

a herald of Christ's presence

THE **DAWN**

"IF YE THEN  
BE RISEN  
WITH CHRIST"

*Colossians 3:1*

april • 1955

**this month  
in the  
DAWN**

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**ON THE RADIO • COAST TO COAST**

- APRIL 3 "The Savior Dies"  
 10 "Christ Is Risen"  
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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. Network stations in Washington, D. C.; Orlando, Florida; Portland, Oregon; Bellingham, Olympia, Wenatchee, and Yakima, Washington use the programs one week later than the above schedule.

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## Go Ye Also into the Vineyard

THE invitation to labor in the Lord's "vineyard" has been extended to the consecrated in every part of the age, and is still beckoning into service those who have time and talent to be used. Today there are many opportunities to serve the Lord: distribution of tracts, following up the radio effort by personal calls and public meetings, and colporteur work. The opportunities are many and golden. Write to us for further details.

There also are openings for work at The Dawn headquarters, particularly for unmarried and unencumbered brethren under thirty years of age who would like to volunteer for a two-year period of service with us. When applying for this service please give full particulars concerning your health, experience, and background. Address your letters to The Dawn, Vineyard Service, East Rutherford, N. J.

**THE MEMORIAL DATE:** The proper time this year for commemorating the death of our Lord is after 6 o'clock, Tuesday evening, April 5. May the hearts of the Lord's people be closely drawn to him on that night.

### THE GENERAL CONVENTION

The date for the General Convention this year is July 30—August 5. It will be held at the Indiana State University at Bloomington, Indiana. Further details will be published in the May issue of The Dawn.

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## Studies in the Scriptures

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**DAWN PUBLICATIONS**

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**NEW JERSEY**

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# The Day of the Lord

**“But of the times and seasons brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction shall come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.”—I Thessalonians 5:1-4**

**S**INCE our first parents transgressed God’s law more than six thousand years ago sin and selfishness have dominated in the affairs of men, leading to unhappiness, pain, and death. The Bible likens this long period to a night-time, when “darkness” covers the earth and “gross darkness the people.” (Isa. 60:2) Through the Bible, nevertheless, the Lord promises that the darkness of sin and death will not last forever. Through the prophet David, the Lord says, “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”—Ps. 30:5

During the pitch darkness of this long night of sin, sorrow, and death the noble-minded of the human race have longed for the coming of “day,” and the sages have tried to assure them that a “golden age” will dawn in which truth, righteousness, peace, health, and life will be enthroned, and when the evils which now plague mankind will be no more. There have been

times when it would seem that this new day of joy was about to dawn, and the hopes of many have been lifted high, only to be dashed to the ground by the cruel logic of unexplained failure.

Throughout the “night,” however, the great God of the universe, who is the God of the Bible and of Christianity, has had his representatives in the earth, and through them has borne testimony to the fact that the “morning” will come, that sin, suffering, and death are not to continue forever. The prophets of the Old Testament were among these servants of God. They wrote as they were moved by his Spirit, and their united testimony harmoniously foretold that a great Deliverer was coming, One who would speak peace to the nations, destroy sin and death, and wipe away the tears from all faces.—Isa. 25:8

To Abraham this great One was to be his “seed,” an offspring through whom all the families of

the earth would be blessed. (Gen. 12:3) The Lord caused Moses to prophesy the coming of One who would be like unto him, a great deliverer and lawgiver. (Deut. 18:4) Isaiah wrote, "Unto us a child is born and unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."—Isa. 9:6, 7

Certain promises of God gave the Israelites reason to believe that his purpose would be fulfilled through their nation, so they waited longingly for the promised One to arise and do for them and through them all that had been promised. In the days of King Solomon the nation rose to a high pinnacle of fame and glory, and doubtless many then thought that the morning of prophecy was near and that soon the darkness of the night would be dispelled.

But their hopes were dashed. Following the death of King Solomon the kingdom was divided, and after a few generations the larger segment was taken captive into Assyria, and the smaller into Babylon. To the last king of Judah, that "wicked prince of Israel," the Prophet Ezekiel said with reference to the rightful rulership of the nation, "It shall be no more until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him." (Ezek. 21:25-27) The One "whose right it is" is the great Messiah and King of the

prophecies, he who was to dispel the darkness of the "night," and bring in the new day of promise. The Prophet Malachi refers to him as the "Sun of Righteousness" who will "arise with healing in his wings."—Mal. 4:2

For seventy years the nation was held captive in Babylon, a captivity which began in 606 B. C. Then King Cyrus of the Medes issued a decree permitting the Israelites to return to their own land, which many of them did. But they were without a king, remaining a vassal nation. Naturally, under such circumstances the devout among them longed for the fulfillment of God's promises concerning the coming of a Messiah. Finally their hopes were lifted. Jesus was born.

An angel announced the birth of Jesus, acclaiming him as the "Savior" and "Christ," or Messiah. (Luke 2:10) The Prophet Simeon referred to Jesus as "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (Luke 2:32) During his maturing years Jesus grew in favor both with God and with man. (Luke 2:52) But when, at the age of thirty he entered upon an active ministry, bitter opposition arose against him which, in three and one-half years, resulted in his crucifixion.

The new King of earth was dead, and his little group of faithful followers were disheartened. Their faith was shaken. They thought the "morning" had come, but now it was darker than ever, for the "Light" which they trusted would

## THE DAWN

bring the day had been extinguished. But they were not left long to grope in darkness, for God raised the King from the dead. They soon became aware of this, and their hopes were renewed.

All during the long nighttime of sin, each disappointment of the Lord's waiting people had led to a better understanding of one or another aspect of his divine plan of salvation. This was so in the case of those first disciples. The resurrected Master appeared to two of them as they journeyed to Emmaus, although they did not at first recognize him. After listening to their sad tale of disappointment in which they said concerning him, "We trusted it was he that should have redeemed [delivered] Israel [from the Roman yoke]," he said to them, "O slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—Luke 24:25, 26

Telling about this experience later the disciples said, "Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, while he opened unto us the Scriptures?" (Luke 24:32) And no wonder! They had failed to realize that the prophecies had foretold the suffering and death of Christ as the Redeemer of the people. They had not known before this that he was to make his soul an offering for sin, and that upon him was to be laid "the iniquity of us all." (Isa. 53: 4-12) They had thought that his death was a great tragedy, proving perhaps that he was not the Mes-

siah at all. But now this stumblingstone to faith had become a further assurance for their faith.

But still all did not seem right. Jesus was so unlike what they had known him to be, and they saw him only occasionally, and then very briefly. The last time they saw him they made bold to ask,

Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" To this question Jesus replied, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."—Acts 1:6-8

Again they were disappointed. They hoped, now that Jesus had been raised from the dead, that deliverance would come, that Israel would be set free, and that the "Light" which was to "lighten the Gentiles" would begin to pierce the darkness of earth's nighttime of sin. But not so. There was a time for this—"times of refreshing" as Peter later explained—but the Lord was withholding from them the knowledge of just when that time would be. Meanwhile, after receiving the Holy Spirit, they were to be witnesses for Christ, a task which, they later discovered, led to suffering, persecution, and oftentimes death.

