

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

"WITH US IS
THE LORD
OUR GOD
TO HELP."

II Chronicles 32:8

June • 1956

this month in the DAWN

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The "Frank and Ernest" topics are scheduled for the Mutual Network, and for individual stations in the United States and Canada. The network station in Washington, D. C., uses the programs one week later than the above schedule.

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A Special Offer

We are closing out the library edition of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" at the special price of fifty cents each—in any quantity. When ordered by class secretaries or stockkeepers the usual discounts will apply. This book makes an excellent gift, and we trust that many will take advantage of this reduced price. This library edition will not be republished. The pocket edition in paper and cloth bindings will be the standard edition, as this edition matches the other volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures."

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DAWN PUBLICATIONS

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NEW JERSEY

Reincarnation vs. Resurrection

"Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men."
—Psalm 90:3

THREE-FOURTHS of the earth's population believe that the dead are reborn to life on earth, either as human beings or in the form of one or another of the lower animals. The theory of rebirth as humans is known as reincarnation, while the teaching that humans return in the form of one or another of the lower animals is designated transmigration.* Belief in reincarnation and in transmigration was, until quite recently, confined largely to non-Christian lands, practically all heathen religionists adhering to either one or the other of these theories.

Now, however, the reincarnation doctrine is rapidly gaining adherents among professed Christians. Thousands are openly confessing it, while probably millions in non-heathen countries are uncertain about it, due largely to the upsurge of interest created by the practice of hypnotists, who claim that under hypnotic spells many

persons have remembered one or more of their former lives as humans, and have presented many details concerning them.

What amounts to a wave of popular interest in this subject has been created by the book entitled, "The Search for Bridey Murphy." According to the story, Bridey Murphy is a woman who died in Ireland about the middle of the nineteenth century, and has been born again, and is now Ruth Simmons, and lives in the United States, but in her "subconscious" mind she is still actually Bridey Murphy, passing through another earth-life cycle.

What seem to be convincing proofs are offered to support the claim that the dead do return to earth by means of rebirth. In the case of Bridey Murphy, for example, it is claimed that much which Ruth Simmons related concerning this person who died in Ireland so long ago has been checked and found true—although there are also a number of discrepancies. These partial "proofs" seem very

*NOTE:—See the article, "The Great Deception," beginning on page 25.

convincing to many, while others have explanations to offer as to how, under a hypnotic spell, she could describe so many things associated with the life of the former Bridey Murphy. Others claim that it is a farce.

Obviously, hypnotism is a practice which very readily lends itself to trickery. It is but natural to ask how much collusion is there between the hypnotist and the subject? How much of that which is described under a hypnotic spell actually entered the subject's mind during the present lifetime? It is now claimed by researchers that Ruth Simmons had Irish relatives. Through family folklore or otherwise, these could have known much about Bridey Murphy, if such a person had ever lived, and could have related many interesting stories concerning her to Ruth Simmons.

Research along these lines finds explanations for much that might seem supernatural. The same is true with respect to the work of spiritualists, who claim, not that the spirits of the dead are reborn as humans, but that they are able to contact and to converse with them. This also is accomplished by a form of hypnotism, the main difference being that the spiritualist practitioner hypnotizes himself instead of the subject who wishes to make contact with a dead friend. Here, also, there is much room for fraud. Houdini, the late world-famous magician, claimed he could duplicate any and all evidences of talking with the dead that spir-

itualists could produce, thus proving, as he believed, that there is nothing at all supernatural about spiritualism.

However, while we do not doubt that there is much quackery connected with both hypnotism and spiritualism, it cannot all be explained from this standpoint. There are definite evidences of the supernatural in connection with both of these practices. But in neither case are these practitioners aware of the powers with which they are dealing. If they were, they would be horror stricken, and so frightened that they would give up their practices at once.

Hypnotism Wrong

In the first place, the basic principle of hypnotism is contrary to normal human experience, and is therefore wrong. The misuse of any normal function of the human body is wrong, and this is especially true of the mind. Man was created in the image of God and given the ability to think, to reason, to know right from wrong. God invites humans to reason with him, saying, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." —Isa. 1:18

But the subject who gives over his mind to a hypnotist, and allows himself to be "put under," surrenders his God-given ability to reason. The normal manner in which thoughts are registered upon the brain is through the five senses —sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. All the nerves and cells of the body, including those of the

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brain, were created and correlated by the master mind of the Creator to build up a thought bank which, as it develops and expands through the years from infancy on, constitutes the mental background of one's personality.

To surrender control of this mind, even temporarily, is to discount the value of all that our five senses have taught us through the years of life. It is as though an electronic engineer had designed and constructed an extremely complicated and sensitive apparatus—such as electronic computers are today—and, after it was built and functioning satisfactorily, decided he could learn more about electronics by simply short-circuiting his machine and destroying all the functions which he had so carefully designed.

To use this figure of speech, a hypnotist "short-circuits" the brain of his subject, at least to the extent of temporarily destroying its normal function. Then, in an abnormal manner, and contrary to the way God designed, he endeavors to plant new thoughts in the subject's brain, or else to extract thoughts therefrom which cannot be expressed while the brain is functioning normally. Reason alone tells us that this is malpractice. It is an abuse of the brain, man's most priceless possession, and it is just as wrong, if not more so, than the abuse of any other organ of the body.

Thousands of hypnotists are practicing every day, and occasionally one of them produces a re-

markable development, such as the Bridey Murphy case. And while there is a natural explanation for much which the hypnotists accomplish, this is not always the case. The only satisfactory explanation of much which they report is the one given in the Bible, which is that the mind of the subject, rendered inactive and passive, succumbs to the control of outside powers.

These outside powers are not, however, the "spirits" of the departed dead, as the spiritualists claim. Nor are they the thought waves, or impressions, of a former existence expressing themselves through what, in these days, is so popularly called the "subconscious mind." How do we know this? Simply because the straightforward testimony of the Bible is that the **dead are dead**. They cannot return via the reincarnation route, neither can they speak to those who are left behind, either through a spiritualist, or otherwise.

But Satan told mother Eve she **would not die**, and one of his great endeavors ever since has been to prove that "there is no death." Spiritualism and reincarnation are but a part of his "bag of tricks" for use in accomplishing this purpose. Satan has allies in this work of deception. The Bible reveals that in the great creative works of God there is a plane of life higher than the human—many planes, in fact. Man, we are told, was "made a little lower than the angels."—Heb. 2:7

Much is said in the Bible about

the angels. They are not, however, the spirits of the departed dead as many suppose them to be, but the messengers, or servants, of the Creator on a plane of spirit existence invisible to man. The Bible reveals that at the time of the Flood many of these angels—the record does not indicate how many—turned from obedience to God and allied themselves with Satan, the Devil. Thus Jesus spoke of “the Devil and his angels.”—Matt. 25:41

They are referred to in Genesis 6:1,2, as the “sons of God,” and their sin described. Jude refers to them as the “angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation.” (vs. 6) Jude also explains that these fallen angels are now restrained “under darkness”—prevented, that is, from working openly, as they did when they were in the service of God. Peter refers to them as being restrained in “chains of darkness.” He also speaks of these fallen angels as “spirits in prison,” and explains that their disobedience occurred “when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah.”—II Pet. 2:4; I Pet. 3:19, 20

At the time of Jesus' first advent, these fallen angels, or devils—also called demons—were very active invading and taking possession of human minds. Many of Jesus' miracles consisted of casting out these demons, or devils. Evidently then, as now, there were those who yielded their minds to occult influences, and these fallen angels were quick to take control.

It is quite possible that today some of the increasing number of insanity cases could be accounted for in this way. But it seems that now the master mind of Satan has devised a better, a more subtle and refined way to take possession of human minds by the aid of these fallen angels. His main purpose in doing it is to “prove” that his first great lie was really the truth, that no one really dies.

Unlike man, these disobedient angels were not at once sentenced to death. As the Scriptures indicate, they have been permitted to continue to live, even though under restraint. Having had a continued existence throughout the centuries, they would be acquainted with the “case history” of any individual they might choose. They could easily know much that Bridey Murphy did, or even thought.

So, when Ruth Simmons surrendered control of her mind to the hypnotist, the fallen angels could take possession and cause her to repeat—as it is claimed she did—many of the details in the life of the former Bridey Murphy. When those details are checked, and found to be true insofar as the names of places and people are concerned, the conclusion is at once reached that Bridey Murphy did not actually die, that while her body died, her real personality continued to live, and has now been reborn in the body of Ruth Simmons.

The same is true in the case of those who think they have con-

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versed with friends who have died. The information received from such messages is so true to facts known only to the one receiving the message and the one who died, that the conclusion is readily reached that the dead must be able to talk with the living. Little do the bereaved ones receiving these messages realize that the information which to them proves that their beloved dead are not really dead at all has been secured right from their own minds by the fallen angels. Our minds have recorded in them even the tone of voice of others. We answer a telephone, and if it is an acquaintance calling, we do not have to ask, "Who is speaking?" We instantly recognize the voice. The fallen angels are able to tap the minds of their victims, and reproduce voice and other characteristics which, to the unsuspecting, prove that the dead are not really dead, but are alive, and able to converse with their friends.

And this, even as with the claimed proofs of reincarnation, is the real purpose behind these satanic practices. The Devil said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die," and throughout all the centuries since he has been using many fraudulent and "cunning devices" in his effort to prove that it was God who lied when he said, "Thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 3:4; 2:17) Therefore let us not be surprised if now, in the close of the age, Satan's efforts along this line become more widespread, and receive a more popular acceptance.

That "Subconscious Mind"

Hypnotists, psychiatrists, and others, have much to say about the subconscious mind. No one knows that there is such a thing as a subconscious mind until it is probed into by a psychiatrist, or made to reveal its secrets by a hypnotist. A newborn infant has no mind at all. It has a complete little brain structure, but not a single thought is registered therein. Soon, however, through sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch, impressions begin to be conveyed to that little brain, through the delicate and marvelously constructed nerve system which connects the brain with the body's "microphones"—its ears, eyes, tongue, etc.

The little brain is at first too tender to retain for long the impressions which are made upon it, so that few can remember, or "play back," thoughts that were registered during the first two or three years of life. But from then on, the impressions begin to remain. From about ten years old and onward, very little that has made an impression is actually "forgotten." A person cannot instantly recall everything that is registered in his brain, but some circumstance or other will "bring to mind" from time to time thoughts of the past which an individual did not realize were in his mind at all until the "play-back needle" of circumstance entered that particular groove.

As a rule, when one passes "middle age" new thoughts are not so readily retained. Things which

happened years previously are remembered, but those of yesterday often are forgotten. This is simply due to the aging brain being no longer so readily susceptible to new thought impressions. It is a physical change, even as graying hair.

What, then, is the "subconscious mind"? Hypnotists practice what they call "age regression," meaning that under a hypnotic spell they induce their subjects to reveal their otherwise forgotten thoughts of previous years, taking them back in many cases, as they claim, to a very tender age. But what can they learn from this except the immature thoughts of a mere infant or, a little better, an adolescent mind?

We grant the possibility that some unhappy experience of the past may have a bearing on present thinking, and perhaps without the individual realizing it. Probably through proper explanation and advice a person might be helped over the difficulties in life that to some extent arise out of past experiences. But the subconscious mind usually referred to by mind healers of various sorts means much more than this. The implication of this expression usually is that the thing which really controls an individual is a mysterious something which can be discovered only by those who use one method or another to probe below the surface of normal thinking.

Actually, and normally, there is not a single thought recorded in the human brain except through

the five senses. Why, then, all the talk about the "subconscious"? We think the answer to this question is contained in the last paragraph of the book, "The Search for Bridey Murphy." In addition to the Bridey Murphy case itself, Morey Bernstein discusses at length various aspects of so-called newly discovered powers of the mind, which, as he forecasts, will shortly revolutionize life on the earth. Summing it up he says:

"There is no telling how far . . . research will lead us. The proof that there is something extraphysical, or spiritual, in human personality has momentous implications. Eventually the laboratory will answer even that all time prize winner among questions: Does any part of a human being survive the death of the physical body? Already research in extrasensory perception [through hypnotism, and otherwise] has indicated, in its freedom from the effects of time and space, the plausibility of some sort of survival. And remember that this relatively new science has barely begun."

Here is the reason for it all! The experiments with hypnotism and probing into the "subconscious" minds of men and women are designed by Satan to confirm the conclusion that "there is no death." The hypnotist who "age regresses" a subject gets back to the infant mind, and finds evidence of understanding that an infant does not ordinarily possess, concluding that another personality must have taken possession.

And he is right. But it is not the personality of a former human who did not die, as the doctor and the undertaker said. Rather, it is one or more of the fallen angels

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that talks back to the hypnotist for the purpose of deceiving him into believing that the dead are not really dead. And we believe that this danger lurks in all endeavors to probe into the so-called subconscious.

The Resurrection

Death is a terrible enemy, and the world welcomes any apparent proof that it is not what it seems to be. But how much better it is to accept the truth of God's Word which asserts that death is the divine penalty for sin, and that it is **real**—that the "dead know not anything," hence cannot talk to the living, nor enter the bodies of infants. Accepting the truth with respect to death, then we are prepared for the comforting assurances of the Bible that divine power will be utilized to restore the dead to life.

If the theory of reincarnation be true, how meaningless would be the Bible's promises of a resurrection. And how confusing, for which of the many personalities would be restored? Besides, there could not be a resurrection of the dead, if no one is dead. Our text sets forth God's truth on the subject. Because of sin the human race was turned to "destruction." Adam was the original sinner—"By man came death." But the love of God through Christ has provided release from that condemnation. Thus through the man Christ Jesus there will be an awakening of the dead, or as Paul wrote, "By man came also the res-

urrection of the dead."—I Cor. 15: 21

Thus will be fulfilled the assurance of our text that the Lord will say to the dead world, "Return [from death] ye children of men." This is God's way for the dead to return. And when divine power is exercised to accomplish this loving purpose of the Creator, no one will have to go into a trance in order to talk with those who have been restored to life. Nor will those thus restored have to communicate with their friends through the hypnotized brain of another. Thank God for this definite assurance of life beyond the grave!

The Dead Will Return

The widespread interest in reincarnation and other no-death theories is due to man's great desire to live. God created man to live. He is a dying creature only because he transgressed the divine law. As our text declares, man was turned to "destruction." But we are assured that the Lord will ultimately say, "Return, ye children of men."

