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Jesus Enters Jerusalem

***“When he was
come into
Jerusalem, all the
city was moved,
saying, Who is
this? And the
multitude said,
This is Jesus the
prophet of
Nazareth of
Galilee.”***

—Matthew 21:10,11

THIS YEAR ON SUNDAY EVE-ning, April 17, 2011, faithful followers of our Lord Jesus from many parts of the world will once again gather in memory of his death. They will partake of the emblems that symbolize their participation with him in his death, as he instructed them. They will eat from the loaf that represents his broken body and drink from the cup which illustrates his shed blood.—Matt. 26:26-28

Jesus left no instructions for us to celebrate his birth, but he did give his disciples specific directions to commemorate his death. It was necessary that he be born into the world as a perfect man to redeem the sin-sick human family by taking the place of Adam, who had disobeyed the law of God. “Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”—I Cor. 15:21,22

As a perfect man, the Master taught many important lessons that have had far-reaching effects upon those who have believed and put their trust in him. His many miracles have served to illustrate the far grander work that he will accomplish under the administration of his future kingdom.

A TRIUMPHANT ARRIVAL

The last few days of Jesus' earthly ministry were hectic and tragic. Although he understood the meaning of the events as they followed one another in quick succession, his disciples were in large measure unable to comprehend their true and deeper meaning. Also, Israel as a nation was blind to the fact that the most important event in the history of the world was being fulfilled before their very eyes.

In his gospel account, Matthew provides us with a vivid recollection of Jesus' seemingly triumphant arrival at Jerusalem. It was during those dramatic days that he rode through the gates of the city of Jerusalem on a donkey, and presented himself to Israel in fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy that had been written nearly five hundred years earlier. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."—Zech. 9:9

The multitudes of people, who had come to see their king, spread their garments and palm branches before him as he entered the city. This was in observance of an ancient custom of giving respect. The multitude also proclaimed, "Hosanna to the Son of David" (Matt. 21:9), which is an

acclaim of praise that closely resembles the word “Hallelujah.” Reference to the name David pointed to King David from whose lineage their long-promised Messiah was to come.

THE KING OF ISRAEL

The disciples believed that Jesus was to be a king at that time and they no doubt expected that at some appropriate time he would present himself as the King of Israel. They couldn’t even think about his dying. He was a king, and it was time the people knew it and had the opportunity to acclaim him as such. He was giving them this opportunity and they were rising to the occasion. The disciples must have thought that surely the Messianic kingdom was now at hand.

Then Jesus went to the Temple, healed the sick whom he found there, and drove out the money changers. This seemed to his followers to harmonize very well with his kingly entry into the city and their hopes were no doubt raised even higher. They manifested their enthusiasm by calling Jesus’ attention to the beautiful stones with which the Temple had been built. Perhaps they had visions of Israel’s new ruler soon taking over that magnificent edifice. However their enthusiasm was quickly dampened, and “Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”—Matt. 24:2

A FUTURE KINGDOM

The disciples began to realize that there was much they needed to learn concerning our Lord Jesus and his plans to set up his kingdom. Although

they had no clear picture of what their questions really implied, they did sense from Jesus' remarks that his kingdom was not as near as they had originally supposed. Some may have remembered other things that he had previously said, as recorded by John, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."—John 14:1-4

They wanted to know more about those things of which they realized they knew so very little, and questioned him concerning the time and evidences of his Second Presence and the establishment of his future kingdom. (Matt. 24:3) From the nature of these questions, it is apparent that the disciples began to sense that Jesus might be separated from them for a time, and would return later to establish his kingdom.

The Master's lengthy reply to their questions is a marvelous prophecy not only concerning the end of the age, but also of the intervening time beginning with the downfall of the Jewish nation. It is doubtful that the disciples understood the full impact of the Master's words, but it prepared them for the events that were immediately before them.

JESUS' CLOSING MINISTRY

Having arrived specifically for the Jewish Pass-over Feast, Jesus celebrated the supper with his disciples in the upper room which he had asked

them to prepare ahead of time. It was there that he instituted the Memorial of his death by taking the place of the sacrificial lamb. During that time, Judas bargained to betray him into the wicked hands of his enemies.

After supper, Jesus went into the Garden of Gethsemane with his disciples, where he spent his time in agonized prayer while awaiting his arrest and trial before Pilate and Herod, and his execution. During that very dark night, our dear Lord endured humiliating mocking and painful scourging, and, finally, his crucifixion between two thieves. These were but a few of the grievous events that marked the closing days of the world's Savior.

The disciples had hoped that Jesus had come to assume his place as the world's rightful king. They had high hopes, but they suffered bewilderment and, finally, bitter disappointment when they realized he was about to die. To many of the Jews, these dramatic events were only the natural consequences of the misguided efforts of a pretender. They may have thought that he was trying to usurp for himself an accepted position as the promised Messiah of Israel. Jesus alone understood his Heavenly Father's will and purpose, and, therefore, was able to bear up under the terrible strain of his trial, and to finish the momentous work that had been given him to do.

DESPISED AND REJECTED

Our Lord had never been accepted by the scribes and Pharisees—the religious leaders of Israel. Individuals among them may have been impressed with his kindly demeanor and manner of teaching

but, as a group, they had been outwardly antagonistic toward him from the very beginning of his earthly ministry. His spiteful enemies never lost an opportunity to do whatever they could to bring hardship upon him, and to prejudice the people against him. However, many of the people were not fooled by the religious leaders, and they appreciated the gracious words which the Master spoke. It was said of him, "Never man spake like this man."—John 7:46

Others were no doubt deeply impressed by the many wondrous miracles that the Master had performed. These marvelous evidences of power had been bestowed upon him by his Heavenly Father, and are reflected in the words of the blind man who had been healed. When the Pharisees challenged the man who had been born blind about how Jesus could have performed such a wonderful miracle, we read in the scriptural account, "He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."—chap. 9:25

In addition to giving sight to the blind, there were also lepers who had been cleansed, cripples who had been made to walk, the deranged who had been freed from the curse of evil spirits, and the dead who had been raised to life again. Few of those who had been blessed by our Lord on these various occasions were able to understand that what Jesus had accomplished in their lives was an illustration of what would be available to the whole world during the time of his future kingdom.

A considerable number of people in Israel were favorably disposed toward Jesus and would not be

easily influenced by the scribes and Pharisees to join in any kind of attempt to take his life. He was also overshadowed by the providential care of his Heavenly Father who prevented his enemies from accomplishing their evil designs against him until it was the “due time” for his sacrifice to be consummated.—I Tim. 2:6

THE DISCIPLES

Jesus had called his disciples to follow him and to become “fishers of men.” (Matt. 4:19) They were eyewitnesses to his wonderful miracles and listened to his gracious words that were filled with the spirit of Truth. As he went about doing good and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, his disciples became convinced that he was indeed the long-promised Messiah of Israel. However, the disciples were natural men who had not yet been begotten of the Holy Spirit. They were, therefore, unprepared for the manner in which the Lord’s ministry was to be so suddenly concluded.