But the coming of the Holy Spirit gave them further understanding of the divine plan as it centered in Christ. They knew that his com-

mission to go into all the world to preach the Gospel was not for the purpose of converting all nations, but to be a witness to the world, a witness that would be heeded by a few who would respond and become his followers. James described these few as a "people for his name," and explained that after these were taken out of the world then would come the time when the "residue," or remainder, would seek after the Lord.—Acts 15:13-18

Understanding this, they were not discouraged by the hardships which resulted from letting their light shine, but were willing and ready at all times to die for the Master, if need be. When the friends of Paul endeavored to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem where his enemies were plotting against him, he replied, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."—Acts 21:13

Just as the hearts of two of the disciples "burned" with joy when they learned that the suffering and death of Jesus was an essential part of the messianic program, so now they all rejoiced to realize that they had the privilege of sharing in the foretold suffering. Now they understood what Jesus meant when he had invited them to ~~deny~~ themselves and take up their cross and follow him. As Peter explained, they did not think strangely concerning the trials which came upon them, but re-

joiced that they were partakers of Christ's suffering.—I Pet. 4:12, 13

They rejoiced in this because they knew that if faithful through suffering, faithful even unto death, they would be brought forth in the "first resurrection" to live and reign with Christ. (Rev. 20:4) Paul wrote, "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." (II Tim. 2:11, 12) Those first disciples understood that these precious promises were to be fulfilled at the time of Christ's second visit, and that not until then would that glorious kingdom of promise be set up in the earth to dispel the gloom of the long nighttime of sin and death.

It was but natural that those in the Early Church should wish for the early return of their Lord. Paul wrote, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." (Rom. 13:12) Since God was holding an understanding of the times and seasons in his own power, even the apostles had no way of knowing just how long it would be before the morning dawned. Peter wrote that there was a "sure word of prophecy" to which he urged the faithful to take heed, "until the day dawn," and the "day star" arise in their hearts.—II Pet. 1:19

But the apostles did have revealed to them that there would first come a falling away from the faith, and apostasy. Paul mentions this in II Thessalonians 2:3. In our text, taken from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, he speaks of

## THE DAWN

the "day of the Lord" coming "as a thief in the night," but that the brethren would "not be in darkness" concerning it. From this some developed the thought that the Lord had already returned, that the "day of the Lord" therefore had already come. It was to correct this misunderstanding that Paul wrote concerning a great falling away from the faith which would first occur, and that a "man of sin" would be revealed, the "mystery of iniquity."

In keeping with this, and even while the apostles were still living, this falling away from the faith began, although it was largely held back by them while they lived. But soon after their death false teachers entered in among the believers, many arising even among themselves, who perverted the truth of the Gospel, until the "wheat field" of the Lord's planting virtually became a field of "tares." —Matt. 13:18-30; 37-42

The apostasy manifested itself in various ways. Jesus' commission to his disciples to bear witness to the truth among all nations was misconstrued to mean that the conversion and salvation of the world depended upon the efforts of the church. While distorted concepts of Christianity spread throughout Europe and parts of Asia, and later to the western hemisphere, the assumed task of converting the world never even approached accomplishment; and now this humanly inspired undertaking is further from realization than ever before.

Quite apart from the calamitous

events which came upon the world beginning in 1914, the missionary efforts of churchianity were failing. At the close of the nineteenth century there were twice as many heathen in the world as at its beginning, and this despite the fact that it was the century of the greatest missionary efforts since Pentecost. At its beginning large Bible societies were formed, and millions upon millions of copies of the Word of God were circulated among the people of all nations. But the world was not converted.

In Isaiah 55:8-11 the Lord reminds us that his thoughts are higher than our thoughts, and his ways than our ways, and adds that the "Word" which he sends forth does not return void, but accomplishes that for which it is sent. Since, after nearly two thousand years of missionary effort the world is still unconverted, it is evident that millions of the Lord's professed people have had a wrong conception of his plan. The realization of this should now be dawning upon the thoughtful, causing them to re-examine the Bible in an effort to discover wherein their concepts of Christianity have been wrong.

### **The Counterfeit Kingdom**

The foretold falling away from the "faith once delivered unto the saints" occurred along still another line. The attempt to convert the world, limiting the opportunity of salvation to those who believe in this life, was based on the false premise that all the wonderful promises of God concerning a time

when the knowledge of his glory would fill the earth as the waters cover the sea were to be fulfilled through human efforts. The Bible associates these promises with a "kingdom," a powerful government, which was to be set up in the earth; and in the great apostasy from the true faith, the professed followers of the Master attempted to establish this promised kingdom.

This counterfeit of Christ's true kingdom was first set up in Rome through the union of church and state. The darkest period of European history was the centuries during which this unholy alliance ruled the people. The Reformation came, but most of the reformers followed the example of Rome insofar as the union of church and state was concerned; so Christendom, "Christ's kingdom," as set up by man, was divided.

The evils of church-state government are now well known, and quite generally acknowledged, except by the papal hierarchy. It was from these evils that the Founding Fathers of America fled. This counterfeit of Christ's kingdom did not establish peace and good will as the prophecies of the Bible assure us will be accomplished by the true messianic kingdom. Instead, it spawned wars and fomented hate and strife. Realizing this, our forefathers wisely safeguarded the United States against such a system developing here by making union of church and state unconstitutional.

There is no need to labor this point. Regardless of any claims

made for the merits of church-state governments, this attempt to set up Christ's kingdom in the hands of imperfect men, and through it fulfill all the wonderful messianic kingdom promises, has failed. It has failed so completely that the word Christendom itself, a word that was coined to describe what was claimed to be Christ's kingdom, is now seldom used. Even in Italy, where the unchaste church of Rome first committed spiritual fornication with the kings of the earth, the kings have been ousted and a republic has taken their place.

The system still functions nominally in some European countries, but nowhere is it a real power in human affairs. And in this time of world crisis, no responsible individual or group is openly recommending a return to church-state governments as a solution to the problems which confront the distressed nations and people of the earth. So, again, the failure of misconceived human efforts calls for a re-examination of God's Word to discover his real plan.

But many fail to do this, with the result that they lose faith in the glorious promises which describe a "morning of joy" in human experience, to be ushered in by divine intervention through the establishment of the real kingdom of Christ. They think of such a viewpoint as being nothing more than a "utopian dream," having no foundation in fact and no possibility of fulfillment. So the world goes on in despair, trying one remedy after another,

## THE DAWN

but failing to find a solution for the distressing problems which threaten its complete destruction.

