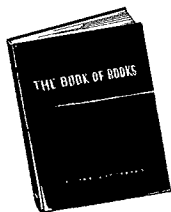




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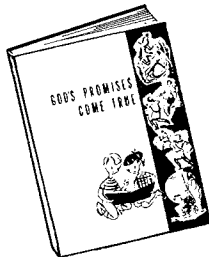
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Christ, who, in his words quoted above, likened the days of Noah in which the Flood came upon the earth to the time of his second presence, when there would be another time of destruction, and when again the foretold vengeance of God would come upon the selfish nations of earth just preceding the establishment of his kingdom.

The Apostle Peter later confirmed the fact of the Flood, and in his lesson reminds us of Jesus' statement concerning the "days of Noe" being like the days of the Son of man. Peter wrote, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming ['presence']? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."—II Pet. 3:3-6

Not only do these references to the days of Noe by Jesus and by the Apostle Peter confirm the fact of the Flood, but both these references furnish "signs," or evidences, by which we are able to identify the days of the Son of man. The information furnished by Jesus and confirmed by Peter is unique. Jesus stressed the ignorance of the people in the days of Noe concerning the significance of the time in which they were living. Peter describes the viewpoint of those who scoff at the evidence that we are now living in the days of the Son of man by explaining that they are willingly ignorant in their statement that all things have continued as they were since creation, for they should know that a tremendous change took place in the days of Noe; that, in fact, a world came to an end—"the world that then was."

It should be noted in these statements by Jesus and Peter that at the time of the Flood—as well as now, in the

days of the Son of man—not all are ignorant of the significance of the events by which they are surrounded. Noah and his family certainly knew of the imminence of the Flood, and that it was destined to destroy the world of that day; and today, those referred to in the prophecies as “watchers” are able, by the grace of God, to read the prophecies which identify our day, and explain its meaning.

Eating and Drinking

Jesus said that in “the days that were before the Flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the Flood came.” (Matt. 24:38, 39) Jesus did not say that it was sinful to be eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage. He merely used these activities to indicate that the unbelieving world of that day went on in its normal way, being ignorant of the impending Flood.

To this Jesus added, “So shall also the coming [presence] of the son of man be.” True, the world before the Flood was indeed a wicked world. The record states, “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” (Gen. 6:5) “And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air.”—Gen. 6:7

“The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt: for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”—Gen. 6:11-13

While the principal comparison Jesus made between the days of Noe and the time of his second presence was that in both cases the unbelieving world would be unaware of the significance of the times in which they were living. However, the Bible also indicated that in both cases it would be a time of destruction due to the sin of the people. As Genesis explains, the earth was filled with violence just prior to the Flood, and the imaginations of men's hearts were evil, and that continually.

Two Worlds Destroyed

Peter explains that the world before the Flood was destroyed, and that a world is also destroyed in the days of the Son of man; that is, during the early years of his second presence. The language used with respect to these events is largely symbolic. For example, the earth itself was not destroyed by the Flood, but rather, a social order which Peter speaks of as "the heavens . . . and the earth." (II Pet. 3:5) Then Peter explains that "the heavens and the earth, which are now . . . are . . . reserved unto fire." (II Pet. 3:7) He also says that "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise," and that the "earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."—II Pet. 3:10

It is generally conceded by students of prophecy that the second coming of Christ is followed by "the end of the world." This is true—except that the world which ends is not the literal earth, but, as we have noted, a social order, symbolized in the prophecies as a "heavens" and "earth." Today, even as it was in Noah's day, the earth is filled with violence, and this violence is part of the symbolic fire which destroys the present sinful world.

New Heavens and New Earth

While the present evil social order is to be destroyed, and is in fact already disintegrating, the earth itself remains, and will be man's eternal home. But there will be

a new, divinely prepared social order, described by Peter when he wrote, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwell eth righteousness."—II Pet. 3:13

All of the Lord's people who are acquainted with the promises of God look for this "new heaven and new earth." One of the promises concerning it is recorded in Isaiah 65:17-24: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old: but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."

One cannot read this precious promise of God concerning the "new heavens and new earth" which he described without realizing how vastly different conditions will be among mankind, when this "creation" is complete, from what they are today. The people will build houses and inhabit them. Now the average man and wife, with the help of a mortgage, build a house for their family; and often before the children are matured the parents die, or else

they are unable to make the payments on the mortgage, and lose the home. But when the new heavens and new earth are created they shall build houses and inhabit them.

They shall also plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. In other words, there will be stability and economic security. And then the people shall long enjoy the work of their hands. How long? "As the days of a tree [will be] the days of my people." In ancient Palestine, trees such as the cedars of Lebanon lived a very long time—through generations—and it seemed to the people that they never died, for they themselves would pass off the scene, but the trees would live on into succeeding generations. So this promise, in reality, symbolizes everlasting life for those who enjoy the blessings of the new heavens and new earth.

No More Death

In Revelation 21:1-5 we have another reference to the new heavens and new earth for which Peter said the Lord's people are looking. We quote: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." (Rev. 21:1) The Amplified Bible renders this "former heavens" and "former earth." Obviously this is correct, for actually the "first heavens" and the "first earth" passed away at the time of the Flood, followed by "the heaven and the earth" which are now, which are the "former" heavens and earth which are supplanted by God's new heavens and new earth.

In the original promise of the new heaven and new earth the Lord associates a new Jerusalem. (Isa. 65:17, 18) So in Revelation 21:1, 2 we have the same combination of symbols. After telling of the new heaven and new earth the Revelator continues, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

The fact that this new Jerusalem comes down from God out of heaven locates the scene on the literal earth, and among men. And what happens when this occurs? The Revelator answers: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." (vs. 3) Here we have more symbolic language. God himself will not dwell literally with humans here on earth. The thought is, rather, that he will extend his favor to them and, in response, the people will declare themselves as being God's people. This is one reason, as stated by the Apostle Peter, that in the new heavens and new earth there will dwell righteousness.

The Revelator continues: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (vs. 4) Another Old Testament promise reads, "He [God] will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces. . . . And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God: we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25:8, 9

In Isaiah's prophecy of the new heavens and new earth he gave assurance that in that new and divinely created social order long life would be the order of the day; that the Lord's people would long enjoy the work of their hands. In the vision given to John on the Isle of Patmos he is assured that actually in the new heavens and new earth death will be destroyed altogether, and that all tears caused by death will be wiped away—"There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21:4

Verse 5 reads, "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." With all things made new, it will indeed be a new earth. And just think of how extensive this thought really is! When we consider that all the evils associated with the reign of sin and death are destroyed, even our present dictionary will be outmoded, for so many words now in use will then be obsolete so far as everyday communication is concerned.

"There shall be no more death"! This will do away with the words sickness, pain, hospitals, doctors, drug stores, dentists, and undertakers, besides hundreds of other words associated with sickness, pain, and death.

War will be no more; and think of the words in the dictionary this will make obsolete! The whole world today is either plagued by war or the fear of war. With the elimination of war will come the destruction of the instruments of war: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks."—Micah 4:1-4

No such changes as these came about when the world of Noah's day was destroyed by the Flood. Noah and his family were brought through the Flood into the new world, but like the world before the Flood it was cursed by the reign of sin and death. Wars very quickly came into vogue, and the nations of earth have been at each other's throats ever since, and tears have continued to flow because of the evils of human sin and selfishness. Nothing was made new!

But how different it will be in that glorious new world—the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Then all things will be made new. Tears will be wiped away, sickness and pain will be destroyed, and "there shall be no more death." □



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RADIO TOPICS FOR JUNE

3—"Many Mansions"

17—"Science and Creation"

10—"When a Man Dies"

24—"Can We Talk with the Dead?"

Bible Study

LESSON FOR JUNE 3

Why Have Law?

MEMORY VERSE: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."—Romans 13:10

EXODUS 20:1,2

THIS is the beginning of a series of lessons based largely upon the Law given to Israel by God at the hands of Moses. There will also be appropriate quotations from the New Testament, as well as the Old Testament, from writers other than Moses. The caption of this lesson is thought-provoking—"Why have law?" God's handling of the entire universe is based on law. Even the stars of heaven are controlled by law, as are all inanimate things. What a crash of worlds there would be if this were not true!

Man, who was created in the image of God, is controlled by laws upon which he can reason, if he will, and to the extent to which these laws are ignored or disobeyed man suffers loss. The outstanding scriptural example of this is Adam's disobedience to divine law, and the thousands of years of suffering and death to which it

has led. Sin is the disobedience of God's law, and the wages of sin ultimately is death.

It was shortly after the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt that God gave them his Law. And although the Lord promised life to anyone who could and would keep that Law perfectly, the Law itself was not God's provision for giving life to Israel or to the remainder of the world of mankind. God's plan for giving life to all the willing and obedient of mankind was expressed in the promise he made to Abraham that through Abraham's seed all the families of the earth would be blessed—with life, that is, through the redeeming blood of Christ.—Gen. 12:3

"Wherefore then serveth the Law?" Paul asks. His answer is, "It was added [to God's promise] because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." (Gal. 3:19) Paul explains in this

same chapter of Galatians that in reality the promised "Seed" of Abraham through which all the families of the earth will be blessed is Christ. (vs. 16) Jesus' footstep followers are heirs with Christ in the promise of the "seed."—vss. 27-29

Without law a nation, or a people, deteriorates rapidly; so, as Paul explains, because of transgression the Law was given to the Israelites to hold them together as a people until Christ came, for, as the Scriptures indicate, it was God's plan that the natural descendants of Abraham should be given the first opportunity to be joint-heirs with Christ in the future work of blessing all the families of the earth. When Jesus did come only a few of his own people accepted him, so the Lord turned to the Gentiles to make up the remainder of the foreordained number of this promised Seed.

