‘dogs’, out of favor with the LORD. As Psalm 73:22 says, “So foolish was I, and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee.” But then a great transformation took place, as shown by Paul: “Now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”—Eph. 2:13

We read in Galatians 3:26-29: “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” In this way, the high calling, which was first offered exclusively to natural Israel, is now made available to individuals who constitute spiritual Israel. And, by the grace of God, we have heard and accepted the call.

When Jesus told the woman, “It is not meet to take the children’s bread and cast it to dogs,” she answered, “Truth, Lord. Yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master’s table.” This reminds us of Jesus’ parable of the rich man and Lazarus, where we read, “There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate, full of sores; and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.”—Luke 16:19-31

Here again we find a person who is an associate of ‘dogs’, desiring ‘crumbs’ from the ‘table’. In this picture, the ‘rich man’ represented the Jewish nation, rich in God’s favor. He was clothed in purple; invested with royalty. The Jews were of a royal priesthood, because of the promises to Abraham and David. The high calling was offered to them first. The rich man was clothed in the fine linen of [typical] righteousness, the Jews being typically a holy people. He fared sumptuously—the Jews being the special recipients of God’s favor. His Word was given to them. The prophets were sent to them. As we read,

"What advantage then hath the Jew? . . . Much every way. Chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."—Rom. 3:1,2

The beggar, Lazarus was an associate of 'dogs'—dogs representing Gentiles, who were outcasts from divine favor. The Syrophenician woman was one of this class. As Lazarus begged, "desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table," she also begged—she pleaded with Jesus for a crumb from the table of divine favor. The parable goes on to indicate how, later, the positions of the rich man and Lazarus were reversed—the beggar being exalted to favor, and the rich man degraded. This shows the temporary casting off of natural Israel, and the opening of the high calling to the Gentiles.

When the Lord finally acted on behalf of the Syrophenician woman, the result came with lightning speed. Her daughter was instantly healed. As we read, her daughter was cured from that very moment! This is often the experience of the LORD's people. After much pleading to the LORD—after much delay and vexation, trying one's patience and faith to the utmost—the answer suddenly comes in a time and manner least expected, and the difficulty is instantly removed. Having had such an experience, one can always remember it, and never doubt the LORD again.

There is still another lesson we can learn from the interaction between Jesus and the Syrophenician woman. It is a very encouraging and heart-warming lesson which gives us insight into the wonderful character of God. We learn that the LORD, lovingly and mercifully, makes exceptions to his rules. For example, although Jesus told the poor Gentile woman that he was not sent except to the house of Israel, nevertheless, he did heal her daughter. On another occasion he, himself, did heal the Roman centurion's servant. (Matt. 8:5-13) And on another occasion he talked with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well and spent two days in a Samaritan city with his disciples. It is recorded that, as a result of this, "Many more believed because of his own word."—John 4:41

Is this making of exceptions to stated rules contrary to God's character? Does not James 1:17 describe the Heavenly Father as one 'with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning?' Does not God say, "I am the LORD; I change not?" (Mal. 3:6), and again "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips?" (Ps. 89:34) And what about Numbers 23:19, "Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Of course! These Scriptures emphasize the absolute justice and dependability of God. He may be utterly relied upon to carry out his divine plan of the ages, for the blessing of all mankind. Such Scriptures give us confidence in God. But we must not forget that in addition to being a just God, he is also a loving God.

Let us note some ways in which his love tempers his justice. Even in his Law he made provision for the exercise of love. For example we read, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." (Gen. 9:6) Yet provisions were made for exceptions. Cities of refuge were provided in Israel, to which unpremeditated killers could flee to escape their avengers.—Num. 35:6

Although we read: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Exod. 21:24,25), these were the outlined provisions of the Law, allowed as payment for wrongs experienced. They were what the Law permitted, but they were not compulsory punishments. If someone knocked your tooth out, you had the right to knock out one of his—but you could choose to forgive him. Similarly, the loss of a hand or foot might legally be avenged by the cutting off of the hand or foot of the guilty person. Surely, few chose to take such gruesome revenge. In every case the aggrieved party had the right to choose to exercise pity and mercy, and to forgive the offender. And to do so would be godlike.

