

The DAWN

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God's Method of Setting Up His Kingdom

***“At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.”
—Jeremiah 3:17***

AS WE ENTER THE NEW year of 2004, we find the Christian world still praying, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10) Yet, as the Apostle Paul said, “now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” (Rom. 13:11) The signs continue to point to the preparations being made by our LORD to set up his kingdom.

Meanwhile, Israel continues to wrestle with the problems of suicide bombers and the havoc they have wrought upon this tiny nation. The *New York Times*, on November 15, 2003, reported on a reaction by some of Israel's past security chiefs, some of their air force pilots and soldiers all denouncing

Ariel Sharon's hard line against the Palestinian militants by hunting them down amongst the civilian population. This has caused Ariel Sharon to be willing to meet with Ahmed Qurel, recently installed Palestinian prime minister, to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian problem.

The Israeli government makes no pretense of seeking guidance from the LORD. An extremely small minority of the Jews who have gone to Palestine during recent years, when God miraculously started regathering natural Israel, have done so because of their faith in the promises of God. It is inappropriate to suppose that what we have seen taking place is related to the setting up of the long-promised kingdom of God.

The prophecies of the Bible reveal that Christ's kingdom would be set up in the earth after a time of worldwide chaos and distress. Daniel's prophecy tells us that the distress occurs when Michael shall "stand up" to start exercising his authority upon earth. (Dan. 12:1) As the prophecy continues it says, "there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." Jesus referred to this prophecy and applied it to himself at the time of his Second Presence.—Matt. 24:21,22

This foretold 'time of trouble,' or tribulation, as it is described by Jesus, consists of "distress of nations, with perplexity." (Luke 21:25) It is a time when the hearts of the people are filled with fear. This is true today not only of one nation, but of all nations, which, the prophecies show, were to be gathered "to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." (Rev. 16:14) All nations do not participate in this final struggle of the ages in the same manner. There is a

marked distinction between the way it affects the Gentiles, and the experiences through which the Jewish people pass in connection with it.

This is shown in the prophecy of Joel 3:1,2. Here the reference is to the time when the LORD would “bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,” and the forecast is that at this time “all nations” would be gathered into “the valley of Jehoshaphat,” defined later in the chapter as the “valley of decision.” The time of this gathering is described in the chapter as one in which the nations would beat their “plowshares into swords,” and their “pruninghooks into spears”—a time, in other words, of mad armament races such as have been characteristic of our day.—Joel 3:9-14

It is during this time that we have witnessed a beginning of the fulfillment of God’s promises to restore the natural descendants of Abraham to the land promised to their fathers. This accurate dovetailing fulfillment of prophecies is faith-strengthening, and should alert us to be on the watch for the momentous events to follow, which, when all the promises of God are fulfilled, will see the kingdom of Christ established upon the earth.

THE REGATHERING OF ISRAEL

One of the prophecies pertaining to the regathering of Israel is Ezekiel 20:33-37, which reads, “As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule [Hebrew, ‘reign’] over you: And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched

out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.”

To us it would be wresting the Scriptures to try to spiritualize this prophecy. There is only one people whose fathers were brought out of Egypt, and into a wilderness. It is this people, therefore the Jewish people, whom the LORD promised to gather out of the nations, reigning over them in fury in order to accomplish it. And how true it is that five million or more of the Jews now in Palestine were brought there under furious conditions!

They are not believers in Christ. Few of them even believe in the God of Israel. They did not go to Palestine because of the promises, but because the LORD, in his fury—and in order to fulfill his promises—overruled circumstances to force them to go. This is clearly implied in the prophecy. And there is more trouble ahead for them. They must yet ‘pass under the rod’ of chastisement and discipline that they might be prepared to enter into the ‘bond of the covenant,’ the New Covenant, that is, which the LORD has promised to make “with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.”—Jer. 31:31

But as yet this people, who have been gathered out of the nations, are actually in a condition represented by the experiences of their fathers in the wilderness. The prophet describes it as the ‘wilderness of the people.’ Technically, they are in the land of promise, but actually it is, as yet, a land

of uncertainty and fear. They are experiencing the same problems as the rest of the world, and some that are worse. There is much trouble ahead for them, for they must continue to pass under the rod, as the prophecy shows.

ISRAEL ATTACKED

The thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel portray the final outcome of their precarious situation, a situation which seemingly will become outwardly more peaceful and reassuring ere the final climax of their trouble. (38:11,14) In verses 1-13 of the chapter we have a description of the forces which make the final assault against regathered Israel.

The reason the LORD will permit this is that it will afford him an opportunity to display his glory before both the attackers and the attacked, for he will protect the Israelites, and disperse their enemies. Verse twenty-three of chapter thirty-eight says, "Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD."

Verse seven of the next chapter (39) reads, "So [that is, in the same way and by the same act] will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen [Gentiles] shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel." From this it is clear that the people of Israel regathered in Palestine will continue in sin and in unbelief until they see this manifestation of Divine power on their behalf. We should not expect, therefore, to see much

evidence of Israel returning to the LORD now, for it would be contrary to prophecy.

RIGHTEOUSNESS ESTABLISHED

As the prophecy shows, it will be in this final phase of the great “time of trouble” (Dan. 12:1) that the eyes of Israel, and of the world, will be opened to behold the glory of the LORD. (Zech. 12:10; Isa. 40:5) Obviously, great changes will then rapidly occur in the viewpoint of Israel and of all nations. Having opened the eyes of the nations to his glory, the LORD will then reveal the manifestation of his kingdom power, and the mediatorial rule of righteousness will be under way.

When we think of a kingdom, we think of the personalities who are the rulers in that kingdom. Who will be the rulers in the kingdom of Christ which will take control of earth’s affairs after the LORD has revealed his glory? The natural descendants of Abraham were conditionally promised this high position (Exod. 19:5,6), but they failed to qualify. Their final test was the appearance of their Messiah, whom they rejected, and Jesus said then that the kingdom would be taken from them and “given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”—Matt. 21:43

This new nation to which the kingdom is to be given is spiritual, and is described by Peter, saying to the followers of Jesus, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.” (I Pet. 2:9) This ‘holy nation’ is made up, first of all, of a remnant of natural Israelites who accepted Jesus and to whom he gave power to become the sons of God. To these are added the Gentile believers. The sons of God in the New

Testament are God's ruling house, the kingdom class.—John 1:11,12; Rom. 8:16,17

Thus, as Paul explains, Israel as a nation did not obtain "that which he seeketh for;" that is, the desired position of rulership in the kingdom. (Rom. 11:7) Natural Israel did not understand that inheriting this kingdom meant also exaltation to the Divine plane. When the two disciples asked to sit with Jesus in his throne they did not understand that the throne of the Messiah would be in heaven. They simply wanted to be corulers with him, and this was the coveted position of all Israel which, as a nation, was forfeited because of unbelief.

The kingdom class proper will consist only of our Lord and his 'elect' of this Gospel Age, to whom he said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) These will be "changed" (I Cor. 15:51) in their resurrection (the first resurrection, Rev. 20:6) and therefore will no longer be human beings, but "partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4), and as invisible to mankind as are God and the heavenly angels.

Consequently it will be necessary for some means of communication between this glorious church and those whom it will be judging and lifting up out of the degradation of sin and death. There are many instances recorded in the Bible of communication between spiritual beings and humans. But we do not expect that the communication between the spiritual rulers and their earthly subjects will be after this manner during the millennium.