PSALM 119:97-104

The record of ancient Israel is predominantly one of disregard for the Law which God gave to them, although in every generation there were a few of whom this was not true. Jesus referred to these as "Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile." The prophets and psalmist were among these.

The psalmist of our lesson wrote, "O how love I thy law!

it is my meditation all the day." (vs. 97) And again, "Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies." (vs. 98) "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation."—vs. 99

How eloquent is the psalmist's testimony as he continues: "I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth."—vss. 100-103

While Jesus did not teach that one could gain everlasting life by keeping the Law, he did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it. (Matt. 5:17) Our memory verse explains that "love is the fulfilling of the Law," and certainly Jesus demonstrated the way of love by laying down his life for Israel and for the world.

QUESTIONS

Could the universe exist without law?

Mention some of the outstanding examples of faithfulness in ancient Israel.

How is love the fulfilling of the Law?

God Is Supreme

MEMORY VERSE: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

—Exodus 20:3

EXODUS 20:3-5

THE commandment given to ancient Israel, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," is just as applicable to the Lord's people today as it was to the Israelites. The Heavenly Father must indeed be supreme in our lives if we are to be pleasing to him. When we dedicate ourselves to God he becomes the supreme Authority in our lives, and to allow other interests to conflict with our full obedience to him would lead to uncertainty and probably chaos in our lives.

The true God expresses his plan and his will through his Word, the Bible. Hence full obedience to him calls for complete loyalty to his Word. We may properly confer with other sources of information, either persons or writings, but the final decision as to what is truth, and the direction in which we should go must depend completely upon what God has said in his inspired Word. At times this becomes a severe test of our loyalty to God, for

other viewpoints and opinions may seem more appealing than the will of God as expressed through his Word.

Image worship has been prevalent in the world throughout the ages. To see and touch something that represents deity may seem to strengthen faith and bring one nearer to God, but it is forbidden in the Word, and probably one reason is that there is too great a temptation to look upon the image as actually being God, hence one's worship stops at the feet of the image. Christians, by the eye of faith, are bidden to look at the things which are not seen, eternal in the heavens; and chief among these is our Heavenly Father himself.

MATTHEW 6:24-33

"No man can serve two masters." Summing up the thought Jesus added, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (vs. 24) Mammon means money; in other words, it is that which stands for security in this world among those who do not put

their full trust in the Lord. This does not mean that it is a sin to possess money. In I Timothy 6:10 Paul explains that it is the love of money that is the root of all evil. The love of money could easily replace the love of God in our lives, and thus be as another god.

There are various other gods which tempt the devoted Christian. In addition to money there are worldly pleasures, prestige, our work, success, and a host of other things which tend to replace full devotion to our Heavenly Father. The Scriptures make it plain that the divine will is transgressed when we give our highest devotion to anything or anyone other than our Heavenly Father.

The Revised Standard Version of verse 25 reads, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" The King James Version admonishes us to take no thought for our lives, which manifestly is not the proper view. We take thought for our lives when we go to the table to eat a meal, or retire at night for rest. The Revised rendering is correct—we are not to be anxious about these material aspects of life.

And then Jesus explains why, by using the example of the birds and the flowers of the field. God takes care of them, yet they are not anxious about their needs. So he will clothe and feed us according to his knowledge of our needs, for we are of much more value than the birds, the flowers, and the grass. The Gentiles, that is, the nonbelievers, spend their energy in seeking the material good things of life, but they do not have the Heavenly Father as their God.

Our Heavenly Father knows that there are certain material things of life for which we have need, and he will provide these without anxious thought on our part. As followers of the Master, we are to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; then all the other things we need will be added according to our needs. The reference here is to a place with Jesus in the rulership phase of the kingdom. No greater prize has ever been offered. It surely behooves us to lay aside everything else in order to attain it.

QUESTIONS

Why should the true God be supreme in every believer's life?

More Than Lip Service

MEMORY VERSE: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."—Matthew 7:21

EXODUS 20:7

TO OPEN the lesson we have one of the Ten Commandments: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." By many this is understood to mean profane language in which God's name is irreverently used, but we doubt if this is the real meaning of the commandment. Many commentators hold that the reference is to the wide use in eastern countries of special oaths to seal special bargains or contracts. In taking these oaths one would often swear by the name of a deity; the Israelites, of course in the name of their God. This it is said, is what is referred to by not taking the name of the Lord in vain, which would be done if his name were thus used and the oath not honored.

But we think that the more likely meaning goes deeper than this. Those who dedicate themselves wholly to God are subscribing to his name. James explained concerning the calling of the Gentiles that "God at the

first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name."—Acts 15:14

The Lord said that the Israelites had profaned his name among the heathen, or Gentiles. (Ezek. 36:22) Those who accept Jehovah as their God are expected to reverence and adore his name, and bring glory to it through their faithfulness to his laws and precepts. Those who are unfaithful to their covenant with him are guilty of taking his name in vain, and of profaning his name, and as the remainder of the commandment reads, "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

MATTHEW 6:1-6

Jesus said, "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." (vs. 1) Jesus enlarges upon this with the admonition not to sound a trumpet to announce our giving of alms. This, he indicates, would be seeking the

plaudits and rewards of men rather than of God. Jesus indicates that hypocrites did this very thing in the synagogues in his day. "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward," but it comes from men, not from God.

The giving of alms, Jesus explained, should be done in secret, and when this principle is carried out the Lord "himself shall reward thee openly." (vs. 4) Jesus applies the same principle to praying. The main point is that our service to the Lord, and our prayers, should be in his name, and therefore not made a public display. "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."—vs. 3

MARK 7:5-8

The Pharisees and scribes asked Jesus why his disciples did not practice the traditions of the elders. "He answered and said unto them, Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." (Isa. 29:13) The text in Isaiah adds, "Their fear toward me is taught by the precept [traditions] of men."

In Jesus' day the traditions of the elders failed to hold before the people the great God of the Bible as the God of love. The scribes and Pharisees held the people more or less through fear, even as has been true

throughout the age. Jesus made it plain that he did not want his disciples to follow the example of the scribes and Pharisees. He wanted them, rather, to be loyal to the Word of God, and in doing this their teachings would lead to love for God, love for one another, and for the whole world of mankind.

Traditions of men frequently, although not always, lead in the opposite direction. The washing of pots and cups in itself did not inculcate fear, but those who did not follow this and other traditions were ostracised and threatened—made to feel that they were disloyal to God.

Our memory verse is right on the point of the lesson, showing, as it does, that mere lip service is not enough; that it is only those who actually do the will of the Heavenly Father who will enter into the ruling phase of the kingdom of heaven. We might deceive men, by a "Lord, Lord," but not the Lord himself.

QUESTIONS

What does it mean to take God's name in vain?

Whom should we strive to serve with our alms and prayers?

Mention some of the evils resulting from the traditions of men.

Work, Rest, and Worship

MEMORY VERSE: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."—Exodus 20:8

EXODUS 20:8-11

THERE are two accounts concerning God's commandment to keep the Sabbath. In the Exodus account, which is cited for our lesson, the Israelites are told that in keeping the Sabbath they were to remember God's work of creation, and that then God worked six "days" and rested on the seventh. In Deuteronomy 5:15 the Sabbath commandment is reiterated, and here, in connection with it, the Israelites were to remember their deliverance from Egypt. Having become slaves in Egypt it is doubtful if the Israelites had any rest days at all.

According to the Law there were to be six days for work and one for rest. The caption of our lesson mentions a third important function of the people of God; namely, worship. However, nothing is said anywhere in the Bible concerning the Sabbath that it was also to be a time for worship. The Jewish people, as well as the followers of Jesus during the pres-

ent age have wisely, we think, frequently used this day of rest as a suitable time for gathering together to worship the Lord. The last section (Luke 4:16) indicates that Jesus was in the habit of attending worship at a synagogue on the Sabbath day.

MARK 2:23-28

Here we have the well-known account of Jesus' disciples plucking corn on the Sabbath day. Jesus was questioned by the Pharisees as to why he permitted this: "Why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful?" Replying to this Jesus reminded the Pharisees of the time David, when a human need was involved, went into the house of God and ate of the showbread "which is not lawful to eat but for the priests."

David and those who were with him were hungry. They needed food, and apparently the showbread was the only food available to them, so they did not hesitate to partake of it. Jesus' mention of David in his reply to the Pharisees would

tend to silence them, for David was held in high esteem among the Israelites, including the Pharisees.

Jesus then explained further. It is here that we are given that well-known statement, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." (vs. 27) The Sabbath was designed to be a benefit to man; that is, to provide him with time for much needed rest. Jesus' argument was that this being true, it would be inconsistent to suppose that the law concerning it should be interpreted in a way that would deprive God's people of their real needs.