Jesus had earlier made clear to his disciples the reason for his ultimate death. Matthew has recorded the occasion when Jesus asked his disciples who they thought he was. Peter’s answer to our Lord was evidence of the Holy Spirit of God working in his heart. “Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”—Matt. 16:16-19

Further, we read, “From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.—vs. 21

THE SPIRIT BEGOTTEN

Peter had expressed his willingness to die for his Master, and vigorously opposed any suggestion that Jesus would put himself in harm’s way. Jesus’ reply to Peter on this occasion contained a depth of meaning which can only be grasped and appreciated by the Spirit-begotten. “Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”—vss. 22-25

When Jesus said, ‘Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it,’ he was directing these words to his disciples. During his earthly ministry, Jesus demonstrated that he would lose his earthly life as a sacrifice and would receive the divine nature—highest

form of all life—as a reward. His sacrifice was a voluntary one, but he must be faithful in carrying out the will of his Heavenly Father and the terms of his covenant of sacrifice. He secured his spiritual life by faithfully completing his earthly sacrifice even unto death. Later, when the Holy Spirit had come upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost, they began to grasp these deep things of God which they were unable to see before. But, even though they did not understand everything the Master told them, they continued to follow him.

By losing his life in sacrifice, Jesus also provided an opportunity of salvation for the whole sin-sick human family that was sentenced to death because of Adam's disobedience to the divine law. This is the reason that the Lord's people commemorate his death. If we are to be like him, we must also lay down our lives in sacrifice and be motivated by the same love which prompted our Lord to lose his life for others.

The Apostle Paul admonished, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."—Rom. 12:1,2

THE UPPER ROOM

The disciples were greatly unsettled as they assembled in the upper room, which had been prepared in advance for their use in partaking of the Passover Feast. There must have been a sense

of increasing anxiety, and the very air was impregnated with impending tragedy. Jesus let it be known that one of them was plotting to betray him. He knew that Judas was the traitor, yet he did not speak against him, but instead addressed him still as a friend.

There was indeed much for the disciples to learn concerning the true spirit and outlook of the Master. They viewed events from a human standpoint and largely one of self-interest. They delighted themselves with the glory which would be theirs when associated with Jesus in his kingdom. They were contentious with each other as to who would be the greatest in the kingdom. This afforded Jesus a further opportunity to exemplify his humility as well as his great passion for service. He washed their feet and explained that he who would be greatest among them would be servant of all.

There was also the strange question concerning the possession of swords. Jesus asked how many his disciples possessed. Being assured that there were two swords in the company, he explained that these were sufficient. (Luke 22:38) Perhaps this question was not so strange to Jesus' disciples at that time as it might be to us now. We know he was to die a sacrificial death and would not permit swords to be used in his defense.

THE 14TH OF NISAN

Jesus and his disciples were in the upper room to eat the Passover supper on the fourteenth day of Israel's first month, Nisan. It was a yearly memorial of that eventful night in Egypt when the blood of the first Passover lamb was sprinkled upon the

lintels and doorposts of the houses, and when the Israelites ate the Passover meal in safety, while all the firstborn of Egypt died.—Exod. 12:1-14

Each year God wanted his people to remember the great deliverance that released the Israelites from bondage in Egypt. The typical Passover lamb pointed forward to the far more important sacrifice of Jesus who was the “Lamb of God” who would take away the sin of the world.—John 1:29

With his disciples, Jesus commemorated for the last time the sacrifice of the typical Passover lamb, of which he was the antitype—the true Lamb of God. It was at the conclusion of this last typical feast that he instituted a new Memorial for his followers, and asked them to partake of the loaf and the cup which represented his broken body and shed blood. They were to remember him and show forth his death each year on the 14th day of Nisan. He did not intend this observance to be a continuation of the Passover supper in a new form, but a Memorial of his own sacrifice as the real Passover lamb. Events show us that the disciples still did not realize that it was necessary for Jesus to die in order that they might have life and enjoy the privilege of reigning with him in his future kingdom. Many truths would be opened to their understanding when the Holy Spirit was poured out later.

ON THE WAY TO GETHSEMANE

The account indicates that after Jesus had instituted the Memorial of his death, they immediately left the upper room and made their way to Gethsemane. “When they had sung an hymn, they went

out into the mount of Olives.” (Matt. 26:30) The Master’s heart was very heavy and the disciples were tired, but there was some conversation as they slowly walked toward the garden. Along the way, Peter affirmed his willingness to die for his Master, and said that he would do this even though all others should forsake him.

Once they had entered the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus invited Peter, James, and John to come aside and watch with him. He thought that these three might be disposed to pray with him, but they did not. “Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.” (Matt. 26:38,39) We are not to suppose that Jesus even for a moment entertained a desire to violate his covenant of sacrifice. He knew it was the Father’s will for him to die, and he was determined to carry out that will.

Perhaps Jesus did not realize fully until now that his death was to be brought about in an ignominious manner, and that he was to be charged with blasphemy and treason. For one who had done nothing but good and who had honored his Heavenly Father in his every thought, word, and deed, these were heartbreaking charges. Yet, he was glad to die as the world’s Redeemer. “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”—Heb. 5:8,9

As far as human aid was concerned, Jesus had very little during the last few hours of his earthly life. This was not because his disciples were unsympathetic. Peter, James, and John were the closest to him, and Peter proved his willingness to help. But these natural-minded men became fearful and were unable to understand the trial through which their Master was passing. However, where the arm of flesh failed the Heavenly Father sustained and gave him comfort. Therefore, Jesus knew that his Father was ever near and ready to help. “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

TRIAL AND EXECUTION

The events surrounding the last hours of Jesus' life took place under cover of darkness. At Gethsemane, Jesus and his disciples were met by the mob led by Judas, which had come out from the city to arrest him. He was then hurried away to be questioned by the religious leaders of Israel, first to Annas (John 18:12-24), and then to Caiaphas the High Priest. (Matt. 26:57-68) From there he was taken to the Council of the Sanhedrin to be examined. (Luke 22:66-71) Being unable to find fault with him, he was then sent to Pilate (chap. 23:1-7), who wanted to release him. Pilate sent him to Herod (vss. 6-12) and Herod sent him back to Pilate.

Pilate was not prejudiced against Jesus and realized that the charges brought against him had no foundation. Even if Jesus did claim to be a king, he knew it didn't constitute him as a contender to the Roman throne. However, the angry mob would not

permit him to release Jesus, so he pronounced his fate and released Barabbas, a robber.—Luke 23:13-25

“When they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head” (Matt. 27:29,30); “And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”—vs. 37

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”—John 1:29 ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

APRIL 7—“My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”—Philippians 4:19 (Z. '96-163 Hymn 261)

APRIL 14—“He hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors.”—Isaiah 53:12 (Z. '99-125 Hymn 168)

APRIL 21—“We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”—Hebrews 4:15,16 (Z. '98-23 Hymn 274)

APRIL 28—“We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.”—Romans 5:3-5 (Z. '03-348 Hymn 165)

Remembering Jesus Christ

Key Verse: “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*”
—II Timothy 2:15

Selected Scripture:
II Timothy 2:8-15

of their national existence, so Jesus Christ, born directly of David’s line, and hence his seed, is to be Israel’s and the entire world’s great king in the coming age when all “nations of the earth” shall be blessed.—Gen. 22:18

In order for Jesus to be the world’s great king, he first had to die as man’s redeemer—a ransom price for Adam and his posterity—to satisfy the demands of justice and gain the release of the Adamic race from the prison house of sin and death. Jesus’ death on Calvary’s cross as a perfect human being provided that price. Also required, though, was his resurrection from the dead by the mighty power of God, in order that this payment could then be made into the hands of justice. His resurrection also showed that a similar hope of being raised

THERE ARE MANY THINGS

for which we should remember Jesus Christ. Today’s lesson identifies several ways in which he was an example for us to both remember and to follow. The Apostle Paul first states that we should “Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel.” (II Tim. 2:8) Just as David was Israel’s king at the very height

from the dead would also be available to others at some time in the future of God's plan.