The Scriptures reveal that God has made provision that a certain class of humanity, already tried

(during the period before the Gospel Age) and found worthy of perfection and everlasting life shall, throughout the Millennial Age, serve as intermediaries between the spiritual kingdom, the saints, and their subjects, mankind. These, while not the kingdom in the proper sense of the word, will be so fully the representatives of it among men that they will be recognized as the kingdom by men. They will, indeed, represent the kingdom before men and be the only visible representatives of it. Hence, these may properly be termed the earthly phase of the kingdom.—Luke 13:28

These, “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” and all the prophets and Ancient Worthies, referred to by our Lord and by the apostles, have passed their trial. (Matt. 8:11; Heb. 11:4-40) They will therefore be awakened from death perfect—fully restored to human perfection—and will not require a resurrection by judgment a thousand years long, as will the remainder of mankind. This perfection will enable them to communicate with the spiritual kings and priests directly, without need that the spirit beings assume fleshly bodies for the purpose of communicating the laws of the kingdom to the world. Just as Adam, while perfect, could commune directly with the heavenly powers, so will these Ancient Worthies commune, when restored to the same state of perfection.

That the earthly phase of the kingdom will be on terms of intimate communion, fellowship, and cooperation with the kingdom proper, the spiritual rulers, is evident. They will be related to each other as father and children, and as cooperative departments of the same heavenly government: the heavenly being the legislative, or lawgiving

department, and the earthly the executive, or law-enforcing department. As it is written, "Out of Zion [the spiritual kingdom] shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD [the Divine messages, through the "princes" (Ps. 45:16)] from Jerusalem."—Isa. 2:3

Miracle-working power will then be operating. However, before this, will be the defeat of Israel's enemies. It will be at this juncture that the resurrected Ancient Worthies may appear on the scene. We can only speculate as to the exact format God will use, but it is possible that as they begin to mingle with the Israelites, whose eyes have been opened to recognize their Messiah, their superior mental powers will distinguish them from all others. Their perfect minds will quickly grasp present-day knowledge and invention. Besides, these Ancient Worthies will, as we have seen, have direct communion with the spiritual kingdom.

The Israelites regathered in Israel, with their eyes opened by the miracle which saved them from their enemies, will have the first opportunity to receive the blessings of the kingdom. It was in order that they might enjoy this great advantage that God, with a powerful hand, gathered them out of the nations and reigned over them in his fury to move them into Palestine and later formed the nation of Israel. While originally they went there in various stages of unbelief, yet none shall be, in any degree, reckoned as a part, or even as supporters of, or associated with, the earthly phase of the kingdom, except as they shall first recognize Christ Jesus as the Son of God, the only Redeemer and Deliverer for Israel and the world.

The news of the defeat of Israel's enemies will speedily be followed by the news of the appearance of their renowned 'fathers' resurrected, and the establishment of a government with these at its head, and of the general conversion of Israel to the long-rejected Messiah.

But the marvelous blessings resulting from the reorganization of government under the new auspices in Israel will work such wonderful and rapid changes in Israel's welfare that the chaotic and fear-filled world will decide that the situation is worth investigating. To the people of the world it will soon appear that this is what all nations need. Then they will send to have these wonderful 'princes' extend everywhere their government, their yoke of righteousness seen to be so beneficial to Israel. It is this that is stated in Isaiah 2:2-4 and Micah 4:1-4.

THE WISDOM OF GOD

How marvelously God's wisdom is displayed by his preparing in advance those who participate in both the spiritual and earthly phases of the Messianic kingdom. Then, by God's power raising them up to perfection in the resurrection—those in the spiritual phase of the kingdom to the Divine nature, and those in the earthly phase to perfect human nature—to form a perfect government. How miserably the best intentioned of imperfect humans have failed in governing nations, even though many of them have professed to do it in the name of Christ.

With the restored Ancient Worthies, it will be different. Having successfully passed their trial, they will be raised at once to perfection and be ready at once for the great work before them as the

human agents of the Christ in restoring and blessing the remainder of mankind. As the spiritual nature is necessary to the accomplishment of the work of the heavenly phase of the kingdom, so perfect human nature is appropriate for the accomplishment of the work to be done among men.

This work will necessitate the establishment of a perfect government among men, with perfect men in positions of control, that they might rightly order the affairs of state. It will necessitate the appointment and implementing of proper educational facilities of every character, as well as philanthropic measures of various kinds. This noble work of elevating mankind—under the direction of the unseen spiritual members of the same kingdom—is the high honor to which the Ancient Worthies have been appointed, and for which they will be resurrected soon after the final wreck of the kingdoms of this world, or about at the close of “Jacob’s trouble.” (Jer. 30:7) And, as the Divinely honored representatives of the heavenly kingdom, they will soon receive the honor and cooperation of all men.

Because, in fulfillment of promise and his love for their fathers, the hand of God will have assembled many of the natural descendants of Abraham to the geographical land center of the new kingdom, they will naturally become the first to accept the new governmental arrangements being supervised by the Ancient Worthies. For this reason, and also because the majority of the Ancient Worthies are the natural descendants of Abraham, the earthly phase of the kingdom will be Israelitish.

However, although the future blessings, like the past, will be to the Jew first and also to the Gentile,

it will be, in the matter of time only, that the Jews will have the precedence to Divine favor. Ultimately, every blessing promised to Israel, except those pertaining to the elected classes, will have not only its actual fulfillment in that people, but also its antitypical fulfillment in all the families of the earth. Under that government, God “will render to every man according to his deeds: . . . glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.”—Rom. 2:6,10,11

The name Israel signifies ‘prevailed with God,’ and is thus descriptive of all, in any age, who, through faith and obedience, obtain God’s favor. It is not a family name, but one that was given to Jacob as a reward. Thus all mankind, beginning with Israel after the flesh, may become Israelites indeed, the people of God. The typical lessons in God’s dealings with natural Israel indicate this. Throughout their typical age many Canaanites remained in the promised land. These were the heathen, the Gentiles. They were not God’s people.

But the picture of the kingdom set forth in Zechariah 14:16-21 shows that all nations—“all the families of the earth”—will “go up” to Jerusalem and participate in the functions of the new kingdom. But verse twenty-one declares, “there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD.” ‘All the families of the earth’ will be there, but not as Canaanites. They will all be the people of God.

JERUSALEM

The prophecies employ the city of Jerusalem as a symbol of the kingdom of Christ, for it was the seat

of empire in the typical kingdom of God. However, it seems clear that literal Jerusalem will become the headquarters of the earthly phase of Christ's kingdom—the members of which will be the Ancient Worthies. The “new Jerusalem” will be the heavenly phase of that government. (Rev. 21:2) There will not be two governments, but the earthly Jerusalem will represent the heavenly kingdom, the ‘new Jerusalem.’

Primarily this new government will be the kingdom of the Father, but the Father has voluntarily proposed to place the dominion of earth for a thousand years under the full charge of a viceroy—Christ and his bride exalted to the Divine nature and majesty. These Divine rulers will put down and destroy all enemies of God and of righteousness, and will restore all the willing and obedient to full harmony with the Father under the gracious conditions of the foretold New Covenant.—Jer. 31:31-34

In a secondary sense this new government will include the earthly ministers, or princes, who will be its visible representatives among men. In a still wider sense it will include all those who will render to it loyal submission and devotion when they recognize its establishment—both Jews and Gentiles; the Jews first because they will be the first to have the opportunity to come into harmony with it.

Since ‘Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,’ and all the prophets are to be the princes in all the earth, it will undoubtedly work greatly to the advantage of many of the natural Israelites. They will come more readily into accord with their own leaders of the past than will the remainder of the world. Thus

in the beginning of the millennium, Israel as a people will again take the most prominent place among the nations.

So the new Jerusalem and its earthly headquarters, as seen of men, will be, as the name implies, a glorious city of peace. It is in the light that will shine from this glorious city (kingdom) of God that the nations (people) will walk on the highway of "holiness," up to perfection and to full harmony with God. (Rev. 21:24; Isa. 35:8) But none can become an actual part of that city, or kingdom, who has not first been thoroughly tested.