We read in Micah 7:18: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy." In dealing with us, the LORD

does not exact full retribution for our sins. This is beautifully brought to our attention in Psalm 103:10-14: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Praise the LORD!

A merciful abstaining from exacting the full penalty of the Law does not violate justice, but goes beyond justice! It exceeds justice. Jesus enjoined this superseding law of love upon his disciples in Matthew 5:38-41: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, That ye resist [revenge] not evil. But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." These are figurative expressions to illustrate the law of love by which the Christian lives—not to exact strict justice, but to go beyond and above it!

The law of weights and measures which God gave to Israel provides us an apt illustration of this: "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and just hin, shall ye have." (Lev. 19:35) This was strict justice. It was absolutely right. They must not do less. But Jesus taught his followers that, by the law of love, they should do more than that—they should exceed justice. He said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over"—Luke 6:38

The Law did not require the Israelites to press down, and shake together to eliminate air spaces, and to allow more to fit in the container. It did not require them to pour liquid until it ran over the edge of the vessel. Did this teaching of Jesus contradict the Law? No, there is no contradiction here. It is

entirely proper and always permissible to give **more** than the Law demands; never **less**.

This is why Jesus, although he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, was free to make exceptions—to lovingly give the crumbs of blessing to some Gentiles who had no claim to them, being outside the commonwealth of Israel. In this he exemplified his Heavenly Father, who so loved the world that he arranged a way for the justly condemned Adam—who had no claim to life—to be released from death.

Do you like to surprise those you love with a gift, something precious they do not expect, and for which they have not asked? God does; only his gifts are exceedingly more excellent than we can ever give. This is what the apostle meant when he said, "Him [Jehovah] that is able to do **exceedingly abundantly above** all that we ask or think!"

We must not be disposed to chide the LORD if he makes loving exceptions to his rules—granting crumbs of blessing to those outside our fellowship. This is the LORD's business. "Who can hinder him? Who will say unto him, What doest thou?" (Job 9:12) And Daniel said of him, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. And none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"—Dan. 4:35

As for us who know what a loving God we have, we should expect to receive from him blessings "pressed down, and shaken together, and running over." If faithful to our consecration, we should confidently claim the promise, "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. 3:10

We do not have to beg for crumbs. We are the children, seated at the LORD's table, "and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17), and all the marvelous bounties of the LORD are ours! □

Jehovah's Abiding Presence

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL had come out of Egypt; they had crossed the Red Sea, and had come to Mount Sinai. Moses had gone up into the mountain, had received the tables of the Law, and had come down and found the nation in idolatry, worshipping the golden calf which they had made. While Moses was still in the Mount, the LORD had told him that Israel had already turned aside from the true God to idols, and was offering sacrifice to a molten calf as the god who had brought them forth out of Egypt. He instructed Moses to go down to the people. The wrath of God was hot against them, and he proposed to Moses that He would consume them and make of him [Moses] a great nation. But Moses besought the LORD for Israel, and the LORD was entreated of him, and spared the nation from annihilation, promising him that he would still be their leader.

Then Moses went down from the Mount. He realized that Israel had grievously sinned, and his anger was kindled against them. He cast down the tables of the Law which were in his hands, and broke them when he saw and heard the dancing and feasting and shouting around the idol which they had set up for themselves. Here was a nation which had been delivered by God from Egyptian bondage. The Red Sea had opened, by the power of Jehovah, for them to pass over. They had received numerous blessings along their way—notable proofs of divine guidance. Yet in spite of all this, here was rebellion and idolatry! What could be expected of a people who had so little appreciation of God that they were quickly turned aside? Even Moses' brother, Aaron, led astray by the insistence of the people, felt it necessary to cooperate with them in the making of the golden calf.