Jesus further explained that he is "Lord . . . of the Sabbath," suggesting that he could not be properly criticized by the Pharisees for permitting his disciples to pluck corn for needed food on this day that was made for man.

In Hebrews 4:3, 4, 10 the apostle sets forth an antitypical significance to the Sabbath as God kept it on the seventh day. We quote: "For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest on the seventh day from all his works."

"For he that is entered into his [Christ's] rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

LUKE 4:16-19

Here we find Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth—"as his custom was." There was nothing in the Sabbath commandment to prohibit religious worship, nor was it enjoined as a part of the Sabbath observance. This was in Nazareth, and we can suppose that wherever Jesus happened to be on the Sabbath he likewise attended the synagogue service.

He was handed the Old Testament, and turned to Isaiah 61, that beautiful outline of the Holy Spirit's commission to preach the Gospel. Jesus said that this scripture was fulfilled in him, and the New Testament indicates that it also applies to the footstep followers of Jesus. And what a truly comforting message it contains!

QUESTIONS

What two important events are associated by the Bible with the Sabbath?

Explain what is meant by the Sabbath being for man.

Did Jesus attend religious service on the Sabbath?

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Witness of the Spirit

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

—Romans 8:16, 17

THE "witness" of the Spirit is vitally important to every disciple of Christ, for the Spirit witnesses that we are "the children of God." Nothing could be more important than to be assured of sonship; that God has accepted and begotten us through his Word to be one of his reigning house of sons, one of his heirs, and a joint-heir with Christ. Strange to say, though, many who love the Lord and sincerely desire to serve and please him are often in doubt as to whether or not they have the divine approval. These doubts are expressed in the lines:

**" 'Tis a point I long to know, oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord, or no, am I his, or am I not?"**

There is really no occasion for these doubts ever arising in the mind of one who is wholly devoted to the Lord for, as Paul says, the "Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Probably the doubts which do arise are due to a misunderstanding of the manner in which the Holy Spirit witnesses to the Lord's people concerning their sonship. The Spirit's witness is not a mat-

ter of feelings. Every consecrated child of God will have days of joy and days of sorrow. One's physical condition, as well as the circumstances of life, has much to do with "feelings," so they are most unreliable as a test of our relationship with the Heavenly Father.

The witness of the Holy Spirit reaches us through the Word of truth, that Spirit-inspired Word which outlines all the terms and conditions of the "narrow way" of sacrifice, and reveals the sort of experiences the faithful followers of Jesus should expect. If we find that we are having the experiences which the Holy Spirit, through the written Word, has testified will come to all the children of God during the present age, then we can be assured of our standing before the Lord and know that we are his children.

First of all, however, it is essential that we examine ourselves to make sure that we have taken the proper steps in order to have the Lord accept and bless us. Have we repented of our sin, and through faith in Christ presented ourselves in full consecration to do God's will? If we have, then a very important witness of the Spirit is already ours.

Jesus said that no one could come to him unless drawn by the Father. (John 6:44) If we have been drawn to Christ we can, therefore, be assured that it was through the drawing power of the Heavenly Father. This means that the Heavenly Father desired that we become his children. And then Jesus, speaking further under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said that he would not cast out those who came to him. (John 6:37) Thus the Spirit witnesses that the Heavenly Father wanted us, and that Jesus accepted us; that is, if we have truly surrendered ourselves to do the divine will.

"If So Be"

In our text Paul states that the Holy Spirit witnesses that we are the children of God "if so be that we suffer with

him (Christ), that we may be also glorified together." This implies clearly that if we are not suffering with Christ, then the Holy Spirit is not witnessing to us that we are the children of God. Why is Paul so emphatic on this point? It would seem that he based this statement on a great truth set forth by the Apostle Peter. Whether he learned it from Peter or by direct revelation from God as to the meaning of the Old Testament Scriptures is not important. Peter expressed it this way: he said that the Spirit of God in the prophets of the Old Testament testified concerning "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."—I Pet. 1:11

Yes, the Holy Spirit testified in advance concerning the "sufferings of Christ." In the following verse Peter further explains that the prophets did not minister to themselves, but to "us" of the Gospel age. In other words, the testimony of the Spirit concerning the sufferings of Christ was intended to outline the way in which we should walk and the experiences we should expect to have as the disciples of Christ. If we are walking in that way, and having the experiences foretold through the prophets by the Holy Spirit, then the Spirit is witnessing to us that we are in God's favor and are therefore his children.

The force of this presentation by Paul and Peter is largely lost unless we recognize that the true disciples of Jesus are a part of The Christ; that if we have been baptized into Christ, and have come under the baptism of the Spirit, it means that we are members of the "body" of Christ. If, then, we are a part of the "body" of Christ, the Spirit's testimony concerning the "sufferings of Christ" applies to us as well as it did to Jesus. How plain it is, then, that if we are suffering with Christ, the Spirit is witnessing to us concerning our position in the "body" of Christ, and that we have, through "begetting," received the Spirit of sonship! If we are not suffering with Christ, the opposite is

true. It means that we have not taken the necessary steps of repentance and consecration, or else have become lax in our devotion so that we are more pleasing to the world than to the Lord.

The strength of this witness of the Spirit concerning our share in the sufferings of Christ is often lost through a wrong conception of what is meant by suffering with Christ. We think of the cruelties which were heaped upon Jesus, leading finally to his being nailed to a cross until he died. We think of the bitter experiences of Peter and Paul, and others in the Early Church. We compare these examples of suffering with the more or less tranquil lives which the Lord's people lead today and wonder, perhaps, whether or not we are doing very much suffering with Christ.

We believe that the answer to this problem lies in the fact that suffering does not always have to be of a physical nature. If the truth were known, we would probably find that only a small minority of the Gospel-age sons of God have had physical cruelties inflicted upon them. Jesus was despised and hated by the religious rulers of his time almost from the first day of his ministry, but they did not inflict bodily suffering upon him until the last twenty-four hours of his earthly life.

Up until the final day of Jesus' ministry any physical suffering he experienced was self-imposed, in that he gave of his strength, his vitality, as he went about doing good. Herein we have one of the most vital and important aspects of his loving example to us. We should not become concerned as to whether or not we are suffering with Christ. If we have plunged wholeheartedly into his service, and are so selfless in going about doing good, we will feel at least some twinges of painful fatigue, some loss of vitality as a direct result of our membership in the "body" of Christ, and this is suffering with him.

No, suffering with Christ does not always involve persecution by enemies of the cross. We have a notable example of this brought to our attention by the Apostle Paul in Philippians 2:25-30. The facts are these: Paul was in prison in Rome. He was greatly loved by the brethren in Philippi. To express their love, and to render a service to him, they sent one of their number, Epaphroditus, to visit Paul and to take him a gift, perhaps of clothing, or of food—the record does not indicate. It was a difficult undertaking. Epaphroditus became ill, very ill, “nigh unto death.” Paul explains that it “was for the work of Christ” this zealous brother was “nigh unto death, not regarding his life.”

Epaphroditus surely had the witness of the Holy Spirit, for he partook of the sufferings of Christ. He was not made a prisoner in Rome. So far as we know, the enemies of Christ did not inflict suffering upon him. But by his own intrepid zeal to serve a beloved brother in Christ, which lifted him above regarding his own life, he almost died. Paul did not caution Epaphroditus to be less zealous in the future, and to take better care of himself. No, he commended him to the brethren in Philippi, to “receive him . . . in the Lord with all gladness,” and to “hold such in reputation.”—Phil. 2:29

Opportunities comparable to the one enjoyed by Epaphroditus do not come to many of the Lord's people, but we can all profit by his example of faithfulness. How are we facing up to the opportunities of service that, in the Lord's providence, are presented to us? Are we backing away from sacrifice when the only reason is that it appears to be too difficult, or too costly in terms of weariness or loss of earthly comforts and ease? If laying down our lives for the brethren, as Epaphroditus was doing in taking a gift to Paul, is suffering with Christ, let us not be concerned as to whether or not we have this witness of the Spirit. Let us, rather, bestir ourselves to greater diligence in

manifesting our love for the Lord and for his people to the point where we will realize that it is really costing us something.

Heart Suffering

Physical suffering is not always the most difficult to bear. We knew a brother who, from a certain ailment, suffered physical pain almost constantly. This brother's family were not Christians, and were very much opposed to him, ridiculing him on occasion, and making the atmosphere of the home very uncongenial for him. He testified that his physical suffering was as nothing compared with the heart pangs that were inflicted upon him by his family. This brother was suffering with Christ even though he was not imprisoned, not burned at the stake, and not thrown to the lions, nor crucified.

Many times, as Jesus foretold, the Christian's foes are principally those of his own household. The truth turns one member of the family against another. This causes suffering where it hurts most. Yet those who are loyal to the Lord and to the truth will not permit even those who are dearest to them according to the ties of the flesh to turn them aside from loyalty to the Lord and to their vows of consecration. Because of their faithfulness under such adverse circumstances they surely are suffering with Christ, and therefore have this witness of the Spirit that they are the children of God.

Separate from the World

Another witness, or testimony of the Holy Spirit that we are the "children of God" is found in John 15:19. Jesus said, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." There are few indeed of the human race who do not esteem the good will and friendship of others. However

small or large our "world" may be, it is natural to desire its approbation. People like to be thought of as accomplished and important. This is the normal viewpoint of the world. It is not in itself sinful, except as fraud and deceit are employed in order to gain a high position in the eyes of others.