One of the proofs of worthiness of continued kingdom blessings will undoubtedly be willingness—not only to obey the laws of the kingdom as administered by the Ancient Worthies, but also to cooperate unselfishly with them in the kingdom work. The natural Israelites will have the first opportunity of doing this, and thus of setting an example to others. But Gentiles will also have the same opportunities, and thus the kingdom influences will ultimately extend to all mankind, who, when they reach perfection at the close of the Millennial Age, will be admitted into membership in the kingdom of God and given the entire control of earth as at first designed.—Matt. 25:31-34

Thus it will be that the Christ, the great Deliverer, will "turn away ungodliness from Jacob," in keeping with the promise of the New Covenant; and "so all Israel shall be saved." (Rom. 11:26-32) And not only Israel, but all the families of the earth. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"—vs. 33 ■

Holding Firm in Suffering

Key Verse: *“He said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.”*
—Job 2:10

Selected Scripture:
Job 1:1-2:10

permits evil. At the beginning, we are told that Job lived in the land of Uz, in Arabia, and probably not far from Palestine.

We are told that he was perfect (morally complete), upright (honest, straightforward), one that revered God and kept himself from evil. This tells a lot about the character of the man. Today we find very few that would fit into this standard. Job was very rich and had seven sons and three daughters. Verse three tells us Job was the greatest of the men of the East.

OUR LESSON TODAY CEN-
ters on a man named Job, who lived in the land of Uz. The Book of Job is one of the finest pieces of poetry that was ever written. Since the author is not mentioned, we should not think that it is merely a parable, and that Job is an imaginary character. He is mentioned in two other passages of scripture, Ezekiel 14:14 and James 5:11, and we conclude, therefore, that the narrative is true and given as a lesson in why God

The Scriptures tell us that as a rule those who are rich “fall into temptation and a snare.” (I Tim. 6:9) However, this was not the character of Job, and he became great among his peers. Evidently Job’s sons were not like their father, for they feasted and drank with their sisters. We are told this worried him, and he sanctified (hallowed and purified) them, and offered burnt offerings for each of them.—vs. 5

In verse six we are told that Satan appeared before God to test him regarding Job’s integrity. God asked Satan to consider his servant, how he was sincere and upright. Satan then tells God that the only reason Job was following him was that God had placed a “hedge” around him to protect him, and that if his possessions were taken away, he would curse him. (vss. 8-11) Satan knew the weaknesses of man and was sure that Job would not follow God if his material blessings were taken away.

However, God knew Job’s heart and allowed Satan to test him. We are assured that “man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.” (I Sam. 16:7) Satan proceeded to take away all of his possessions, causing his sons and daughters to be killed, yet this only caused Job to say, “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”—vs. 21

How much this tells us of the integrity of Job. Again Satan tested God by saying, “Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.” (2:4) God then allowed Satan to do what he wished to Job but he could not take his life.—vs. 6

Job was smitten with boils from his head to his feet. He suffered so much that his wife told him to curse God and die. Through all this, Job did not sin with his lips. (vs. 10) Peter tells us that “if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye.”—I Pet. 3:14 ■

Seeking God in Times of Trial

Key Verse: “Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.”
—Job 13:3

Selected Scripture:
Job 9:32-35; 13:20-24; 19:25-27; 23:10-12

IN OUR LAST LESSON

Satan had been allowed by God to afflict Job with boils, from his head to his feet. He was in so much pain that his wife asked him to curse God and die. Three so-called friends came to see him. All three insisted that his affliction was due to wickedness on his part and that he was receiving punishment from God. What says the word of God? “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.” (James 1:13) God may allow tests to come upon us, but only to develop our character.

Through all this Job continued his defense saying, “I will not keep silent; I will speak out in the anguish of my spirit, I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.”—Job 7:11, *New International Version*

One of the problems confronting humans is that when accused of something, they will almost always wish to make a defense, and this is what Job desired. He was asking God to be heard. He knew better than to argue with God, but wanted an answer to his suffering. He said, “He is not a man like me that I might answer him,

that we might confront each other in court. If only there were someone to arbitrate between us, to lay his hand upon us both, someone to remove God's rod from me, so that his terror would frighten me no more. Then I would speak up without fear of him, but as it now stands with me, I cannot."—Job 9:32-35, *NIV*

We can almost hear Job pleading with God, like the psalmist, "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer." (Ps. 4:1) Job only asks two things of God, "Withdraw thine hand far from me: and let not thy dread make me afraid."—Job 13:21

Job felt that he needed a "daysman" (umpire) to stand for him in his plea to God (9:33); perhaps I have done something to suffer for. "How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin."—Job 13:23

Job's so-called comforters kept up their bitter words until he cries out, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." (19:21) He wished he could die, for he knew of a coming resurrection. "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!"—vss. 25-27, *NIV*

Job longed to speak to God face-to-face. "Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat." (23:3) "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (vs. 10) In this respect Job is a picture of the people being selected in God's name. (Acts. 15:14) These are assured of being brought forth as gold (a Divine nature) after their testing is over. They are assured of seeing God face-to-face. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."—I Cor. 13:12 ■

Maintaining Integrity in Daily Living

Key Verse: *“All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils; My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.”*
—Job 27:3,4

Selected Scripture:
Job 27:2-5; 28:12,13, 23,28; 31:5-8,24,25,28

Job had maintained his desire to defend his cause before God. Through all this, his friends continued their attack upon him, claiming he had to be wicked and that was why God was allowing his suffering. In today's lesson Job continues to maintain his integrity. In chapter twenty-seven, verse four, Job says that he would never 'speak wickedness' nor allow his 'tongue' to speak 'deceit.' In his defense he claims he never would give in to his so-called friends and say he was wicked, and that was the reason God was punishing him.

Job continues, "If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit; Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity." (31:5,6) He felt that he was being unfairly judged by a pair of faulty balances (scales). How important are exact scales? Job felt his friends were weighing him by uneven scales. "A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight. The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors

IN OUR LAST LESSON,

shall destroy them. The righteousness of the perfect [morally upright] shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.”—Prov. 11:1,3,5

How often, in times of distress, man looks for excuses for the problems he is going through. Was Job making excuses? No. However, he was asking God to hear him. He could not find any reason for his suffering. In Proverbs we read, “To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the reply of the tongue. All a man’s ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD. Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. The LORD works out everything for his own ends—even the wicked for a day of disaster. The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished. Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear [reverence] of the LORD a man avoids evil. When a man’s ways are pleasing to the LORD, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him.”—Prov. 16:1-7, *New International Version*

Evidently, Job had not yet learned the lesson of wisdom of his own human frailties. From his standpoint, wisdom only came from knowing God and from reverence. His defense would only come when he could speak to God face-to-face. Job asks, “Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof. Unto man he said, Behold, the fear [reverence] of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.”—Job 28:12,13,23,28

Job felt in his heart that he was innocent of any charges made against him and his defense must be made only to God. “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (II Tim. 3:12) “He that judgeth me is the Lord.”—I Cor. 4:4 ■

Encountering God

Key Verse: “*My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.*”

—**Job 42:5,6**, *New International Version*

Selected Scripture:
**Job 38:1-7; 40:7-9;
42:1-6**

HOW OFTEN HAS THE DESIRE to be heard been answered by mother, father, or some human? Like a father, when a child cries to be heard, the father has said, “Stand up! Brace yourself like a man.” Now comes the Heavenly Father’s voice to Job, “Brace yourself like a man; I will question you.”—**Job 38:3, NIV**

In today’s lesson we find Job being questioned by God. The Heavenly Father does not chide him, neither does he ask that he bow down in humility, but simply says, stand, listen, and answer me. God asks Job to tell him where he (Job) was when he (God) made the earth, and asks him, “Would you condemn me to justify yourself?” (40:8, *NIV*) This went to the heart of Job. God continues, “Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.”—vs. 2

Job finally comes to realize whom he is dealing with. The question may be asked, “Do we know with whom we are dealing?” The Prophet Isaiah, speaking for God, says, “Who hath directed the spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? (Isa. 40:13) Going on he says, “Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and

are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?"—vss. 15,18

Mankind has pictured God as vengeful, while the Scriptures describe him as a God of love, mercy, and justice. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (I John 4:8,10) "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16