The people of God who are moved by Peter's admonition to take heed to the "sure word of prophecy" until "the day dawn" are not perplexed over these failures of human efforts. They know that it was not God's will to convert the world during the present age. They know that the church-state governments of Europe were counterfeits of the real kingdom of Christ, therefore could not endure. Not only are they blessed now with this knowledge, but saw in advance, and proclaimed publicly, that the "kingdoms of this world" would crash in a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."—Rev. 11:15-18; Dan. 12:1

To the Lord's people the long-promised "day of the Lord" is now dawning, but, as the prophecies reveal, it is dawning amidst "clouds and thick darkness," making it to begin with "a day of darkness and of gloominess." (Joel 2:1, 2) It is this aspect of the "day of the Lord" that is referred to in our text. So far as the world is concerned, it has come as a "thief in the night"; that is, unexpectedly.

And how true this has been! As the twentieth century dawned there were high hopes in the minds and hearts of millions that so-called Christian civilization was rapidly moving forward. This viewpoint is well emphasized by the fact that a well-known church paper changed its name to "**The Christian Century**," in the belief that within the hundred years then beginning the

cherished hopes of Christendom for peace on earth and a world converted to Christ would mature into reality.

How wrong this viewpoint was! The wise men of the world, still thinking that God wanted them to bring in the promised reign of righteousness, did not know that the real King of earth was already present, that the "day of the Lord" had come in the which the symbolic heavens and earth created by man were to "pass away with a great noise." (II Pet. 3:10) Because they had not given heed to the "sure word of prophecy," the destruction which was to mark the beginning of the "day of the Lord" came upon them as "a thief in the night."

Paul wrote that this would occur when "they" were saying "Peace and safety," and it did. Paul added, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." This also proved to be true. For many years prior to the outbreak of the first World War in 1914, the crushing effects of which are still continuing to destroy "the world that now is," the fact that this "time of trouble" was coming was known and proclaimed the world over by Pastor Russell and his associates.

But they stood alone, and were called prophets of doom. Was not civilization advancing, their critics asked? In the light of increasing knowledge along all lines it was unthinkable, the world said, that a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" could come upon the nations. Instead,

## HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

they insisted, this is to be a century of greatest human triumph. The prophecies of God's Word meant nothing to those being guided by worldly wisdom, so the trouble came upon them "as a thief in the night."

Paul explained that the foretold "sudden destruction" would come "as travail upon a woman with child." This means, in spasms, which has also been true of the chaotic years since 1914. The two World Wars and the "great depression," each were shattering blows to the "Christendom" erected by man. Now the nations know not what they are facing. But this did not come upon the "brethren" as "a thief in the night" nor are they now bewildered.

But there is more to the "day of the Lord" than these harrowing years with which it dawns. The trouble through which the world is now passing is only incidental to the necessary overthrow of humanly constituted authority in the earth. As the trouble increases,

and reaches even greater crisis proportions than heretofore experienced, the authority and power of Christ will be manifested, speaking peace to the people. It is this that is promised in Psalm 46:10, where the Lord speaks to the raging nations, saying, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen [the nations], I will be exalted in the earth."

For a thousand years this kingdom authority and power will exercise firm but loving control over the people of the earth, fulfilling all the glorious promises of God concerning the daytime of peace and joy for which men have longed and hoped and prayed, but could not attain. It will be then that the Gospel-age followers of the Master will actually convert the world, for they will be glorified with their Lord, Christ Jesus, and will be reigning with him as kings and priests to extend God's promised blessings to "all the families of the earth."

HEAR . . .

### "FRANK AND ERNEST"

DISCUSS

"THE CHURCH AND ITS MISSION"

**WOR**

SUNDAY, APRIL 17, 1955

710 kc.—8:45 A. M.

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## For Your Newspaper

On the left is a suggestion for a small advertisement in your local newspaper. The outline is designed for two inches in one column.

**MAY TOPIC:** The "Frank and Ernest" topic to be specially advertised in May is, "The Resurrection of the Dead." This topic will be used on Sunday, May 15. Circulars will be available in any quantity you can use. Place your order as early as possible, through your class secretary, or direct, as you prefer.

LESSON FOR APRIL 3

## The Cross and Christian Discipleship

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."  
—Galatians 6:14

JOHN 12:20-26

II CORINTHIANS 5:14-19

**A**PRIL 3 this year is Palm Sunday, so-called in commemoration of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem just a few days before he was crucified. He was acclaimed king by his friends and admirers, and palm branches were strewn in the way as he rode into the city on an ass. But, due to the opposition of the religious rulers, the city and the nation as a whole rejected Jesus.

Jesus was always ready to minister to those who sought his aid, hence the unusual nature of the circumstance recorded in John 12:14-19. At the time, which was just before his arrest and crucifixion, the jealousy and anger of the Pharisees had spurred them on in their determination to do away with him. They said among themselves, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him."—John 12:19

"And there were certain Greeks among them, that came up to worship at the feast." Through Philip they requested an interview with

Jesus. These "Greeks" may have been Gentiles, or they may have been Jews who ordinarily lived in Greece. This is not important. The point is that when their request finally reached Jesus' ears, he did not choose to see them. Instead, he explained that the hour had come when he should be glorified. Then he explained that "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

These remarks indicate that Jesus considered the time of his arrest and crucifixion so near that there would be no point in interviewing the Greeks, for, in any case, the real blessing he had come to impart to them and the whole world was dependent upon his death. He had reached a high degree of popularity. As the Pharisees observed, it seemed that the whole world had gone after him, and now these Greeks were seeking an interview. But all of this could mean nothing, except, as a "corn of wheat," he fall into the ground and die as the Redeemer of mankind.

"He that loveth his life shall lose

it," Jesus further explained. The popularity he was temporarily enjoying must not be allowed to swerve him from the real objective of his coming to earth, which was to give his life for the sins of the people.

He explained further that this must be the viewpoint of all those who elected to follow him. He did not want his disciples to imagine that following him would lead to their popularity, for with them, as with himself, their foremost opportunity of service in the divine plan of salvation was to suffer and die. He had invited them to take up their cross and follow him.

In II Corinthians 5:14-19, Paul explains that we are constrained to enter upon this life of sacrifice by the love of Christ, "because we thus judge, that if one die for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."—vss. 14, 15

Those who are thus living "unto him," devoting their lives to sacrifice as he did, are being baptized into his death, and this means that they are also baptized by one Spirit into the one body, the mystical body of Christ. (Rom. 6:3-5; I Cor. 12:13; Col. 1:26, 27) It means that they are "in Christ"; that is, that they have denied themselves, have renounced their own wills, and have accepted the headship of Christ.