But when we accept the truth and faithfully bear witness to it within the circle of our acquaintances, our "world" begins to lose esteem for us. Not that our friends distrust us. They may even admit that our ethical standards are higher than before. What they do not like is our religion, and we find that more and more they hold aloof from us. Depending on how deeply we were intrenched in the ways of the world, this estrangement will "hurt." This, however, we can, and should, accept as part of the Spirit's witness. It is a part of our suffering with Christ.

The enmity of the world may not lead to physical persecution, especially in the "free" world. In some countries, however, loyalty to the truth still leads to imprisonment and other forms of physical punishment. Our love for the Lord and for the truth should be so great that we would not hesitate to let our light shine regardless of what the consequences may be in terms of mental or physical suffering. Our overcoming the world consists in our refusing to permit the selfish spirit of the world, even its jeers and threats, to stand in the way of our full loyalty to the Lord. If this is our attitude, then we have a further witness of the Spirit that we are the children of God, for John wrote, "Whosoever is born [begotten] of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—I John 5:4

Will Not Wilfully Sin

John mentions another witness of the Spirit to confirm that we are among the Spirit-begotten children of God. He

writes, "Whosoever is born [begotten] of God sinneth not." (I John 5:18) As new creatures we still have a body of flesh, and a very imperfect body it is. John did not mean that our new minds would always be able to control the flesh and make it live up to the perfect standard of righteousness which the Lord sets before us in his Word. But the new mind will not consent to sin, and when through weakness of the flesh a sin is committed, we "have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous."—I John 2:1

John writes further on this point, saying, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:8, 9) This explanation is no excuse for relaxing our efforts to keep the body "under." (I Cor. 9:27) It does mean, however, that if at heart we find that we are thoroughly out of harmony with all unrighteousness, we can claim the witness of the Spirit which John mentions; namely, that those who are begotten as the children of God do not wilfully sin. Thus we have this further proof that we are the children of God.

Abounding in Grace

Peter wrote, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." (II Pet. 1:4) It is the Spirit-begotten children of God to whom these "exceeding great and precious promises" belong. But in order to attain the "divine nature" we must develop as new creatures. Peter outlines what is involved in this, saying that we should give diligence to add to our faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance (self-control), patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, and love.

Peter further explains that if these evidences of spiritual growth are in us and "abound," we will "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 Savior Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:5-11

Whether we have been the Lord's disciples for only a short time or for many years, can we, upon looking back over the way see some evidence of growth in the spiritual graces? Have we become better acquainted with the Lord through the precious truth of his Word, and thus increased in knowledge? Are we more patient, more kind, more self-sacrificing in our service for others? Are these evidences of the Spirit's power within us "abounding," in the sense that holy things of the Lord are the most important consideration of our consecrated lives? If so, then we have this as another testimony that we are the children of God, members of his royal house of sons who are to live and reign with Christ in his kingdom; and as Peter affirms, we will have an "abundant" entrance into that kingdom.

Led by the Spirit

Paul wrote, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14) Are we being "led" by the Holy Spirit of truth? If so, then we have an additional witness that we are the "children of God." What does Paul mean by being "led" by the Spirit? This is a most important consideration. Again let us emphasize that God's Holy Spirit does not lead us by "impressions" or "feelings." The leadings of the Spirit are by means of the Spirit-inspired directives of the written Word.

We have in Jesus a perfect example of a Spirit-led life, for he followed exactly the instructions contained for him

in the "volume of the book"; that is, the Old Testament Scriptures, and these same instructions are for our guidance. If ever in doubt as to how the Spirit might lead in certain circumstances, we need but ask what Jesus would have done under similar situations. Of course, we will not find in his experiences a criterion for every detail of our lives, because he could do what we cannot, but the principles which he followed should, and do, constitute a wonderfully accurate guide for all who are endeavoring to walk in his steps.

Primarily, the Spirit led Jesus in the way of sacrifice—a sacrifice so all-consuming and complete that it ended in death. Through the Prophet Isaiah, the Spirit testified that Jesus would be "brought as a lamb to the slaughter." (Isa. 53:7) And he was "brought," not by the religious rulers of his time, not by Roman soldiers, but by the "Spirit of God." We, too, are being similarly led by the Spirit. "As it is written," Paul testified, concerning one of the Spirit-appointed instructions found in "the volume of the book," "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."—Rom. 8:36

The slain lamb symbolism epitomizes one of the results of the Spirit's leadings in Jesus' life. It led him to death. In Revelation 14:1 we find the "Lamb" on Mount Sion, and "with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." These, in other words, are the "children of God" who had been led by his Holy Spirit. And verse 4 informs us that these followed the Lamb "whithersoever he goeth." As Jesus was led by the Spirit, so these were led by the Spirit. As we have seen, the Spirit led Jesus into death, and even so it leads all who truly walk in his steps. There is no way to continue being the sons of God except by thus being led by the Spirit of God.

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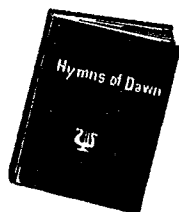
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Here, then, is another important testimony of the Holy Spirit to assure us of our sonship. Are we allowing the Spirit of the truth, through the written Word, to lead us in the way of self-sacrifice, contrary to the desires of the flesh, and in opposition to the spirit of the world? It is not a complex question to answer. However, if for any reason we have been resisting the Spirit's leadings, the decision to change our ways and live up to our consecration vows may be a difficult one. But it is an important decision, and blessed are all they whose hearts are responding in loyal obedience to the leadings of God's Holy Spirit, for it means that they are indeed "the children of God."

Divine Providences

The providences of God, under the direction of his Holy Spirit, supplement the directives of the written Word. But we have the responsibility of interpreting his providences correctly. They should never be given meanings contrary to the testimony of the written Word. God's Word points out a certain definite course for all the consecrated to follow. It includes the development of the Christian graces, associating with the Lord's people whenever possible, bearing witness to the truth, and laying down our lives for the brethren. The providences of God should never be interpreted contrary to this general course.

For example, we might make an effort to bear witness to the truth and obtain no results. As far as we can determine all the "seed" which we "sowed" fell by the "way-side." We might be inclined to interpret this as meaning that the harvest "work" is all done; that the Lord does not want us to continue bearing witness to the truth, otherwise he would bless our efforts. But this would be wrong, because it would be contrary to the written Word. The Lord has made it plain that he wants his people to continue to proclaim the truth as long as they possibly can. Nothing is

said in the Bible about ceasing to bear witness to the truth when it appears there are few or no results.

The proper way to interpret such an experience would be to conclude that perhaps the Lord wants us to examine our methods of witnessing, or our motive in serving him. Often the Lord withholds the "increase" until our hearts are right before him. The Lord may withhold his blessing from the witness work of an ecclesia until the spiritual health of the ecclesia is better. There are many possible reasons why the Lord might not bless our efforts to witness for the truth, but never does the lack of results mean that he does not want us to try again. So if our love for the Lord is so great that we find ourselves interpreting our experiences in full harmony with his written Word, determined to continue in the way he has directed, regardless of the difficulties and discouragements which may be involved, then we have a further testimony of the Spirit that we are the "children of God."

Scriptural Examples

Interesting and revealing examples of the leadings of God's providences are given us in the Book of Acts, which records much of the activity of the Early Church. In those apostolic days, of course, the "gifts" of the Spirit were operative, and in many instances the believers were blessed with miraculous demonstrations of the Holy Spirit's leadings in their experiences. Even so, the principles involved in those leadings are the same today as they were then.

In Acts 8:29 we read, "The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." This was the "chariot" in which the Ethiopian eunuch was riding, and reading the prophecy of Isaiah. Previously Philip had been directed to go into the territory where the Lord knew this eunuch would be traveling: "The angel of the Lord spake

unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert."—vs. 26

Just how the Holy Spirit directed Philip to approach the chariot and engage the eunuch in conversation the account does not indicate, nor is this important for us to know. The point is that circumstances were shaped in a manner to direct him to an opportunity of service. Philip knew he had been anointed to proclaim the glad tidings, and he interpreted circumstances bearing upon his life from this standpoint. He knew that the Holy Spirit of truth would not lead him contrary to the Word of truth.

By means of the Spirit, or power of God, there was a miraculous shaping of circumstances in connection with the conversion of Cornelius, the first Gentile accepted in the "body" of Christ. Cornelius himself was given a vision in which an angel of the Lord spoke to him; and Peter had that remarkable dream in which he saw a sheet let down from heaven filled with unclean animals. This was on the roof of Simon the tanner's house. When Peter awoke from his dream, "the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee."—Acts 10:19

These "three men" had been sent by Cornelius to seek Peter, as the angel of the Lord had directed. Again, we do not know how the Spirit informed Peter about the three men. Since it was in the days of miracles, perhaps an angel spoke to him, as an angel had spoken to Cornelius. The main point is that the Spirit, or power of God, directed in connection with another aspect of the divine plan—not contrary to it. The time had come for the Gospel to go to the Gentiles. There was service to be rendered in connection with it, and the Spirit of God directed in harmony therewith.

We read in Acts 16:6 that Paul and Timothy were "forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia."