God is "rich in mercy." (Eph. 2:4) "The Lord is . . . of tender mercy." (James 5:11) God is a "just" God (Deut. 32:4), "a just God and a Saviour."—Isa. 45:21

A marvelous testimony was given by Jesus when he said, "Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil."—Luke 6:35

Job knew he had misjudged God and he asks God to forgive him. "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." (Job. 42:2,5) It was now by the eye of faith that Job saw God as one would face-to-face. The eyes of his understanding were opened. (Eph. 1:18) Job was humbled when God asked him to "gird up" his loins "like a man." (Job 40:7) Job and all mankind must know as Jeremiah the prophet has written, "Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."—Jer. 9:24 ■

In the Image of God

***“God created man
in his own image, in
the image of God
created he him;
male and female
created he them.”***

—Gen. 1:27

A REALIZATION OF THE

truthfulness of this text is perhaps the strongest single argument there is against the theory of human evolution. Darwinists are adept at calling attention to the various ways in which the evolutionary ladder may have been climbed throughout the millions of years they claim there has been life on the earth, beginning with protoplasm. But not one has hazarded a guess at what rung in this ladder an ape, or a missing link, became conscious of right and wrong, and was able to reason the difference between the two. Nor have any of them been able to suggest a set of circumstances that would prod an ape into thinking on the human level.

IN GOD'S IMAGE

In high circles of professorship, in and out of the church, and among our government leaders from the president down, nearly all claim to believe that

man was created in the image of God. In the free world it is this viewpoint that constitutes the basis for the dignity of man doctrine, and for the zealous fight to maintain the individual rights of man.

Let us remind ourselves that this viewpoint, which is the unequivocal teaching of the Bible, cannot be harmonized with the Darwin theory of human evolution. If man is a product of evolution, and not the direct creation of God, then there is no basis for the claim that he is the image of God. If God did not create man, and give him his law, then he has no Divine law to guide him in his behavior. It might be argued, that what we suppose to be a law against sin is only a mistakenly conceived repressive measure which in reality is keeping man back from the next great step in evolution.

Thank God for the realization that the plain statements of his Word express that sacred Truth which all right-thinking men and women instinctively espouse and declare, many of them despite their unproved theories of natural selection and evolution. The full beauty and grandeur of the Bible's teaching on this subject stands out even more brilliantly when we note the detailed manner in which man is so completely set apart from the beasts; and further, when we become acquainted with the Creator's designed eternal destiny for this human creature made in his own image.

MENTAL IMAGE

This, of course, is not a physical, but a moral and intellectual image. Man has the ability to know right from wrong, and he is able to think, to reason. He cannot think on the same high plane as his

Creator. His thinking, rather, is confined to a realm in which he was created to live, that is, the earthly. Speaking to man, God said, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:9) But man is able to reason with God on matters pertaining to his relationship with his Creator. God invites this, saying, "Come now, and let us reason together, . . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—Isa. 1:18

Man's ability to think, to reason out the ways and problems of life, rather than to be guided merely by instinct as are the lower animals, manifests itself in many ways. We see this from the very beginning of human experience. When our first parents disobeyed, they immediately felt a sense of guilt, and were afraid. (Gen. 3:7-10) Then, to cover their shame, they donned leaves. The lower animals in the garden would not have thought of putting on clothing to cover nakedness. God provided a protective covering for the lower animals, but man was left to provide his own.

MORAL IMAGE

The guilt expressed by Adam and Eve that led them to clothe themselves and caused them to be afraid, showed that man was created in the moral image of God. A principal problem with evolutionists is searching for the missing link, or bridging the gap between the animal kingdom and man. Animals are not able to reason concerning right or wrong, or to know the difference between the two.

Nor have any of the animals been able to think on this human level.

Man soon began to make and use tools, which is something else the lower animals have never shown any inclination or ability to do. Monkeys have been known to pick up a stick and with it pry open a door. Elephants have been known to use a piece of brush to sweep something from an otherwise unreachable part of their body. But no animal has ever been known to attempt the fashioning or making of a tool. Here, again, man is set completely apart, and above, even the highest form of lower animals.

MAN, A TOOL DESIGNER

Archeological discoveries reveal that the earliest known man manufactured and used tools. Today this difference between man, who was created in the image of God, and the lower animals is more striking than ever. Think of the intricacy of tools and instruments of all sorts which are now in use, with even greater marvels in the making. In modes of travel, communication, and manufacture we are daily witnessing miracles.

Earlier in these lessons we drew a sharp distinction between the infinite wisdom and power of God and the limitations of man. This was to emphasize that with all man's boasted wisdom he had only scratched the surface in his understanding of the mighty creative works of God. In this connection, we are reminded of a statement made by one of the most brilliant men of all time, Sir Isaac Newton. Well along in his life Newton wrote, "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I

seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

Probably most great scientists feel much as Newton did concerning their own accomplishments. Nevertheless, when we consider man's ability to think, to plan, to invent, we recognize striking evidence of the fact that he was created in the image of God. God, for example, is a Creator, and man is endowed with the desire to create, and by the use of materials already created by God, can put together marvelous things.

At times we hear the comment made of an individual that he has a "creative mind." However, we are inclined to limit the word create to the works of the Creator. All that man can do is to use the materials provided by the Creator and with them make things. Because he was created in the image of God, what marvelous things man can make! Let us remember that the metals, the gases, the oils, the electricity, the wood, and whatever else man may use in putting together the things he invents, have all been furnished by God. The fact that man, even in a limited way, can utilize the materials furnished by the Creator is one of the evidences that he was created in the image of God.

MAN AND MUSIC

Someone has written that monkeys have no music in their souls, and thus we are reminded of another wide gap between man and the highest species of the lower animals. Music is harmony of

sound, and on earth apparently only the human ear can discern the difference between harmony and discord. In one respect, a dog has a keener sense of hearing than a human. Sound waves are measured by cycles, the more shrill the tone, the higher the number of cycles, whereas a dog's ears respond to tones up to nearly thirty thousand cycles. Because of this, whistles can now be purchased which, when blown within hearing of a trained dog, can cause it to come running to its master; but the dog's master, or others standing nearby, hear nothing.

However acute a dog's hearing may be, it does not know the difference between harmony of sound, and discord or noise. But man, created in the image of God, finds one of his greatest delights in the field of music. In a wonderful promise to the LORD's faithful people, the Prophet Zephaniah wrote, "He [the LORD] will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." (Zeph. 3:17) From this we learn that God at times expresses his joy and his love through singing. Because man was created in the image of God, he also finds joy in expressing his delights through the harmony of music.

Many times in the Bible reference is made to the joy experienced by man in singing praises to God, his Maker. And here is another way in which man is set apart from the lower animals—he instinctively looks up to a higher power in praise and worship. Because of man's fall into sin and selfishness, his quality of worship has, in the case of many, become distorted—having deteriorated into base superstition in which God is seen as not much different than a demon. In others, the

disposition to worship a higher power has been almost completely erased.

But even now, more than six thousand years after man's creation and fall, the vast majority of the human race still possess, in varying degrees of strength, the desire to worship. Millions bow down before idols; others worship a multiplicity of gods. A few have confidence in the Bible and accept its teachings as the revelation of the one and only true God, the Creator of heaven and earth. A continued examination of his Word reveals that he is a God of wisdom, justice, love, and power; a God in whom we delight to trust, and whom we are glad to serve. We read, "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."—Jer. 9:23,24 ■

OBITUARIES

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

Brother Sam Krystek, Los Angeles, CA—November 13.

Age, 86

Sister Descygne Herrscher, Phoenix, AZ—November 17. Age, 89

Sister Viola Perry, Clear Lake, CA—November 21.
Age, 91

Ransom, Propitiation, Sin Offering

***“The man Christ
Jesus; Who gave
himself a ransom
for all, to be
testified in
due time.”
—I Tim. 2:5,6***

IT TRULY HAS BEEN SAID

that most of our misunderstandings arise from the fact that language is an inadequate vehicle with which to convey our thoughts to others. To some, written

words may convey exactly the opposite meaning to the same words when spoken, and divergent ideas can be founded on exactly the same passages of scripture. Many are familiar with the difference in meaning between “I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise,” and “I say unto thee today, Thou shalt be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43) This is the case of the misplaced comma.