Thus, the dead will return, not by reincarnation, but in the resurrection, and by the direct exercise of miracle-working power. Isaiah 35:10 reads, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." The dead will not return in the resurrection because this is a normal cycle in human experience; they will return because they have

been "ransomed." The "destruction" to which man was turned because of sin would have been eternal, but for the grace of God which provided redemption through Christ.

In I Timothy 2:3-6 the Apostle Paul explains that it is God's will for all the dead to be "saved," or awakened from the sleep of death, in order that they might receive a knowledge of the truth. The great truth they are then to learn is, as Paul explains, the fact that "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all." The vast majority have died without a knowledge of the "ransom for all," but when awakened from death this information is to be "testified" to them, the apostle explains.

Isaiah says that when the "ransomed of the Lord" return they will "come to Zion with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads." "Zion" is one of the Bible's symbols of the messianic kingdom, particularly its spiritual phase, made up of the glorified Jesus and his body members, the church—those who live and reign with him a thousand years. (Rev. 14:1; 20:4; Obad. 21) The "ransomed of the Lord" will "come" to these in the sense of recognizing the authority of the kingdom. By their acceptance of divine grace through the "ransom," and by their obedience to the kingdom agencies then in control, "they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." What a glorious hope for the return of the dead is thus held out to us in the Word of God!



IF YOU HAVE A TAPE RECORDER we will be glad to send you, on loan, a half hour recording of an interview on the subject of reincarnation which was broadcast over Radio Station WOR. In this recording "Frank" is interviewed by one of the broadcasting staff of WOR.

LESSON FOR JUNE 3

The Church in Europe

GOLDEN TEXT: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

—1 Corinthians 1:23, 24

ACTS 16:6-10; 18:5-11

NONE of the important points to be observed in this lesson is the fact that the Lord's providences directed the Apostle Paul and his co-workers to take the Gospel into Europe, and not to limit their ministry to Asia; that is, the Roman province by this name. Since it was by God's direction, there is indicated a measure of selection, of choice, as to whom he has given the opportunity to become disciples of Christ.

This does not imply, however, that God had forgotten the people of Asia. Nor does it mean that he had less love for them. Indeed, later, a fruitful work was conducted in this Roman province. The divine plan reveals that the work of this age has not been to convert the whole world. Rather, it has been merely to take out from the world a people to be associated with Christ in the glory of his kingdom, to live and reign with him for the blessing of the remainder of the human race.

Our Golden Text indicates that there is a further selection on God's

part. Although he directed that the Gospel should be taken into Europe, and circulated there more freely than in Asia, it was not his will that all Europeans should become disciples of Christ. Paul wrote that the Gospel of Christ was to the Jews a "stumbling-block," and to the Greeks and other non-Jews, "foolishness." He explains that it is only those who are "called" who can see in the Gospel "the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

This explains what every true Christian knows to be true; namely, that when the Gospel is publicly proclaimed it is only one here and there who responds in full belief and devotion. Jesus said that no one could come to him unless drawn by the Father. It is those who are "called of God" who are also "drawn" by him, and these are the only ones who give lasting heed to the message.

In a letter to the brethren in Corinth Paul explains this from a slightly different standpoint, but meaning the same thing. He said that some "plant" the seeds of

truth, others "water," but it is God who gives the "increase." (I Cor. 3:6) This is an important and also encouraging thought to keep in mind in connection with all our efforts to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom. If we lose sight of this truth we might be tempted to use methods not approved by the Lord in order to make converts, feeling that as many as possible must be brought into the fold. It is encouraging, because no matter how many or how few respond to our efforts we know that it is the Lord's will; for his arm is not shortened and he is abundantly able to draw to Christ and to himself all whom he wishes. He knows how and is able to give the "increase." That is not our responsibility.

Millions in the world today know little or nothing about the Bible. On the other hand, there are certain passages and expressions in the Bible that are well known by many. In our lesson today we have one of these. It is, "Come over into Macedonia and help us"—or, the "Macedonian call," as it is frequently styled. Even today a call for help from people of a neighboring community or nation is not infrequently spoken of as a "Macedonian call."

Paul received this call in a vision at night. This was at Troas. It was this call that induced him and his fellow-laborers to go into Macedonia, for it was recognized that the Lord was calling them to "preach the Gospel unto them." Their first Gospel work in Mace-

QUESTIONS

Why did the Gospel of Christ spread into Europe more than into Asia? Does this mean that God loved the Europeans more than the Asiatics?

In our Golden Text what does Paul mean by the expression, "them which are called"?

What is the "Macedonian call"?

Why did God assure Paul of his protection when the work was progressing so favorably in Corinth?

donia was done in and about Philippi, where they abode "certain days." (vss. 11, 12) It was here that Lydia, the "seller of purple" accepted the Gospel, and the Philippian church was organized in her home.—vss. 13-15

Paul remained longer in Corinth—a year and six months. He took up his abode with "Justus, one that worshiped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue." "Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house." This was very encouraging, for it led to the conversion of many in Corinth. The Lord spoke to Paul in a vision, saying, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city."

It frequently happened in those early days of the Christian era that the popularity of the message or the messenger led to persecution, but Paul was assured of divine watchcare and protection. In Corinth the Lord had "much people," while in some places only a few. But he was glad to continue laboring where the Lord directed.

The Gospel Overcomes Paganism

GOLDEN TEXT: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."
—Ephesians 5:8

ACTS 19:8-10, 18-20, 23-27

THE title of today's lesson could be misleading. For a short time in Ephesus, and in the minds and hearts of a limited number of Ephesians, the Gospel of Christ was accepted in place of paganism, but paganism as such throughout the world has not been overcome by the preaching of the Gospel. It was not intended by God that throughout the present age the preaching of the Gospel would overcome paganism, and establish in its place the true teachings of Christianity. For that reason paganism and all the other heathen "isms" still flourish, and in many aspects the professed churches of Christ are today more pagan than Christian.

But this does not mean that God's plan has failed. As we read in Acts 15:14, the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles was designed by God merely to "take out of them a people for his name." This was the object of Paul's work in Ephesus. First he labored particularly among his own people, the Jews. "He went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God."

By this time the situation clarified itself in the sense that while some accepted the Gospel and were enthusiastic about it, "divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude." Then Paul separated from the crowd, taking the believers with him. Then he began to "dispute daily in the school of one Tyrannus." He continued in this school for two years.

While the record does not clearly indicate, the probability is that Paul merely engaged the school room as a meeting place during hours it was not used by Tyrannus. It does not seem likely that Tyrannus would permit his school to be interrupted by religious discussions over a period of two years.

The word "dispute" used in the text to describe Paul's activity in the school room is not a good translation. The thought of the Greek word which it translates is to discuss thoroughly, to reason with. Using the school room of Tyrannus, it would seem that Paul conducted a school of his own, a course of instruction in the Gospel of Christ, making welcome all who wished to attend and to ask questions.

QUESTIONS

Has it been God's plan that the preaching of the Gospel during the present age was to supplant all forms of false religion?

Where did Paul first preach the Gospel in Ephesus?

In what manner did Paul "dispute" in the school of Tyrannus?

How do we know that while Paul's work in Ephesus was successful, the city as a whole was not converted?

To whom in Ephesus did Paul write his "Epistle to the Ephesians"?

EPHESIANS 5:15-18

PAUL'S letter to the Ephesians was neither to the Jews nor pagans at Ephesus, but "to the saints, . . . and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." With Paul it was not a case of merely witnessing the Gospel, but wherever there were believers he did his best to follow up and nurture the interest. His letter to the Ephesian saints was written to them from Rome, while he was a prisoner. He remembered these believers, and did his best to serve them, even though under great difficulty.

In the few verses assigned for our lesson he admonishes them to "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." They were not to look to old methods of finding exhilaration, but, being emptied of self, they were to seek to be "filled with the Spirit"—the Spirit or power of God. They were to put their trust in the Lord, and find their joy in serving him.

The Lord richly blessed this effort, "so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." The word "Asia," as used here, denotes the Roman province of Asia, which, comparatively speaking, was a small section of country, and in the two years Paul's discussions were continued in the school room of Tyrannus all in this little segment of the Roman Empire received a witness to the truth.

The believing pagans "confessed, and showed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them." Verses 13 to 17 reveal that "certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists," undertook to use the name of Jesus in their work. This turned into a disaster for them, and fear fell on many Jews, and also Greeks, and it was following this that the believers brought their books to be burned.

It was evidently quite a demonstration. The value of the books which were burned was "fifty thousand pieces of silver, so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." After this, and while Paul was preparing to leave Ephesus, "Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana," incited a mob against Paul and his companions. They escaped, and no one was harmed, but it reveals that while many had believed, paganism had not been stamped out in Ephesus—it was merely that a people had been called out for the Lord's name.

Ambassador in Bonds

GOLDEN TEXT: "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

—II Timothy 1:12

ACTS 26:2-8, 19-23

THE record of Paul's appearance and defense before Agrippa and Festus never loses its luster. It is one of the most stirring narratives of the Bible. When it was over, Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar." (Acts 26:32) Paul, a Roman citizen, and a lawyer, knew this as well as they, which means that his "defense" was not an attempt to gain his liberty, but to bear witness to the truth.

Naturally, it had to be in the guise of a defense, otherwise he would have had no opportunity to be heard. Through Ananias Paul had been informed by the Lord that he was to bear Christ's name before "kings," and now he recognized that he was having one of these opportunities. (Acts 9:15) This would serve to strengthen his faith, being a witness of the Spirit that the Lord was directing his course.

In opening his defense Paul said, "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee

touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews." He was "happy" about this, for he knew that in answering the charges of his Jewish enemies against him he would be able to give the king a good witness for the truth. Paul believed in using every legitimate method possible in presenting the Gospel, and said to King Agrippa, "I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews." This was not flattery, for it was true, and the fact that Paul acknowledged this would certainly increase his chances of being favorably heard.

Then Paul testified concerning his former standing among the Jews as a Pharisee. The Pharisees professed to believe the promises of God as recorded in the Old Testament, but now, he explained to Agrippa, he was being accused by the Jews for no other reason than that he believed these promises—believed them, that is, as they were beginning to be fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus. In his witness before Felix, Paul also preached the resurrection of the dead—of all the dead, that is, "both of the just and of unjust."—Acts 24:14, 15

To Agrippa, Paul explained somewhat the order of the resurrection, that "Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead." (vs. 23; I Cor. 15:20-23) This, of course, as he explains, was his message to the Jews, and it was for this that they hated him.

Except for the sect of the Sadducees, the Jews believed in the resurrection of the dead. They would not have been particularly disturbed had he preached the resurrection as they had been accustomed to hearing it. What they violently objected to was the apostle's teaching that Christ was the first to rise from the dead, and that the remainder of mankind would be raised from the dead by him. See Acts 3:26 and 4:1, 2 as examples of their animosity toward Peter for the same reason.

Paul had informed Agrippa that he believed him to be an understanding man, which gave more weight to his question, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (vs. 8) The mind that reverences God, and realizes to some extent his mighty power, has little difficulty in believing the many promises of the Bible that the dead will be restored to life. Later in the hearing, Agrippa said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." This was in answer to Paul's question, "Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." Evidently, however, Agrippa could not quite believe. It probably did seem "in-

QUESTIONS

Was Paul hopeful of gaining his freedom by his defense before Agrippa?

What great doctrine of the Bible did Paul stress in his speech to Agrippa?

Since the Jews believed in the resurrection of the dead, why did they oppose Paul for preaching it?

How do we know that the true followers of Jesus participate in the foretold sufferings of Christ?

credible" to him that God should raise the dead.

Christianity alone, of all the religions of the world, teaches that there shall be a resurrection of the dead. Christianity alone teaches the need for a resurrection, for all other religions hold that no one really dies, that "there is no death." Obviously, if no one is dead, there could be no resurrection of the dead. The resurrection, therefore, is the very essence of the Gospel, the good news that centers in Jesus, the Redeemer and Savior.

Paul explained to Agrippa that the prophets had foretold both the suffering and death of Jesus, as well as his resurrection. (vs. 23) Agrippa was not a believer, so Paul did not explain to him that these prophetic references to Jesus' suffering were having a larger fulfillment in the suffering of Jesus' followers, the members of his mystical body. The Apostle Peter calls attention to this great truth in his first epistle. See chapter 1:10, 11, and chapter 2:20, 23. Paul wrote that if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him.—II Tim. 2:11, 12

The Continuing Mission of the Church

GOLDEN TEXT: "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."
—Matthew 28:19, 20

ACTS 28:16, 23-31

WHEN Jesus instructed his disciples to "teach all nations" it was not with the expectation that everyone in all nations would become his footstep followers. This command was to be understood merely as an enlargement of his previous commission when, in sending them out into the ministry he said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 10:5, 6

This restriction was not to remain. Beginning at "Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria" they now were to witness for Jesus "unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) The purpose of this witness to all nations was to "take out" from the world "a people for his name." Because of the great falling away from the true faith of the Gospel which occurred after the death of the apostles, the apostate followers of Jesus joined hands with the civil authorities, and throughout the countries of Europe a distortion of Christianity was made the religion of the state. But this did not make them Christian nations.

Paul clearly understood that the

Lord did not expect him to convert whole nations. He was happy to bear witness to the truth under all circumstances, but he knew that only a few would believe and become true followers of the Master. Today's lesson finds the great apostle arriving in Rome, still a prisoner, even as he had been since being rescued from the mob in Jerusalem which sought his life. He was taken to Rome upon his own appeal to Caesar, although there was no specific charge against him.

Seemingly it was recognized by the authorities that Paul was not a vicious criminal, for he was permitted to live in his own hired house, and to enjoy other privileges, although he was continually under guard. He was allowed to have visitors, and the first ones he sent for were the representative Jews then living in Rome. This was in keeping with his practice in other cities, where he always witnessed first in the synagogues, going to the Gentiles after his own people had been given an opportunity to hear the Gospel of Christ.

Being a prisoner in Rome, Paul could not go to the synagogue, so he invited the Jews to come to him. He explained to the "chief of the

QUESTIONS

What is the work of the church during the Gospel age?

To whom did Paul first witness in Rome? Give details.

What prophecy did Paul quote to show why the majority of the Jews in Rome did not accept his message?

What did Paul write to the Philippian brethren concerning his work in Rome?

Jews" the circumstances which had brought him to Rome as prisoner. Summing up, he said, "For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." (vs. 20) These representative Jews told Paul that they had not previously heard about him, but they expressed a desire to hear him further, giving as a reason the fact that "this sect is everywhere spoken against."