Paul further explains that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed

## QUESTIONS

- What event in the life of Jesus is commemorated by Palm Sunday?
- What is the apparent reason Jesus did not grant an interview with the "Greeks" who asked to see him?
- What did Jesus mean by his reference to a "corn of wheat" falling into the ground and dying?
- Can Christians expect to be popular in the world if they follow faithfully in the footsteps of Jesus?
- What is involved in our being "in Christ," and how does this make us new creatures?
- What service in the divine plan do Christians render as they lay down their lives sacrificially, following in the footsteps of Jesus?

away; behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17) This being true, our relationship with others of like precious faith is not according to the flesh. We no longer think of Christ after the flesh, Paul says. As new creatures we are dwelling together with him and with one another in the "heavens."—Eph. 2:6

"All things are become new," writes Paul. Then he explains that these "all things," are of God, "who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." In other words, having been reconciled to God ourselves, we have been given the opportunity of being co-workers with God in the reconciling of others. To participate in this work now means the laying down of our lives as Jesus did, sacrificing all in our faithful ministry of the "word of reconciliation."

## Our Assurance of Eternal Life

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die."  
—John 11:25, 26

I CORINTHIANS 15:3-10, 53-58

**A**LL the promises of God pertaining to the resurrection of the dead are made sure by the fact that Jesus, the world's Redeemer from death, was himself raised from the dead. Because he lives we also shall live. And not only "we," the believers of the present Gospel age, but by the resurrection of Jesus, assurance has been given that all men will have an opportunity to gain life during the future judgment day.—Acts 17:31

Jesus' statement to Martha, recorded in our Golden Text, assures an opportunity of life to believers of this age, as well as believers of the next age. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." In John 5:24 Jesus is quoted as saying, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [Greek, judgment]; but is passed from death unto life." This conforms to the statement in our Golden Text—"Though he were dead, yet shall he live."

However, this entering into life through belief in Jesus, and in the Heavenly Father who sent him, is upon the basis of faith. It will become a reality only in the resur-

rection. In John 5:28, 29 Jesus emphasizes this, saying that all in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; and that those who have done good, the believers, shall come forth to a resurrection of life. The others, those who believe not in this life, shall come forth to judgment.

The word here translated "judgment" is *krisis*, meaning a trial time, which, of course, culminates in a decision. God's decision as to the eternal status of these will depend upon whether or not they then believe. So in our Golden Text the Lord says to those who are restored to life in the resurrection that he that then "liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Those who, under those favorable conditions of full knowledge and understanding, fail to believe will be "destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:23) Thus seen, the Golden Text speaks of two classes. First, those who believe and receive life everlasting (immortality) in the resurrection without further trial, and those who, awakened from the sleep of death, then become believers and are given lasting life on earth at the conclusion of their judgment period.

Verses 3-8 of I Corinthians 15

review some of the proofs that Jesus was raised from the dead. Luke refers to these in Acts 1:3 as "many infallible proofs." Paul went into considerable detail in presenting these proofs because there were some in the church at Corinth who, like the Sadducees, did not believe in the resurrection.

Verses 53-55 sum up the glorious hope of the resurrection for both the church and the world. In verse 23 Paul states the order of the resurrection—"Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." According to the Greek text the last clause of this text would more correctly read, "Afterward, they who become Christ's during his presence," and his presence is during the time of his thousand-year kingdom. "For," Paul continues, "he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—vss. 25, 26

This entire chapter is written especially for the encouragement of Christians, who are promised exaltation to immortality in the resurrection. Nevertheless Paul reminds us that in the resurrection there will be "terrestrial" or earthly bodies, as well as "celestial" or heavenly bodies.—vs. 40

Those who will be among the "firstfruits" of the resurrection will be given celestial bodies—"This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." After explaining this, Paul returns to the order of the resurrection, saying that "when" this mortal shall have put on immortality, "then shall be brought

## QUESTIONS

- How important to the plan of God is the resurrection of Jesus?
- Explain the relationship of thought expressed by Jesus in our Golden Text and in John 5:24.
- Will those who die in unbelief ever have an opportunity to believe?
- What is the order of the resurrection as set forth by Paul in I Corinthians 15:23? Who are the "firstfruits," and who the "afterward" class in the resurrection?
- Who, in the resurrection, will receive heavenly bodies, and who will receive earthly bodies?
- How is the order of the resurrection again stated by Paul in verse 54? When will death be swallowed up in victory?

to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

—vss. 53, 54

Paul is not saying that the exaltation of the "firstfruits" to immortality will fulfil the saying, "Death is swallowed up in victory," but that this promise will be fulfilled "when this mortal shall have put on immortality." In other words, this promise of the destruction of death—the last enemy to be destroyed during Christ's kingdom reign—must await fulfilment until the work of the present age is completed, when all the "firstfruits" class will be united with Christ.

The promise that death will be swallowed up in victory is a part of one of the Old Testament kingdom prophecies. In it the kingdom is pictured as a great "mountain" in which the Lord makes unto all people a "feast of fat things." It is in this kingdom that the Lord "will swallow up death in victory."—Isa. 25:6-9

# Rehoboam, King of Judah

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

—James 1:5

## II CHRONICLES 10:6-17

**R**EHOBOAM was the son of Solomon, and was the lawful heir to the throne which his father occupied for forty years. During the reign of Solomon the nation of Israel rose to its highest pinnacle of fame and glory. Jesus speaks of "Solomon in all his glory."—Matt. 6:29

Evidently, however, despite, the outward appearance of prosperity, the people of Israel were heavily taxed to maintain the splendor and glory of the king and his court. So, after he died, and when his son Rehoboam was about to ascend to the throne, he was interviewed by representatives of the people and asked if he would do what he could to ease the tax burden.

Jeroboam seemed to be chief spokesman for the people in presenting this request to Rehoboam. Formerly Jeroboam occupied a high position in Solomon's government. (I Kings 11:28) Solomon became suspicious that Jeroboam might be seeking to seize the throne, and therefore endeavored to have him killed. The Prophet Ahijah assured Jeroboam that God would give ten of the tribes of Israel into his hands, but not while Solomon was living. So, when he

realized that Solomon was attempting to destroy him he fled into Egypt, returning after the king's death.—I Kings 11:29-40

His position in Solomon's government was superintendent over taxes and labors exacted from the tribe of Ephraim. From this position he would be fully aware of the attitude of the people regarding taxes, and it may well have been he who suggested the petition to Rehoboam to reduce this burden.

Rehoboam did not give the people an answer right away, but asked them to return in three days. Meanwhile he sought advice from a group of elderly men who had served as Solomon's advisers—his cabinet members, so to speak. These men, like Jeroboam, had been in a position to know how irksome the tax burdens were to the people, and seeing this as a favorable opportunity to gain the good will of the people and put them solidly behind the new ruler, they advised Rehoboam to grant their demands.