Verses 9-12 of our lesson point out another important remembrance of Jesus Christ. We are to remember that he suffered and endured many things, and was called an evildoer by many. As we remember Jesus' example along this line, it is for the special purpose of realizing that, as we strive to be a true follower of him, we, too, will suffer and endure many things. "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." (II Tim. 2:11,12) When we remember that his suffering was to assist in his becoming a merciful High Priest (Heb. 2:17), we also realize that we have been called to be part of this same office. As such, we must also go through the same types of experiences as he did, that we, too, may become merciful and sympathetic to the world's problems.

In verses 13 and 14, Paul councils us further. He says we should keep our faith strong, remembering that our Lord will be faithful to us in all our experiences. He also says that we should remember to avoid getting involved with strifes about words. So many times the scribes and Pharisees had tried to stumble Jesus with "words to no profit" (vs. 14), but he did not fall to this temptation. Jesus, rather, spoke plainly and simply, in ways his hearers could understand, using the natural examples of nature and daily human life all around him. The follower of Christ should also remember his example along this line.

The Key Verse of our lesson points out another way in which we should remember Jesus Christ. He spent much time in meditation and study of his Father's Word of truth. The purpose of this was not to merely fill his mind with facts and information, but to do as this verse points out. He studied these things so that his character might be found approved of God, and that he might be a faithful workman for his Father. Likewise for us, our purpose in the study of God's Word is that we might be approved and also be a faithful worker for the Lord in all things. ■

Praise Builds Us Up

***Key Verse: “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”
—Jude 24,25***

***Selected Scripture:
Jude 17-25***

IN HIS EPISTLE, JUDE describes conditions that befit our day. “There should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.” (Jude 18,19) It is in the midst of such evil conditions that the Lord’s truly consecrated people live today. Jude reminds us that God’s hand is still with his people even in the midst of such evil and, therefore, we must continue the work of “building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.”—Jude 20

Three important things are pointed out in the above verse. First, we have a foundation structure of faith, centered in Jesus—the rock of our salvation. Second, we must build upon this foundation. The thought is not that we each build individually, although we each must individually make our calling and election sure; but the thought is that we together as the body of Christ build each other up. We do this through meeting and studying together, taking note of each other’s experiences and helping one another in these, and being examples one to

another. Third, the verse points out the importance of prayer. ‘Praying in the Holy Spirit’ simply means that our prayers are to always be based on the desire to submit to the leading power of God’s Holy Spirit—“Thy will be done.”—Matt. 6:10

“Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” (Jude 21) Another important responsibility of the Lord’s people during this evil day is to keep ourselves in God’s love. Jesus, when prophesying of our day, stated, “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” (Matt. 24:12) One of the ways we are to keep ourselves in the love of God is to constantly show this trait of character to others. “Of some have compassion,” Jude says. (vs. 22) Even in such an evil world we are to have compassion upon the people because they have been the victims of Satan’s evil desires and workings. We must remember that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.”—John 3:16

Our Key Verses remind us that, because we live in such an evil time, we are subject to falling if left to our own devices. God, however, is able to keep us upright in this narrow way. In fact, we can be presented faultless before God, but only through the merit of Jesus’ blood and the covering robe of his righteousness. Yet, it is that very condition that, if continued in and embroidered upon with the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, will result in our being ushered into ‘the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.’

Continuing the Key Verses, Jude closes out his epistle with an acknowledgement of the ‘glory and majesty, dominion and power’ of our Heavenly Father. In this verse, God is acknowledged as our Saviour, not that he was one and the same person as Jesus, but that this great plan of man’s salvation was “of” the Father’s origin, and would come to fruition “by” the Son’s faithfulness.—I Cor. 8:6 ■

Hosanna

Key Verse: *“They that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”*
—Mark 11:9

Selected Scripture:
Mark 11:1-11

Remembering this prophecy, Jesus called two of his disciples and sent them forth with specific instructions concerning the colt they were to bring for this occasion.—Mark 11:1-7

Having secured the colt, Jesus sat upon it and began to enter into the great city of Jerusalem. Such was the custom of the great kings of Israel, that they would enter into the city in this manner to receive their coronation. As a further mark of respect and honor, verse 8 states that “many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way.” It is thought that, as the animal passed over these garments and branches, the people quickly picked them up and took them back to the front of the procession, placing them again on the ground and thus repeating the process until their final destination was reached—the Temple.

TODAY’S LESSON PRESENTS the account of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. This had been prophesied by Zechariah. He states, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” (Zech. 9:9)

The most impressive part of this procession, through the city to the Temple, was the cry of the people as recorded in the Key Verse and in the verse following, in which they said, “Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.” (Mark 11:10) The word ‘Hosanna’ was an exclamation of adoration and, literally translated, means ‘Save now!’ It was the people’s desire that Jesus, the one who had done so many miracles, even raised the dead, be the one who would now reestablish the kingdom of Israel in the glory that it had under their father David. Surely, they thought, he who had the power to raise the dead could restore the greatness of their nation and lift the yoke of bondage to Rome. This was their desire, and the cry ‘Hosanna’ gave indication that they wanted this done now, not in the future.

In verse 11 of our lesson, we are told that, upon entering Jerusalem, Jesus went to the Temple, and then shortly thereafter left the throngs of the people and went quietly with his disciples out of the city to Bethany. It was then, and over the ensuing days until his death, that Jesus spent much time teaching and explaining to his disciples that, although he had entered into the city proclaimed as Israel’s next great king, he in fact would not now be establishing his kingdom. Rather, he would soon give up his life in order that Adam and his entire race might have an opportunity to be restored in his coming kingdom, in ‘due time.’ This would not be a kingdom just for Israel, but would encompass the entire world—“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth.”—Phil. 2:10

Although the cry ‘Hosanna’ was not answered at the time of Jesus’ first advent, God has not forgotten the groaning of the human family. Soon, “the desire of all nations [people] shall come: . . . and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.”—Hag. 2:7,9 ■

Christ is Risen

Key Verse: *“As they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.”*
—Matthew 28:9

Selected Scripture:
Matthew 28:1-17

ALL FOUR GOSPELS PRESENT different, but not conflicting, details as to the historical account of Jesus’ resurrection and subsequent appearances during the forty days before his ascension into heaven. In today’s lesson, we will examine the perspective of Matthew’s gospel. It is evident from the Matthew account (and others) that it was some of the women followers of Jesus who were the first to understand and believe

that he had been raised from the dead. Matthew specifically identifies Mary Magdalene and “the other Mary” as coming to the sepulchre early on the “first day of the week.” (Matt. 28:1) Mary Magdalene was one out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons (see Luke 8:2), and she subsequently became a close follower of him. ‘The other Mary’ mentioned here was Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and is supposed to have been an aunt to Jesus (compare Matt. 27:56,61 and John 19:25).