A time was set for this further hearing, and when the day arrived "there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." That was a long sermon, preached under most unusual circumstances, and to an audience of mixed sentiments.

The record is that "some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." This has been the experience of all who have borne testimony concerning Jesus and his kingdom. It is not the time in the plan of God for the general conversion of the world. Only those who are drawn by the Father, and by him are given hearing "ears" and seeing "eyes" respond to the kingdom message.

Before the audience left, Paul called attention to a prophecy by Isaiah which foretold their inability to understand and accept the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." (Isa. 6:9, 10; Matt. 13:11) Jesus quoted this same prophecy in answer to the disciples' question

as to why he spoke to the people in parables. (Matt. 13:14, 15) Evidently the prophecy applies in principle to the apparent fruitless efforts of the Lord's witnesses throughout the entire age. It should be a comfort to all the Lord's people when their efforts to bear witness to the truth may not result in much new interest.

Having witnessed to the Jews in Rome, Paul then turned to the Gentiles—as many, that is, as came to his "house" during the two years of his first imprisonment in Rome. The account states that he "received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."

The witness Paul thus had the privilege of giving was very far-reaching. It would be natural to suppose that a prisoner would have little or no opportunity to preach the truth, but to the Philippian brethren Paul wrote: "I would that ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel."—Phil. 1:12, 13



Kings of Judah and Israel

(Continued from May Issue)

OUR last article ended with a brief account of the reign of King Joash or Jehoash, of Judah, who became the titular head of the two tribe kingdom of Judah at the tender age of seven. He was succeeded by his son Amaziah, who began his reign when he was twenty-five years old. A brief summary of his reign is given in II Chronicles 25:2, which reads, "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart." The record in II Kings 14:3 adds the explanation, "yet not like David his father." Instead, "He did according to all things as Joash his father did."

After establishing himself as king, Amaziah slew all those who conspired against and murdered his father, Joash. He did not slay their children, for the Law of the Lord said, "The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers,

but every man shall die for his own sin."—II Chron. 25:4

The Law Covenant into which God entered with the Jewish nation was typical of the New Covenant. Concerning the time when that covenant is operative, the Prophet Jeremiah wrote, "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge; but every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge."—Jer. 31:29-34

Amaziah planned war on the Edomites, and hired one hundred thousand men of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel to augment his own army. A servant of the Lord warned him against using these, explaining that the Lord was not with the Israelites. He explained to Amaziah that if he used the men of Israel he would be defeated, but

if he went to battle against the Edomites without them the Lord would more than make up his need and he would be victorious. Amaziah followed the instructions of the "man of God" and was victorious. However, he "brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods. . . . Wherefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Amaziah."—II Chron. 25:5-12

Flushed with his success, he challenged the king of Israel to battle, but was completely defeated, and he was taken to Jerusalem as a prisoner by King Joash, of Israel. In the twenty-ninth year of his reign he was murdered at Lachish. He had gone there from Jerusalem for safety.—II Chron. 25:13-28

King Uzziah

Uzziah, sixteen year old son of Amaziah, was chosen to succeed his father. He reigned fifty-two years, and during most of this time he was faithful to the Lord, and Judah prospered. He was an industrious king. "He loved husbandry," the record states. (II Chron. 26:9, 10) But he was also a militarist, and raised a huge army of more than three hundred thousand men, well trained and well officered. It was one of the first mechanized armies.—vss. 11-15

Uzziah did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, "according to all that his father Amaziah did." (vs. 4) This is but a partial compliment. Amaziah served the Lord in the beginning of his reign, but was unfaithful at the end. This

also was the case with Uzziah. The record states that "when he was strong, his heart was filled up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense."—vs. 16

Burning incense on the temple altar was the prerogative of the priests of Israel. No one else had the right to do this, not even the king. Nor did Uzziah undertake this ignorantly, for the priest, Azariah, "went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord." They reasoned with him, saying, "It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense."

They asked Uzziah to "go out of the sanctuary," but he refused and became angry. Suddenly he was smitten with leprosy, from which he was never healed. He died a leper. Thus again we have an example of how pride can develop in the heart, and even after a lifetime of faithfulness cause one to transgress against the Lord. How timely is the admonition, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Prov. 4:23

During Uzziah's reign a great earthquake occurred in Judah.—Amos 1:1; Zech. 14:5

Jotham was the next king of Judah. He was somewhat on a par with his father, Uzziah, so far as his faithfulness to the Lord was concerned. The record is, "He did that which was right in the sight of

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the Lord, according to all that his father Uzziah did: howbeit he entered not into the temple of the Lord. And the people did yet corruptly."—II Chron. 27:2

Apparently he accepted things as he found them, not bothering to institute needed reforms in the religious life of Judah. However, the Lord prospered him "because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God."—vs. 6

After Jotham, came Ahaz, who was a wicked king. "He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim. Moreover he burned incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burned his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel."—II Chron. 28:2, 3

This "valley of the son of Hinnom" is in the Greek language called Gehenna, meaning land of Hinnom. It is one of the words in the New Testament which is translated "hell." The fire god Molech was worshiped in the valley of Hinnom. According to Jewish tradition, the image of Molech was of brass, hollow within. The tradition reads, "His face was that of a calf, and his hands stretched forth like a man who opens his hands to receive [something] of his neighbor. And they kindled it with fire, and the priests took the babe and put it into the hands of Molech, and the babe gave up the ghost."

A later, God-fearing king of Judah, Josiah, terminated these abominations in the valley of Hin-

nom by polluting the place, rendering it ceremoniously unclean by spreading over it human bones and other corruptions. (II Kings 23:10, 13, 14; II Chron. 34:4-7) It became the common cesspool of the city of Jerusalem. Jesus used it as a symbol of everlasting destruction of incorrigible sinners, those not worthy of everlasting life.

King Hezekiah

Hezekiah (the might of Jehovah) was the twelfth king of Judah. He was the son of the apostate Ahaz. He was one of the most faithful and illustrious kings of Judah. Concerning him the record states, "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done." (II Chron. 29:2) This is a real compliment. The wicked kings of Israel are all compared to Jeroboam; the partially righteous rulers of Judah are compared to one or another ruler who displayed much the same degree of faithfulness. Few are compared to David, the man after God's own heart, and Hezekiah is one of these. See also II Kings 18:3, 5-7

His father, King Ahaz, in his wickedness had pillaged and mutilated the holy temple of the Lord, and Hezekiah's first act was to purge, repair, and reopen the temple so the sacrificial services could be resumed therein. (II Chron. 29:3-11) In connection with this noble effort Hezekiah said, "It is in mine heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us."—vs. 10

We read further concerning Hezekiah: "In every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered." (II Chron. 31:21) The restoration of the temple and its services is an example of how this righteous king did everything "with all his heart."—II Chron. 29:4-36

Another measure taken by Hezekiah was to reinstitute the yearly passover. Ordinarily the passover was commemorated in the first month of their religious year. But some time elapsed after Hezekiah became king before the priests and the Levites—and the people also, for that matter—were prepared to keep the passover. Under the wicked Ahaz the worship of Jehovah had been completely set aside. Ceremonially the priests, Levites, and people were all unclean.

While Hezekiah instituted his reforms immediately upon his becoming king, the priests and Levites were not prepared, ceremonially, to administer the passover in the first month of their religious year, as was proper under the Law. Hezekiah therefore took counsel with the "princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem," and it was agreed that for once they would commemorate the passover in the second instead of the first month of the year.—II Chron. 30:1-4

"So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all

Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written." Letters from the king, saying, "Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria."—vss. 5-7

There is an important point here which should not be overlooked. By the time Hezekiah became king of Judah, the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel, which was instituted by the wicked king Jeroboam, had fallen, and a large portion of the people had been taken captive to Assyria. But there was a sizable remnant of the ten tribes still in Palestine, and it was to these, as well as to the people of the two-tribe kingdom of Judah over which Hezekiah ruled, that the letters of invitation were sent to gather at Jerusalem to commemorate the passover.

Hezekiah urged the Israelites not to be stiffnecked, like their fathers, but to yield themselves to the Lord to serve him, promising that if they did his fierce wrath would turn away from them. Hezekiah promised further: "If ye turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him."—vs. 9

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The account says that those who delivered these letters to the Israelites were laughed to scorn, and mocked. But not by all, for we read, "Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the Word of the Lord. And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation."—vss. 11-13

The "much people" who assembled for the passover were very enthusiastic. For several generations those of the ten-tribe kingdom had been serving false gods, and doubtless had very little, if any, knowledge of the requirements of the Law preparatory to observing the passover. In their enthusiasm they rushed into the observance unprepared. We read, "A multitude of the people . . . had not cleansed themselves, yet they did eat the passover otherwise than it is written." Hezekiah knew, however, that they were not wilful in this, and "prayed for them saying, The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary."—vss. 18, 19

"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (I Sam. 16:7) Hezekiah seemed to know this, and was himself taking the Lord's view-

point of these Israelites who had so enthusiastically returned to the worship of the true God. And the Lord answered his prayer favorably, and the people were healed. It was a happy and blessed occasion. We read, "The children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the Lord. And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord."—vss. 21, 22

An Enemy from Without

After Hezekiah restored the worship of the true God of Israel, the land was invaded by Sennacherib, king of Assyria. The Assyrians had already conquered the ten-tribe kingdom, and now the purpose was to capture Jerusalem, and bring the two-tribe kingdom into subjection. Hezekiah was keenly aware of this evil purpose and "took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him." (ch. 32:1-4) They also "stopped the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?"

One source of Hezekiah's strength as king of Judah was his willingness to consult with his princes and other leading men of state in matters of importance. This reveals his humility, and in

humility there is strength. But even more important to him than the advice of his partners in the government, was his reliance upon the Lord. He did all he could to prepare the land, and Jerusalem, against the expected attack, and then to a large gathering of the people which he had summoned "in the street of the gate of the city," he said:

"Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: with him is the arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested [margin, 'leaned'] themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah."
—II Chron. 32:6-8

Verse 9 of this chapter informs us that Sennacherib sent messengers to Jerusalem who endeavored to persuade those guarding the city, and all the people, to forsake Hezekiah and surrender in order to save their lives. The Prophet Isaiah was contemporary with Hezekiah, and in Jerusalem at the time. In chapters 37 and 38 of his book he fills in the information that when this effort failed the persuasive eloquence of one named Rabshakeh was employed in an effort to induce Hezekiah to surrender.

His chief line of attack was to convince Hezekiah and his associates that their God was helpless to protect them against the strength of Sennacherib's army. In reality

it was a blasphemous attack against Jehovah. Despite his great faith in the Lord, Hezekiah was greatly disturbed. He sent messengers to Isaiah, who said unto him, "Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, where-with the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."—Isa. 37:1-7

Rabshakeh returned from his master, Sennacherib, bearing a threatening letter to Hezekiah. He read the letter and then took the matter to the Lord in prayer. He concluded his prayer, saying, "Now therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord, even thou only."
—Isa. 37:14-20

Like many of the wonderful prayers recorded in the Old Testament, the burden of this one was the honor and glory of Jehovah's name. And God's prestige was at stake. The kingdom of Judah was the Lord's kingdom which, for his servant David's sake, he had promised to protect, so he replied to Hezekiah through Isaiah, saying concerning the king of Assyria, "He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will de-

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fend this city to save it for my own sake, and for my servant David's sake."—Isa. 37:33-35

The Lord kept his word. He sent an angel and destroyed 185,000 of the Assyrian army in one night. (vs. 36; II Chron. 32:20, 21) "Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side."—II Chron. 32:22

Few men in history, even among the Lord's servants, have been able to keep humble when highly honored. The fame of Hezekiah spread "so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth." (vs. 23) He became ill, "sick to the death, and prayed unto the Lord: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign." (vs. 24) The marginal translation reveals that this "sign" was a miracle which the Lord wrought on behalf of the king. It was indeed a miracle. See II Kings 20:8-11. Isaiah reveals that Hezekiah was restored to health and given fifteen years more of life.—Isa. 38:5

But with all these favors from the Lord, "Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up." (II Chron. 32:25) He forgot for the time that his great success and popularity were not due to his own wisdom and strength, but to the Lord. When threatened by the Assyrians, he donned sackcloth and sprinkled ashes upon himself, and cried to the Lord for help. The Lord delivered him and

his people, and now he was accepting the glory for himself.

The Lord was displeased with this, and decreed wrath upon Hezekiah, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. But this good king was only temporarily overtaken by the sin of pride. The marginal translation of verse 26 says that he humbled himself for lifting up his heart. Because of this, the foretold wrath upon Judah and Jerusalem was postponed until after Hezekiah died.

The son of king Baladan of Babylon, having heard that Hezekiah had been sick, sent messengers with a letter of condolence. It was but a ruse, for actually these messengers served as spies. Trusting them, Hezekiah showed them all his "precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor [margin, jewels, Heb. vessels, or instruments], and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not."—Isa. 39:1, 2

This was not a wilful act on the part of Hezekiah, but nevertheless, Isaiah explained to him what the result would be; namely, that in a later time all this treasure would be seized by the king of Babylon. But Hezekiah was assured that this calamity would not come upon Judah while he lived. "Good is the Word of the Lord which thou hath spoken," he said to Isaiah, "For there shall be peace and truth in my days."—Isa. 39:8

(To be continued)

The Great Deception

"The serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die."

—GENESIS 3:4

IN REVELATION 20:2 we find the expression, "that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan." Obviously this a reference to the "serpent" which appeared to and deceived mother Eve. The general consensus of opinion among Bible scholars is that Satan, who is a powerful although invisible spirit being, "spoke" through the serpent. Just how he conveyed his message to Eve is not important. For our present purpose we will consider that it was the Devil who deceived Eve, ignoring whatever part "the serpent" may have played in it.

Concerning the Devil, Jesus said, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8:44) Here Jesus takes us back to what occurred in Eden. He states that Satan was actually a murderer, for it was under his influence that our first parents transgressed God's law, which resulted in their death. Our Lord further identifies Satan's treachery in Eden by saying that he was a "liar, and the father of it."