But Rehoboam, young and ambitious, wanting no doubt to maintain the glory of the kingdom, and, if possible, to increase it, rejected the advice of these elder statesmen. This is not the only time on record

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**QUESTIONS**

when youth assumed to know better than older, more experienced men. Often older people are too cautious, too conservative, while youth is sometimes too anxious to get ahead. So, happily, in most cases, the two working together find a happy medium.

However, it failed to work out so with Rehoboam. He next consulted those of his own age, probably special friends, and perhaps attaches of the government under Solomon. They urged him to assert his authority by increasing the burden of taxes, and to oppress the people even more than did his father. This was, indeed, extreme advice, but Rehoboam chose to accept it.

When the people returned the third day, Rehoboam told them his decision, and in a manner that was not at all friendly. "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add thereto: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."—vs. 14

The people rebelled against this threatened treatment, and ten of the tribes followed the leadership of Jeroboam and established a separate kingdom, thereafter known as the Northern Kingdom, and often the Kingdom of Israel; the two tribes which followed Rehoboam being known as the Southern Kingdom, or the Kingdom of Judah.

Because the record says "the cause was of God, that the Lord might perform his word, which he spoke by the hand of Ahijah," some expositors hold that all the promises of God to the nations, beginning even with Abraham, are, and

Who was Rehoboam, and under what circumstances did he come to the throne of Israel?

Who was Jeroboam, and what was the grievance of the ten tribes of Israel against Rehoboam that caused them to break away from him under Jeroboam's leadership?

Did God's favor continue with Jeroboam, and with the ten tribes under his leadership?

How do we know that the royal promises of God did not depart from the line of David?

To whom should every servant of the Lord go when in need of true wisdom?

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continue to be, fulfilled through the ten tribes. They overlook the fact that this promise through Ahijah was conditional upon Jeroboam remaining faithful to the Lord, which he did not. At the very outset of his reign he introduced idol worship. His successors walked in his steps of unfaithfulness, and the kingdom finally went into captivity in Assyria.

Nor did all the ten tribes follow Jeroboam. Those of the ten tribes who dwelt in the cities of Judah accepted Rehoboam's rulership; so in a limited way he really ruled over all twelve tribes. God's favor remained with Solomon's line, according to the sure promise made to David.—I Kings 11:34, 36

Our Golden Text emphasizes the importance, when a servant of the Lord is in need of wisdom, to seek it through prayer. There is no evidence that Rehoboam did this. He seemed determined to have his own way, and took the advice of those who agreed with him. But even this the Lord overruled.

## Asa's Religious Reforms

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you."

—II Chronicles 15:2

### II CHRONICLES 15:1-12

**A**SA was the third king of Judah, the two-tribe kingdom of the Hebrew people, after the other ten tribes broke away from the rulership of his grandfather Rehoboam in the revolt which was led by Jeroboam. From the very start of his reign Rehoboam failed to manifest a determined desire to look to the Lord for guidance. After he had established himself as ruler of the two tribes—Judah and Benjamin—"he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him."—II Chron. 12:1

He was almost continually at war with Jeroboam during the seventeen years of his reign. All the while he "did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord." (II Chron. 12:14) When Rehoboam died and "slept with his fathers, . . . Abijah his son reigned in his stead." (II Chron. 12:16) Asa was the son of Abijah.

"There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam" also. (II Chron. 13:2) However, Abijah mustered as large an army as he could in an endeavor to settle the issue. Although Jeroboam's army greatly outnumbered the forces of Abijah, the Lord blessed the latter, and he scored an outstanding victory. "Thus the children of Israel were

brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers."—II Chron. 13:18

Abijah manifested a desire to serve the true God and be loyal to him. Thus he instituted a measure of reform in the nation, and when after his death his son Asa succeeded him to the throne, this religious reform was continued. The record is that "Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God."—II Chron. 14:2

The record states that Asa "took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment." (II Chron. 14:3, 4) "Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him."—vs. 5

The peaceful condition of the nation did not continue, however. Asa raised and equipped an army of nearly six hundred thousand soldiers, with the thought, no doubt, of thus preventing war. But just as strength of arms now is no safeguard against war, neither was it in the ancient past. Zerah the

Ethiopian came against Judah with an army of a million men.

Then Asa prayed, "Lord it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee." (II Chron. 14:11) The Lord answered this prayer and "smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled."—vs. 12

It is after this defeat of Judah's enemies that the narrative of today's lesson begins. "The Spirit of God came upon Azariah," who spoke words of wisdom and encouragement to Asa which no doubt further strengthened his hand in bringing about religious reforms within the nation. The man of God said to Asa, "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you: but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you."—II Chron. 15:2

Our lesson states that prior to this Israel had for a long season been without the true God. But in keeping with the words of Azariah, when in their trouble the people turned to him, he was found of them. Without God the nation had passed through a difficult time. The record states there was no peace "to him that went out, nor to him that came in." Instead, "great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity."

## QUESTIONS

Who was Asa, and who preceded him on the throne of Judah?

What religious reforms did Asa institute in Judah?

How was Asa victorious over an Ethiopian army almost twice the size of his own?

After this victory, what further reforms did Asa accomplish?

Should we of this age expect God to bless us along temporal lines?

These truly must have been difficult years. But when Asa heard the words of the prophet he took the matter in hand, and finally at a great assembly of the people at Jerusalem, including large numbers who came over to him from the ten-tribe kingdom, "they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul."—vs. 12

The Lord honored this covenant, and "gave them rest round about." (vs. 15) This was in keeping with God's original covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. God is always faithful to his promises. If God is withholding blessings from us, it would be well to examine our own hearts to discover the reason. God is not now dealing with his people and blessing them along material lines, but from a spiritual standpoint, and upon the basis of faith.

The principle expressed by Azariah, nevertheless, operates in the same manner. If we endeavor with our whole soul to live close to the Lord, and to be faithful to him, he will stay close to us, and will be faithful to us in our every time of spiritual need.

## THE PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE— Part IV—Genesis 25:11-35

### Isaac, Esau, and Jacob

**G**ENESIS 25:11 reads, "It came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi." Abraham had other children, but in the New Testament Isaac is referred to as his "only begotten son of whom it was said that in Isaac shall thy seed be called." (Heb. 11:17) Isaac was born in fulfilment of God's promise concerning a "seed" that would bless all nations. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," God said to Abraham, when he grieved over the demand of Sarah that Ishmael, his son by the bondmaid, be cast out.—Gen. 21:12; Rom. 9:7; Heb. 11:18

It is therefore with Isaac and his descendants that the plan of God for the blessing of all nations is associated. Nevertheless, God promised Abraham that he would make a great nation of his son, Ishmael, and the geneology constituting the beginning of that nation is given in Genesis 25:13-18. It is of special interest today, in view of world developments, to know that the descendants of Ishmael form one of the chief elements of the Arab nations; that is, the wandering Bedouin tribes.