Moses then took the calf which they had made, and burned it in fire, ground it to powder, scattered it upon the water, and compelled the children of Israel to drink it. He reproved Aaron, and then stood in the gate of the camp and said to all the people, "Who is on Jehovah's side. Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said to them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."—Exod. 32:26-28

The day following this, Moses explained to the people how great was the sin of which they had been guilty, and he told them that he would go to the LORD in prayer if peradventure he might make atonement for their sin. He went to the LORD in earnest supplication, pleading that if God would not forgive Israel that the LORD would also blot out Moses' name from His book. But God answered, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." (vs. 33) He promised to send his angel before Moses, but assured him that he was not yet through dealing with Israel for their iniquity. He instructed Moses to tell them of their stiffneckedness and to command them in his name to put off their ornaments, that he might know what course he would pursue with them.

The people obeyed. They laid aside their jewelry, and humbled themselves and worshiped the LORD. Moses, heavy of heart, felt that unless the LORD would in some special way give him the necessary wisdom and grace for the great task of leading so perverse a people into the inheritance which the LORD had promised them if they would serve him, he would be utterly insufficient for the undertaking. Again Moses appealed to God in prayer. He told him of his trepidation and his earnest desire for God's sustaining help and presence with him all the way. He pleaded, "This is too great a work for me!" Then the LORD assured Moses that he would go with him, that

he would have his presence throughout the entire journey to the Promised Land, for he had found grace in God's sight. The LORD said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exod. 33:14

Moses then besought the LORD, "Show me thy glory." It was here that God put Moses into the cleft of a rock, and covered him with his hand while he passed by, letting Moses see his glory from behind, saying, "No man can see my face and live." When God speaks of his presence with his servants, we are not to think of his being with them in bodily presence, but rather by his Spirit and through his angelic messengers, sustaining, blessing, and guiding them. He protects them from whatever will harm them. He watches over their every interest and tenderly cares for them. We understand the Bible presentation of the presence of God to be that God has a personal, bodily presence, aside from the power and influence which he exerts; and that he has a central seat of government, where he resides.

"Heaven is my throne, the earth is my footstool," says Jehovah. (Isa. 66:1) The one who has his seat in heaven and whose footstool is the earth is a great God! But this is, of course, a forceful figure of speech, showing his all-embracing power and control, and that his sphere of influence and interest at the present time revolves around both heaven and earth. God does not actually sit in a certain part of the material universe and have his literal feet in another part. The language of Scripture accommodates itself to the mind of man, and speaks of God as if he possessed the same bodily members as human beings. But actually we know not what a spirit body is like: "It doth not yet appear," even to the saints of the LORD who are still in the flesh.

We do understand that the bodily presence of Jehovah is in heaven. Everything in the Bible teaches us that he is very great—infinite in power. We read that "the LORD looketh from Heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth." (Ps. 33:13,14) He beholds men in their distress, and

has provided for their deliverance in due time. But we should clearly distinguish between this thought of God looking down from heaven and the thought that he is personally present on earth. We can see a mile off—or five miles off—by the power of our sight. We can be a hundred or more feet away and be present by the power of our voice; or aided by the telephone we can be present by our voice thousands of miles away.

In that sense of the word, the LORD is present everywhere throughout his mighty universe, and his power can be exerted everywhere. He has means by which he can be cognizant of all earthly affairs, and of matters pertaining to all his great domain. We have these powers only to a very limited extent.

1991 Memorial Supper Date

THE PROPER TIME for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after 6:00 p.m., on Thursday, March 28, 1991.

We have a complete Memorial Service available for isolated brethren, or for any who care to have it, on both audio and video cassette. The audio cassette can be purchased for \$3.00, or is available free of charge on loan from:

**Dawn Recorded Lecture Service
199 Railroad Avenue,
East Rutherford, NJ 07073.**

The video cassette can be purchased for \$6.00, and is also available free on loan. Send your request to:

**Dawn Video Cassette Service
P.O. Box 4355
North Hollywood, CA 91617**

The telephone, radio, television, telescope, etc.—enhanced by satellite—are all means by which man's presence, power and influence is extended to a certain degree. But our powers are limited to this small planet, except as we further extend them by means of prayer, and thus set in motion influences whose extent we are not now able to fathom. But those who exercise the privilege of going to the mighty king of heaven in prayer, must go only in his appointed way, subject to the conditions which he has made.