THE MEANING OF WORDS

Perhaps the Apostle Paul had some language difficulties among the brethren of his day, when Greek, Latin, Aramaic, (Continued on page 38)

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“Send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.”

—Psalm 43:3

(Continued from page 31) Arabic, Persian, and Egyptian-speaking Christians gathered in the same ecclesia. We read, "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (I Cor. 1:10) This advice was not given to all the people of Corinth, but only to the 'brethren.'

In connection with Paul's advice we might add that there is no greater sophistry prevalent among Christians today, and even among Bible students, than the statement that "we all have the right to believe as we please." As Christians, we have been "bought with a price" even "the precious blood of Christ," and can we say to our Master, "I will believe what I please, regardless of your teachings?" (I Cor. 6:20; 7:23; I Pet. 1:19) Or does our consecration include the acceptance and recognition as Truth "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God?" (Matt. 4:4) "Incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding."—Prov. 2:2

God's voice on the Mount of Transfiguration declared, "This is my beloved Son, . . . hear ye him." (Matt. 17:5) As we endeavor to walk in his footsteps, we are not following him unless we follow his teachings, and the teachings of God, through the prophets and apostles.

There are difficulties in all languages. But writing and speaking in English, a very gifted writer, who was the greatest exegete of the Bible in modern times, was often misunderstood, even though

to many he could make most obscure things of the Bible plain. If he, with his logical mind and gift of expression, was so woefully misunderstood, the rest of us should not be surprised if we are also found conveying thoughts to others at times, which are different from what we intend.

Among Christians there are certain terms or words that are used rather loosely, and in many cases, interchangeably. For example, the words ransom, propitiation, sacrifice, sin offering. To many these all mean the same thing, but not if we make a careful analysis of the words, however, and their real meaning. All of these have as their central thought the death of our Savior on Calvary, and yet none of these words is actually synonymous with any of the others.

THE FIRST LIE

To get a proper setting for our study, let us look back to the Garden of Eden. God had created man and made him a helpmate—"They twain shall be one flesh." (Matt. 19:5) He "called their name Adam." (Gen. 5:2) Thus the unity of man and wife was recognized. Originally, Adam possessed all the qualities of perfect humanity. Strong temptations were presented to this first pair; both disobeyed God, and, although the woman was the first in the transgression, God's penalty was pronounced because of Adam's sin. It was by one man's sin that death came into the world. A perfect man had sinned, and the penalty was death. The Adversary told Eve, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4), but God had told Adam that disobeying, he would surely die, cease to be, and go back to the dust from whence he was derived.

Here began the great struggle between truth and the lie. Either God told the truth and the Devil the lie, or it was God who lied and the Devil that told the truth. Practically every religion to-day teaches, by implication, that the Devil told the truth. But if we are to believe the Word of God, we must believe that God was correct, and that it is impossible that he should lie. The Bible is consistent from beginning to end that humans are mortal and die; that they do not have immortal souls, but pass into the state of death where there is neither "device, nor knowledge." (Eccles. 9:10) This, then, leaves Adam in the bosom of Mother Earth, and since none of the race was born before the penalty was pronounced, the entire race came under condemnation of death. All in Adam die.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4), and the perfect man must pay the penalty for his transgression, without hope of release, unless some other perfect man is willing to take his place and pay that penalty. Job records the philosophy for such a substitution and its result, if it were possible of accomplishment. If that perfect man could be found, then God would be "gracious unto him [mankind]," and say, "Deliver him from going down to the pit [*sheol*, the grave]: I have found a ransom [Hebrew, *kopher*—literally, a covering; figuratively, that which would cover the transgression, or the equivalent of the penalty]." The result would be, "His [mankind's] flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth."—Job 33:23-25

THE LOGOS MADE FLESH

But “there is none righteous [perfect], no, not one,” so what fallen mankind could not do, God, in his infinite mercy and love, did for him. (Rom. 3:10) He sent his only begotten Son, in the likeness of the flesh that sinned (the perfect man Adam), to die for all mankind, so that all who would believe on him should not perish, but on the contrary, have a life that would be everlasting.—John 3:16

The life of Jesus was not a forfeited one of Adam’s race, but a transferred life, yet human. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” (John 3:6) He was born of woman, made flesh. There had been no other perfect humans on earth from Adam’s transgression to the birth of Jesus. Jesus possessed all the marvelous characteristics of a perfect human, and was, therefore, an exact corresponding price for father Adam before he sinned.

But Jesus’ mission in that First Advent, nearly two thousand years ago, was to die as a corresponding price, that the life of a perfect man might be paid to justice to offset the transgression of the perfect man Adam. On Calvary’s cross he “poured out his soul unto death.” (Isa. 53:12) There he triumphantly finished his baptism, and surrendered his human life, committing it to the hands of his Father.

JESUS, THE RANSOM

Paul said, “The man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” (I Tim. 2:5,6) The word ‘ransom’ can be used in different ways: as an adjective, as a noun, and as a verb. A familiar use of the word is in connection with the cases of kidnapping, and that can well

serve as an illustration. When the demand is to be met, the party who gives the money prepares the required amount. This is the ransom price.

Thus the Scriptures speak of Jesus, "A body hast thou prepared me." (Heb. 10:5) The ransom price was being prepared, and at the age of thirty years the perfect man, Jesus, presented himself as a sacrifice which was to begin at Jordan and end at Calvary. Then he had the ransom price, a price to correspond.

But Jesus could not give that price into the hands of justice at Calvary, for he was dead. However, on the third day, God, by his own mighty power, raised Jesus Christ from the dead. (Acts 10:40) He was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened [made alive] by the [life-giving] Spirit." (I Pet. 3:18) Jesus did not desire, and did not take back, his human nature, although at times during the next forty days he appeared as flesh.

Then, ascending to the Father with his completed sacrifice, Jesus appeared in the presence of Jehovah, the very embodiment of justice. He presented his finished sacrifice to his Father, leaving it in his Father's hands as a surety for a further work. It had been prophetically said of the Messiah, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance," yet Jesus, just before he left the upper chamber in Jerusalem for Gethsemane, had told the Father, "I pray [ask] not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." (Ps. 2:8; John 17:9) In due time Jesus will ask for the heathen (Gentiles), and all of Adam's race will hear the voice of the Son of man.

THE RANSOM PRICE DEPOSITED

An English dictionary defines the word ransom as a verb, as follows: 'To pay the required price and effect the deliverance of that which is held by another party.' To pay means to completely release to the other party the price demanded. To be technical, we might say that the ransom has not yet been paid, or released. It is being used as security until those whom God draws to Jesus during this age have been selected and trained and changed into the Divine likeness.

In God's economy it appears very desirable that Jesus should have these trained assistants in the great work of bringing back billions of the dead to human life. A position of joint-heirship with Christ is not to be lightly given. They must earn it. Worthiness is shown by faithfully enduring suffering, sorrow, and shame, such as fitted our Master for his position.

How much will the death of Jesus cover when it is finally paid into the hands of justice, and the release effected? It will be the price to cover the sin of Adam, and the condemnation upon him and the race in his loins when he sinned. Its coverage is exactly coextensive with the curse. It has that much value, and nothing of merit left over. All Jesus had to do to redeem Adam and his race was to surrender his perfect human life. The manner of its surrender had no effect on the price or its value. That price still stood—a perfect man's life for a perfect man's life which had been forfeited because of sin.