Yes, it was Satan who fathered the sin of lying, his first lie occurring when he said to mother Eve, "Ye shall not surely die." God had made it plain to Adam, and Adam had communicated the information to his wife, that death would result from their disobedience. But Satan denied this; and not only was he successful in deceiving Eve, but he has successfully carried on his campaign of deception ever since, with the result that only a few have continued to believe God on the subject of death, the vast majority unwittingly believing Satan, insisting that "there is no death." This work of deception will be allowed to continue until the "due time" in God's plan of the ages when Satan will be bound, "that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed for a little season," and then destroyed. —Rev. 20:3; 12-15; Heb. 2:14

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It was not difficult for Eve to believe that she would not die as a result of disobedience. After all, she had had no experience with death. She had seen no one die. Doubtless she took Satan's denial of the Lord's statement literally, believing that despite her disobedience she would continue to live and to enjoy all the blessings of Eden, and have the added advantage, as she thought, of being much wiser. How bitterly disappointed she must have been when, debarred from the trees of life in Eden she realized from year to year that the seeds of death were working in her and that she would eventually become feeble and die. Adam had no illusions on the matter, for he was not deceived. He knew that eventually he would die.

The fact that the human race began to die despite his assertion, "Ye shall not surely die," proved that Satan was a liar, just as Jesus later said. But having foisted this deception upon Eve he did not propose to allow subsequent circumstances to prove him wrong, so his next great deception was that death is not what it seems to be, that in reality those whom we call dead are more alive than ever. It is held by Satan and those who unwittingly espouse his great deception, that only the body dies. The claim is that there is a separate entity within humans which cannot die, and that at death this escapes from the body and lives on in another realm.

The great power of this deception is in the fact that no one wants to die, therefore it is pleasant to believe that "there is no death." In continuing to foster his great deception, Satan introduced into the minds of men almost innumerable theories as to what happens to the "never dying" part of man when the body dies. There are the theories of reincarnation and the transmigration of souls.

Reincarnationists believe that every time a child is begotten, or born—they are not sure which—a "departed spirit" enters into it, there finding a home until this newest body dies, when the disembodied spirit again is homeless until it has an opportunity to find refuge in another human infant. The theory is that most of us have made many of these excursions, and will probably keep on doing so indefinitely. Just how the reincarnationists explain the constantly increasing population of the earth we have not yet learned; for, according to this no-death theory there are more spirits reaching earth each year than are departing. Where do the extra ones come from?

The "transmigration of souls" is somewhat different, and not quite so pleasing. This theory also calls for continuous cycles of the

"soul," but it does not always succeed in finding refuge in a human body. While, according to this theory, during our present visit to earth we may be human beings, the last time we were here we may have been a dog, or a cat, or an elephant, or a spider; and the next time we come we may find our soul is being flitted through the air in the body of a bird, or hopping around in the slimy body of a croaking frog. It all depends upon how well we do with ourselves on each visit, as to just what form we will have the next time we come. There is an end to this, for finally the soul departs for the last time, and after that, in due course, finds rest in a mythical Nirvana, meaning "extinction of the flame of life," or "loss of all personal consciousness by absorption into the divine."

This satanic method of endeavoring to prove true the lie, "Ye shall not surely die," has been adopted into most heathen religions in one form or another. This is why a Hindu tries to avoid stepping on an insect, or killing a fly, lest he injure the feelings of an ancestor. To many it may seem difficult to understand how anyone could believe such apparent nonsense, but it is really no more unreasonable than the no-death theories which have found their way into the professed Christian religion.

All the religions of the world attempt, each in its own way, to deal with the problem of sin. That is to say, rewards are held out to the righteous, and punishments for the wicked. A faithful Hindu might not have to come back to earth as a dog, and he will reach Nirvana with fewer earth cycles than those less faithful. Also, in the creeds of the churches, account is taken of the fact that there are saints and sinners, believers and unbelievers, faithful and unfaithful, and attempts are made to explain how the "good" will be rewarded and the wicked punished.

In all this theorizing, the simple fact of the Bible that the "wages of sin is death" is ignored. How could one believe that the "wages of sin is death" and at the same time insist that "there is no death"? When God's penalty for sin is denied, his reward for righteousness cannot be appreciated. Paul wrote, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) But if there is no death, then, as one devotee to the no-death dogma explained, what Paul meant when he wrote that the "wages of sin is death" was "the death that never dies." If this were true, then Paul must also have meant in his reference to eternal life, the "life that never lives."

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Refusing to believe in the reality of death, the creed makers invented their own conceptions of how God would punish sinners—the “soul” of sinners, that is. The creeds of Christendom set forth two general views on this subject—the Catholic and the Protestant. According to the Catholic view, there are two places to which wicked “souls” go when they depart the dead bodies in which they lived as humans. One of these is called hell, and the other purgatory.

Hell, it is alleged, is only for the out-and-out sinners, those who maliciously and wilfully defy the church, and turn their backs upon all its rules and regulations. Many “heretics,” it is claimed, fall into this category, and therefore are doomed to spend the endless ages of eternity in hell. And “doomed” is the appropriate word to use here, for in this hell the wicked are said to be tortured—yes, tortured—in burning flames many times hotter than any fire ever produced by man.

From the humane standpoint, the teachings of the heathen seem better than the hell dogma. But then, there is an alternative! If one wishes he can avoid being wicked enough to go to hell, and after death find himself in purgatory. Purgatory, it is explained, is just what its name implies, a place of purgation, of cleansing from sin and defilement, so that one is eventually made pure enough to enter into the bliss of heaven. The purging methods in purgatory are, of course, very strenuous. There is fire there also, and very hot. In this respect probably the chief difference between hell and purgatory is that the tortures of the latter are not eternal in duration. There is an eventual escape, the time spent in the flames being determined by a number of circumstances, one being how well the sufferer responds to the refining process.

In the Middle Ages various reformers began to question such teachings of the established church. They discovered that the doctrine of purgatory is not taught in the Bible, that not even the word purgatory appears in the sacred Word, so they protested against this teaching. It was not a pleasant thing to do, for it left them with somewhat of a problem on their hands. By doing away with purgatory, there was no place, as they thought, for the partially wicked souls—which it was claimed were in purgatory—to go except to hell.

From the standpoint of mercy, the Protestants really worsened the outlook for sinners, particularly the partially wilful among them.

Throughout the ages there have been millions who, according to the standards of the church, and the Bible also, have not been good enough to go to heaven. The Catholic Church said, however, that most of them were too good to spend an eternity in hell, so purgatory was provided. Many Protestants will also agree that there are many fundamentally good people in the world—fine neighbors, willing to do a good turn whenever they have an opportunity, but they are not good enough for heaven because not devoted to the cause of Christ. But still, according to the Protestant view, these must all spend eternity in a hell of torment. It is a repelling thought, and one of the many God-dishonoring teachings which have naturally followed in the wake of Satan's lie, "Ye shall not surely die."

Not in the Bible

The doctrines of purgatory and of eternal torture are not taught in the Word of God. Some have reasoned, "If there is a heaven, there must be a hell." There is a heaven—that we will discuss in a later article. However, the alternatives set before us in the Bible are not heaven and hell, but life and death. Death is the penalty for sin, and life is the "gift of God." This marvelous gift was proffered to our first parents, and was available to them on condition of obedience to God's law. They disobeyed, and the penalty of death came upon them.

But God's gift of life is again available. Jesus tells us about it, as recorded in John 3:16—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Notice that Jesus uses the word "perish," meaning complete destruction, not torture. Except for God's gift of life through Christ the Redeemer, the human race would have perished, but it was never threatened with torment.

Satan's deception has been so great that it has robbed language of its meaning. Ordinarily everyone would know the meaning of the words "die" and "death," but Satan's lie has been so deceptive that in theological circles these words are twisted to mean "separation from God," and separation from God means torture in a fiery hell. But suppose we apply this false meaning in reading the account of the loss of life during the Deluge. The record says, "All flesh died [separated from God] that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man."—Gen. 7:21

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This text of Scripture makes no distinction between the death of beasts and man. It does not state that man was swept away to a place of torment by the swirling waters of the Flood. It does not state this, because it would not have been true. The Bible says, "As the one dieth, so dieth the other; . . . all go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."—Eccles. 3: 19, 20

It is man's earnest desire to live that makes him so readily susceptible to Satan's no-death deception. Even under the abnormal conditions of sin and sickness and war, life is considered by most people a boon, a blessing, and it is hard to believe—millions refuse to believe—that when the heart stops beating there is no more life. With this determination to live, mankind has fallen ready prey to Satan's lie, "Ye shall not surely die"—"There is no death."

This human attitude toward life is one of the things that sets man apart from the lower animals. God created man with the intention that he should live, not temporarily, but forever. Death, therefore, was the severest penalty that could have been attached to sin. Little wonder that we should shrink from it, and it is not surprising that so many are willing to insist that it is not real, but rather that what we call death is merely a means of escape into another life.

But, severe though the death penalty is, the Scriptures emphasize its reality. Nevertheless, the Bible does hold out hope for a future life. This hope is not predicated on the vain illusion that no one really dies, but on God's promises to restore the dead to life. The followers of Jesus are promised a heavenly home with him, not because there is some death-proof element within them which escapes when the body dies and which is whisked off to heaven, but because the power of God will restore them to life in the resurrection and exalt them to "glory and honor and immortality."—Rom. 2: 7

When the Prophet Job had suffered beyond the point of ordinary human endurance, he asked God to let him die. Having thus prayed for death, Job raised the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14: 14) Job did not ask, "If a man die, is he really dead?" Job knew that those who die are dead. It is because he knew this that he asked God to let him die, for this, he believed, was the only way he could be free from suffering. What concerned Job was whether or not God would restore him to life at a later time.

Job spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, or power of God, and answering his own question, he said, "All the days of my

appointed time [in death] will I wait, till my change come, [then] thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." (vss. 14, 15) In the New Testament Jesus confirms this hope of being called forth from death in God's due time, using as an example the death of Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary of Bethany. This account is recorded in the 11th chapter of John, verses 1 to 46.

When Jesus was in the north country of Galilee, Lazarus became ill, and his sisters sent word to Jesus saying, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." (vs. 3) The sisters evidently thought when their Master received this information he would come to Bethany and to their home at once. Instead he waited for two days, and then announced to his disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." The disciples did not understand the intent of this remark. They thought Jesus referred to "taking of rest in sleep." Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead."—vss. 11-14

A very fundamental truth of the Scriptures is set forth in this conversation between Jesus and his disciples. Actually, as Jesus said, Lazarus was dead; but because he expected to restore him to life, Jesus spoke of death as being merely a sleep. The same is true of all mankind—the dead and those who will yet die; they are dead. Satan lied when he said, "Ye shall not surely die." This penalty for sin would have been eternal oblivion for all of Adam's children, except for the provision of divine love through Christ, who gave himself in death as a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam. Paul wrote, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—I Cor. 15:22

They are not actually made alive until God's due time to restore the dead to life. But as God now looks upon those who have died he sees them as though they were asleep. Those who sleep are unconscious, and so are the dead. For those who are asleep we have an expectancy of an awakening, and God has promised that through Christ those who sleep in death will also be awakened.

Jesus returned to Bethany, and as he approached the home of that little family which he so dearly loved, Martha met him, and said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Jesus replied, "Thy brother shall rise again." (vss. 21, 23) Jesus did not tell Martha that her brother was not really dead, that now he

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Worthy the Lamb!

"The Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

—John 10:11

SO FAR from self-seeking, the Good Shepherd gladly laid down his life for the sheep, and it was by virtue of thus purchasing the sheep by his own precious blood that their eternal life is possible. Without his purchase there would be no flock, and it is by this that he becomes the Shepherd of the flock. How clear, how beautiful the thought, "Ye are bought with a price"! No one else could give this ransom for us; no one else could purchase us or grant us life everlasting; no one else, therefore, could legally become our Shepherd or be able to lead us into the rest and peace of God, into the knowledge of the truth, and ultimately into the heavenly fold, the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Worthy the Lamb that was slain to receive glory, honor, dominion, and power!

"So We Preached"

"These things are written that ye might believe; . . . and that believing might have life through His name."

—John 20:31

THE Gospel was written that those who have the hearing ear

and the proper heart might be enabled to believe that Jesus is the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life through his name. Not that merely believing will bring the life, for "devils also believe and tremble," but that believing brings them into that relationship with God where it is possible for them to become followers of Jesus, pupils in the school of Christ to learn of him; to be assisted in walking in his footsteps, to learn of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and by assistance granted, to make their calling and election sure to life eternal as members of his little flock, his bride class. All this is possible in his name, in his merit, but none of it is possible on any other terms or conditions, for "there is none other name under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved. We thank God, however, that while only the few have the hearing ear now, and hence only the few hear the divine call now, yet by and by all the deaf ears shall be unstopped; the message will be delivered in no uncertain tones, and all shall know, from the least to the greatest, of divine love and mercy in Christ, and shall have the opportunity of accepting it in his name, or of rejecting it and coming under the divine condemnation of the second

death. Let us see to it with diligence that having been favored so highly as we are, it shall not be said of us that we received the grace of God in vain!

"Bless Them That Curse You"

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."
—Matthew 5:48

TRADITION taught that neighbors should be loved and enemies hated, but the Great Teacher said that enemies also should be loved and blessed, even though they returned persecution and injury. The cultivation of this spirit of love for enemies, as well as for friends would mark the followers of Jesus as children of God, as having the Heavenly Father's Spirit—disposition. He sends the sunshine on sinners and on saints. And the rain comes down for the just and for the unjust. It is difficult to estimate the amount of harm done to our minds by the traditions of the "Dark Ages" respecting God's intention to torment eternally his enemies—all except the elect. Thank God that we find that these teachings are not from his Book! Admittedly, love is a glorious quality and Godlike quality, but if it extend only to those who love in return, how would it be worthy of any special reward? Do not the heathen, yes, all men, love after this fashion? And if we are courteous merely to those who are courteous to us, wherein are we

superior to Gentiles and sinners? The followers of Jesus, the pupils in his school, are to take the highest standard of excellence for their pattern—their loving Creator. They are to strive for perfection such as his. They are to attain it in their hearts, and so far as possible, outwork it in every thought and word and deed of their fallen flesh.

Bread from Heaven

"Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life."—John 6:35

IT was after Jesus had spent the night in prayer, and toward morning came to his disciples still on the lake in the boat—stormstayed—and after they had come to the landing safely, that some of those who had been with him and who had partaken of the miraculous bread and fish had returned to the vicinity of Capernaum and sought Jesus again, that he upbraided them and accuse them of seeking him more for the loaves and the fishes than on account of the truths which he proclaimed; and using our text, proceeded to tell them of himself as the Bread of Eternal Life that had come down from heaven, of which if a man eat he would never die—the bread of life everlasting. Blessed are our ears, for we have heard! Blessed are the eyes of our understanding, for we have seen him! Blessed are we, for we have tasted of this Bread of Life! Blessed are we if we are still hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and day after day being more and more filled according to the promise.