We can place no limitations upon the power of Jehovah. Inventions which have come to the fore in this time of the end, increasing our powers of communication and uniting all parts of the globe, give us but a very faint concept of the infinite powers of the Almighty God. These inventions will continue to improve and increase and multiply throughout the next age, thus adding more and more to the powers and blessings of mankind. They will give mankind a greater appreciation of the majesty, glory, and might of their Creator as they come to know him as he is, and to worship him in spirit and in truth. Yet no human mind, even in perfection, will be able to comprehend the fullness of the mighty Maker of the universe.

God promised Moses that his presence, his power, and his sustaining grace would go with him all the way. He wished him to understand that he was not to perform his great work alone without all-sufficient backing. "I will be with you," was the promise. The LORD's presence was indeed with the children of Israel in a very marked manner—continually with them from the time they crossed the Red Sea. They were guided by blessings or by chastisements, as they were needed. God was with them in the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, and by his presence in the Shekinah glory which covered the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle.

After the Tabernacle was set up in accordance with God's instructions, these manifestations of his presence, his power, and his watchful care never failed. The pillar of cloud and of fire guided their journeyings; and when these rested, it was an

indication from God that they were to abide where they were until the pillar of cloud or fire again moved from its place.

Moses had said to the LORD, "If thy presence go not with us, send us not up hence." (Exod. 33:15) In other words he knew that this was too great a task for any man to accomplish alone. But Moses knew that if God's presence continued with them, and if they were shown his will and received his continual direction, he would be able to lead Israel through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. Frequently the LORD spoke to Moses through the Tabernacle arrangement.

In this we see that the promise of God's presence with him was fulfilled. The LORD gave him rest. He lived to be 120 years old, yet was not his strength impaired nor his eye dim. We remember that there was a time when Moses realized that the work of judging the people was too great for him. He took the matter to the LORD, and seventy judges were then chosen to share his burden. The matters that were too difficult for them were brought to Moses. He went, then, to God with all his difficulties and burdens, and he had continual blessing.

The experiences of natural Israel have served as very important lessons for Israel according to the Spirit. A people, originally part of the world, we have been invited to come out from the world and to journey to a new country, to share in a heavenly inheritance. We are marching toward our victory, where we will have part, if we are faithful, in bringing about the glorious kingdom promised. There are trials and difficulties along the way, but our God has promised us, as he promised Moses, that his presence shall go with us. If sometimes he seems to withdraw from us and leave us to ourselves, this is not really so. At times he may test our loyalty and our faith in him by withholding the sense of his presence. Shall we then, like Israel of old, conclude that God is no more with us? Shall we turn again to venerate the gods we formerly worshiped—wealth, pleasure, fame, etc. Shall we give ourselves up to revelry, worldly merry-making, and sin? Shall we forget all the way by which our God has led us, all the great deliverances of the past? Shall anything, "tribulation, or distress, or persecu-

tion, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, or life, or death, or things to come or any other thing in creation be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" Surely not! The closer we live to the LORD, and the greater our faith, the more we shall realize the divine direction, and the more we shall make use of the means he has provided for our strengthening and upholding. We may call upon him in time of trouble. We may go to him in prayer. He never fails those who put their trust in him and earnestly seek to walk in his appointed way. This being true, we may go forth upon our journey in perfect trust and confidence. Having consecrated our all to the LORD we are to seek for his guidance, for his presence is with us in all the affairs of our lives.

Few have had such mighty burdens to carry as had Moses. But all of God's children have burdens to bear. Important responsibilities are resting upon each of us who have taken upon us the vows of our God. But the continued guidance and assistance of the LORD is daily ours. Heavenly manna is furnished for our daily sustenance. The water of life flows out to us for our daily refreshment from the smitten Rock of Ages. Our Father's chastening rod restrains us when we are in danger, or when we wander into wrong paths. Surely we may have implicit confidence in our God. We may rest in him and be kept in perfect peace. Our hearts exclaim with the poet:

He has guided my steps where I could not see,

By ways that I had not known;

The crooked was straight and the rough made plain

As I followed the LORD alone.