Taken by itself this statement might indicate that at times the Holy Spirit leads God's people away from service, but the context reveals otherwise. Here is a case where another field of service was opening—Macedonia. Circumstances were such as to hinder the ministry in Asia so that Paul and Timothy would be alerted to the call to “come over into Macedonia, and help us.” (vs. 9) Sometimes the Lord's people have to decide as to where and how they will serve, and should watch carefully for the leadings of the Holy Spirit in all such cases, but never should our experiences be interpreted to mean that the Lord wants us to give up bearing witness to the truth. So, if we are following the Spirit's leadings in keeping with the commission, “Ye are the light of the world,” then we bear this witness that we are the “children of God.”

The Joy of the Lord

Not all of the Spirit's witnessing is related to sacrifice and suffering. This was not the case with Jesus, nor will it be with us if we are enjoying the fulness of divine favor. In the “volume of the book” it is written prophetically of Jesus, “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.” (Ps. 16:5, 6) The “lines” here mentioned were those used to mark out a piece of land, or a field, for one who had inherited it. So, symbolically, Jesus received a “goodly heritage”; the “lines” had fallen for him in “pleasant places.”

There was a wonderful future joy set before Jesus which enabled him to endure the cross, and despise the shame that was heaped upon him. (Heb. 12:2) He knew that in his Father's actual presence there would be “fulness of joy.” (Ps. 16:11) But, in addition to this, Jesus possessed a great inward peace and joy of heart even while he was laying down his life as the world's Redeemer. This

"joy" of the Lord was his strength. It stemmed from his full confidence in the victorious outcome of every feature of his Father's plan for the redemption and recovery of the fallen race from sin and death.

Toward the close of his ministry Jesus bequeathed this peace and joy to his disciples. He said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." (John 15: 10, 11) Are we keeping the Lord's commandments, and are we experiencing the joy which Jesus said would be ours as a result? If so, then we have this most reassuring witness of the Spirit that we are abiding in Jesus' love and in the love of our Heavenly Father.

Jesus bequeathed to his disciples another blessed portion of the inheritance he enjoyed while laying down his life as the world's Redeemer. He said to them, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27) This is the "peace of God" which passeth all human comprehension, yet it is ours to enjoy if our faith can only lay hold firmly upon the promises of God.

Are we enjoying this peace? Daily there are situations in life which tend to distract, and to fill the heart with anxious forebodings. The world around us is disturbed and fearful, and their fears can easily become ours unless we keep in mind the precious promises of God, our Heavenly Father, who is almighty in his power to help, too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. God knows the outcome of his plan, and Jesus had full confidence in it. That is why Jesus had the peace of God. If we have the same confidence, we will have the same peace, for we will know that

God's design for us, and his plan for the world, will triumph gloriously. Do we have this peace of God? If so, it is another "witness" that we are "the children of God."

Truly the present inheritance of the Spirit-begotten children of God is a blessed and a rich one! As with Jesus, so with us, we can testify that our "lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places." And the rejoicing in the Lord which is our happy lot while still in the flesh will expand into "fulness of joy" as it did with Jesus when, being faithful unto death, we enter into the promised "glory to follow" and become associate kings and priests with Jesus for the blessing of all mankind with health and life. □



A GIFT SUGGESTION

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The British Section

The Needs of The Christian

"His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness."

—II Peter 1:3

FOR our encouragement, the Apostle Paul gives us the assurance, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19) We, as the Lord's followers, realize that our needs, in harmony with the Apostle Peter's words quoted above, are of two kinds—temporal and spiritual—certain material things needful for the present life; and needs of another kind helpful to the development of godliness.

Life

Jesus sent out his disciples to preach the good news of the kingdom without purse, and taking with them only

one coat, etc. On their return, he said, "Lacked ye anything?" They assured him they had experienced no lack. (Luke 22:35) Here our Lord evidently referred to temporal needs, the things of the present life. These, as they went from place to place holding forth the Word of life, had all been provided by the special and loving dispensations of divine providence.

The same kindly provisions are the portion of all who, in response to the Father's drawing, have fully consecrated themselves to him, and have been begotten again as new creatures in Christ Jesus. We have "the promise of the life that now is," is Paul's triumphant assurance; that is, true piety, reverence "is profitable unto all things," both now and for our hope of the everlasting future. (I Tim. 4:8) Our Lord while with his disciples was continually impressing this thought upon them. He says (Luke 12:15), paraphrasing his words, Do

not covet earthly things, temporal blessings, for a man's true life consists of more important things than even great material possessions. Again he says (vs. 22), "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on."
—R. V.

Then he mentions as an example the ravens, who possess no storehouse or barn of even the smallest or most temporary character where food or other necessities might be stored. Again he says, "Consider the lilies," how beautifully they are clothed, and that without any toiling or spinning on their part, or the spending of more money than can be really afforded—a frequent weakness in frail humanity. As a climax to the argument, Jesus says, "Fear not, little flock [Do not be fearful regarding your earthly needs. Why?] for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke 12:32

If he is going to give you such a wonderful honour and position; namely, that of exercising the authority of the millennial kingdom for a thousand years for the blessing of all the families of the earth,

you may have every assurance that you will have all the comparatively small needs of the present life provided if, in harmony with your consecration, you continue to seek first the interests of the kingdom and its righteousness.

So in these various ways our dear Redeemer sought to strengthen our faith that the Father, in his love and wisdom, will supply the things we need for the few rapidly passing years of the present life. This provision of our earthly needs is sometimes multiplied many times beyond our personal requirements, that as good stewards of the manifold grace of God, we might distribute to others in need, as well as contribute to the general work of the Lord's vineyard.

Godliness

The other, and even more important phase of our needs concerns the spiritual one; those things which will build us up as new creatures in Christ Jesus, and help us to be fruitful in every good work in the service of our God. These needs, our Master, as the Father's representative, provides by first of all giving us such spiritual food as will

cause us to grow thereby. This must have been preceded by a knowledge of our lost condition by nature, that we were sold under sin and under the condemnation which passed upon all in Adam.

This, is the case of those whom the Lord calls, leads to repentance and sorrow for the past, followed by justification, spirit-begetting, and sanctification. This development of godliness or godlikeness, holiness, sanctification, is brought about in large measure by the truth, the truth concerning the divine character and plan; for the new creature, prompted by the Spirit of God, searches out all things, even the deep things of God.—John 17:17; I Cor. 2:10

Further, the Lord supplies the things that pertain unto godliness or godlikeness, by giving us opportunities of witnessing in his name; for, by speaking the truth in love, we grow up into him in all things. (Eph. 4:15) We further grow in godlikeness and Christlikeness by laying down our lives for the brethren, seeking to follow the example of our Master who laid down his life for us. Although the Lord has promised to supply all these

means for growing in grace, developing godlikeness and Christ-likeness, they are not forced upon us; but it is for us to make use of them as they come within our reach, seeking in all ways open to us to be faithful stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Finally, let us not overlook the fact that, as the apostle expresses it in our text, it is "His divine power" which provides us all these temporal and spiritual blessings. What care, thoughtfulness, watchfulness, this implies on the part of our heavenly Father and our Redeemer! Truly, all things are for our sakes, and are working together for good to those called according to his purpose. May our gratitude and thankfulness for all that is being done for us prompt us to do our part by making use of every means of grace, and continuing to present our bodies a living sacrifice, our reasonable service, inspired by the precious promise, "My God shall supply all your need according to his infinite wisdom and love by Christ Jesus."—Phil. 4:19

The Laws of the Spirit

Recent years have added

enormously to man's knowledge of the laws governing sound waves and light vibrations which make it possible for the voice to be transmitted over vast distances, and for pictures to be sent over lesser distances. Many of the marvels of radar and the intricacies of nuclear power still remain untapped. These marvels so long kept secret, but which man has been permitted to discover during the days of the increase of knowledge, "the time of the end" (Dan. 12:4), and particularly during the days of the bright-shining of the presence of the Son of Man, should help us to realize that the laws which govern and operate in the development of the spiritual life of the Christian are still more wonderful.

Here God's laws are not operating in connection with inanimate objects, but upon those whom he has blessed with mind and free will, and yet in spite of what might be hinderances, are successfully accomplishing his purpose of grace. The first sixteen verses of Psalm 139 might well be examined in the light of the foregoing, and the thought of their having reference to the

ways the laws of the Spirit operate in connection with the new creature in Christ Jesus.

In verse 15, the psalmist says, "My form was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lower parts [the lower condition] of the earth. Thine eyes did see mine imperfect substances. And in thy book were all my members written [the members of the body of Christ], which day by day [gradually] were fashioned [from the time, that is, from Pentecost] when as yet there was none of them" (R.V.), and from which time the members of Christ began to be selected.

The Apostle Paul, getting a glimpse of the wonderful providences relating to the development of the new creation, exclaims, "If God be [thus] for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31) May we diligently and gratefully co-operate with him in this stupendous work of grace in all reasonable ways; seeing that we do nothing by the exercise of self-will or in any other way to hinder or frustrate its gracious operation. "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall."—II Pet. 1:10, 11

Your Questions

The Unpardonable Sin

Jesus said, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." (Matt. 12:31, 32) What is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit?