How the eleven disciples, later on, must have felt humbled by the fact that these women, along with other women mentioned in the Mark, Luke, and John accounts, were the first ones given the privilege of knowing of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. Their simple but strong faith in the Master was rewarded in this way. When they arrived at the sepulchre early in the morning,

the stone covering the entrance was rolled away and, in fact, was being sat upon by an angel of God. (Matt. 28:2) The account says that the angel's countenance terribly frightened the keepers of the sepulchre, but there is no record that the women were afraid. The angel said to them, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."—vss. 5,6

The angel then instructed the women to go tell the eleven disciples that Jesus was risen from the dead, and that he would soon go before them to Galilee, where they would see him. The women, again displaying their faith, did exactly as the angel had instructed and ran to bring the disciples word of what they had witnessed. (vss. 7,8) Our Key Verse indicates that as the women went to tell the disciples of these things, Jesus himself appeared in their midst. They immediately prostrated themselves at his feet and worshipped him. Worshipping him literally at his feet was a sign of humility, deep devotion, and servitude, and most certainly was pleasing to God. Confirming the words of the angel at the sepulchre, Jesus instructed the women, "Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me."—vs. 10

Matthew's gospel continues by saying that the eleven disciples followed the instructions related by the women and traveled to Galilee where they indeed saw the resurrected Jesus. The account says, "When they [the disciples] saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted." (vs. 17) The final verses of Matthew's gospel record Jesus' acknowledgement of his high position, his commission to the disciples, and his assurance that he would be with them always. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world [age]. Amen."—vss. 18-20 ■

Precious Promises

*“Whereby are given
unto us exceeding
great and precious
promises: that by
these ye might be
partakers of the
divine nature,
having escaped the
corruption that is
in the world
through lust.”
—II Peter 1: 4*

IN THIS SCRIPTURE, THE Apostle Peter has recorded God’s assurance that he will bestow abundant favor and grace through his precious promises to those who love and trust him. The apostle directed this second letter “to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus

Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”—II Pet. 1:1-3

EXCEEDING AND GREAT

Peter emphasizes that God’s promises are not only full of his wondrous grace, but they are also ‘exceeding great and precious.’ These words add considerable depth of meaning and dimension to whatever blessings God may desire to give to his people during this present Gospel Age. They are

directed especially toward those who have responded to the heavenly calling through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thus, may grace and peace be multiplied unto all who continue to abide in the promised blessing of sharing in his future kingdom of righteousness and Truth.

As a help in attaining this wonderful spiritual inheritance, God gives his people valuable instructions for their spiritual growth and attainment. Peter further wrote, “Beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—vss. 5-11

These are important lessons for the Lord’s people to learn. ‘If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ The word ‘if’ points to the attached conditions that God has set forth, and our need to fulfill them as the terms of our consecration. We are thus instructed to add virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity

to the foundation of our faith. If we cultivate these graces of the Holy Spirit, which our Heavenly Father has outlined for our spiritual growth, we will attain the fruitage he desires in us and which will prepare us for an abundant entrance into Christ's future kingdom. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10

Knowledge is to gain understanding and enlightenment of God's Word. We learn to know his will and purpose, and especially as it may relate to our faith. It applies to those who receive the exceeding great and precious promises, and have accepted them as their own. "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ."—Phil. 1:9,10

Temperance, or self-control, is that virtue which keeps one moderate, gentle, and properly balanced. "Let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." (I Pet. 3:4) "Let your moderation be known unto all men." (Phil. 4:5) "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible."—I Cor. 9:25

Patience is that grace of character which enables one to bear affliction and calamity with calmness and cheerful constancy of mind. "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and

have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” (James 5:10,11) “In your patience possess ye your souls.” (Luke 21:19) “We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience.”—Rom. 5:3

Godliness allows us to view and discern every experience from God’s standpoint. Those who possess this characteristic are dignified and just. They are more inclined toward peace and are opposed to strife. The Psalmist David waited to know what God’s will was for him. “David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me.” (I Sam. 22:3) We read that David’s heart smote him for his actions against Saul. “It came to pass afterward, that David’s heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul’s skirt. And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD’S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD. So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.” (chap. 24:5-7) “Know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.”—Ps. 4:3

Brotherly kindness is a virtue that possesses an affinity for others of like mind. In spiritual matters, it is manifest in the desire for fellowship, care, and concern of others. Paul said, “Let brotherly love continue.” (Heb. 13:1) “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring

one another.” (Rom. 12:10) His concern for the spiritual welfare and growth of the Lord’s people is also manifest. “Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”—II Cor. 11:28

Love covers all of the other virtues of which the Apostle Peter spoke. “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” (I John 4:15,16) Our Lord Jesus is the perfect example and pattern of our Heavenly Father. “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” (II Cor. 8:9) “Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”—John 13:1

MEN OF FAITH

Abraham was an outstanding example of faith, and under very difficult circumstances he continued to trust God. “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” (Heb. 11:8-10) “By faith

Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called.”—vss. 17,18

Let us be diligent to intensify our faith with fortitude and singleness of purpose. The Apostle James has well said, “Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”—James 1:6-8

Daniel the prophet is another fine example of unwavering faith during times of adversity. He was determined to follow God’s law and took a stand for his convictions. “Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.”—Dan. 1:8

He also knew that the king had signed a petition that could restrict his privilege of prayer and put him in great danger. The record states, “All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.” (Dan. 6:7,8) However, Daniel continued to pray to God although knowing of the king’s

pronouncement. "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."—vs. 10

This is a great lesson for the Lord's people to also have the same spirit of faith and confidence as Daniel. Let us learn to put our trust in God and dare to be a Daniel. We must be ready to stand alone if necessary. "Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, and neither be fainthearted."—Isa. 7:4

GRACE ABOUNDS

The Apostle Paul encouraged the church at Corinth by saying, "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men; And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”—
II Cor. 9:8-15

Paul was quoting from the previously written words of the psalmist, who said, “Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever. Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.”—Ps. 112:1-4

Those who possess Godly fear, or reverence, receive the light of Truth by keeping the commandments of God. “A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies. He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour. The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.”—vss. 5-10

When writing his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul also reminded them of the precious promises of God. He told them, “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able

to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”—Eph. 3:16-21

NO LIMITS TO GRACE

The love of God has no limit, his grace has no measure, and his power has no boundary that is known to men. “Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.” (Ps. 55:22) “The LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.” (chap. 84:11,12) “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”—Isa. 26:3

Jesus said, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.” (John 15:7,8) Paul wrote, “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”—Heb. 13:5,6

The promises given to us from our loving Heavenly Father cover every feature and phase

of our temporal experiences and spiritual growth. Growth in grace and mercy are distinct characteristics and mark the true child of God. Jesus said to the people, "Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."—Luke 6:35,36

THE HEIRS OF PROMISE

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrew brethren, he spoke of God's unchangeable promises that had been confirmed by his unconditional oath many centuries earlier. "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife."—Heb. 6:13-16

Our Heavenly Father could not swear by anyone greater, so he sealed the covenant with his oath. This is the anchor of our soul and the firm foundation of our faith. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”—Heb. 6:17-20

These wonderful promises assure us that ultimately all mankind will be blessed by the antitypical seed of Abraham—the heirs of promise under the administration of Christ’s future kingdom. “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—Gal. 3:29

THE FATHER OF LIGHTS

We put our trust in God’s unconditional oath and receive his exceeding great and precious promises. Accepting the heavenly calling through Christ Jesus, we become partakers of the call to the divine nature, and our hearts and minds are being changed from the human nature to that which is spiritual. We realize that God is the author of this great change, and that his Holy Spirit of Truth is operating within us. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”—James 1:17,18

Faithful men of old saw many of these exceeding great and precious promises that are now being revealed with greater light and understanding. “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” (Heb. 11:13) It was God’s ultimate plan that we might share as members of a new and spiritual creation.