However, Jesus became "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." (Isa. 53:3) He lived a life of sacrifice. The Son of God who was to be heir of all things had not a place of his own on which to lay his

head. He, by whom the worlds had been created, the most honored of the Father, was mocked and reviled by sinful men, and put to death in one of the cruelest ways known to man. Why? For one reason, God desired that his Son should prove himself worthy of the great exaltation that awaited him. He was proved perfect "by the things which he suffered."—Heb. 5:8

Another reason for Jesus' cruel crucifixion is given us by Paul. He wrote, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) The Jews, having undertaken to live up to the requirements of God's perfect law, came under an additional condemnation when they failed. So Jesus was "made under the law, . . . to redeem them that were under the law."—Gal. 4:4,5

For three and a half years the message was confined to Israel and proselytes to Judaism, and then the message went forth that Gentiles could be fellow heirs of the glorious promises. The Apostle Paul mentions that the Gentiles were in need of propitiation before they could come into Christ. (Eph. 2:11-16) The whole world is under Adamic condemnation. The ransom price in the hands of justice is also surety for their propitiation, and thus effects their reconciliation.

PROPI TIATION

What is propitiation? It is defined as that which causes a favorable decision; the act or thing which makes for conciliation and reconciliation between the offender and the offended. The basis for such propitiation was provided at the cross. While the original

sin which caused the alienation of man from God's favor was committed on earth, we could properly think of the judgment against him as being entered in the courts of heaven. So the depositing of the ransom price on the antitypical mercy seat would be the cornerstone of any attempt at reconciliation.

With that price so deposited, Jesus could stand surety for any member of Adam's race, for the price was sufficient for the purchase of all. Thus God could be just in keeping the death penalty upon mankind in general, yet still be the justifier of those who believe on Jesus. While we believers are still in fallen flesh, we have the Master standing as our Advocate, representing us before the Father. No mediator is required, as we have complete reconciliation, and are in accord with God.

Jesus is "the propitiation for our [the church's] sins: and not for ours only, but [in due time] also for the sins of the whole world." (I John 2:2) When the ransom price is applied for the sin of Adam, eventually it will effect a conciliation and reconciliation between God and man, and thus become a propitiation for the whole world.

SIN OFFERING

It was sin that had alienated man from God, and only by some offering for sin could there be any propitiation, so in that sense the depositing of the ransom price with justice was in the nature of a sin offering. But before we go further with this thought, let us look at the definition of the term sin offering and we find it to be 'that which is offered because of a transgression to effect reconciliation or atonement.' The appearing in the presence of

God for us, and presenting his sacrifice, was foreshadowed in the Tabernacle services by the first sprinkling of the mercy seat. This, it will be remembered, was done with the blood of the bullock, and afterward the LORD's goat was also sacrificed and its blood taken into the Most Holy for the second sprinkling of the mercy seat; and only then did the high priest come out to bless the people.

The Most Holy represented heaven itself, the seat of God's throne, and his place of abode. Since the presentation of the completed sacrifice was to be made to Jehovah, that offering on behalf of transgressions, the sin offering, must be made in heaven. Like the ransom, all parts of the sin offering are prepared on earth, but all the rest of the presentation is pictured as taking place in heaven.

It is only those who have come to God through Christ who can now claim him as their sin offering. While the work of reconciling the whole world began at Calvary, for the first two thousand years thereafter the benefits have been confined to a little flock. These are to accept the work of reconciliation and the forgiveness of sins, and through faith present themselves in full consecration, and have peace with God, and no longer be "aliens" and "strangers."—Eph. 2:12

Paul entreats us to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." (Rom. 12:1) Why should we? Was not the sacrifice of Christ sufficient to atone for all sin? Perhaps the Jew thought the slaying of a fine, fat ox was sufficient without the additional sacrifice of that goat which could hardly be compared to the ox. Truly here was a mystery that was hidden from ages and genera-

tions, although shown in symbol in the Tabernacle, that the Christ was to be made up of many brethren, who, like their Head, must walk the way of sacrifice; and that sacrifice could have no value except as it first received it from the blood of Jesus. These brethren become members of his body, and their sacrifice counted in with his sacrifice. In due time, the entire body will be presented to the Father, their sacrificing finished and acceptable to God through the merit of the Savior's death.

Thus the church enters into, and is a part of, the sin offering—an offering made on behalf of sin. When the second sprinkling of the mercy seat occurs, the footstep followers of Jesus are with him, but it still is all his merit. The blood of the goat was not acceptable until the slaying of the bullock and its blood applied on the mercy seat. The goat's blood was merely a repetition of the bullock's. So it is only as members of the body of Christ, and not in our own merit, that any are permitted to be counted as a part of the sacrifice that is offered on behalf of the transgressions, filling up "that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24

The sacrifice of Jesus was vicarious; that is, it was made for us who were unable to do it for ourselves. No one of Adam's race was able to "give to God a ransom" price for the entire race (Ps. 49:7); so God sent his own Son. But when the ransom price has been fully paid, fully released to justice, then "whosoever will" may come and drink of the "water of life." (Rev. 22:17) However, belief and obedience will be required.

The term atonement is used when the real thought is at-one-ment—full reconciliation between

God and man. One of the Bible's pictures of bringing about this at-one-ment, which is made possible by the ransom, is "the [high]way of holiness." (Isa. 35:8) It will require desire and effort on the part of mankind to walk in this way. Salvation to human perfection, restitution, will not come without sincere and earnest effort on the part of humanity. But the final results will be glorious.

When the at-one-ment is complete and Jesus turns the kingdom over to the Father, Jehovah will take direct charge of his human sons. That will be the completion of God's great plan of the ages through Christ Jesus our Lord. Then all the world will stand on the threshold of the ages of glory to follow. Truly ours is a great God and worthy of our reverence and love! ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JANUARY 1—"O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard: which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved."—Psalm 66:8,9 (Z. '03-3 Hymn 119A)

JANUARY 8—"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men."—I Thessalonians 5:15 (Z. '01-297 Hymn 143A)

JANUARY 15—"What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah 6:8 (Z. '02-172 Hymn 267)

JANUARY 22—"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD"—Psalm 31:24 (Z. '01-79 Hymn 263)

JANUARY 29—"The fear [reverence] of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."—Psalm 111:10 (Z. '96-155 Hymn 360)

A New Creature

“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

—II Corinthians 5:17

THOSE WHO ARE RICHLY

blessed by being ‘in Christ’ marvel at the wondrous grace of God which has made it possible for them, who were born in sin and shapen in iniquity, to be-

come New Creatures. With joy they can testify in the words of the psalmist, “He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth.” “Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.—Ps. 40:1-3; 116:2

Very gratefully they recall and relate their being brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of Divine Truth. With thanksgiving they remember those early days, and the Father’s drawing power on their behalf (John 6:44), and that on their part there was the very necessary response of repentance (a change of mind), also conversion (the turning about).

When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we make a grand start in the Christian life. At that initial

stage we may not have even heard about a New Creature, or our need to be ‘in Christ,’ nor the terms of discipleship.

Those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and yearn to be taught of Jesus—as he said, “Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart”—are in a very happy condition. (Matt. 11:29) Such humble, earnest, teachable ones are ready to be instructed in the Truth of God’s Holy Word and will. With such truly receptive hearts and minds, it is our great privilege, by Divine grace, to grow in grace and heavenly knowledge.

The Scriptures exhort us to “rightly” divide “the word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15), and it is a great day for all Truth seekers when they begin to read and meditate upon God’s Word, recognizing the time periods that are involved.

CONSECRATION

We are not to remain at the early condition of conversion, but are to truly become followers of Jesus, who said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” (Luke 9:23) In proportion as we exercise faith in God and his Word, and wholeheartedly seek to know him and his will for us, the eyes of our understanding become more and more enlightened. It is then that we fully consecrate ourselves to God, which is our “reasonable service.”—Rom. 12:1

Having entered the course of full consecration—nonconformity to this world, and a transforming to the kingdom requirements—we have a wonderful experience. We read, “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness [when he said, ‘Let

there be light: and there was light'—Gen. 1:3], hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—II Cor. 4:6

Their knowledge is completely beyond the comprehension of the spirit of man, or of the world. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—I Cor. 2:14

We learn, from the Scriptures, to sacrifice the interests of the flesh, and to develop the necessary Christlike character. God, now, is selecting and specially directing those who are willing and gladly desire to lay down their lives with Christ. These are going on from grace to grace; living not "after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Rom. 8:4

It is recorded, "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (II Tim. 3:12) However, the LORD's true people can reach that degree of development where they rejoice in the LORD despite all these experiences, while the desire and deeds of the flesh are being put to death. We know that for everything which we deny ourselves now, our Father gives us abundant compensation in our spiritual blessings and joys even here. Then we have all the unspeakable glories promised to his saints, awaiting us beyond the veil.