In order to find the answer to this question we must first take into consideration what the Holy Spirit is, and how it operates. This aspect of the question is fully discussed in the booklet entitled, "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," a copy of which will be supplied free upon request. Briefly, the Holy Spirit is the holy power of God, used by him for the accomplishment of his purposes. It was exercised in creation; it shapes the provi-

dences of God for his people, and it works in their hearts and lives to will and to do his good pleasure.

On the occasion when Jesus said that speaking against the Holy Spirit could not be forgiven, either in this age or the age to come, he had just employed the power of the Holy Spirit to heal a man who was possessed of the Devil and was blind and dumb. (Matt. 12:22) The people were amazed, but the Pharisees charged that Jesus had performed this miracle by the power of "Beelzebub the prince of the devils." (vss. 23, 24) Jesus was referring to this viewpoint of the Pharisees in making his statement about speaking against the Holy Spirit.

The connection is obvious. The holy power of God had been manifested in miraculously healing a man. A good work had been performed which the Pharisees could not condemn. Nor could they claim that what had been accomplished was other than a

miracle. The afflicted man had been beyond human help. But they refused to acknowledge the truth. They spoke against what had been so clearly demonstrated, saying that this good work was done, not by the holy power of God—the Holy Spirit—but by the power of the Devil. Thus they spake against the Holy Spirit.

On another occasion Jesus said, "That servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, . . . shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." (Luke 12:47, 48) This sets forth the principle involved. Doubtless the Pharisees in the next age will receive "many stripes," but they may yet, at that time, have their hearts softened and turn to the Lord. Jesus said that the time was coming when they would say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."—Matt. 23:39

Applying this principle, we could say that sin against the Holy Spirit is any wilful opposition to revealed truth. To the extent that we have been enlightened and know that a

certain attitude or course is wrong, yet persist in it, we would be sinning against the Holy Spirit. Very few, if any, who are not fully consecrated to the Lord are today sufficiently enlightened to thus sin wilfully against the known will of God. The position of the Pharisees was unusual in that Jesus, the Son of God, was personally in their midst, and through him they were given many demonstrations of the power of the Holy Spirit.

The dedicated followers of the Master, who have received the Holy Spirit into their hearts and lives, are in a different position than are those of the unbelieving world. These have devoted themselves to the doing of God's will, and the great desire of their hearts is to please and honor him.

These have received the Holy Spirit through the Word of truth, and the power of God is working in them to accomplish his good pleasure. The Holy Spirit has also enlightened their minds so that wilful transgression of the will of God on their part would be a sin against the Holy Spirit.

Concerning these we read, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."—Heb. 6:4-6

In Hebrews 10:26, 27 Paul writes in similar vein, saying, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."

Both of these passages in Hebrews reveal clearly that it is possible for those who were "once enlightened," and who have received the Holy Spirit, to commit wilful sin, which, if continued, would lead to the full and eternal penalty of sin, the "second death." Such wilful sin on the part of the consecrated people of God does not usually come about suddenly. This is suggested in

a prayer by David: "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I . . . be innocent from the great transgression."—Ps. 19:12, 13

"Secret faults" may lead to "presumptuous" sins, which are wilful sins. These, if persisted in until the heart becomes hardened, will lead to the "great transgression," the "sin unto death," the second death. John wrote, "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that ye shall pray for it." It would be useless.—I John 5:16

Predestination

Please explain the doctrine of predestination.

The one who asks this question does not indicate whether his question pertains to the doctrine of predestination contained in some of the creeds which have come down to us from a darker past, or whether his desire is to learn what the Bible teaches on this subject. Briefly, the predestination taught by some of the

creeds is that the eternal destiny of every human is determined by God in advance of birth—that some are predestinated to be lost, which, according to this view, means to suffer eternal torment, while others are predestinated to be saved and spend eternity in heaven. This doctrine is not taught in the Bible.

However, the Bible does teach that God is selective with respect to those whom he calls to be co-workers with him in the carrying out of his plan of salvation. In Isaiah 51: 2 we are informed that God called Abraham alone. To him and to no one else God made the promise, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3) The natural descendants of Abraham became a select, or chosen, people of God.

During this Gospel Age the followers of Jesus are referred to in the Bible as being "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience." (I Pet. 1:2) In Romans 8:29 we read, "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be

conformed to the image of his Son."

As Peter explains, God's program of election during the present age is in keeping with his foreknowledge, and Paul shows that in God's foreknowledge he predestinated that all who would be associated with Jesus in his kingdom as joint rulers with him must be conformed to his character likeness. Thus it is not an arbitrary selection and predestination of the individual. Rather, it is the foreordination of a class, and a determination made in advance that everyone in that class must attain certain standards of character, certain qualifications.

This is a far cry from the notion that some are predestinated to spend an eternity in a fiery hell while others are foreordained to an eternity of bliss in heaven. Instead, it means that those who prove worthy of the divine calling will be instruments associated with Jesus in the work of blessing all mankind during the thousand years of his kingdom.—Gal. 3:27-29; Rev. 20:6

Vineyard Echoes

Preview of 1973 General Convention

THE time rapidly approaches when many brethren will assemble to enjoy the blessings of the 1973 General Convention, which will be held at Calvin College, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, from July 28 through August 2. Application for accommodations will be found on pages 63 and 64 of this issue of *The Dawn*. Many who have visited Calvin College feel that this is the best provision for a convention of any we have used thus far. The Lord is good to his people, and let us pray that as many as possible make their plans to attend and enjoy the spiritual food which we are confident will be provided during these coming six days of association under the hallowed influence of the glorious truth of his Word—the divine plan of the ages.

The theme text selected by the convention committee is, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad," (Ps. 126:3) and the banner which will greet the brethren each time they enter the beautiful air-conditioned auditorium will be, "THE LORD HATH DONE GREAT THINGS FOR US." As a result of the stresses and strains of everyday life in this chaotic world in which we live there is at times a tendency to overlook somewhat the fact that all the blessings we enjoy, both temporal and spiritual, are provided for us by the Lord. It is the hope of the convention committee that the six days of fellowship at Grand Rapids will help to remind the brethren of the extent to which the Lord really is blessing us, and of how

commonplace and drab life would be without an awareness of this fact.

Referring to the temporal blessings of life Solomon wrote, "Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God." —Eccl. 5:18, 19

Jesus, in an admonition to love our enemies, and to be ready to bless them, explained that in this way we would be the "children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt. 5:45) Thus is emphasized that the temporal blessings of life not only are provided by our Heavenly Father, but also that they are shared by both the just and the unjust. But even these blessings which are common to all mankind we too often take for granted, and fail to be truly thankful to the Lord.

Spiritual Gifts

And how precious indeed are the spiritual gifts which the Heavenly Father is daily bestowing upon his people—those gifts which pertain, not to this fleeting temporal life as humans, but to our eternal existence as Spirit-begotten children of God. Basic to all these is the gift of his beloved Son to be our Redeemer and Savior. This gift, of course, will accrue to the benefit of all mankind when the truth concerning it will be testified to all in God's due time, for the assurance is that "whosoever" believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3:16

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Thanks be unto God for his

unspeakable gift." (II Cor. 9:15) The reference here is, of course, to Jesus. And truly he is an "unspeakable gift," in the sense that no words of mere humans are capable of describing all that he means to us—and will yet mean to the whole world of mankind. In addition to the theme address, which will be given on Sunday in which the "great things" which the Lord has done for us will be discussed, on Monday this "unspeakable gift" will be discussed by three brethren who will remind us from the Scriptures of some of the wonderful ways in which Jesus serves us as new creatures, doing those things without which we would not be able to make our calling and election sure.

Jesus is our Redeemer, the One who gave himself as "a ransom for all." It is through his sacrificial death that we have a hope of life, and it is through his shed blood that we are counted worthy to be his footstep followers, and to run for the prize of the high calling, following his example of laying down our lives sacrificially—suffering and dying with him, that we might also reign with him. In this, Jesus is our Exemplar, and his faithfulness to his Heavenly Father is ever an encouragement to us. We are encouraged to look "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

Jesus is also our Advocate with the Father. While we are acceptable to God through the blood, we are still imperfect according to the flesh. Our hearts are right, but our flesh is not, and will induce us to say and do those things which are out of harmony with our covenant of sacrifice. The Apostle John wrote, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (I John 2:1) How thankful we are for this gracious provision of divine love! Truly this is one of the "great things" which our Heavenly Father has done for us.

The Lord's Leadings

The Lord leads his people in "the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." (Ps. 23:3) This leading is by the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14) This leading of the Holy Spirit is by means of his providences in our lives, and also by his truth. David wrote, "Lead me, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day."—Ps. 25:5

It is essential that we, as the Lord's children, be fully surrendered to the influences of the Holy Spirit, through the Lord's providences and through his Word. To the extent that we may put our own will ahead of the influence of the Holy Spirit we will fail to be led by this power of God in our lives. One of the ways by which the Lord leads us and teaches us by his Spirit through the Word and through his providences is through fellowship with our brethren. If we fail to fellowship with the Lord's people, and fail to take their viewpoints into consideration as they also study the Word, we cannot claim the leadings of the Holy Spirit. If our ways of serving the Lord, and our viewpoints on his precious truths, differ radically from those of our brethren, let us not assume that this is because we are being led by the Spirit and they are not. The Lord does not lead his people in different directions.