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was actually more alive than ever. Jesus knew that to comfort Martha in this way would have been agreeing with Satan's lie, "Ye shall not surely die." Jesus' message of comfort was that although Lazarus was indeed dead, he would be restored to life. This is the great hope of life the Bible holds out to all mankind.

Martha then replied to Jesus, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." (vs. 24) The Bible reveals that the "last day" mentioned by Martha is the final age in God's plan for the recovery of man from sin and death. With this recovery program completed, endless ages of peace and joy will spread out before the restored human race. Martha knew that her brother would be restored to life in that time of the general resurrection, but that did not take the loneliness from her heart which all experience when they lose their loved ones in death.

Jesus replied to Martha again, saying, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." (vs. 25) Prof. Rotherham translates the next verse properly: "And no one who lives again and believeth in me shall in any wise die." From this wonderful statement we have Jesus' own assurance that both believers and those who have not had a full opportunity to believe in this life will be awakened from death, the believers to immediate perfection of life, and the unbelievers to an opportunity to believe and live forever.

A little later Jesus awakened Lazarus from death as an illustration of the divine plan for all mankind. In John 5:28 and 29 we read, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good [the believers], unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment [Revised Version translation]."

There are many Bible texts to show that in the resurrection the faithful believers in Christ of this age will be rewarded with immortality—Paul uses the expression, "glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) But those who are awakened from death, or "come forth" to "judgment," will, if they pass through the judgment successfully, be restored to perfection of human life as it was originally given to Adam and Eve. The word "judgment" in this text translates the Greek word *krisis*. It means a test, or trial, so in

that time of the general resurrection all mankind will be placed on probation, as Adam and Eve were on trial in Eden.

The great difference between the future probation period of all mankind and the trial of our first parents will be that the people will not then be deceived by Satan, as Eve was deceived, and as almost all mankind have since been deceived by him. Then they will know that God spoke the truth when he said that death would be the penalty for sin, because they will have observed and experienced it. When they are awakened from death and learn how much time elapsed without their knowledge of it, they will know that they were dead. They will know that while dead they were neither in a hell of torture, nor a purgatory of pain. They will know that they had not been in a heaven of bliss. The Hindu believers will know that they had not been a butterfly or a tiger while they were dead. All will know that they knew nothing while they were dead, and will thank God for the opportunity he has given them through Christ, the Redeemer, to live again!



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Walking With God

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"—Amos 3:3

OUR text was addressed by God to the Jewish nation with which he was in covenant relationship, and it applies in principle to our association with him. Those who are in disagreement cannot successfully walk together. The words "walk," "walking," "walk-est," and "walked" are used in the Scriptures to denote a course of action, a general demeanor of life.

We read in Genesis 5:24 that "Enoch walked with God." We know little of Enoch except that he prophesied the Lord would come with ten thousand of his saints and would execute judgment. (Jude 14, 15) Evidently the Lord gave Enoch some understanding of his plan for human redemption, and he was faithful to the knowledge he enjoyed, this faithfulness constituting his walk with God.

In Genesis 6:9 we are informed that Noah walked with God. We have a little more information concerning Noah. He was faithful to the Lord, and labored zealously to do his will as it was revealed to him. Thus he walked with God, a "walk" that involved many long years of toil in building the ark, and of scorn from his fellows as he warned of the coming flood

and urged upon them a course of righteousness.

In contrast to these two examples of faithfulness, we read in Leviticus 26:40, 41 that the Israelites walked contrary to the Lord, and because they did, he walked contrary to them. This illustrates the thought of our text—"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" The obvious and scriptural answer is that they cannot. Thus it is emphasized that to walk with the Lord one must be in harmony with him, desirous of knowing his will, and being fully surrendered to it.

To be sure that we are fully devoted to doing God's will requires a sincere and deep search of our hearts. In Jeremiah 11:8 we read of those who walked according to the "imagination of their evil hearts"—the marginal translation says "stubbornness" of their hearts. The Apostle Paul reminds us of the Lord's provision to cast down, or destroy these imaginations. We read, "(The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations [margin, reasonings], and every high thing that exalteth itself

against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (II Cor. 10:4, 5) How easy it is to substitute our own reasoning for the clearly expressed will of God as set forth in his Word!

In Ephesians 2:2 Paul writes of the time when we "walked according to the course of this world," a world which is under the domination of Satan, the "prince and power of the air." Peter writes of walking according to our "former lusts," or desires. (I Pet. 1:14) So it is that in order to walk with God, and in full harmony with all the divine appointments, there must be a sincere struggle against our own preferences, a continuous resistance of the spirit of the world, and a constant watchfulness lest we be led away from the path of righteousness by the wiles of the Devil.

From Behind

God has revealed his will through his Word. A beautiful poetic expression of this is given in Isaiah 30:21, which reads, "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." "This is the way"—the Lord's way, the way in which he walks, and the way in which we must walk if we desire to walk with him.

The "word" which we hear from behind is the entire Word of God, that precious Word which reveals the divine plan of salvation and the place we are privileged to occupy therein. Are we in agreement with

that plan? Is every detail of it a delight to our hearts? Are we willing to set aside all our own plans and preferences and yield ourselves fully to the accomplishment of that which the divine plan reveals to be God's will for us?

God is willing to walk with us, but only if we are in agreement with him. Typical Israel was his chosen people. In the verse preceding our text he said to Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." He had devoted himself wholly to this people, but if this arrangement was to continue, they would have to devote themselves fully to him, otherwise they could not walk together, for they would not be in agreement.

Throughout the Gospel age the consecrated followers of the Master are the Lord's chosen people—his "peculiar" or very special people, as the Greek text indicates. (Titus 2:14) Peter wrote, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar [Greek, "purchased"] people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." —I Pet. 2:9

But here again this precious and favored relationship to the Lord is dependent upon our continued agreement with his ways, yea, our delight in all that pleases him. The Lord is unstinting in showering his blessings upon us. In Psalm 36:8 we read, "Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." The thought is that the pleasures of the Lord become

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our pleasures if we are walking in complete agreement with him.

His Pleasures

All creation is a pleasure to the Lord—"Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4:11) We joy in the creative works of God because we see manifested in them his infinite wisdom, his mighty power, and his abounding love. Even the sunshine and the rain are evidences of his loving care for his creatures.

Jehovah rejoiced in his Son, who willingly and joyfully obeyed him. To him he said, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22) Are we well pleased with Jesus? Do we see in him the One who is "altogether lovely"? Naturally we rejoice that through his death he has provided salvation for both the church and the world; but apart from this, are we "well pleased" with Jesus because he loved righteousness and hated iniquity?

In Psalm 149:4 we read, "The Lord taketh pleasure in his people." Do we? Are the Lord's people our people, the people with whom we delight to fellowship? Perhaps if we had had the selection of the Lord's people we would have chosen quite a different group, especially those in our community. But God is too wise to err. He saw in each of his chosen ones certain heart qualities which he could use, and which would enable them to make their "calling and election sure."

Are we looking for those same qualities in our brethren, and thus finding joy in their fellowship? Or do we see only the weaknesses of their flesh, and seeing these half wish, perhaps, that we did not have to be so closely associated with them in the meetings and in the service of the truth? It is a test of our love for those whom the Lord loves, an opportunity of demonstrating that we are in agreement with him and that we take pleasure in those who are a joy to him.

In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah we have that very vivid description of the suffering and death of Jesus, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter. In verse 10 we are told that it pleased the Lord to "bruise him," and that he "shall see his seed," and "the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." The "pleasure of the Lord" here mentioned is undoubtedly his loving purpose, centered in Jesus the Redeemer, of recovering the world of mankind from sin and death.

We are likely to talk about those things which give us pleasure, and in his Word God has said much about his plan for human restoration. This aspect of the divine plan is described by the Apostle Peter by the word "restitution," and Peter says of the "times of restitution," that "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19, 21

Yes, the prospect of restitution for dying humanity has been such a pleasure to God that he continued to talk about it throughout

all those centuries of the past when he was speaking through his holy prophets. Are we "drinking" of this "river" of God's "pleasure"? We are if we are in agreement with God, sufficiently in harmony with him to warrant his walking with us.

And this involves more, we think, than merely being thankful that God has blessings in store for the world. Do we continue to realize how important this aspect of God's plan is to him, and that for us to discuss this and related truths pertaining to his provision for the world's blessing is a pleasure to him, even as it should be for us?

Jesus, in whom the Father was well pleased, rejoiced to discuss the many aspects of the divine kingdom plan for blessing all mankind. In one of the last parables, a prophetic parable given as one of the signs of his second presence, Jesus spoke of the "sheep" class as those to whom it would be said, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"—the restored earthly dominion.—Matt. 25:34

The apostles all preached and discussed the purpose of our Lord's return. "The last enemy to be destroyed is death," wrote Paul. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26) There is to be a dispensation of the "fulness of times," he explained, in which all things will be gathered under Christ, in heaven as well as in earth. (Eph. 1:10) The hope of the world is set forth over and over again in the Book of Hebrews. Peter reminds us of God's promise

to create a "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—II Pet. 3:3

The last three chapters of Revelation are devoted almost entirely to emphasizing God's wonderful provision of life for the world. Hell gives up its dead and the books are opened. There shall be no more death, for the former things are passed away. There will be a river of water of life, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. Finally, the "Spirit and the bride say, Come, . . . and . . . take the water of life freely."—Rev. 20:12, 13; 21:4; 22:1, 2, 17

Thus we see that from first to last in his Word God continues to talk about "restitution." It is one of his favorites themes. Do we find it a "pleasure" to join in the conversation as we walk with God? We do if we are in agreement with him, having the same interest in mankind as he displays throughout his Word. This interest is prompted by his love, and if this love fills our hearts they will overflow with enthusiasm over his glorious restitution provision for the world of mankind.

God also takes "pleasure" in the "high calling" of his house of sons. Paul wrote, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (Eph. 1:5) This feature of the divine plan should also be a "pleasure" to us, especially if we are running for the "prize of the high calling." Our joy therein will be increased as we realize that we are

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being prepared to live and reign with Christ for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

"Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound," wrote the Psalmist, "they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." (Ps. 89:15) This is the "joyful sound" of the truth, present truth, the glorious harvest message, including the doctrine of restitution. What a blessing it is to know this truth! That we have been permitted to know these "mysteries of the kingdom" is evidence of the Lord's favor, that we are walking in the light of his countenance. Let us, then, never lose our enthusiasm for any part of the truth. Let us continue to take pleasure in it as we walk together with the Lord.

To Gaius, one of the early disciples, the Apostle John wrote, "I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth." (III John 3) To the "elect lady" he wrote, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." (II John 1, 4) To walk in the truth is to walk with the Lord, and John properly speaks of his rejoicing to know that this was the happy experience of Gaius and the "elect lady" and her children. We cannot truly walk with the Lord without rejoicing!

"As He Walked"

Again John wrote, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he [Christ]

walked." (I John 2:6) Certainly Jesus walked with his Heavenly Father. So closely did he walk with God that he could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14:7-10) Jesus said that the words which he spoke were not his but the Father's, and the works he did were the Father's works.

Jesus testified that he always did the things which were pleasing to his Father. For this reason, he could say to his Father, "I know that thou hearest me always." (John 11:42) In walking with God, Jesus was guided by the "word" from behind. "It is written," was his reason for every step which he took in his walk with God. He then is our perfect Exemplar and Guide, and if we profess to be his, and to be "in him," we ought to walk as he walked.

The only way we can be in Christ is by being baptized into his death. We are "buried with him in baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:4) Jesus was raised from the dead literally, and exalted to the divine nature. What a glorious new life he thus entered. This is our hope also, but if our hope is to be realized we must begin now to walk in newness of life.

We are no longer to walk "after the flesh." Our human ambitions and desires must be kept under, while we walk "after the Spirit." (Rom. 8: 1, 4) "Walk in the Spirit,"

Paul explained, "and ye shall not fulfil the lust [desire] of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16) We receive God's Spirit through the Word of truth. Every instruction of the Word is a leading of the Spirit. The Spirit leads in the way of sacrifice. Actually, it was not the Roman soldiers who led Jesus as a lamb to the slaughter, but the Spirit of God, and it leads us to follow in his steps. This is God's will for us, and when we walk in this way we are walking with him.

It is glorious to walk with God. Concerning Levi, the head of the priestly tribe of Israel, the Lord said, "My covenant was with him of life and peace; . . . The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity."—Mal. 2:5, 6

If we have been baptized into Christ we are members of the anti-typical priesthood, and the Lord has entered into a covenant with us. It is a covenant by sacrifice. (Ps. 50:5) It is a covenant, therefore, which, if we are faithful to it, will eventually lead to death by way of toil, ignominy, and suffering. Nevertheless, it is a covenant of peace because in the consciousness that we are walking with God and that through all of our experiences, regardless of how trying they may be, he is holding us by the hand, we have peace—the "peace of God" which passeth all human understanding.

A Walk of Faith

The enjoyment of this peace while we walk with God depends upon our faith. We must believe that "he is," and that he is the "rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6) Thus, as Paul wrote, "We walk by faith, and not by sight." (II Cor. 5:7) We do not see God literally. Our faith must lay hold upon the promises of his presence, and enable us to see in every experience of life the overruling of his providences for our good.

If we have a faith that firmly trusts God, come what may, we can continue to walk with him in peace and joy, and not become weary. Isaiah expressed this thought beautifully, saying, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." (Isa. 40:31) If we are not to faint as we walk, we must remain close to the Lord, walking with him, and in full agreement with every detail of his will, rejoicing in every feature of his glorious plan of salvation.