NEW MIND

It may be asked, how do those, whom God now recognizes as New Creatures, differ from what they

were when conformed to the world? What have they now that they did not possess previously? The answer is, they now have a 'new mind.' The newly developed mind and will is the great difference.

Our mind is transformed by the power of God's Spirit coming through the channel of Truth, the Holy Word. We now have the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, through the Word of Truth, to guide us in the way in which we should go. We are to mortify everything in us which is not fully endorsed by our new mind. (Col. 3:5) Everything that would hinder the growth of the New Creature must be deadened. Certain elements of the mortal body are to be destroyed, warred against at all times. Other qualities of the human body are to be utilized in the service of righteousness.

Our present privileged position is being in Christ; and 'if any man be in Christ,' he is not the same old creature, but a New Creature. We are being "transformed by the renewing" of our "mind." (Rom. 12:2) A new mind is being formed in us, "begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*) "Of his own will [God's will] begat he us with the word of truth."—James 1:18

There is a special spiritual "treasure" being developed in an "earthen" vessel, "that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (II Cor. 4:7), and the deeds of the body are to be put to death. We are to put off, according to the former course of life, that old man corrupted by deceitful desires, and to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."—Eph. 4:22-24

DEVELOPMENT

To each fully consecrated child of God, it can be rightly said, "You have placed yourself in the Lord's hands. You have asked him to help you to make your calling and election sure, and that you may be thoroughly fitted and prepared for the glorious heavenly inheritance which he has promised." Development is a vital necessity for the New Creature, so our powers are to be turned in the direction toward which we are to be trained, under the LORD's supervision.

If the grapevine, under the care of the husbandman, could reason and speak, it would probably say, "It is natural for me to develop an abundant supply of foliage and to throw forth branches and tendrils in every direction to support me." But the wise husbandman vigorously prunes off these superfluous branches and tendrils that dissipate the strength of the sap, that develop only wood and leaves, and that cause the vine to cling to proper supports. The husbandman seeks for fruit—rich, abundant fruit—and everything which would hinder this attainment must be sacrificed. The vine would tend downward. The husbandman trains it to grow upward. So does our heavenly husbandman train his spiritual vine, that we may bring forth abundant fruitage to his praise.

In the parable of the vine, Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away [there is not to be any dead wood, or fruitless branches, in the true vine]: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth [or cleanseth] it, that it may bring forth more fruit."—John 15:1,2

To have been accepted by the LORD as a New Creature in Christ some years in the past would seem, therefore, to imply a more or less regular growth in grace and heavenly knowledge, taking care to develop the required fruitage of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise our relationship to him would be forfeited.

Not only is this standing in Christ illustrated by growth in a fruitage of the Spirit, but also as the Apostle Peter wrote, "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:8-11

"If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8:13) In order to attain eternal life now held out to the faithful overcomers—"glory and honour and immortality" (Rom. 2:7)—we must conform ourselves to the instructions given us in the Holy Word. We are not able to do this in our own strength. This would be impossible. But our Heavenly Father has promised to work in us, while we work out our own salvation, and he is able to do for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."—Eph. 3:20

It would be improper to think that, having come to the present moment of time, our trials and difficulties are now all over. It may be that God will yet allow different trials and tests to bring us closer to himself, and to purge out remaining dross of the fallen human nature. In allowing all these tests and trials to come to us the LORD is supplying all our needs, furnishing us with the very conditions we

need to cleanse, purify, and develop the new mind, fitting us for the kingdom.

We need to become strong in faith. "Lord, Increase our faith," is our prayer. (Luke 17:5) And thus praying, we need to use the means which God has designed for the fulfilment of this prayer. If our prayer is sincere, we will use those means earnestly. We will fervently seek the LORD in prayer; search to know his Word; endeavor to obey it; seek and enjoy his service; and be diligent to put on all the graces of the Spirit. This being our attitude, we shall be strong in the faith. We are called to joint-heirship with Christ beyond the veil; and, to be prepared for such an exaltation, we must be overcomers.

OBLIGATIONS

We now have obligations. The highest of all is to our Heavenly Father, and to his dear Son. We realize that all the wondrous Divine blessings are "of" the Father, and "by" the Son. (I Cor. 8:6) "We love him [God], because he first loved us" (I John 4:19), and we are to love him supremely. To do this we need to understand his character, and the great principles that are the foundation of his holy and righteous kingdom. If we love God, we are loving and appreciating those Divine principles.

Concerning Truth, and our Father's righteous character, we find that the world is a dark place. Our Father's character is blasphemed, and God-dishonoring creedal teachings are proclaimed, even by those who profess to be his children. If, therefore, we have love for God, we should be active and zealous for him, proclaiming the true Gospel, and

rejoicing in a special sense as the Truth reaches those who have hearing ears, and are hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

At the present time we, as “ambassadors for Christ” (II Cor. 5:20), have opportunities as never before, of showing our love to God by shining “as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life.” (Phil. 2:15,16) When we are paying our obligations to our Father we, as New Creatures, are striving, as far as we can in these ‘earthen vessels,’ to be in line with God’s Spirit and character, and all the principles underlying his great name. In doing this, we shall honor and glorify our Father and his beloved Son. As New Creatures, every property of our body should be under the control of the new mind. This is our present mission. It is of vital importance.

Our development into the likeness of Christ includes doing “good unto all men,” as we have opportunity, but “especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” (Gal. 6:10) Our human body was once a slave to sin, and to the things of this world, but now we are to say, “This body belongs to the LORD; I must control it to his glory. I am determined to increase day by day my power over this body, that I may use it more and more fully in the service of my Master.”

It is our desire to pass on the Truth to others, and we learn to do this humbly, yet fearlessly, and in love. It has been well said that expression deepens impression. Whoever appreciates and speaks forth the glorious truths of the Divine plan, in love, will receive a blessing in his own heart and mind. In helping others, he will himself be helped. “He that watereth shall be watered also himself.”—Prov. 11:25

SPIRIT BIRTH

The beginning, development, and birth of the New Creature is likened to the beginning, and progress, of human life. As in the one case there is a begetting and later a birth, so also in the other. The consecrated are begotten by the Holy Spirit through the Word of Truth. Thereafter, they find themselves thinking and acting as the new, or transformed, mind prompts, even to the crucifying of their human desires. To these embryo New Creatures, old things—human desires, hopes, plans, ambitions—pass away, and all things become new. The New Creature continues to grow and develop as the human nature is crucified.

These two processes continue simultaneously from the time of consecration until the actual death of the human, and the birth of the spiritual takes place. Meanwhile, the Spirit of God quickens our mortal bodies enabling us to render acceptable service while the flesh is being sacrificed, and, while we are waiting for our new, or heavenly, bodies which will be adapted in all respects to our new spiritual minds. Then we will be equipped to participate in the glorious kingdom work of the millennium, that glorious restitution work “spoken by the mouth of all his [God’s] holy prophets.”—Acts 3:21

Finish Lord, thy New Creation;
Pure and spotless let us be;
Show us all thy great salvation—
Thine shall all the glory be.
Changed from glory into glory,
Till we see thine own dear face;
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

—*Hymns of Dawn* ■

General Convention Bulletin

July 17-22, 2004—Orange, California

THE 2004 GENERAL CONVENTION will be held at a new venue, on the campus of Chapman University in Orange, California. Rooms sharing a bathroom with one other room are available. Additionally, rooms with private bathrooms are available at a somewhat higher price. All rooms are air conditioned. Details of all room and meal prices can be found on the registration form following this announcement.