WATERS OF LIFE

It is written, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”—Ps. 1:1-3

The man that is like ‘a tree planted by the rivers of water’ points to the meek and lowly of heart who is not in sympathy with the ways of the world or the worldly-wise. He draws his supplies of refreshing waters from the river of abundant life and blessing, and brings forth the fruitage of the Spirit. We also read, “All my springs are in thee.”—chap. 87:7

Using the symbol of water, Jesus taught a most remarkable lesson. “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:38) This wondrous grace was also manifest when he spoke to the woman of Samaria who was drawing water from Jacob’s well. “Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”—John 4:13,14

When the mind and heart is filled with the exceeding great and precious promises of our loving Heavenly Father, we become more aware that the blessings of life will ultimately flow to all mankind. The promise of life in the truest sense causes a

swelling and springing up within, which finds expression through the tongue.

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE

In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul wrote, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him."—Eph. 1:11-17

THE FULNESS OF CHRIST

Paul encourages us to strive for the stature of a full grown man in Christ Jesus. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."—chap. 4:13

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."—II Pet. 1:4 ■

Manifestations of Discipleship

*“Remembering
without ceasing
your work of faith,
and labour of love,
and patience of
hope in our Lord
Jesus Christ, in the
sight of God and
our Father.”
—I Thessalonians
1:3*

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST ARE

those who have accepted Jesus as their Redeemer and Savior, and have dedicated their lives to the divine cause represented in him by accepting his invitation to take up their cross and follow in his footsteps even unto death. The word ‘disciple’ means ‘one that receives instruction from another’ and the disciples of Christ receive their instructions from Jesus whom they accept as their Master, whose instructions reflect the will of their Heavenly Father.

Jesus said of Nathanael, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” (John 1:47) This implies that there were those in Jesus’ day who were looked upon as Israelites, but who in reality were not, in that their lives were not sufficiently in tune with the will of the God of Israel. Because of this, they did not accept Jesus as their promised Messiah.

The same is true with respect to spiritual Israel of the Gospel Age, made up of the disciples of Christ. There are disciples 'indeed' and then there are those who accept this name professing to be followers of Jesus, who are disciples in name only, inasmuch as they do not comply with the teachings of the Master.

Sincerity of heart is one of the basic qualifications for true discipleship, and those who are sincere will endeavor to manifest their professions not by mere words, but also by deeds. The Apostle John wrote, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."—I John 3:18,19

The brethren at Thessalonica, to whom our text is addressed, were evidently very faithful 'in deed and in truth' demonstrating the genuineness of their professions as disciples; for Paul commended them for their labor of love, their work of faith, and their patience of hope. Every true disciple of Christ must be filled with love, possess a mountain-moving faith, and be patient and longsuffering in his service of the Lord, the Truth, and the brethren.

LOVE LABORS

There are various ways in which love labors. To the Hebrew brethren, Paul wrote, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." (Heb. 6:10) Here the 'labour of love' referred to is on behalf of the brethren, and this is in keeping with the Master's instruction that we should love

one another as he loved us and his love for us induced him to lay down his life on our behalf. “We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren,” John wrote, in his admonition to be filled with love.—I John 3:16

The labor of love is voluntary. One may be constrained by love, but not compelled. Love is unselfishness, and is of God. In God, we have the superlative example of love. All of God’s creative works are from one standpoint evidences of his love. He did not need the things he created. They were for the benefit of his creation. The most outstanding demonstration of God’s love is in the gift of his only begotten Son to be the Redeemer and Savior of the world. “For 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

In a number of instances in the New Testament, the Greek word *agape*—meaning love—is translated ‘charity.’ While most Bible students prefer the word ‘love’ rather than ‘charity,’ yet pure charity comes closer in meaning to what the Scriptures indicate divine love to be. Charity is the act of giving to those from whom there can be no hope of a return. This was true in God’s gift of his Son. In accepting this gift, it is with the understanding that there is nothing we can do to repay. All we can do is to express our appreciation by accepting the gift, and devoting our lives wholeheartedly to the one who gave it.

Love labors, love gives, and thus love manifests itself in the service of the Lord, the Truth, and the brethren. Where love fills the heart there will be

labors of love. There will be daily sacrifices on behalf of others, especially the brethren. There will be a burning zeal to serve the Lord and to show forth his praises. When there are no such manifestations of love, it simply means that love is lacking.

Paul mentions other manifestations of love which are to be in the hearts and lives of the Lord's disciples. "Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind; charity [love] envieth not; charity [love] vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity [love] never faileth." (I Cor. 13:4-8) It is not to be expected that in our fallen flesh we can be so filled with love as to measure up fully to these various qualities but, if we have the heart desire to do so, they will be manifest to a large extent in our association with the brethren and also with those with whom we come into contact in the world.

WORK OF FAITH

Paul also commended the brethren at Thessalonica for their work of faith. This is a very fitting expression, for actually where true faith exists there will inevitably be the work of faith. James summed this up very nicely, when he wrote, "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." (James 2:17,18) The illustration which James used was the case of

a poor man coming to the meetings of the brethren. If the poor man is ignored, it reveals a lack of the works that should proceed out of a true faith.