I praise his name for the pleasant palms

And the water-springs by the way;

For the glowing pillar of fire by night,

And the sheltering cloud by day.

There is light for me on the trackless wild

As the wonders of old I trace,

When the God of the whole earth went before

To search me a resting place!

Hath he changed for me? Nay, he changeth not;

He will bring me by some new way,

Through fire and flood and each crafty foe,

As safely as yesterday.



Wishes for the Wings of a Pigeon!

Dear Brothers and Sisters from U.S.A.: We are thinking of you, our beloved brethren, and thanking our LORD for having the possibility of meeting with some of you and sharing with you such wonderful moments. We thank the LORD our God, and Jesus Christ, who is present for the second time, for those happy, unexpected moments that brought tears to our eyes. From the bottom of our hearts we greet you with holy greetings in the LORD. We also thank you for the letters which we receive every month. May God reward you for this. We have also received the letter that was written in English, along with the small booklet. We couldn't read the letter, but we were glad that we have seen the name of our village in one of the books, and also that you mentioned in one of the publications about us having the same Christian belief, for which we are grateful to our Lord and

to you. Oh, we wish we had the wings of a pigeon to fly overseas and land, to share with you the peace and the common real tranquility.

We should have written this letter in English, but we do not have anyone to help us with that, but we are sure that with the help of a brother there who speaks Romanian you will have it translated. We express our sentiments and thoughts, and we wish one day to see you all! Your brothers and sisters from Calinesti. We are all thinking of you brethren in Christ.—Romania

Sends His Thanks from Russia

Dear Brother: [This was a letter written to a Pilgrim Brother who visited Romania last spring.] Peace be unto you dear brethren and sisters in Christ. A brother in Christ, and in the truth, from 1943 is writing to you. First of all, please accept the greetings from me, my family and also from our congregation, which is made up of 90 per-

sons. All of us pray for the LORD's blessings upon you in his service. I got your address from a *Hope* booklet, and decided to write a few words of appreciation for your work. I learned from the brethren in Moldavia about the brother who had translated the *Hope* booklet. On August 5, 1990 we had a meeting in the city of Chernovits, which before WW2 was part of Romania. There we rented a bus and 21 of us, the whole chorus of our singers, traveled down to Moldavia. There we had a wonderful time, such warm fellowship with the LORD's people. We discussed together the truth activity, our faith, and the aspects of witnessing among different sects, and to the public in general. I heard that some of you are planning to visit our country, and that is nice. . . . When you come you will see our manner of truth activity, and get to know each other. I am corresponding with brothers in Canada. I received from them the 6th volume entitled "*The New Creation*," in the Ukrainian language. In Polish I have all the volumes, since I

read and speak Polish fluently.

I serve our congregation regularly with discourses. I would like to be in contact with you, also, to work together in the LORD's service, to bring the message of salvation to all mankind, to speak of the thousand-year kingdom, and to tell all people about Christ's presence since 1874.—Ps. 145:11-13 (Ps. 144:11-13 in Russian Bible) Goodbye, and the LORD be with you. Your humble brother. We send our love to all brothers and sisters who love the truth.—*Russia*

Memories and Appreciation from Romania

Dear Brother: I am writing a few words to you to let you know that we miss you very much. We greet you and your family, and thank you for the picture of your wife. But we don't have any picture of your daughter! How are you, is your health better now? We realized you have been very tired when you were visiting us. We needed you, so you gave yourself in serving us, and we are sorry

for exhausting you physically! We wanted to know so many things, and your visit was very short. It was very hard for me and my husband to have you and the other dear brother stay in our home, but finally we succeeded on the last day in our area, and you stayed the night with us. We discussed many things that encouraged us very much. We did have even more things to discuss, but time was limited. Soon after your visit some brethren visited us from Soviet Moldavia. They told us the story of their persecution in the past. You, too, really went through terrible persecution and suffering. You endured more than anyone of us in other lands. I am sure that after all this your character became stronger. I am amazed when I think of you Russian brethren. We thank you very much for the pictures of your visit that you sent us. They are beautiful and we appreciate your work. Now a dear brother from France is visit-