The Lord's instructions, his principles of righteousness, are set forth in his Word for our guidance. Let us humbly endeavor to ascertain God's thoughts, his will; and when we all do this, while we will not understand every point exactly alike, we will not be going in opposite directions. What a blessing it is to realize that the Lord is leading and teaching his people through his truth! On Tuesday of the convention there will be a panel discussion on this "great thing" which the Lord does for his people. This panel will be made up of four brethren. It will, we believe, be one of

the specially profitable sessions of the General Convention this year.

The High Calling

Another of the "great things" which the Lord has done for his consecrated people of the Gospel Age is to extend to them a "heavenly calling." Paul wrote, "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (Heb. 3:1) On Wednesday there will be a discussion of this aspect of the divine plan by three brethren. These brethren will call attention to the conditions of this calling, its object, and its time.

The conditions of the high calling are, of course, full consecration to do God's will, with the understanding that this means walking in the narrow way of sacrifice. It also means the giving up of the will of the flesh, and a resolute determination to do the will of God regardless of what the cost might be. It means giving up of earthly hopes, and setting our affections on heavenly things, and the future prospect of living and reigning with Christ a thousand years.

This session will be held on the Wednesday of the convention. The vast majority of professed Christians think that the Lord takes his people to heaven when they die instead of consigning them to an eternity of torture in a fiery hell. Thus heaven is looked upon as a place of escape from hell, or perhaps purgatory, as in the Catholic viewpoint. There is, in this viewpoint, nothing specially to do in heaven.

But with the heavenly calling of the Scriptures there is a real purpose; that purpose being that those who qualify for this high position in the divine plan will, together with Jesus, participate in the glorious future work of restoring mankind to human life upon the earth. In other words, they are called to be the agents of God in extending bless-

ings of health and life during the Millennium to all who believe and obey. What a glorious prospect this is!—Rev. 20:6

This heavenly calling has not been in operation from the beginning of human experience on the earth, but only since the first advent of Jesus, and particularly since Pentecost. Prior to that no heavenly hopes were set before the people, although reference is made to this feature of the divine plan in the Old Testament, but those references pertained to the plan of God for the present age. This heavenly calling will be continued until God's foreordained number of joint-heirs with Christ have been selected and prepared for their place in his kingdom.

Hope for the World

Another of the "great things" which the Lord has done for us is the revealing of his plan for the future blessing of the world. Without this comprehension of the earthly salvation for the world of mankind the Bible is virtually a sealed book so far as the harmony of its doctrines is concerned. So we rejoice in this loving provision which the Lord has made for the world of mankind, and our love for him and our zeal to do his will are increased as we consider this feature of his divine plan of salvation.

On Thursday afternoon of the convention there will be a discussion of this doctrine, based on the text, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17) The time for the fulfilment of this text is the Millennial Age, following the completion of the Gospel-Age call to those who are given the hope of living and reigning with Christ during the Millennium.

The blessings for the world during the Millennium include the resurrection of the dead to human life on the

earth; the work of judgment mentioned by Paul when to the Athenians on Mars' hill he declared that God had appointed a day in which he would judge the world in righteousness, and had given assurance of this by raising Jesus from the dead to be the great Judge of that "day," or age (Acts 17:31); and the bringing of the world into at-one-ment with God under the terms of the New Covenant.—Jer. 31:31-34

Those who are awakened from the dead in the next age, who obey the laws of the messianic kingdom and accept the provision of life made for them through the blood of Christ, will be restored to human perfection as enjoyed by our first parents prior to their disobedience of the divine law. God's law will be written in their hearts, and ultimately no one will need to say, Know the Lord, for all shall know him from the least of them unto the greatest of them. (Jer. 31:34) Yes, the problems of the world will then be solved, and even sickness and death will be destroyed. (Rev. 21:4) How refreshing it will be to hear these truths restated, as they will be by three qualified brethren on the last afternoon of the convention.

Other Blessings

In addition to these special programs for the discussion of some of the important "great things" which the Lord has done for us, more than twenty regular discourses are scheduled for the convention, one of these being the theme address on Sunday morning.

There will be six testimony meetings, at which all who wish to do so may participate. These sessions have always been a special contributing source of blessings at all the General Conventions. We enjoy testimony meetings in our home ecclesias, and certainly we will look forward to testifying to the glory of the Lord at the General Convention.

Then there will be the public meeting on Sunday evening. This will consist of a film showing, for it is found that by far the attendance at a public meeting is much larger when a film is shown rather than when having a discourse, and we want as many as possible to have the glad tidings presented to them at this meeting. The meeting will be advertised by the distribution of special cards, also through the mail, and in the newspapers.

There will be, as always, an immersion service for the benefit of any who may desire to symbolize their consecration to do the will of God. This is always an inspiring service, not only for those who participate, but also for all who attend the convention, for it takes them back to the time when they entered the narrow way, and they are reminded of how wonderfully the Lord's keeping power has been manifested in their lives. The immersion service will be held on Wednesday evening. If you have not yet symbolized your consecration, but are considering doing so, this will be an excellent opportunity.

In our next issue we will publish the complete program.



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

JUNE 7—"The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."—I Peter 5:10 (Z. '95-202 Hymn 21)

JUNE 14—"God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the

humble."—I Peter 5:5 (Z. '96-19 Hymn 1)

JUNE 21—"Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly of heart."—Matthew 11:29 (Z. '96-79 Hymn 326)

JUNE 28—"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil."—Proverbs 3:7 (Z. '96-263 Hymn 312 A)

Comforting the Mourning

IN THE commission given to the followers of the Master by the Holy Spirit, special mention is given to those who sorrow. It is described as binding up the broken-hearted. (Isa. 61:1) One of the greatest causes of sorrow is the Grim Reaper, Death. Seldom, if ever, is anyone quite prepared to face the tragedy of death when it strikes down a relative, or friend—especially a member of one's immediate family.

The brethren generally are aware of this, and are always ready to speak a word of comfort when they have the opportunity. And for many years now the brethren of The Dawn have co-operated in this by furnishing consolation folders to the relatives of those who have died. The addresses of the near relatives are published in the obituary lists of most daily newspapers. These consolation folders contain a brief message of comfort, and besides, offer to send our free booklet, "Hope," to any who request it. In the folder mention is made of the booklet, "God and Reason," together with an offer to mail a copy free to those who, after reading the "Hope" booklet, may desire to have one.

The response to this effort is very encouraging indeed. It is encouraging, through the letters received, to realize that many are being comforted; and besides, to learn that some, through this means and through the providence of the Lord, are brought to a knowledge of the truth. There are brethren here and there throughout the country who are today rejoicing in the knowledge of present truth because someone sent them a consolation folder when a member of their family was stricken with death.

We receive many letters from mourning ones, and recently there has come to us an unusual request. The letter reads: "The Dawn: How happy I was in my home of sorrow to receive a card of sympathy with your name on it! The words on the card were comforting, and I was happy to read that you had a booklet, "Hope," that I might receive. Please send me a copy. I have a larger favor to ask, however; the funeral director has organized a widow-to-widow club, of which I am president. We have two hundred enrolled with seventy-five active members. I am asking

if you would be kind enough to send us one hundred copies of the "Hope" booklet for distribution to our membership."—Mich. Needless to say, we have complied with this request!

Realizing that death in a family often prepares the heart for the truth, we are now considering ways and means of making the "Hope" booklet available to funeral directors generally. We are looking to the Lord for guidance in this matter, and will report any definite results of our planning. We ask that you, too, bear this matter before the throne of heavenly grace.

Throughout the period of the harvest the brethren have always recognized the value of presenting the truth at funeral services. This is a wonderful opportunity for those who have the privilege of serving under such circumstances. Recently a telephone call was received at The Dawn from a lady who requested the services of a qualified person to conduct the funeral service of her husband. We gladly complied with this request, and it was found that she had been introduced to the truth through the "Frank and Ernest" program. It seemed that the whole family were Catholics, and that she did not want a Catholic service.

The brother who was asked to serve was somewhat surprised to learn that his audience was entirely of another faith; but was not surprised to realize afterward that his message was not especially appreciated, except by the widow. However, a witness was given, and this one, so new in the truth, was comforted.

Arising out of this experience, we are reminding our readers that we are in a position to supply speakers for funerals on a wide scale. If in your area you know of no one capable of conducting a "truth" funeral service, and the need arises for such a service, simply telephone us, and we will do our best to help you. We do not promise that in every case we can put you in touch with a brother who can serve, but we will certainly do our best. Our telephone number is 201-438-6421.