There are various ways by which faith works. In his letter to the Hebrew brethren, Paul mentions many of these. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain; . . . By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; . . . By faith Abraham, when he was called of God to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; . . . Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age; . . . By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; . . . By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; . . . By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones; . . . By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."—Heb. 11:4-25

These are but some of the manifestations of faith Paul gleaned from the faithfulness of many Old Testament characters. Then he adds, "What shall I more say? for time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made

strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again.”—Heb. 11:32-35

Here Paul mentions the accomplishments of faith in cases where the Lord rewarded the faithful in ways that demonstrated his pleasure with them. Then he continues, “Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.”—vss. 36-38

Others, as shown here, had experiences of trial and persecution because, through their faith, they stood for the Lord’s cause and would not compromise with the powers of evil by which they were surrounded. A good illustration in point is the case of Daniel’s three friends, who refused to bow down to the image which had been set up at the order of Nebuchadnezzar. Those who refused to worship this image were to be cast into a fiery furnace and destroyed. When given a second chance, and after a warning from Nebuchadnezzar, these faithful stalwarts said, “If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”—Dan. 3:17,18

Here the work of faith was the refusal to worship the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar had

set up. These three Hebrews had faith to believe that their God was able to deliver them from a cruel death in a fiery furnace. On the other hand, they did not know whether or not this would be his will for them. However, faith worked to give them victory over temptation regardless of what the outcome might be. They had faith to believe that, if they died, it was because their God saw that this would be best. Their real hope was deliverance in the “better resurrection.”—Heb. 11:35

PROCLAIMING THE MESSAGE

In our featured scripture, the Apostle Paul commended the Thessalonian brethren for their work of faith and was referring to their activity in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. (I Thess. 1:3) This comes to light in the context from which this verse is selected. We read, “Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit: So that we were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.”—vss. 4-8

This is a remarkable statement. Paul speaks of the manner in which he witnessed the Gospel to those who had become disciples in Thessalonica. His zeal and faithfulness had been manifested to

them. He mentions that they had become followers of him even as he was of Christ—emulating his missionary zeal in proclaiming the good tidings. Because of this, they in turn had become ensamples ‘to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.’ Then he explains why: ‘For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad.’

Jesus, our Master and Teacher, whose disciples we profess to be, left instructions that we should be his witnesses throughout the earth. If we have faith in him and in his leadership, we will obey his instructions. A failure to wholeheartedly obey would be an evidence of a lack of faith, for this particular work of faith would be absent from our daily lives. Let us be rather like the Thessalonian brethren, who sounded forth the Word of the Lord far and wide, and thus gave evidence of their faithfulness in following the example set for them by Paul—following him as he followed the Lord Jesus, who himself also was faithful in proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom.

PATIENTLY HOPING

Paul also mentions the Thessalonian brethren’s ‘patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.’ He wrote, “We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” (Rom. 8:24) As disciples of Christ, we hope for the things which the Lord has promised, the things which we do not yet see. Chief among these in the Early Church was the return of Christ and the setting up of his kingdom in which they

hoped to live and reign with him. We rejoice to realize that the Second Presence of Christ is now a reality, but we are still waiting for the fulfillment of the hope of living and reigning with Christ. We, like the disciples in the Early Church, are patiently waiting for the realization of our hope.

This waiting requires patience and endurance, because while we are waiting there are trials to endure. Paul again wrote, “We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.”—Rom. 5:3-5

In Hebrews, we read concerning the promised return of Christ that is directly associated with the disciples’ need of patience. “Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” (Heb. 10:36-38) Again, we read, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”—James 5:7,8

In the Lord’s providence, he has often permitted his people to suppose that developments in the outworking of his plan were closer to hand than they have often turned out to be. This is particularly true with respect to the return of Christ and the

establishment of his kingdom. Many of the disciples in the Early Church believed that Christ's return was very near. Peter, and others, were able to see before they finished their course that it would not take place in their day, yet it is doubtful if any realized that so many centuries would elapse before this outstanding development in God's plan would take place.

Even so, this glorious hope was so precious that every day they waited for its realization by the exercise of patience and endurance. It was thus so with the brethren at Thessalonica and, judging from Paul's observation in our featured text, they patiently waited for the fulfillment of their hope in the proper way by continuing to be active in the service. They actively waited.

THE SAME TEST TODAY

While we, during the harvest of this present Gospel Age, are in a much more knowledgeable position with respect to the outworking of God's plan than were those in the Early Church, nevertheless the test of patiently enduring is upon us also. We would all like to see a speedy realization of our kingdom hopes, but we have no assurance as to just how soon this will be. We are also called upon to continue laying down our lives in the service of the Lord without knowing how much longer we will be called upon thus to serve, sacrifice, and suffer.

This is why we need the patience of hope—that is, the patience which will enable us to maintain our hope regardless of how long the waiting time might be, and no matter how severe our experiences in the Lord's service may be while we are

actively waiting. This is indeed a test of endurance. Let us not lose our ‘first love’ enthusiasm for the Truth and its service simply because there is a seeming delay in the fruition of our hopes. God is a perfect timekeeper, and every detail of his plan is working out exactly when he has decreed that it should. If to us the vision seems to tarry, let us realize that this is not actually the case, but that the Lord is testing our patience of hope, and watching to see how zealous in his service we will continue to be regardless of how long the wait may seem to be.

When Paul assured the Hebrew brethren that God was not unrighteous to forget their “labour of love,” he added, “We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.” (Heb. 6:10,11) It is not enough that our labor of love and work of faith continue either for a short time or for many years. The test of true discipleship is faithfulness to the very end of the narrow way even unto death. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

In the parable of the sower, Jesus taught, “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that

on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”—Luke 8:11-15

The seed which fell among thorns holds a special warning to all of the Lord’s disciples. We need to be on the alert lest the cares of this life unduly interfere with our work of faith, and labor of love. Patient continuance in well doing is the best safeguard against this danger, together with prayer for unfailing strength to continue laboring until our course has been finished. We read, “His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”—Matt. 25:21-23 ■

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We Are All One Body

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.”
—I Corinthians 10:16,17

IN THIS SCRIPTURE, THE Apostle Paul speaks of the Christ as one composite body with many members. We learn from God’s Word that the body of Christ will number 144,000 when the heavenly call has been fully completed at the close of this present Gospel Age. (Rev. 14:1) Paul uses the word ‘communion’ which has been translated from a Greek word that means ‘to share or to participate’ in a certain goal. It thus points to the common partnership in our Lord’s death in which he has invited us to share. Those who will be remembering his death this year will be privileged to eat and drink of the emblems that he gave us. This year the Lord’s people will gather for this occasion on Sunday evening, April 17, 2011. It is a great joy to once again partake

of the Memorial supper that our dear Lord Jesus instituted nearly two thousand years ago.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

We echo the words that the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth in connection with the significance of this solemn annual observance. He told them, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."—I Cor. 11:23-26

As we participate in this Memorial celebration, we will be partaking of two symbolic emblems—the unleavened bread and the cup, or fruit of the vine. In order to appreciate the true and deeper meaning of this Memorial observance, we must understand the true meaning of the emblems themselves, and also how they relate to our partaking of them.

THE BROKEN LOAF

When Jesus chose to use the broken loaf, he explained to his disciples that the bread would represent his body that was broken for them. He invited them to eat of it and told them that they were to do this in remembrance of his death each year. His body represented his perfect human life that he was to lay down in sacrifice as a corresponding

price to redeem Adam and his posterity from the penalty of death. As the typical Passover lamb of the Israelites involved the slaying of an unblemished lamb, so Jesus is also spoken of as the “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29) The Apostle Peter said that Jesus was the “lamb without blemish and without spot.” (I Pet. 1:19) We also read that Jesus was the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”—Rev 13:8

As the bread was broken, we partake of Jesus’ broken body by accepting him as our Redeemer. “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb. 12:2) It is only because of his broken body that we have a relationship with God. A living Jesus in the flesh, even though perfect, could not accomplish our redemption. He had to die as a perfect human being, and his body had to be broken in death.