The convention theme text is taken from the words of Luke 21:28, “When these things are beginning to occur, raise yourselves, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance is drawing near.” (*Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*) There will be a discourse given on this timely subject.

In addition to the theme text discourse, a number of other special meetings will highlight the convention program in 2004. There will be a panel discussion on the topic “Israel’s Role in the Kingdom.” A symposium of two brethren will consider the subjects “Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels” and “Jesus in John’s Gospel.” Special discourse topics will be assigned using subjects of current interest. In addition, a public meeting is planned for the convention.

The cost of room and meals for those five years old, or younger, will be paid by the convention.

Once again 50% of the cost of those from ages six through seventeen will be refunded if the young person attends at least 75% of the studies for his, or her, age group. This subsidy does not cover meals paid for at the door.

The Orange County Airport (code is SNA-Santa Ana) is the closest to Chapman University. Local brethren will provide frequent shuttle service between that airport and the college as needed. Those who fly into other airports might have a longer wait before a commercial service, paid by the convention treasury, takes them to Chapman.

	Ages 18 & up	13-17†	6-12†
Breakfast	\$7.00	\$6.00	\$5.00
Lunch	8.00	7.00	6.00
Dinner	10.00	9.00	8.00
Total, three meals	<u>\$25.00</u>	<u>\$22.00</u>	<u>\$19.00</u>
Lodging (per night)			
dbl occ (private bath)	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00
dbl occ (shared bath)	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$35.00
single occ (private bath)	\$70.00	n/a	n/a
single occ (shared bath)	\$60.00	n/a	n/a
PKG: 7 nights, 18 meals			
dbl occ (private bath)	\$345*	\$325*	\$310*
dbl occ (shared bath)	\$295*	\$275*	\$260*
single occ (private bath)	\$495*	n/a	n/a
single occ (shared bath)	\$395*	n/a	n/a
* Deduct \$25 if no breakfasts.			
† 50% of these costs will be refunded if the young person attends 75% of the studies for his or her age group.			

General Convention Registration

1425 Lachman Lane — Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

E-mail: Nekora@aol.com (310) 454-5248

	Brkfst	Lunch	Dinner	Bed
Fri., July 16, 2004				
Saturday, 17th				
Sunday, 18th				
Monday, 19th				
Tuesday, 20th				
Wednesday, 21st				
Thursday, 22nd				

Check for package: 7 nights, all 18 meals ☐
or 7 nights, 12 meals (no breakfasts) ☐
 (Dinner Friday, July 18 is at additional cost)

Check: ☐ private bath **or** ☐ shared bath
☐ double occupancy ☐ single occupancy

Names and ecclesia name (age if under 18)

Address:

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TALKING THINGS OVER

Statistical Report

For the year ended September 30, 2003

WE CONTINUED TO budget expenditures so that we would spend approximately 20% of our reserves. In the fiscal year 2003 the same level of witnessing expenditures were retained as in 2002 and it was estimated that we dip into our reserves by 18%. Consequently, witnessing expenses ran 104% of budget this year, while operating expenses were 73%.

Contributions were only 73% of that estimated and we would have had to dip into our reserves by 25.7%. A large bequest was received which enabled us to finish the year by dipping only into the reserves by 7%. The figures are tabulated below:

Income	Receipts	Expenditures
All revenue other than bequests	\$275,625	
Expenses		
Radio (domestic and foreign)		\$233,302
TV (includes spots and recordings)		216,994
Other Media and Editorial		13,384
Pilgrim Service (domestic and foreign)		30,698
Other Foreign Support Work		26,755
Shop Operating Expense		109,813
House Operating Expense		55,140
Shipping and Mailing		90,431
Outside Printing		81,257
Totals before Bequests	275,625	857,774
Loss before Bequests	(582,149)	
Bequests	414,204	
Loss after Bequests	(167,945)	

A new Heidelberg Digimaster (Print-On-Demand) machine was obtained in the new fiscal year starting September 30, 2003. The machine would permit *The Dawn* to be printed with less manpower required. Plans were considered to send it to Orlando where brethren could provide twenty-eight part time workers, the equivalent of over five full time workers. There are six regular full time workers at the Dawn and help is received most of the year from a seventh worker.

The Dawn continues to struggle with a manpower shortage, especially in the shop. We are indebted to the offsite help we receive. Work is being done in Orlando, Los Angeles, New Haven, Detroit, Chicago, and other locations around the country. Additionally, several brethren have spent weeks working full time at the Dawn.

The message of Truth continues to be spread everywhere we can in the world, and by various means. We solicit the prayers of the brethren that we may, by the Lord's grace, continue to spread the message of God's Holy Word. ■

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—Psalm 90:12

The Christian, in numbering his days, does not do so with a doleful or disconsolate sentiment, although he does so with sobriety. He counts the days as they go as so many blessings, so many privileges, so many opportunities to "show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light," to render assistance to others in the pilgrim journey, and to develop in himself more and more of the character pleasing in the sight of God.

—Daily Heavenly Manna, January 6

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The speakers listed below, in cooperation with the Dawn, are invited by individual classes or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

C. Chandler

Phoenix, AZ January 1,2,3,4

L. Post

Phoenix, AZ January 1,2,3,4



CONVENTIONS

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

PHOENIX NEW YEAR'S CONVENTION, January 1,2,3,4—Wyndam Garden Hotel, 427 N. 44th Street. Contact Janell Porcolab, P.O. Box 5432, Sun City West, AZ 85376. Phone: (623) 362-2056

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA CONVENTION, January 17,18—Cape Coral Masonic Temple, 244 Santa Barbara Blvd. Contact Ed Futchkar, 3460 North Key Drive, #306E, North Fort Myers, FL 33903. Phone (941) 997-3008

SACRAMENTO CONVENTION, February 13,14,15—Quality Inn, 2600 Auburn Blvd. For reservations, contact Donna Burke, 10771 Wood Reed Court, Nevada City, CA 95959. Phone: (530) 265-8252

ROCKLAND BIBLE STUDENTS ANNUAL CONVENTION, February 22—Comfort Inn, Nanuet, NY. Contact Mrs. Russell Shallieu, 1041 Johnston Drive, Watchung, NJ 07069.

FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 6,7,8—Clarion Hotel, Orlando International Airport, 3835 McCoy Road, Orlando, FL. For rooms, contact the hotel at (407) 859-2711 or (888) 266-2711. Mention “Florida Bible Students Group” for special rate. Deadline for special rate is February 27. For other information, contact Michael J. Balko, 321 Kentia Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 339-7580

NEW ORLEANS CONVENTION, March 8,9—Beachfront Holiday Inn, Gulfport, MS. Contact Mrs. Lezlie Costelli, 1505 18th Avenue, Gulfport, MS 39501. Phone: (228) 868-2464

NEW YORK SPRING CONVENTION, March 14—Wellesley Inn (formerly Ramada Inn), Two Bridges Road & Exit 52, Route 80, Fairfield, NJ. Contact Ann Truth Post. Phone: (845) 634-5876

FRESNO CONVENTION, March 19,20,21—Picadilly University Hotel, Cedar at Shaw Avenue. Contact Virginia Wilson, 2103 N. Price Avenue, #112, Fresno, CA 93703. Phone: (559) 255-2241

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, March 26,27,28—Macomb Community College, 14500 12-Mile Road, Warren, MI. Contact Norman Zendler, 20 Devonshire, Pleasant Ridge, MI 48069. Phone: (248) 399-8843

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 17-22—See “General Convention Bulletin,” pages 58-60, this issue.

BIBLE STUDENTS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 8-13—Polanica Zdroj, Poland. Contact Tom Machacek, 7222 E. 106th Avenue, Crown Point, IN 46307. Phone: (219) 662-8107