Walking Humbly

The Prophet Micah wrote, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6:8) Paul confirms this thought. He wrote, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness,

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with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love."—Eph. 4:1, 2

There is an important relationship between walking humbly with God and walking worthy of the vocation to which we have been called by God. It is a very honorable vocation. We have been called, or invited, into partnership with God, to be "co-workers" with him, in his great plan of salvation. (II Cor. 6:1) We have also been called to "glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) Through Christ, we have "access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."—Rom. 5:1, 2

It is surely a "high calling." No wonder we are admonished to walk worthy of it, but to do so we must walk humbly with our God. It is important ever to realize that we have not been called to this high position because of any merit of our own. We are "not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think." (Rom. 12:3) Our trust, our confidence, is "through Christ to God-ward. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves; . . . but our sufficiency is of God."—II Cor. 3:4, 5

So it is that as we walk together with God, rejoicing in all his arrangements for us and for all mankind, we can humbly look to him as the One whose grace has given us such a glorious privilege. And the more we realize this, the more earnestly and zealously we will strive to show ourselves approved by him through a prayerful and careful study of his Word, that we

may know with precision just what the "word" from behind is saying to us from day to day as it outlines the way of the Lord in which we are to walk.

Walking Together

All of the Lord's people during the present age are called to walk in the same way. We are walking together. Paul wrote, "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." (Phil. 3:16) There is no question as to what Paul means by the "same thing." He has just finished explaining what it is, and has emphasized, "This one thing I do."—Phil. 3:13

The "one thing" mentioned by Paul was "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." In doing this, Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (vs. 14) This is simply another way of defining the "vocation" to which we are called. And to walk worthy of it, we must give ourselves wholly to it. We cannot expect to walk with the Lord, and have the assurance that he is walking with us if we are half-hearted in the matter, giving only partial attention to him and to the steps we are taking as we walk in this "narrow way."

We should not expect that the Lord will outline a special path for each one of us, one perhaps that may be a little more favorable to our flesh, a little more in keeping with our particular likings. No, there is only the one way, and all the consecrated are walking in this

way, all "minding the same thing." Thus we are not only walking with the Lord, but we are walking with one another, and this, too, is an added joy—"Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Ps. 133:1-3

In His Presence

Our walk with God today is a walk of faith. He speaks to us through his Word and through his providences, and we speak to him through prayer—a blessed fellowship. Meanwhile, however, we are inspired with the hope of actually being with him, and in his presence enjoy fulness of joy. Jesus promised, "They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."—Rev. 3:4, 5

Only the pure—symbolized by white raiment—will have the inestimable honor of being introduced to the Heavenly Father by his beloved Son. That will be after "this corruptible" has put on "incorruption." But prior to that there must be a purity of heart, while the imperfections of the flesh are covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8) Purity of heart leads to faith's vision of God even now. It is the pure in heart who are privileged to walk with him and enjoy the delights of his fellowship. It is these who, as they walk with the Heavenly Father, tell him all their sorrows and all their joys. It is to these that, through his Word, he speaks words of comfort, and gives assurance of his delight in them.

Thus we walk and talk together with our God, and it is this walk of faith and joy which eventually—beyond the veil—will culminate in our being presented to him by Jesus. The hope of entering into the Father's actual presence as a divine being was one of the joys set before Jesus which enabled him to endure the cross, and despise the shame. (Heb. 12:2) This prospective joy will enable us also to continue on zealously in the way of sacrifice, until, being faithful unto death, we receive the crown of life. Walking with God, we have the same assurance Jesus did, and like Jesus, we can say to him, "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—Ps. 16:11



"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
His grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply;
The flames shall not hurt thee, he only designs
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

Joseph and Fruit Bearing

"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel.)"—Genesis 49:22

THE Scriptures frequently refer to things of nature as illustrations of spiritual truths. So, for our encouragement, let our thoughts for awhile be among the trees and boughs, the wells and springs which are so often seen to be the emblems of spiritual life and growth. David speaks in Psalm 1 of a righteous man as a tree planted by rivers of water. Jesus said in John 15, "I am the true vine, . . . ye are the branches." Genesis speaks of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Gen. 2:17) Revelation 22 speaks of "the tree of life," and of those having a right to its fruit. We read also of the palm tree; the cedars of Lebanon; the olive and fig trees, and many others which are used in the Scriptures as symbols of various characteristics of men and nations.

Jacob at the end of his days

called for his sons, that before his departure he might confer blessings upon them and give them certain warnings. Through his long experience he had closely observed the peculiar and varying characteristics of his family, which, of course, is quite natural for parents to do. He was probably able to determine measurably the course each would take in life, and consequently the results which would follow the fruitage of their lives.

Jacob's strong faith and hope in the promises of God would encourage him to anticipate their fulfilment in and upon his twelve sons, so he sought to confer his blessings and counsel upon them as indicated by the Lord's guidance, thus encouraging them to look for the fulfilment of those treasured promises made to him and to his father and grandfather, Isaac and Abraham, that through the "seed" all the nations of the earth would be blessed.—Gen. 12:2, 3; 22:18

Undoubtedly the spirit of prophecy was with Jacob, enabling him to make such statements of his sons as recorded in Genesis 49, which years after were fulfilled in the various tribes of Israel. The complete fulfilment of the greatest promise to father Abraham is yet future. Of Joseph, Jacob declared he was a "fruitful bough." Fruitful in the faith; fruitful in confidence of his God; fruitful in the promises of God to the fathers. Joseph was truly a fruitful bough

in the family tree, in his services to them and in his administrative office as ruler of Egypt under Pharaoh.

The glory of a fruit-bearing tree is its seasonable fruit—that is, fruit ripened in its rightful season. We understand fruit artificially ripened is not long-keeping, and fruit ripened out of season is often insipid and tasteless. How like ourselves in seeking to produce fruitage of character acceptable to God in our own power of restraint or self-control! Fruitage acceptable to God is the outgrowth of submission to his will, that he may work in us “both to will and to do of his good pleasure”—by discipline and through our sincerity—until we become “filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”—Phil. 1:11; 2:13

Joseph seems to have manifested a pleasing disposition, and generally favorable to all. Tactful, uncomplaining under the most trying experiences, he seems to have borne fruit in every season and in seasonable opportunities in his contact and dutiful obligations and service to and for others. Maybe we would be strengthened in these privileges if we observed more closely Paul’s exhortation in II Timothy 4:2: “Be instant in season, and out of season,” in our zeal and love for the Lord and his kingdom.

Joseph was fruitful in his character and deportment in the prison life with the baker, butler, jailer, and was quickly raised to authority above other prisoners. (Gen. 39:21-

23; 40:1-23) When imprisoned he might have been justifiably sour or indignant, but retained sweetness and helpfulness to those about him. Think of his integrity, his honor, his humility, when accosted by Potiphar’s wife. “How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?” (Gen. 39:9) Oh, if we could think of our omissions and commissions as against God rather than against ourselves or others, what a power for overcoming! No one lives to himself, and the influence of Joseph’s life was a torch of light and life to others.

Jesus said for our benefit, our encouragement, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:16) Jesus also confirmed the need of consistency of character in righteousness. “Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?” (Matt. 7:16) “Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”—Matt. 7:17-20

There are three things especially necessary to successful fruit bearing. First, the condition of the tree and its source of life or nutriment; second, the elements; third, the time. All who accept the life of faith find similar necessary steps to observe. First, one’s heart con-

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dition before God, and the source of spiritual food or nutriment to give and sustain faith. Second, the experiences (varied) of daily life; and third, patient waiting, trusting, confidence, and perseverance.

Joseph was a fruitful bough or branch by a well. Another reason for the fruitfulness of a tree and its boughs is the position of its roots. The roots typify our faith. Where faith is firmly rooted in the Word of God, and in Christ, growth, foliage and fruit are certain. A living faith in the Word of God is a wellspring of life.

The resources of mighty oceans feed the wellsprings of the earth. So Joseph drew his sustaining power, his encouragement in enduring faith and comfort from One mightier than oceans—not only from life's experiences, as Jesus reminded his disciples and ourselves: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John 6:63

Joseph would appreciate that the promises made to Abraham and Isaac, and his father Jacob, were for future fulfilment and accordingly would treasure them. He would perceive something of the extent to which these promises reached—to "all the families of the earth," outside and beyond Israel. Joseph would muse over and meditate upon their outworking upon nations and men, much more so than others of his family. They would satisfy his mind and heart, and would be to him a glorious hope of life and prosperity, and their fulfilment he would continu-

ally seek to visualise. All this is implied in his request that his bones be taken out of Egypt to the land promised to Abraham and his father Jacob. (Gen. 50:25) Joseph would be included in the apostle's remarks in Hebrews 11:13: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

The meditation of Joseph on the promises of God are substantiated by his remarks to his brethren when disclosing to them that he was their brother whom they sold into the hands of the Ishmaelites. "Be not grieved . . . that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." (Gen. 45:5) Such an assertion could come only from a heart strongly convinced of God's overruling providence and a faith firmly rooted and grasping tenaciously the promises of God. Thus we are reminded that our faith must be firmly embedded in Christ Jesus and sustained by the Word of God, the water of truth, and so take the same stand of righteousness by faith as did Joseph.

Jesus assures us that he is "the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6) "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14) We should always seek to draw water

from "the wells of salvation."—Isa. 12:3

Joseph was a fruitful bough, whose branches run over the wall, suggesting unlimited growth. Imagine a fruit tree by a well with roots reaching down into its bed. A well gets its water not from the surface only; it does not depend entirely on rain; its main resources are from underground streams.

Joseph lived daily by a well-spring, which to him was life indeed. Concerning Jehovah and the promises made to his family, he could say like David, in Psalm 87: 7, "All my springs are in thee." Joseph's constant faith manifested in so many of his experiences beautifully illustrates for us our spiritual life and growth as new creatures in Christ Jesus. Only as we abide in him by faith, and in meditation on his Word and life, can we grow spiritually and produce the fruit our Heavenly Father expects to find in us. Such fruit will honor him, as Jesus disclosed to his disciples in John 15:1-8: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

Let us ever remember that our life as new creatures in Christ is first internal not external. Again, our spiritual life does not first consist in ordinances or activities. The Scriptures say, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:10) Justifying faith is not merely an intellectual conviction of truth. There may be conviction. "Devils also believe, and tremble." (James

2:19) Justifying faith is an operation of the heart, the affection.

Again, spiritual life consists not in outward institutions, but in internal affections. Our spiritual life being within is beautifully illustrated in the palm tree. Its life is in the heart, or center of the trunk, from the roots, not between the bark and the tree trunk, which is usually the case. (Ps. 92:12-14) The center root runs to a spring. You cannot kill the palm tree unless you get at its heart or center. That faith which justifies or assures one of righteousness; the faith that brings a conviction that a seal has been made, a covenant agreed upon, and gives one a deep sense of peace and rest as well as fellowship with God, is an operation of one's heart.

The apostle says, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 14:17) Paul's enumeration of the fruit of the Spirit does not mention a single action, but merely a series of internal emotions: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."—Gal. 5:22

It is true that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Rom. 10:17) The head or intelligence will teach that "the just shall live by faith." (Heb. 10:38) The heart of necessity imbibes the spiritual truths of the Word of God as is so clearly explained in our Heavenly Manna portion for March 15: "The life of faith is an individual matter, as

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well of the heart as of the head. It is far more than an acceptance of doctrine which we consider Scriptural and therefore true; it is the **assimilation** of that which we have proved to be the truth, so that its principles become our principles, and its promises become our inspiration."

We can therefore readily conclude that our spiritual life is first internal, secondly, it is supernatural, and thirdly, it is developed amid the trials and the antagonisms of daily life.

For instance, as to its being supernatural: It is really a miracle because it is manifest that the fruitage acceptable to God emanates from God, and from Christ Jesus and his Word. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63) "Whoso keepeth his Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." (I John 2:5) There are, of course, natural virtues that are quite in order of nature, and which nature, with the assistance of reason and moral sense, has produced. We have read of those who are astonishingly generous, just, temperate, amiable and brave, but lamentably poor of spiritual fortitude and meekness under insult and oppression, not rejoicing under persecution, nor glorying in tribulation, etc., and who belong to a different system of things altogether—a system that reverses the order of nature in the heart of man, particularly imperfect man.

The ability to rejoice in tribulation is due to a power above nature which the Israelites under the Law

of Moses were never called upon to experience, like the true Christian. Their Law was an "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."—Exod. 21:24, 25

David was within his right, according to the Law of Moses, when he requested the destruction of his enemies. For us, Jesus taught, "Love your enemies, . . . do good to them that hate you." (Matt. 5:44) It was David's faith and confidence in his God that enabled him to endure the cursing of Shimei without retaliation.—II Sam. 16:5-14

Living, active faith in God and his Word is a virtue of the heart. The Apostle Paul explains that it is the power which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13) "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin: but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Rom. 8:10) "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."—Col. 3:3

It is the fruitage of growth in spiritual powers that we are exhorted to produce by wholehearted submission and obedience to God. Through the Lord's grace and Holy Spirit, begotten within, we are renewed in the spirit of our minds. We are transformed. (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23) It is those virtues which are the product of the Holy Spirit within us that will enable us to manifest the fruitage that God is looking for in us as followers of his dear Son—fruitful branches of the true vine. (John 15:1-8) "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy

and beloved, bowels [a heart] of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing, and forgiving one another, . . . and above all these things put on love."—Col. 3:12-14

Fruitage of character is developed amid the trials and antagonisms of daily life, especially so as the roots of faith and hope are well bedded in the wellspring, Christ. We can discern this worked out in varying particulars. Think of the words of Jesus: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." (Matt. 5:5) Who are meek? Where is meekness seen? When is there scope for manifesting meekness? Only in circumstances of irritation and provocation. There is no experience for meekness in a hermitage where the will is never thwarted or where there are none of the jars and collisions of daily life. There is no manifestation of meekness without antagonism.

The apostle exhorts to "put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities"; that is, the great Adversary, the god of this world; "against powers," the emissaries of Satan with powers to oppose, deceive, and discourage the church of Christ; "against the rulers of the darkness of this world"—those human agents with overriding influence against all goodness and righteousness—"against spiritual wickedness in high places"—ecclesiastical leaders of the people in matters of worship

and doctrine, whose work is to build up organisations and systems of religion contrary to scriptural teaching. All these things are carnal to the follower of Jesus Christ and his Word, antagonistic to faith, hope and love in him.—Eph. 6:11-17; Col. 2:3; Eph. 4:26, 27, 32

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5:7) Mercy is not merely goodness or forgiveness, but goodness in the face of demerit. Mercy presupposes wrong done against one which might be taken advantage of to punish, but does not punish. Mercy is toward the unthankful and the evil, and can only manifest itself when it comes into collision with such. God is merciful. The Lord is longsuffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, abundant in goodness and truth. (Exod. 34:7) "Be ye therefore merciful," says Jesus, "as your Father also is merciful."—Luke 6:36

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:3) This implies the loss of conceit with one's own strength, goodness, and wisdom, to feel that apart from God's grace we are nothing. It is to realise that our best resolves are like stubble. The Apostle Paul confesses: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."—Rom. 7:18

This is the grace—"poor in spirit" that lies at the foundation of all other graces and which is matured and confirmed as we meet the antagonisms of our daily life in the

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overcoming spirit of the apostle as expressed in Romans 8:36, 37: "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Joseph was truly an example of faith, and a fruitful bough in all his experiences through life. A fruitful bough by a well, whose branches (extension of trial and persecution) ran over the wall (radiated light and truth to others). The archers sorely grieved him and hated him, and shot at him; but his bow (power of service) was made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.—Gen. 49:23, 24

Therefore, brethren, the secret of our quest: fruitage in Christ, life in Christ Jesus, is not merely the blossoms of profession or confession that we are Christ's. It begins with faith in his redeeming sacrifice on our behalf, and sincerity fostered with real heart throbbings for Christ and his Word. It continues with a desire to be like him in all his virtues.