ing us in December. We would like you to come, too, and hope someday you will visit us again. You really brought us so many blessings. Certain things troubled me and my husband, but after discussing them with you that night we understood many things you brought to our attention. Now our hearts and minds are at peace, and free. That is why we appreciate and love you very much. We appreciate your service and sacrifice on our behalf. My brother and I are taking an intense course in learning English, and we are progressing in it. I could write to you in English, but we don't want you to forget the Romanian language! With much Christian love to you and to our dear brethren. By his grace. P.S. I ask you a favor. Please help us as we desperately need The Dawn magazine in English. It helps me to learn English, and I enjoy the articles. Thanking you in advance!—Romania ☐

***"Established in the faith, as ye have been taught,
abounding therein with thanksgiving."
— Colossians 2:7***

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

Brother Frank Rushton, Vancouver, B.C.—November 19. Age, 78.

Brother Henry Markus, Detroit, MI—November 22. Age, 78.

Sister Leaner Calicutt Green, Sacramento, CA—Nov. 24. Age, 84

Sister Maude Maples, Cincinnati, OH—November 30. Age, 88

Sister Anna May Nauman, Cincinnati, OH—December 1. Age, 88.

Brother Albert Haldenwang, Phoenix, AZ—December 26. Age, 93.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of the Dawn, or by classes associated with the Pilgrim Service. Their visits are furnished free upon request.

W. Harp		G.M. Jeuck	
Detroit, MI	February 24	Sacramento, CA	February 15-17
		Middletown, NY	24

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

FEBRUARY 7—"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law."—Romans 13:10 (Z. '98-201 Hymn 23)

FEBRUARY 14—"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."—Matthew 12:37 (Z. '96-32 Hymn 199)

FEBRUARY 21—"Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake, lead me, and guide me."—Psalm 31:3 (Z. '02-249 Hymn 238)

FEBRUARY 28—"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."—Philippians 4:6 (Z. '03-8 Hymn 16A)

CONVENTIONS

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

SACRAMENTO, CA, February 15-17—Sierra Inn, 2600 Auburn Blvd. Contact: Mrs. E.F. Lankford, 6000 19th Ave. 95820
Phone: (916) 457-0669

DETROIT, MI, February 24—YWCA, 25940 Grand River, Redford, Detroit, MI. Contact: George Tivador.
Phone: (313) 978-7444

ROCKLAND, NY, February 24—Bear Mountain State Park, Overlook Lodge, Bear Mountain, NY. Contact: Dawn Shalieu, 1041 Johnston Drive, Watchung, NJ 07060

FLORIDA BIBLE STUDENTS, March 2,3,4—Plaza Inn, 603 Lee Road, Orlando. Phone: (407) 644-6100. For information, contact: Mr. Michael Balko, 321 Kentia Road, Casselberry 32707
Phone: (407) 339-7580

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, March 15, 16,

17—MaComb Community College, 14500 12 Mile Road, Warren 48093. Contact: George Tivador.
Phone: (313) 978-7444

NEW YORK, NY, April 14, 1991—Wm. Paterson College of NJ, Pompton Road, Wayne, NJ. Contact: Mrs. A. Lange, 76 Longview Ave., White Plains, NY 10605
Phone: (914) 948-5428

LOS ANGELES, CA, April 21—Masonic Temple, 248 E. Olive, Burbank. Contact Michael Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pac. Palisades 90272
Phone: (213) 454-5248

BOISE, ID, April 26-29—Owyhee Plaza Hotel. For reservations, contact Mrs. Paul Cooper, 1422 Denver, Boise 83706.
Phone: (208) 344-2173

"WHO HATH BELIEVED our report? and to whom is the Arm of the LORD revealed? . . . He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."

—Isaiah 53:1, 3, 4