In getting acquainted with the people of the Bible, our principal interest centers in Isaac, rather

than in Ishmael, for it is in God's dealing with him and his descendants that we can trace the golden threads of divine promise concerning the ultimate deliverance of mankind from sin and death. In our discussion of God's dealings with Abraham, we found Isaac being offered for sacrifice, thus picturing Christ, whom his Heavenly Father actually gave for the life of the world. Paul indicates, also, that the true followers of Christ during this age (who, together with their Head Christ Jesus, are the real "seed" of promise) are pictured in Isaac—"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."—Gal. 4:28; 3:27-29

By an arrangement of his father Abraham, Rebekah, the granddaughter of Nahor, Abraham's brother, became Isaac's bride. Rebekah, like her mother-in-law, Sarah, was childless for many years after her marriage, and "Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren." As in Sarah's case, a miracle was wrought, and Rebekah bore twin boys to Isaac. They were named Jacob and Esau. Before their birth the Lord informed Rebekah what to expect, explaining that "two manner of people" would develop from her twin sons; the one, God said, "shall be stronger

than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger."—vs. 23

The firstborn was "red all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau." The second one born was called Jacob, "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents." (vss. 25-27) Their father, Isaac, who was now well along in years, had a preference for Esau, because, as the account indicates, this "cunning hunter" brought him venison steak: "but Rebekah loved Jacob." Thus was created a situation leading to one of the greatest human interest stories of all time.

Esau, returning from one of his hunting expeditions ravenously hungry, said to Jacob, who had prepared himself a meal of red pottage, "Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage, for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom," meaning red. Jacob, seeing the situation, was quick to grasp an opportunity, and offered to feed his brother in exchange for the birthright which, as the firstborn, belonged to Esau.

Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?" (vs. 32) So he sold his birthright for a meal of red pottage—thought to be a sort of lentil soup. The advantages accruing from birthrights were not, in patriarchal days, definitely fixed. Seemingly great respect was paid to the firstborn in the household. As the family widened into a tribe,

this respect grew into a sustained authority, but undefined, save by custom.

Esau evidently did not specially value these, as he considered them indefinite benefits, and was quite willing to give up his birthright for temporary tangible advantage. The record states that he "despised his birthright." (vs. 34) The Hebrew word here translated "despised" literally means "disesteemed"; that is, he did not esteem it as having worthwhile value comparable to a bowl of lentil soup.

But Jacob thought differently. He was his mother's favorite son. She was conscious of the fact that God had performed a miracle in enabling her to give birth to these twins, and she would be keenly aware of what the Lord told her before they were born, that the elder (Esau) would serve the younger (Jacob). It is reasonable to conclude that she had told Jacob about this message she had received from the Lord, and he, being a man of faith, would be deeply impressed.

Indeed, Abraham, having lived some years after Rebekah married Isaac, probably gave her a first-hand account of God's wonderful oathbound promise concerning the blessing of all the families of the earth through his "seed." This information also she no doubt related to Jacob. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that both Rebekah and Jacob saw in the family birthright the assurance of being heir to the wonderful promises God had made to Abraham. To them, there-

## THE DAWN

fore, and especially to Jacob, who purchased it, the family birthright was not something to esteem lightly, but to value very highly. And, since God had indicated before he was born that he was to be the favored son, why not co-operate and secure the birthright by legitimate purchase?

According to the custom of the times, the parental blessing belonged to the firstborn son. To obtain this special blessing before the father died was a confirmation of the birthright. So, when "Isaac was old and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see," he asked Esau to take his weapons, his quiver and his bow, and "go out to the field, and take me some venison; and make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die."—ch. 27:1-4

While the record does not so state, it seems reasonable to conclude that Isaac had not been informed concerning the sale of the birthright to Jacob, else perhaps he would not have arranged to pronounce this special blessing upon Esau. But Esau knew it, and the honorable thing for him to have done would have been to tell his father of the changed circumstances, and thus at least it would have given him the opportunity to decide upon which of the twins to pronounce his special blessing.

But even though Esau did not do this, the mother, Rebekah, was watching over the interests of Jacob, whom she knew the Lord favored and had chosen. She over-

heard Isaac's instructions to Esau to bring him venison and receive his blessing, so she instructed Jacob to get "two good kids of the goats" and, she said, "I will make them savory meat for thy father, such as he loveth."—ch. 27:1-9

Isaac in his old age had lost his eyesight, so when Jacob explained to his mother that the father would easily detect the deceit when he felt his smooth skin and would know that he was not Esau, who was covered with hair, the mother "put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck." (vs. 16) When Jacob brought the savory meat of the goats to his father there was some doubt on the old man's part as to the identity of the one before him, but Jacob insisted that he was Esau, and after some hesitation received his father's blessing, which in part was, "Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be everyone that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee."—ch. 27:29

Whatever other writers may have said in condemnation of Jacob and his mother in this matter, the inspired writers say nothing. Even before the twins were born God indicated his selection of Jacob to be the inheritor of the promise made to his grandfather, Abraham. Paul emphasizes this in Romans 9:9-12. There is a definite program of election or selection in the outworking of God's plan to bless all

mankind through the seed of Abraham.

God's program of election is not one in which he elects certain ones to be saved, and foreordains that all others must suffer an eternity of torture. However, just as in a democracy a few are elected to serve the rest, so in God's plan he has been electing the future servants of mankind and preparing them to be the channels of his promised blessings to the remainder of the world of mankind.

The Apostle Paul, quoting from Malachi's prophecy (1:2, 3), writes, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Rom. 9:13) Prof. Strong suggests that the Greek word here translated "hated" could, by extension, be construed to mean "loved less." He gives "detested" as a stronger definition. Esau's disposition, which the Lord had the ability to know even before he was born, would cause him to be "loved less" by God. The fact that Esau disesteemed his birthright involving God's promises to Abraham would be sufficient reason for the Lord to be greatly displeased with him.

In Hebrews 12:16, 17 Paul speaks of Esau as a "profane person, . . . who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." Paul continues to say that Esau "found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." The marginal translation indicates that here the thought of repentance is the changing of one's mind. A careful comparison of this text with the account in Genesis 27:33-38

indicates that Esau's tears were associated with his plea for Isaac to change his mind and give him a blessing even though he had already blessed Jacob. It was Isaac, as the account shows, who could not be persuaded to change his mind.

Because of Esau's attitude toward the birthright, he has become a symbol of those who esteem earthly advantage above spiritual blessings, and are willing to forego their share in the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord in order temporarily to satisfy their longings for the good things of this earth.

Esau was given the name Edom. His descendants were the Edomites, who are referred to a number of times in the Old Testament Scriptures, both historically and symbolically, in the prophecies pertaining to the end of the present age and the downfall of nominal Christianity.