While in this short article we have stressed the great opportunity of witnessing to the truth in times of sorrow due to death, let us remember that there are many other ways and times of proclaiming the glad tidings of the kingdom, and may we be faithful in all the privileges which may come our way! □

Encouraging Letters

The Whole Bible

Dear Friends at The Dawn: For the enclosed please send the following literature to the names which I will give later in my letter. I want these friends of mine to have the Dawn. If I had not found the Dawn Books I would not have the peace of mind and soul which I have today. But I had to leave the church because the preachers and leaders could not bear to have me talk about God's plan of salvation for the world. But thank God I have a Bible to read and I believe every word of it. May the God of all grace add his blessings on each one to whom I am sending the literature.—Tennessee

Blessed by the "Hope" Booklet

Dear Dawn People: I have been buying books, sending and giving them to friends, and have taken The Dawn for about six years, which I have read and have learned from it how to understand the Bible much better. I hear your Sunday morning broadcast and enjoy it very much. I am eighty-five years old and until I began to read your books and magazine I did not know that God has a plan for the world. I lost my husband in

1965 and you sent me the "Hope" booklet, and from that time I have kept busy reading, and have given away much of the literature. Very truly.—Ohio

Comes Alive

Dear Friends of The Dawn: Again I am enclosing a subscription for The Dawn. I read every part of The Dawn. I have not read anything like the books from The Dawn. I received "The Book of Books" yesterday, and the other books I ordered. Oh how glad I was to receive them. They make the Bible come alive right before our eyes.—Tennessee

Secure

Dear Friends: I cannot begin to tell you how much I have enjoyed your literature throughout the year. The truth can make one feel secure as nothing else can. It has brought so much joy into my life. God bless each and every one of you. Christian love.—Michigan

Wants to Witness

Gentlemen: I have been listening to "Frank and Ernest" for many years, and through their

explanations of the Scriptures and the Dawn literature I have learned to appreciate the Bible. As I like to have publications available to give to my friends and members of my family, please send me the following.—Pennsylvania

At Age Ninety-one

Dear Friends: I have enjoyed this year of The Dawn. I have always been interested in the Bible, and also in the many interpretations by the various churches—although I am a member of none. Now at the age of ninety-one may it be that I have found the right way of reading the Bible. Jesus said, "How readeest thou." (Luke 10: 26) Sincerely.—Colorado

Learns from The Dawn

Dear Friends: The enclosed is for my renewal of The Dawn. I thank you for your labor of love throughout the year. The Dawn Magazine is a wonderful book, and a great help in these days.—North Ireland

Now Rejoicing in the Truth

Dear Friends in the Lord! My husband and I are Christians, and had belonged to the Baptist Church for a long while, but we cannot now agree with the doctrines of the Baptist faith. We saw your TV program, and decided to send for your litera-

ture. Previously my husband had read the six volumes of Studies in the Scriptures. He explained them to me and our eyes were opened. We now have faith in a better understanding of the true Word of God. We have now left our church for we feel that we can no longer go there. Would it be possible for you to send us some names of brethren that believe as we do? We would like to get in touch with them. May the good Lord watch over you."—West Virginia

Shares The Dawn

I am enclosing my renewal for The Dawn. It is lovely to read and understand. There is an elderly Sunday School teacher who always gets it when I am finished with it. She has even given a talk from it at Sunday School. I have learned more of the truth from The Dawn than I did during all the years I went to church.—England

First Aid

Dear Friends: I am very pleased with the books you sent to me. They are like First Aid. Will you please send me the booklet, "When a Man Dies," and do you have a hymn book? May God bless you for the comfort you have been to me.—Ghana

Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

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

S. ALLEN		Toronto, Ont.	4
New Haven, Conn.	June 3	Tonawanda, N. Y.	5
E. E. FAY		Rochester, N. Y.	6
Portland, Ore.	June 2, 3	Catawissa, Pa.	7
The Dalles, Ore.	4	Agawam, Mass.	8
Wenatchee, Wash.	5	Boston, Mass.	10
Spokane, Wash.	6	New Bedford, Mass.	11
Seattle, Wash.	7, 8	North Brookfield, Mass.	12
Vancouver, B. C.	9	Portsmouth, N. H.	13-17
Victoria, B. C.	10, 11	Hartford, Conn.	18
Tacoma, Wash.	12	New Haven, Conn.	19
Olympia, Wash.	13	New York, N. Y.	20
Portland, Ore.	14	Pittsburgh, Pa.	21
Salem, Ore.	18	Detroit, Mich.	30
Chico, Calif.	19	E. K. PENROSE	
K. FERNETS		Lynchburg, Va.	June 1
Catawissa, Pa.	June 17	Hendersonville, N. C.	3
G. M. JEUCK		Nashville, Tenn.	4
York, Pa.	June 10	Birmingham, Ala.	5
A. H. KRUMPOLT		Louisville, Ala.	6
Bremerton, Wash.	June 1	Mobile, Ala.	7
Seattle, Wash.	3	Shreveport, La.	10
Vancouver, B. C.	4	Livingston, Tex.	11
K. M. NAIL		Houston, Tex.	12
Allentown, Pa.	June 24	Lake Charles, La.	13
GEORGE PASSIOS		St. Petersburg, Fla.	15
Sayville, N. Y.	June 24	Orlando, Fla.	17
HARRY PASSIOS		Miami, Fla.	18
Buffalo, N. Y.	June 3	St. Petersburg, Fla.	20
		Louisville, Ala.	22
		Nashville, Tenn.	24

Columbus, Ohio	25	F. S. WASSMANN	
Detroit, Mich.	30	Hartford, Conn.	June 10
LEO POST			
Baltimore, Md.	June 3	E. G. WYLAN	
Philadelphia, Pa.	3	Detroit, Mich.	June 22
		London, Ont.	23, 24
H. W. PRICE		Buffalo, N. Y.	25
Los Angeles, Calif.	June 29, 30	Toledo, Ohio	27

BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

C. A. CORNELL		E. T. NADAL	
Dewsbury	June 16	Latchford Newport	July 7 21
Latchford	17	W. F. READER	July 15

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND LITERATURE—70, Station Road, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex RM2 6DA

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SUNDAY, JUNE 17

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use. Address your request to,
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New Jersey 07073.

Conventions

JACKSON, MICH., June 2, 3—IOOF Hall, 789 Woodworth Road. Mrs. Ray Lumley, 2531 Ashton Rd., 49203

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., June 3—2601 Fillmore St., N. E. Mrs. Mike Nekora, 2601 Fillmore St., N. E. 55418

WATERBURY, CONN., June 10—Waterbury Girls' Club, 35 Park Place. Miss Anna Tsimonis, 227 Wil-low St., 06710

CINCINNATI, OHIO, June 17—2850 Dunaway, Cincinnati. Mr. John Slavich, 126 S. 22nd St., Richmond, Ind. 47374

GARY, IND., June 17—Indiana Uni-versity Northwest, 3400 Broadway, Gary. John Ulicni, 6703 Tyler St., Merrillville, Ind. 46410

CHICAGO, ILL., June 24—Masonic Temple, 5352 W. Chicago Ave. Mr.

Albert Sheppelbaum, 5739 S. Nor-mandy Ave. 60638

LOS ANGELES, CALIF., June 29-July 1—Downey Community Theatre, 8441 E. Firestone Blvd., Downey, Calif. Mr. A. W. Abrahamsen, 710 S. Hobart Blvd., Apt. 207, Los Angeles 90005

DETROIT, MICH., June 30, July 1—Armenian Cultural Bldg., 22011 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield, Mich. Mr. Wolter Blicharz, 19146 Bedford Rd., Birmingham 48009

NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J., June 30, July 1—Douglas College, New Bruns-wick. Mrs. Robert E. Gray, 81 Brae-ton Way, Freehold, N. J. 07728

WINNIPEG, MAN., July 11-15—Canadian Midwest Convention

1973 GENERAL CONVENTION CALVIN COLLEGE, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN JULY 28—AUGUST 2

RESERVATION FORM

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION

Calvin College

Grand Rapids, Michigan

JULY 27-AUGUST 2, 1973

Put an X in each square
for which you will require accommodations:

JULY	JULY	JULY	JULY	JULY	AUG.	AUG.
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

No food will be served on July 27.
Breakfast will be served on August 3.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, and Zip code: _____

Names of all of the other persons included in this reservation:
(Give age if 5 through 18 years of age.)

Total number of persons for which reservations are being
made _____.

SEE OTHE SIDE FOR RATES AND OTHER INFORMATION

ADVANCE PAYMENT SUGGESTED BEFORE JULY 1

This year it is requested that, if possible, those attending the convention pay for their rooms and meals in advance. This will greatly facilitate the checking-in process. Please make payment before July 1, so that the college will know how to plan for food.

Payment should be made to:

Bible Students General Convention
P. O. Box 96
Marne, Mich. 49435

RATES

The weekly rate for food and lodging is \$50.00 per person, two to a room. The single rate is \$53.50 for the week.

The daily rate for room and meals is \$9.05 per person.

The rate for children 5 years of age through 12 is \$25.00 for the week. The daily rate is \$4.55. Children under 5 are free, over 12, full price.

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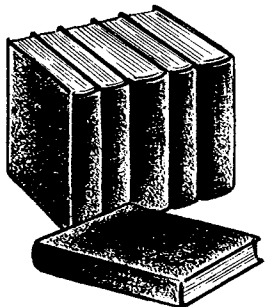
The convention will pay half the above listed rate for children 5 through 18 years of age.

FIGURE YOUR ADVANCE PAYMENT HERE

Rate that applies
Times no. of days
Total
Times no. of people (over 18 years of age)
Total for adults
Children's rate applicable
No. of children
Times no. of nights
Sub Total
50% Discount
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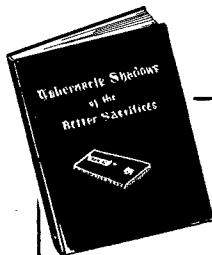
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To us the SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH...

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.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

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

That the basis of hope for the church and the world lies in the fact that “Jesus Christ, by the grace of God tasted death for every man,” “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 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.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 11 Pet. 1:4

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

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