As this new mind and heart, urge and thought, clothes itself in co-operation, or as collaborators, with God in these virtues of Christ, growth in foliage and fruit is inevitable. Then all that is essential to the great husbandman in intellectual appreciation and understanding of truth will be yours: For he that willeth to do his will shall know of the teaching.—John 7:17

Jesus was ever seeking to make these matters clear to his disciples, to earnest inquirers such as Nicodemus, to the rich young ruler, to scribes and Pharisees, and to all receiving his words of life. To Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again;" to the young man running to him and saying, "What must I do?" Jesus said (paraphrasing) "If you are sincere in your enquiry, go sell all you have, dispose of that, and then follow me." The woman putting in her mite at the temple, put in more than they all; she put in all her living. Jesus labored continually to clarify his position in contrast to their known Law of Moses, contrasting the letter or external observances, and the expressions of the heart from within.

The life is more than meat. Life is more than nutriment for the body, and the body more than raiment. The vessel containing life, the inner self, or heart, emotions, is to be cherished more than outward adornment. Let us "labor not for the meat which perisheth," but for that which abideth unto eternal life.—John 6:27; I John 2:3-6; John 15:9-12; Eph. 4:31, 32; Heb. 13:20, 21

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."—John 15:8



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THREEPENNY BOOKLETS—2/6 per dozen
Spiritualism; Jesus, the World's Savior; Hope for a Fear-filled World; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; Armageddon; Does God Answer Prayer?; Your Adversary the Devil; The Light of the World; The Church; Born of the Spirit;

What Can a Man Believe?; The Blood of the Atonement; Divine Healing; The Day of Judgment.

SIX PENNY BOOKLETS

Our Lord's Return; God's Plan; The Truth About Hell; God and Reason; Hope Beyond the Grave; Creation; A Royal Nation; Chosen People; When a Man Dies.

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS

"Behold Your King" (Cloth)—2/6; (Paper)—1/3

Daily Heavenly Manna—(Cloth)—2/6; (de luxe)—6/3

Hymns of Dawn (Cloth)—5/- each; without music, 1/3

Tabernacle Shadows (Cloth)—2/6 each.

The Everlasting Gospel—8d each; 7/6 per dozen.

Hope (Consolation booklet)—1/2 a dozen.

"Songs in the Night"—2/6

Our Most Holy Faith—10/-

God's Promises Come True—10/-

The Book of Books (Cloth)—5/-

The 1956 General Convention

Bloomington, Indiana, AUGUST 4-10

THE Program Committee for the 1956 General Convention of Bible Students now has the outline of the program arranged and we are able to present a preview of some of its main features. As we examine this first draft of the program it becomes evident that rich blessings are in store for those who attend, and it is the hope of the committee that as many as possible will avail themselves of this opportunity to fellowship with those of like precious faith in order to gain spiritual strength for their continued walk in the narrow way and be prepared to help others when they return home.

As we glance over the proposed program we notice first of all the theme text—"With us is the Lord our God to help." (II Chronicles 32:8) Instantly these words convey the assurance that the Lord is with his people, that he will help them in their every time of need. The Lord's people have always been a very small minority in the world, a minority which is very much out of place in a pleasure-mad, self-seeking society which is almost wholly under the domination of Satan. But this theme text encouragingly reminds us that we have the greatest of all helpers by our side, that greater is he who is for us than all they which be against us.

The reassuring words of this text were spoken by Hezekiah, one of the good kings of Judah, at a time when the Assyrian army, under the command of Sennacherib, was threatening to destroy Jerusalem and enslave the people of Judah. Hezekiah had made all the preparations he could to defend the city and the people. "He set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them, saying, Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: with him is the arm of flesh; but with

us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles."—II Chron. 32:6-8

The position of the Lord's people throughout the Gospel age is very different from what it was during the Jewish age, although it is none the less precarious. Our enemies do not consist of kings and armies such as threatened Jerusalem in the days of Hezekiah. It is as new creatures in Christ Jesus that we fight the "good fight of faith." We wrestle not against "flesh and blood," but "against principalities, against powers" of a spiritual nature, unseen by the eye of flesh, but subtle and powerful.—Eph. 6:10-13

Satan is our chief enemy, and willing co-workers with him are the world and our own fallen flesh. This makes a formidable lineup of intrigue and strength, one against which we would be hopelessly inadequate to fight victoriously should we depend upon our own wisdom and strength. But, as it was with Judah of old, so it is today—"With us is the Lord our God to help." This being true, we can go forward in the Christian warfare with courage, certain of victory through him.

Hezekiah said to the people of Judah that with the king of Assyria was the "arm of flesh." He had a huge army—185,000 men—a mighty "arm of flesh" indeed. (II Kings 19:35) But this army was as nothing in comparison with the strength and resources of the Lord. At times we, too, may be inclined to depend upon the "arm of flesh." That is to say, we may be prone to depend upon our own resources in coping with the various complex and threatening situations which from time to time confront us. Being proud of our own supposed wisdom we may not realize the need of the Lord's guidance. No matter what form our "arm of flesh" may take, we cannot afford to put our trust in it. As we sometimes sing, "The arm of flesh will fail you; ye dare not trust your own."

We are told that the people "rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah, king of Judah." The marginal translation says that they "leaned" upon his words. In other words, they believed what their king said, and put their faith in the Lord. And it was not in vain. Later, when this mighty Assyrian army was encamped near Jerusalem, and an ultimatum had been given demanding the surrender of the city, Hezekiah and Isaiah prayed to the Lord, and he sent an angel and destroyed the entire host in one night.—II Chron. 32:20, 21

"With us is the Lord our God to help." This is still true of the

THE DAWN

Lord's people. While our enemies attack in a different way, we too have our guardian angels, those "ministering spirits" which are sent forth by God to serve those "who shall be heirs of salvation"—the "great salvation, which began to be spoken by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Heb. 1:14; 2:3) If the people of Judah could lean upon the words of Hezekiah assuring them that the Lord would help his people, should we not trust fully all those words of the Lord by which he has guaranteed to us that his ear is ever open to our cry, and that his limitless resources are available as needed to give us victory? And, since God is for us, who can be against us!

Instead of the customary theme address on Sunday morning, four brethren have been assigned to discuss different ways by which the Lord helps his people, and some of the circumstances in which they particularly need his help. He helps us, for example, through our personal study of his Word, and in our fellowship with his people, especially in meetings where we study his Word together.

The Lord also helps his people through their daily experiences and his providential overruling of all their affairs. The more we watch for his leadings in all of life's experiences, the more fully we will realize how wonderfully he is dealing with us, how our every step is overshadowed by love, and directed by his wisdom.

We also obtain the Lord's help through watchfulness and prayer. The Lord may daily be doing wonderful things for us, yet we are unaware of it unless we are spiritually alert and watchful. In Gethsemane Jesus said to his disciples, "Watch and pray." Watchfulness and prayer are closely associated. The more we go to the Lord in prayer, the better able we will be to discern the gentle, loving, and wise manner in which he is directing our steps. Lack of faithfulness on our part will lead to discipline, but even his corrective "rod" will "comfort" us if we are rightly exercised.

We have entered into a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice. We sacrifice our time, our strength, our all, in the service of the Lord. We sacrifice the flesh and its interests, but this is not pleasing to the flesh—indeed, it is quite contrary to our natural desires. For the new mind to insist on a continued course of sacrificing the interests of the flesh, it needs to be strengthened by the Lord. And the Lord does give his people strength to continue in the narrow way of sacrifice. Of Jesus we are told that for the "joy that was set before him"

he "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."—Heb. 12:2

The Lord has set a "joy" before us also. It is the anticipation of being associated with Jesus in the great kingdom work of restoring mankind to life. It is also the anticipation of being with Jesus, and with our Heavenly Father, where there will be "fulness" of joy throughout the endless ages of eternity. The prospect is indeed transporting, and makes us realize that the "light afflictions" which we may now experience as we sacrifice the flesh are but "for a moment," and that they are working out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—II Cor. 4:17, 18

Methods of Service

On Sunday evening there will be a witness work discussion, with audience participation. We often hear brethren say that they would like to have some part in the work, but wonder what there is for them to do. We trust that the Sunday evening session of the convention will help many along this line.

The pilgrim service will be discussed. Most of the friends might say, Well, the pilgrim service is not for me. Yet the pilgrim visits do provide opportunities for service along various lines. Public meetings may be arranged. Special efforts can be made to get in touch with those who are interested, but for one reason or another do not attend the meetings regularly. The discussion Sunday evening will reveal various ways in which the visit of a pilgrim brother affords opportunities of service.

There will also be a discussion of tract distribution. This phase of the service is increasing, and the brethren participating are being richly blessed. It is the hope of the convention committee that the discussion of tract distribution will encourage many to become more active in this branch of the harvest work.

Closely allied with tract distribution is the mailing of consolation folders to relatives of the deceased. There are many who are not familiar with this method of dispensing the truth. We are glad that it will be discussed at the convention.

Then there is the follow-up work, that is, calling upon those who, through response to the radio programs, or in other ways, have shown some interest in the truth. This is a blessed service, and it is hoped that many more will be encouraged to take part in it.

THE DAWN

Public meetings are still being blessed by the Lord. And here again many besides the brother who gives the lecture are given an opportunity to serve in connection with a public meeting. The matter of proper halls and effective advertising will be included in the discussion of this method of proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom.

One of the newer branches of the work is the Dawn Recorded Lecture Service. We learned recently of one of these recorded lectures being relayed to an invalid in a hospital over the telephone. This suggests the variety of ways in which this service can be used to further promote the truth. The discussion at the convention on Sunday evening will point up more of the details concerning it.

Our Most Holy Faith

On Monday evening of the convention nine brethren will outline important doctrines of the divine plan, beginning with the creation of man, and ending with the "times of restitution." The truth has satisfied our longings as nothing else could do, and it is the thought of the convention committee that one session of the convention could not be more profitably used than to remind the brethren again of the beauty, harmony, and grandeur of the divine plan of the ages.

Radio and Television

The Tuesday evening session carries the heading, "Radio and Television Reports and Prospects." Since the radio work is international in scope, and whatever extent television is used will call for the co-operation of the brethren generally, the General Convention affords an excellent opportunity to report what is being done in these fields of service, and what the prospects for the future may be. This session should be, and we believe will be, one of the highlights of the convention.

Other Sessions

Another blessed session will be the immersion service. There will also be a well advertised public lecture—a service which is always an inspiration to the brethren. There will be more than twenty-five discourses, five testimony meetings, and eleven praise services. A unique session of the convention is listed under the heading, "The Convention Speaks." It is designed to get the brethren better acquainted with one another. The committee believes that in this session expressions of love for the Lord, the truth, and the

brethren will be given by many who never before have been heard at a convention. The convention theme song will be Hymn 272, "Stand Up for Jesus."

As in former years, daily meetings will be held for the children—juvenile and intermediate groups—and also for the teenagers. Thus parents bringing their families to the convention may be assured that they, too, will be able to participate, gaining further knowledge of God and of his Word.

Application for Rooms

An application blank for room reservations will be found on page 63. It is important that your application for reservations be sent in by July 23 for it is upon the basis of the number of these applications that food purchases are made for the convention week. We urge the brethren to co-operate in this respect to the fullest extent possible. The dormitory assigned for the convention this year is the same as last, namely, Smithwood Hall. It has four wings, and those applying for reservations will be informed in advance the wing in which their rooms are located. If for any reason you are unable to apply for a reservation prior to July 23, you will still be taken care of if you find that you can attend.

So, brethren, we suggest that you determine now that you will attend the General Convention this year. It will be an experience of joy in the Lord which you will never forget. With crisis conditions in the world continuously becoming more acute, we do not know from year to year just what our future privileges in this connection may be. Whether or not we can attend this year, let us all earnestly pray for the convention and all its arrangements, that the Lord may be glorified, and his people blessed.

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JUNE 7—"The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."—I Pet. 5:10 (Z. '95-202. Hymn 286)

JUNE 14—"God resisteth the proud, and

giveth grace to the humble."—I Pet. 5:5 (Z. '96-19. Hymn 322)

JUNE 21—"Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."—Matt. 11:29 (Z. 96-79. Hymn 44)

JUNE 28—"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil."—Prov. 3:7 (Z. 96-263. Hymn 177)

Television Program Appreciated

Dear Brethren: On April 14 it was our privilege to hear and see your television program at 10:30 A. M., over channel 7, Chicago, Illinois. It was remarkably clear and distinct. The message was to the point, and spoken by all concerned in a way that only good students of the Bible are able to do. The reading of the passages of Scripture covering the thoughts expressed in the questions and answers made each point more clear, which of course, was the necessary thing to do. Some thought it would have been an improvement if the Bible texts could have been enlarged on the screen to enable the public to read them with the one who read them on the program.* The program was very good, and we enjoyed it all. It seemed so real. What a wonderful day awaits this crumbling old

*(Our original plan was to have the Scripture texts appear on the TV screens sufficiently enlarged to be readable. However, since many television screens are quite small, this was not practical. It was pointed out also, that nearly every one reads at a different speed, and that some would be ahead of the "voice" on the program, and some behind, which would be somewhat confusing, and probably result in the viewers not getting such a clear impression of the text as by simply listening, with nothing to distract. We appreciate this, and other suggestions. It is a new undertaking, and we hope to find many ways of improving the presentations as time goes on—if it be the Lord's will: Editors.)

world when all will sit silently and hear the good Word, and all with ears of understanding. May God bless you in your work. Most sincerely in Christian love.—Ill.