#### **Jacob's Enforced Flight**

Esau was very wroth with his brother Jacob and was determined that when a suitable opportunity offered he would slay him. Rebekah learned of this, and instructed Jacob to leave Canaan and go to her brother's home in Padanaram. But she had a deeper purpose in this also, as her later efforts reveal. She complained to Isaac concerning Esau's wives, who were the daughters of the Canaanite, Heth. She explained that if Jacob should also marry one of his daughters, her life would no longer be worth living.

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Then Isaac, exercising the prerogative of a father in that ancient time, instructed Jacob to take one of the daughters of Rebekah's brother Laban for his wife, adding, "God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people." (ch. 28:3) With these instructions, and with his blessing, Isaac sent Jacob away to Padan-aram.

At the close of his first day's journey, Jacob took stones and arranged a bed for himself. He was doubtless somewhat downhearted and discouraged. Falling asleep, he dreamed of seeing a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with "the angels of God ascending and descending on it." (ch. 28:12) In his dream he saw the Lord standing "above" the ladder, saying to him, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy Father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—ch. 28:13, 14

After assuring Jacob concerning his inheritance in the land promised to Abraham, and that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed, the Lord gave him assurances of personal care and protection, and that he would return to the land from which he was then fleeing. The Lord said, "Behold, I am with thee,

and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."—vs. 15

"Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place [or how awe-inspiring]! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (vss. 16, 17) Jacob then erected a "pillar," or an altar, to mark the site, and called the place Bethel, meaning the house of God. Then he promised the Lord that in return for his care and bringing him back to his father's house he would give him a tenth of all that he gained.

### The Ladder Dream

It seems reasonable to conclude that the dream in which Jacob saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and angels ascending and descending upon it, represented the fulfilment of God's promise to his grandfather Abraham, which the next morning was confirmed to him; namely, that through the promised "seed" all the families of the earth would be blessed. One of the fundamental needs, that these promised blessings might flow out to the people, is the re-establishment of peace and fellowship between heaven and earth.

In the New Testament Jesus explains how this will be brought about. In an evident reference to the significance of Jacob's dream, he said to Nathanael, "Hereafter ye

shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." (John 1:51) Jesus is here saying that he would, in fact, be the "ladder" upon which, or by means of which, communication between heaven and earth would be established.

We are not to think of heaven being literally opened, as Jesus' statement to Nathanael might imply. Through the Prophet Malachi, God spoke of opening the "windows of heaven" and pouring out a blessing upon the Israelites such as they would not be able to contain. (Mal. 3:10) So the opening of heaven suggests the pouring out of God's blessings; and in fulfilment of Jacob's dream the blessings to be poured out upon all the families of the earth are those contained in God's oathbound covenant with Abraham.

In Galatians 3:16 Paul explains that Christ is the real "Seed" of Abraham, the means by which his blessings will reach the people when the due time comes for heaven to be opened up for this purpose. So it is in keeping with this that Jesus spoke of himself as being the "ladder" upon which the "angels," or messengers, of God will convey the promised blessings of heaven to earth.

The true followers of Christ of this age, as we have seen, are also spoken of in the New Testament as being the promised "seed" of Abraham. They will be the chief messengers, or channels of blessing, as a part of The Christ, Jesus, the Head, and the church, his body,

or fellow-members. It is fitting that Jesus should speak of himself as the "ladder" in this picture, for it is only because of his redemptive work—giving himself a ransom for all—that the world can be reconciled to God, and have the promised blessings communicated to them.

### His Journey Continued

After erecting an altar and calling the place Bethel, Jacob "went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east." (Gen. 29:1) The marginal translation says that he "lift up his feet." This seems significant. Jacob, although he had purchased the birthright from Esau, and had obtained the parental blessing which went with the birthright, had not been too happy. The strained relationship between him and Esau had reached crisis proportions, making it necessary for him to flee from the country.

Under these circumstances we can well imagine how Jacob felt that first night away from home. There is no indication in the record that he had received any communication from the Lord since his father had given him his blessing. But what a change was brought about by his dream! Now the Lord had spoken to him, relating to him the promise made to Abraham, and to his father, Isaac. If he had had any doubts about the course he had taken, they were gone, and now he knew that the Lord was with him. So, starting on his journey the next morning, it was with lightness of heart and a buoyant

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step—lifting up his feet, no longer dragging them, as it were, in despondency and fear.

In due course he reached his destination. There were no special landmarks or road signs to guide him, but Jacob assumed that he was near Haran, where his Uncle Laban lived. He saw shepherds watching their sheep near a covered well. He spoke to the shepherds and learned that they were from Haran, the place he was seeking. He found that they knew his uncle, and even while they were talking, Rachael, one of his uncle's daughters, came to the well with another flock of sheep to be watered.

Jacob's mother had no doubt told him the circumstances under which Eliezer met her at a well, and now that he had met his possible future wife, the niece of his mother, also at a well, he was probably quite impressed. But the account indicates that he was equally impressed with Rachel herself.

Laban welcomed his nephew into his home, where he remained as a guest for a month, evidently doing what he could, meanwhile, to serve his uncle. No doubt he had made known his reason for leaving Canaan, and that his desire was to remain with his uncle, at least for a while. Then Laban suggested some "wages" that Jacob should receive for his work.

He agreed at once to serve Laban seven years in return for Rachel, that he might have her for his wife. Laban agreed, but at the end of the seven years, because Leah, an

older daughter, was not yet married, Laban found himself in a difficult position. According to the custom of the time and of the land, it was not proper to give a younger daughter in marriage while an older one remained unwed. So the only solution Laban could think of was to give Leah, the older daughter, to Jacob, instead of Rachel, which he did.

But Jacob was not satisfied, and agreed to work another seven years for the girl he really loved. Then he had both of them, which according to the custom of that time was not improper. Besides, each one of the daughters was given a handmaid, and, as in the case of Abraham and Hagar, circumstances arose which led Jacob's wives to give their handmaids to their husband to bear children for them. The four mothers bore Jacob thirteen children—twelve sons and one daughter, the daughter's name being Dinah. We will later get acquainted with the sons.

After eleven of his sons had been born, Jacob felt that he had remained in Padan-aram long enough, so he asked his uncle and father-in-law, Laban, to let him return to his people in Canaan. He said, "Send me away, that I may go unto my own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee."—ch. 30:25, 26

Actually, Jacob had served much longer than the fourteen years, but he was evidently an efficient serv-

ant, and Laban preferred that he remain, and offered to enter into a new contract with him. This was done, and Jacob prospered under the arrangement so that he became wealthy in flocks and herds. Laban did not fare so well, and his sons complained. Jacob overheard them saying, "Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's."—ch. 31:1

Jacob also noticed that Laban was not as pleasant to him as he had been. About then the Lord spoke to Jacob again, saying, "Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee." (ch. 31:3) Jacob then consulted with Rachel and Leah, and although it meant the breaking of homes ties for them, they indicated their willingness to go with Jacob back to Canaan, and that he should do just as God had directed.