HE KEEPETH ALL HIS BONES

In prophetic terms, the Psalmist David wrote, “The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.” (Ps. 34:18-20) David’s prophecy spoke figuratively of Jesus’ death, and that his body, or perfect humanity, would be voluntarily broken to fully take Adam’s place as the ransom price for the human family. It is in this sense that Jesus’ body had to be broken in death, and not as a result of any disease, weakness, or imperfection

that had come upon him. None of these fleshly causes of death applied when our Lord died.

In John's gospel, we read the account of Jesus' death and the fulfillment of David's prophetic words. "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation [day], that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."—John 19:31-36

Jesus' body was figuratively broken in his death on the cross. It was also broken during the entire three and a half years of his earthly ministry, during which time he continuously poured out his life through his preaching and in the wonderful miracles he performed. His entire life was a perfect example of total dedication to the will of his Heavenly Father. His ministry became life-sustaining food for us, and is the key to our spiritual growth and development as New Creatures in Christ Jesus.

BREAD FROM HEAVEN

The Master more than once used the symbol of bread to illustrate his broken body. He explained,

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.”—John 6:51-57

Just as we would expect to receive life-giving nourishment from eating bread, so would we also benefit from the example provided from the life of Jesus. We are to eat of him by speaking, acting, and thinking as he did. The Apostle Paul relates this symbol of the bread to the development of the New Creature as exemplified in Jesus. He admonished, “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”—I Cor. 5:7,8

‘Unleavened bread’ signifies that which sanctifies and separates us from the fallen tendencies of the flesh and the world. When we partake of the bread, in addition to remembering Jesus’ broken body, we are also renewing our covenant of sacrifice

and our commitment to the great work of sanctification during our walk in newness of life. We are appropriating to ourselves the benefits of that which was accomplished during our Lord's earthly ministry.

THE CUP

Jesus told his disciples what the cup symbolized when he instituted the Memorial supper. "He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."—Matt. 26:27-29

In this scripture, the Master explained that the cup represented the 'blood of the new testament,' or the New Covenant. Only the cup is mentioned in this connection because his broken body could do nothing relative to the New Covenant. Having merit, the blood served as the seal, or ratification, of the New Covenant. It guaranteed that the New Covenant would be instituted at the designated time when his future kingdom here on earth will be established.

The bread represented Jesus' body broken for three and a half years culminating on the cross, and the cup represented the value, or merit, of that life which was represented in the blood—"With the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (I Pet. 1:19) It is important to note the necessity of both parts of the transaction. Jesus' body—the corresponding price—had

to be broken and put to death for the ransom to be provided. However, this by itself was not sufficient because a dead Messiah could not restore the race to perfection. The value of that life, as represented in the blood, needed to be applied as payment into the hands of justice in order to bring release to the human family from condemnation. It provided hope for man's restoration to God.

APPLICATION OF THE BLOOD

By his death, Jesus provided the ransom price. By his resurrection, the merit of that ransom was demonstrated and he was able to initiate the process by which that value would be applied. It was first applied on behalf of the members of the Christ during this present Gospel Age, and later it will be applied on behalf of the whole sin-sick world under the administration of Christ's future kingdom.

The Apostle Paul pointed to the sealing by blood of both the old Law Covenant as well as the New Covenant. He said, "When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you." (Heb. 9:19,20) "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better [new] testament."—chap. 7:22

We would have no standing before our Heavenly Father if it were not for Jesus who accomplished that standing on our behalf. While explaining the type in his letter to the Hebrews, Paul emphasized the realization of that standing and the importance

of the blood sacrifice. "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission [of sin]." (Heb. 9:22) He further explained that the first application of the blood took place on behalf of the Christ during this present Gospel Age. "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."—vss. 23,24

APPROPRIATING THE CUP

We appropriated the significance of the cup to ourselves at the time we made our consecration to God. Through faith, we accepted Jesus and received the merits of his sacrifice. At that time, the merit, or true value, of Jesus' blood was imputed to us and we were justified in God's sight. The psalmist wrote, "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD." (Ps. 116:12,13) "Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—Rev. 1:5,6

However, our appropriation of the cup at the time of our consecration was only the first step in our consecrated life. Just as the Israelites in the type

had to remain under the blood during the entire Passover night, we, too, must remain continually under Jesus' blood through all the experiences of our walk in newness of life. We also receive Christ's robe of righteousness. "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."—Isa. 61:10

THE CUP OF EXPERIENCE

Jesus referred to this cup of experience both in reference to himself, and to the members of his church. Concerning himself, he said, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11) Concerning us, he asks, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"—Mark 10:38

We must be willing to drink of the cup that our loving Heavenly Father has poured for us, and delight in all of the experiences he sees fit to give us for our spiritual development and growth as New Creatures in Christ Jesus. We must be able to answer even as Jesus did and have the same attitude of heart devotion to God. By doing so, we will have the cup fully appropriated to us.

EXAMINING OURSELVES

We should solemnly consider the benefits that are symbolized in the body and blood of our dear Lord Jesus. They are represented by the emblems which he instituted during that last night of his

earthly life in the upper room with his disciples. The Apostle Paul admonishes, “Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”—I Cor. 11:27,28

Let us remember that our worthiness to partake of these emblems and our faithfulness in so doing is not only to be measured by our partaking of the emblems on the night of the Memorial, but by all of the remaining days of our Christian walk in newness of life. “We are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”—Rom. 6:4,5

As we look forward to another year in the school of Christ, let us each remember the work that Jesus accomplished and what it means to us. As Jesus gave thanks before serving the bread and the cup to his disciples, may we also continue to be thankful for all that has been done on our behalf, and all that will soon be made manifest to the entire world of mankind.

ONE BODY IN CHRIST

We are all one body in Christ Jesus. “As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”—Rom. 12:4,5 ■

2011 MEMORIAL SUPPER DATE

The proper time for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after 6:00 P.M. on Sunday, April 17, 2011.

A complete Memorial Service is available for isolated brethren, or for any who care to have it.

The audio cassette tape or CD can be purchased for \$2.00, and the DVD for \$4.00. All are also available free on loan, from:

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

The cut-off date for ordering is April 10.

OBITUARIES

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to their family and friends in the loss of these dear ones.

Sister Lucille McClughen, Mahomet, IL—January 29. Age, 93

Sister Suzanne Boulter, France—February 5.

Sister Alice Rainford, North Bend, WA—February 5. Age, 96

Brother Leonard Moore, Salem, OR—February 9. Age, 88

Sister Lisa Bovat, Agawam, MA—February 27. Age, 46

Brother Bernd Eckholt, Reeders, PA—March 1. Age,

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

BETTER LEADERSHIP

DawnBible: I came upon your site by accident and now I realize it was no accident! I believe everything happens for a reason. That reason has definitely been positive. I have been a loyal reader since that time. I have been very well pleased with your information.

I am an associate minister at my church and your information has helped me to a better leadership role. Thank you, God bless your ministry, keep up the good work.—VA

WHEN A MAN DIES

DawnBible: I was overwhelmed while reading your book on what happens to a man when he dies (*When a Man Dies*), as I almost did last year from a heart attack.

I have never, ever been able to understand anything from the Bible as I did when reading your book.