Has Full Assurance

Dear Friends: I read The Dawn Magazine in conjunction with the Bible and find it my only association with fellow members of the church. Yes, I attend a local church (Presbyterian) and have been an active member for about five years, and an elder for about four years. In all this time I have yet to meet and know a person who is consecrated and a follower of Christ as we of The Dawn believe we should be. I have studied very carefully what I believe to be the truth. I have accepted the complete plan of God as taught by The Dawn. I still consider myself very young (about six years from my consecration) and unlearned, but with a great deal of careful study of the Word behind me, I have undisputable reason in my own mind that I have been called by God and that my consecration has been accepted. Would you please find time to answer one question that has been on my mind, which is this: Should I withdraw from the nominal church now and its activities, or wait for the Lord to separate me from them? Your answer will be greatly appreciated and carefully considered, and I will look for guidance from the Lord. Your brother in Christ.—Mich.

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

Gift Subscription Brings Blessing

"Dear "Frank and Ernest": Our daughter sent in our subscription last year, and we like The Dawn Magazine so well that we are subscribing again, even though it takes almost our last penny to do so. We have some of your other literature also. . . . We first learned the truth twenty-nine years ago, and have been studying and preaching it whenever possible ever since. There is a company of . . . about twenty miles from us and we have been studying with them for a number of years. But things there now are not as they should be, and about thirty of us have stopped going. . . . So far we agree with what The Dawn Magazine teaches. It is the same as we first learned it twenty-nine years ago. . . . We listen to "Frank and Ernest" every Sunday whenever possible. Please send us the "Plan Book." There are no Bible Students near us so far as we know, but we are with you all the way.—Minn.

No Longer Confused

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I felt I must write and thank you for the books you sent me some time ago, on subjects I couldn't understand. I have bought most of your books, but have passed them on to friends, so enclosed you will find money order for another supply. I gave five of the booklets to a preacher, with an understanding that after reading them he would come back and explain wherein they are wrong. That was six months ago, and he has not come back. I am so thankful for the truth, and for the

wonderful work you are doing. Will you please send me a supply of any free literature you have, so I can in a small way pass this truth on to others. My husband also loves to hear you on the radio each Sunday. May God bless you and the work of the truth. Yours in Christ."—North Carolina

Not "Evil Servants"

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I received your letter inviting me to buy the book, "The Divine Plan of the Ages." I have one of these books, and I read it very much. It is an old copy, but I think it is the same. You have two books which I am ordering now and I will be ordering more later on. I like The Dawn Magazine, and I always pass it on to someone I think will read it. I was baptized by the . . . in 1949, and have had Bible studies with them, and have worked with them, but I am staying with the Bible. If someone else is telling God's great plan, as I know you are doing, I cannot say you are "evil servants." I still have Bible studies each week, but not with them. May God bless you.—Ohio

Appreciates Facts

Dear Sirs: I would appreciate your sending me a copy of your magazine, The Dawn. I have been listening to your programs with interest. They are educational, and the most logical explanations of the Bible I have ever been privileged to listen to. Keep up the good work! People like to listen to facts and explanations such as you present.—Canada

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

HENRY E. ANDERSON		
Providence, R. I.	June	3
Asbury Park, N. J.		10
SAMUEL BAKER		
Sonora, Calif.	May	30, 31
Sacramento, Calif.	June	1, 3
Fallon, Nev.		4, 5
Stockton, Calif.		6, 7
Fresno, Calif.		8, 10
San Luis Obispo, Calif.		11, 12
Glendale, Calif.		13
Covina, Calif.		14
Bell Gardens, Calif.		15
Riverside, Calif. (Morning)		17
Ontario, Calif. (Afternoon)		17
Los Angeles, Calif. (116 St.)		19
Long Beach, Calif.		20
San Fernando, Calif.		21
Whittier, Calif.		22
Santa Ana, Calif. (Morning)		24
Los Angeles, Calif. (Afternoon)		24
Huntington Park, Calif.		26
El Monte, Calif.		27
Los Angeles, Calif. (S. W.)		28
Los Angeles, Calif.	July	1-4
NICK BARACOS		
East Liverpool, Ohio	June	17
JULIUS BEDNARZ		
Jackson, Mich.	June	3
Detroit, Mich.	June 29-July	1
FRED A. BRIGHT		
New Haven, Conn. (Morning) ..	June	24
Waterbury, Conn. (Afternoon)		24
J. BURTON BROWN		
San Jose, Calif.	June	16
San Francisco, Calif.		17
EUGENE BURNS		
Allentown, Pa.	June	2, 3
ALFRED BURNS		
New Brunswick, N. J.	June	17
JENS COPELAND		
Saginaw, Mich.	June	10
RUSSELL DEAN		
Allentown, Pa.	June	2, 3
York, Pa. (Morning)		10
Lancaster, Pa. (Afternoon)		10
ORLANDO D. DEIFER		
Hazleton, Pa.	June	10
THOMAS C. FAY		
San Diego, Calif.	June	10
IRVING C. FOSS		
Whittier, Calif.	June	17
PANTEL HATGIS		
Phoenix, Ariz.	June	2, 3
WILLIAM J. HOLLISTER		
Pittsburgh, Pa.	June	6
West Newton, Pa.		8
Dayton, Ohio		10
Columbus, Ohio		13
Cleveland, Ohio		17
Toledo, Ohio		19
Grand Rapids, Mich.		21
Saginaw, Mich.		24
London, Ont., Can.		27
Detroit, Mich.	June 29-July	1
LEVI JACOBS		
New Brunswick, N. J.	June	17
GEORGE M. JEUCK		
Paterson, N. J.	June	10
PETER KOLLIMAN		
New Brunswick, N. J.	June	17
ARTHUR H. KRUMPOLT		
Wilmington, Del. (Morning) ..	June	10
Philadelphia, Pa. (Afternoon)		10
Reading, Pa.		24
RAYMOND J. KRUPA		
Allentown, Pa.	June	2, 3
Detroit, Mich.	June 29-July	1
C. STUART LIVERMORE		
New Bedford, Mass.	June	24
LUDLOW P. LOOMIS		
Mahanoy City, Pa.	June	10
Catawissa, Pa.		24
JOHN Y. MAC AULAY		
Cape Breton Is. area ..	May 27-June	1
St. John's, Nfld.	June	3-30
ADAM MISKAWITZ		
Milwaukee, Wis.	June	10
MARTIN C. MITCHELL		
Allentown, Pa.	June	2, 3

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Wallingford, Conn. (Morning)	10
Bridgeport, Conn. (Afternoon)	10

ROY E. MITCHELL

Groton-New London, Conn. .. June	16, 17
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FRED MUNDELL

Allentown, Pa. June	2, 3
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EVERETT MURRAY

Columbus, Ohio	May 31
Allentown, Pa. June	2, 3
Lewistown, Pa.	4
Steubenville, Ohio	5

LEON H. NORBY

Baltimore, Md. June	24
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ADOLPH OBENLAND

St. Petersburg, Fla. June	17
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GUSTIN P. OSTRANDER

Cleveland, Ohio	May 31
Elyria, Ohio	June 1
Jackson, Mich.	3
Adrian, Mich.	4
Grand Rapids, Mich.	5, 6
Flint, Mich.	7
Saginaw, Mich.	8, 10
London, Ont., Can.	12
Toronto, Ont., Can.	13, 17
Orillia, Ont., Can.	14, 15

HARRY PASSIOS

New Centerville, Pa. June	10
Shadyside, Ohio	17
Monessen, Pa.	24

E. K. PENROSE

New Centerville, Pa. June	10
Ebensburg, Pa.	14
Wilmington, Del.	15
New Brunswick, N. J.	17
Millfield, Ohio	24
Detroit, Mich. June 29-July	1

LEO POST

Gary, Ind. June	17
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KENNETH W. RAWSON

Allentown, Pa. June	2, 3
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BERT ROSE

Jackson, Mich. June	3
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ALBERT SHEPPLEBAUM

La Salle, Ill. June	17
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CHESTER A. SUNDBOM

Chicago, Ill. May	27
Indianapolis, Ind.	28

Muncie, Ind.	29
Piqua, Ohio	30
Toledo, Ohio	31

AUGUST SWANSON

Kent, Wash. May	29
Seattle, Wash. June	3
Bremerton, Wash.	4
Allyn, Wash.	5
Tacoma, Wash.	6
Portland, Ore.	7
Salem, Ore.	8
Albany, Ore.	10
Chico, Calif.	12
Sacramento, Calif.	13

J. I. VAN HORNE

Duquesne, Pa. June	3
New Centerville, Pa.	10

CLAUDE R. WEIDA

Nanticoke, Pa. June	24
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GEORGE M. WILSON

Pittsburgh, Pa. June	24
Columbus, Ohio	27
Toledo, Ohio	28
Detroit, Mich. June 29-July	1

W. NORMAN WOODWORTH

Allentown, Pa. June	2, 3
Baltimore, Md.	24
Los Angeles, Calif. July	1-4

ERNEST G. WYLAM

Millfield, Ohio area June	22-24
Shadyside, Ohio	25, 26
Steubenville, Ohio	27
East Liverpool, Ohio	28
Connellsville, Pa.	29
Pittsburgh, Pa. July	1
Piqua, Ohio	2

CHRISTIAN W. ZAHNOW

St. Louis, Mo. June	1, 3
Mattoon, Ill.	4
Champaign, Ill.	5
La Salle, Ill.	6, 7
Clinton, Iowa-Albany, Ill. area	8, 10
Elkader, Iowa	11-13
Ostrander, Minn.	14
Austin, Minn.	15
Minneapolis, Minn.	17, 18
Parkers Prairie, Minn.	19
Fergus Falls, Minn.	20
Buxton, N. D.	21
Winnipeg, Man. area	22-26
Portage La Prairie, Man., Can.	27
Regina, Sask., Can.	28, 29
Moose Jaw, Sask., Can. July	1

CONVENTIONS

For Mutual Fellowship, Edification, and Service

ALLENTOWN, PA., June 2, 3—Convention opens Saturday morning at 10:30 o'clock in the Odd Fellows Hall, 118 N. Ninth Street. For accommodations and other information, write the secretary, Mrs. Orlando D. Deifer, 747 E. Wyoming Street, Allentown, Pa.

ALBANY, ORE., June 3—3596 Bernard Street.

JACKSON, MICH., June 3—Convention opens at 9:45 o'clock in the Gymnasium Room of the YWCA, 298 West Michigan Avenue.

NEW CENTERVILLE, PA., June 10—Convention will be held in the Firemen's Hall. Tea and coffee will be served. For other details, write the secretary, Mrs. Raymond Siesky, R.F.D. 3, Box 105, Connelville, Pa.

SAGINAW, MICH., June 10—Convention opens at 10:00 o'clock in the Woman's Club, 311 N. Jefferson Street.

CLEVELAND, OHIO, June 17—Convention will open at 9:30 o'clock in the YMCA Building, Prospect Avenue and East 22nd Street.

NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J., June 17—Convention opens at 9:30 o'clock in the YMCA Building, Corner of George and Livingston Streets. Lunch will be served by the Ecclesia.

SALEM, ORE., June 17—Convention opens at 11:00 o'clock at 2339 State Street.

BALTIMORE, MD., June 24—For details regarding this one-day gathering, please write to the secretary, Mr. J. H. L. Trautfelder, 505 West University Parkway, Baltimore 10, Md.

CHICAGO, ILL., June 24—Convention opens at 10:00 o'clock at 910 N. La Salle Street.

MILLFIELD, OHIO, June 24—The friends in this area have planned for a one day gathering

to be held in the First Methodist Church, and the opening service will be at 11:00 o'clock. Further details may be obtained by writing to the secretary, Miss Doris Sams, R.F.D. 4, Box 130, Athens, Ohio.

DETROIT, MICH., June 29, 30, July 1—Convention will be held in the YWCA Building, 2230 Witherell, beginning at 7:00 p.m., Friday evening. A baptismal service is being arranged and any desiring to be immersed, will please notify the secretary in advance. The Detroit friends will accommodate as many of the visiting friends as possible. Meals will be served during the convention. For further information and room reservations, write the secretary, Mr. Walter Blicharz, Jr., 19300 Braille, Detroit 19, Mich.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF., July 1-4—All sessions of this twenty-first annual convention will be held in the Unitarian Community Center, 2936 West 8th Street, near Vermont Avenue. An immersion service is planned for those who wish to symbolize their consecration. Advance room reservations are desirable and should specify length of stay, type of beds, as well as time and mode of arrival, and any other information that will be helpful in providing the kind of accommodations desired. All reservation requests should be addressed to the secretary, Mr. A. W. Abrahamson, 2816 West 83rd Street, Inglewood 4, Calif.

RINDGE, N. H., July 7—Meeting at Cathedral in the Pines, Saturday at 2:30 o'clock, weather permitting. Details in July Dawn.

GENERAL CONVENTION, BLOOMINGTON, IND., August 4-10.

LABOR DAY COVENTIONS: New York, N. Y., Cincinnati, Ohio, Minneapolis, Minn., Saginaw, Mich., San Diego, Calif., Seattle, Wash.

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION
INDIANA UNIVERSITY, BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

August 4 to August 10, 1956

ENTIRE CONVENTION WILL BE HOUSED IN SMITHWOOD HALL

I (we) will want _____ space (s) reserved for the convention.

I (we) will arrive on _____ and leave _____

My (our) exact reservation is as follows: (Cross out **each** square you will be here: breakfast, lunch, supper, and overnight. For example, if you plan to attend the entire convention, cross out every square beginning with supper on Saturday, August 4 and ending with lunch on Friday, August 10. Or, if you are coming Sunday afternoon, mark out supper and overnight on that day and all the others through lunch on Friday.)

[illegible]

List below the name and address of **each** person for whom this reservation is being made:

Send this form, after it is completely filled in, to:

**Indiana University Conference Bureau,
Union Building, Bloomington, Indiana.**

This should be mailed not later than July 23, 1956.

RATES PER PERSON, INCLUDING MEALS

ADULTS: \$5.60 per day (two in a room). \$6.10 per day (one in a room).

CHILDREN: Two through eleven, \$2.05 per day.

Twelve through eighteen, \$3.35 per day.

Towels will not be furnished to children.

Rooms are furnished with two single beds—no bunk beds.

All bedding will be furnished by the University.

**(A one dollar Registration charge will be made for all persons
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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 wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35