My uncle, who was like a second Dad to me, passed away yesterday. When I found your book, it sure

has helped. Thank you.—
E-MAIL

FOR THIS CAUSE

Dear Dawn: (Translated from Spanish): Thank you for this website. You have helped me so much in my current study of why it was necessary for Christ to come to this world.

Blessings, and may God multiply the fruit of your works.—E-MAIL

DETAILED LITERATURE

Dear Dawn: I own a *Divine Plan of the Ages* booklet and let me add that this is the most inspirational and detailed literature about and/or concerning life relative to the Scriptures that I have ever read in my life, and others who have read it are very overwhelmed.

Thank you in advance for your correspondence.—LA

COMFORT IN THESE LAST DAYS

Dear Dawn: I received your booklet on Armageddon [*Armageddon Then World Peace*] yesterday and have already read it. I find it

comforting even in these terrible last days.

I would like a copy of *Christ's Thousand-Year Kingdom*. Take care, and thanks.—PA

WALKING WITH THE LORD

DawnBible: Could you please send me every booklet that I viewed on the pages. I will in return share them with family and friends. I find them very interesting to read and to help me with my walk with the Lord.

I want to learn and seek knowledge, but I need help and prayers. Sometimes I get sad because I fear the Lord because I think I disappoint him that I don't understand the Bible; but I feel this will help with the understanding with the booklets. God bless you.—E-MAIL

BELIEVE AND OBEY

DawnBible: I read *How God Answers Prayer*, *Millennium*, *God's Plan*, etc., downloaded on the site by the Dawn Association. It motivates and inspired me to believe and obey God's

words more and more. May the Lord continue to promote and bless the association for spreading the Gospel far and near.—NIGERIA

CLOSER TO GOD

DawnBible: I just received your booklet, *How God Answers Prayer*. It was very enlightening. I am a born-again Christian who wants to get closer to God and your booklet really helped. Thank you.—OH

GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD!

Dear Dawn: Thank you and bless you for proclaiming the Greatest Story ever told—God's Kingdom through his Son Jesus—when there will be restitution of all things spoken by all God's prophets since the world began.

I am so thankful and full of joy and hope, that he told it to me. I will see all my beloved family!—WV

WEBSITE A BLESSING

DawnBible: Glad to be here. I loved the items I ordered from here [DawnBible.com]. Great site.—TX

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The speakers listed below are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

K. Fernets

Boise, ID April 22-24

The speakers listed below are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

W. Austin

Fresno, CA April 1-3

D. Blencowe

Boise, ID April 22-24

E. Blicharz

Detroit, MI April 9,10

E. Byrd

Detroit, MI April 9,10

C. Chandler

Boise, ID April 22-24

D. Christiansen

Fresno, CA April 1-3

Boise, ID 22-24

O. B. Elbert

Fresno, CA April 1-3

Boise, ID 22-24

R. Goodman

Fresno, CA April 1-3

St. Augustine, FL 17

R. Gorecki

Boise, ID April 22-24

L. Griehs

Detroit, MI April 9,10

Albuquerque, NM 22-24

K. Humphreys

Boise, ID April 22-24

B. Keith

Detroit, MI April 9,10

Boise, ID 22-24

T. Krupa

Detroit, MI April 9,10

E. Kuenzli

Albuquerque, NM April 22-24

H. Montague

Boise, ID April 22-24

M. Nekora

Fresno, CA April 1-3

D. Rawson

Boise, ID April 22-24

D. Rice

Fresno, CA April 1-3

Albuquerque, NM 22-24

T. Ruggirello

Detroit, MI April 9,10

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

FRESNO PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 1-3—Fresno Quality Inn, 4278 W. Ashlan Avenue, Fresno, CA 93722. Contact R. Evans. Phone: (559) 291-4710

COLUMBUS PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 2,3—Der Dutchman Restaurant, 445 S. Jefferson Avenue, Plain City, OH. Phone: (614) 873-3414. Contact E. Crisan, 1357 Clydesdale Avenue, Columbus, OH 43229. Phone: (614) 843-0655

GREATER NEW LONDON PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 3—Bayview Lodge, 32 Society Road, Niantic, CT. Contact V. Grillo, 154 Case Street, Norwich, CT 06360. Phone: (860) 823-7099

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 9,10—Quality Inn - Troy, 2537 Rochester Court, Troy, MI 48083. For reservations, phone: (248) 689-7500. Specify "Detroit Bible Students Ecclesia." Deadline for special rate is April 2. Other information, contact P. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

ALBUQUERQUE CONVENTION, April 22-24—Sheraton Albuquerque Airport Hotel, 2910 Yale Boulevard SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. Contact S. Thomassen. Phone: (505) 268-8170

BOISE CONVENTION, April 22-24—Owyhee Plaza Hotel, 1109 Main Street, Boise, ID. Contact D. Allers, 7558 W. Hathaway Lane, Boise, ID 83714 by April 1. Phone: (208) 375-6873

JACKSONVILLE CONVENTION, May 1—Holiday Inn Hotel, 620 Wells Road, Orange Park, FL 32073. Contact C. Hires. Phone: (904) 781-0506

WEST NEWTON CONVENTION, May 1—Sewickley Grange Hall, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact L. Mlinek. Phone: (724) 689-8733

AGAWAM CONVENTION, May 14,15—Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA 01001. For room reservations and other information, contact M. Wardak. Phone: (413) 789-6198

BUFFALO CONVENTION, June 4,5—Holiday Inn Buffalo-Intl. Airport location, 4600 Genesee Street, Buffalo, NY 14225. Contact R. Morin for reservations by May 8, 2011. Phone: (585) 322-3430

WATERBURY CONVENTION, June 4,5—Saturday in Morris, CT. Sunday at Litchfield Fire House Hall, Litchfield, CT. Contact H. Tsimonis, P. O. Box 1494, Waterbury, CT. 06721-1494. Phone: (860) 567-0109

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, June 25-30—University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Johnstown, PA. Contact M. Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Phone: (310) 454-5248

PRINCE ALBERT/SASKATOON CONVENTION, July 1-3—Siwak Farm. Contact A. Siwak, RR 1, Station MPP, Prince Albert, SK, Canada S6V 5P8. Phone: (306) 764-7692

SAN DIEGO CONVENTION, July 2-4—Alliant University, 10455 Pomerado Road, San Diego, CA 92131. For accommodations at Alliant University, or at nearby hotels, contact B. Bach, P. O. Box 323, Alpine, CA 91903-0323. Phone: (619) 445-4879

NIGERIA GENERAL CONVENTION, August 19-21—Emmanuel College Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. Contact C. O. Egbu. Phone: 2348033339949 or 2348082146621

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To us the Scriptures clearly teach:

THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD —peculiarly “his workmanship;” that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world’s Redeemer and the chief “corner stone” of this temple, through which, when finished, God’s blessings shall come “to all people,” and they find access to him.—I Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING, AND POLISHING of the consecrated believers in Christ’s atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these “living stones,” “elect and precious,” shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8

THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD lies in the fact that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God “tasted death for every man,” “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5,6

THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH is that she may be like her Lord, “see him as he is,” be a “partaker of the divine nature,” and share his glory as his joint-heir.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4

THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God’s witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6, 20:6

THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35