While Jacob was prospering in Padan-aram, he considered the promises of God of greater value than earthly riches, so when God directed that he return to Canaan he did not hesitate to obey. Previously, when he decided apart from God's direction, that it was time to leave Padan-aram he informed Laban of his decision, but Laban influenced him to remain for another six years. But now that God had directed him to return to his people in Canaan, there must be no holding back, no postponement, so he purposely did not tell his father-in-law that he was leaving.

Three days after Jacob had left, taking his wives, children, and all his earthly possessions with him, Laban heard about it. Then Laban

"took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead." It was a critical time for Jacob. Not only was Laban angry because his son-in-law had fled, but Laban had discovered that someone in the company had stolen his idols.

It was Rachel who took her father's idols. The fact that this family worshiped idols indicates that Abraham must have been almost the only one among them who worshiped and served the true God. Apparently during the years Jacob had been in close contact with the family they had not been influenced by him to give up their idols.

A heated controversy took place in mount Gilead between Jacob and Laban. Jacob finally said, "Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty." (ch. 31:42) Laban then proposed that they enter into a covenant of peace, which they did, and they erected a heap of stones to be a witness between them. Then Laban said, "This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; and Mizpah; for he said, The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another."—ch. 31:48, 49

The next morning Laban, bidding farewell to his daughters and their families, returned to Padan-aram, and Jacob "went on his way, and the angels of God met him," we are

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told. "And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim."—ch. 32:1, 2

Jacob had fled from Canaan because of the anger of Esau, whose birthright he had purchased and whose special blessing he had obtained from their father through deceit. Now that he was returning he realized that he would have Esau to deal with, or as Jacob stated it, to "appease." (ch. 32:20) Perhaps Jacob was overly concerned, for actually, entering Canaan at mount Gilead, Esau, who lived at mount Seir, would be about one hundred miles to the south.

However, Jacob probably reasoned that Esau would eventually learn that he had returned to Canaan and he decided that he would seek a reconciliation at once. So he sent messengers to his brother, instructing them to say to him, "I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: and I have oxen and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight."—vss. 4, 5

The messengers returned to Jacob after delivering his message and reported that Esau was coming to meet him, accompanied by four hundred men. In the New Testament we are told that "fear hath torment," and Jacob, being fearful of Esau, imagined the worst; that is, he supposed that his brother was bringing the four hundred men

as an army to attack and destroy him.

Thereupon he divided his little company of people into two groups, hoping thus that while one group was being attacked the other could escape. Then Jacob prayed earnestly to the Lord for help and protection. In his prayer he addressed the Lord as the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, "which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee." Jacob added in his prayer that he was not worthy of all the blessings the Lord had bestowed upon him, but since the Lord had said, "I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude," he was now pleading for divine protection in this crisis.

Jacob made elaborate preparations to appease Esau. He arranged with his servants to take Esau presents—"two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams, thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals." This number of domestic animals to be sent as "presents" to Esau gives an indication of what Jacob's total possessions must have been.

Jacob sent his wives and family "over the brook" ahead of him, while he remained alone the night before he was to meet his brother, "and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Apparently this "man" was a materialized angel, a representative of

the Lord. The generally accepted thought is that Jacob wrestled with the angel in prayer, although there was apparently also a physical struggle.

With the coming of morning the angel said to Jacob, "Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." The angel then told Jacob that his name would be changed to Israel, which means "a prince of God," the angel's explanation being, "as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."—ch. 32:24-29

The angel, while wrestling with Jacob, touched his thigh "and the hallow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him." Jacob was greatly impressed, and he called the name of the place "Peniel," meaning "the face of God," for, he said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." (ch. 32:30) The Scriptures state that "there shall no man see me [God], and live." (Exod. 33:20) Jacob saw the angel of the Lord, and it was a marvelous experience. He can be excused for saying, in his enthusiasm, that he had seen God himself.

The next morning the much feared meeting with Esau took place, and Jacob was greatly relieved. He was very happy to learn that his brother had no evil intentions toward him. On fact, it was only after much persuasion by Jacob that Esau accepted the "presents" the servants had brought ahead with which to appease him. Esau said, "I have enough, my

brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself."—ch. 33:1-11

Esau had left Canaan and was living beyond the southern border of the Promised Land. He realized that his father Isaac's blessing upon Jacob had not enriched him in earthly goods—that whatever he had gained of wealth had come to him outside of the land which God had promised to their grandfather Abraham and their father Isaac. Having little or no faith in the future aspects of the birthright, Esau probably now reasoned that he had lost nothing, hence there was no good reason to hold enmity against Jacob.

After the meeting, Esau invited Jacob to accompany him back to mount Seir. But this was not what the Lord had commanded, so Jacob made the excuse that with all the cattle, and the women and children, they could not travel as fast as Esau with his four hundred men, so he suggested that his brother journey on ahead and he would follow as best he could.

Actually, however, after Esau started on his return journey south, Jacob traveled west, stopping temporarily at "Succoth," and then on to Shechem, a place about thirty-five miles north of Jerusalem. Here he bought a plot of land and erected an altar and called it El-elohe-Israel, meaning "God, the God of Israel," or, the mighty God of Israel."—Dr. Strong

Circumstances developed in Shechem which made it necessary to move on, and "God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and

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dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother." (ch. 35:1) Jacob then instructed his household to dispose of the idols which were brought from Padan-aram, and they moved on to Bethel.

Arriving in Bethel, Jacob built the altar which the Lord had commanded. It was at Bethel, it will be recalled, that Abraham built an altar soon after he entered Canaan. It was here also that Jacob more than twenty years previously had in a dream seen a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with angels ascending and descending upon it. Now, by the keeping power of God, and in harmony with his gracious providences, Jacob was back at Bethel.

Here at Bethel the Lord renewed his promise concerning the land, adding that "a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins." (vs. 11) Here also God confirmed the word of the angel that Jacob's name was to be changed to Israel.

In Genesis 17:5 God promised Abraham that he would be a father of many nations. The promise to Jacob implies the same thing. In the expression, "company of nations," the Hebrew word translated "company" means an assemblage, or multitude. In God's original promise to Abraham he said that in him "all families of the earth" would be blessed. Paul quotes this and translates it "all nations." —Gal. 3:8

Paul indicates the marvelous manner in which this promise to Abraham and Isaac will be fulfilled insofar as the "many nations" are concerned. He says, "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." —Rom. 4:13, 16, 17

The faith seed of Abraham, called out from Jews and Gentiles during the Gospel age, will constitute a spiritual, "holy nation"—under Christ, the ruling nation of earth for a thousand years. (I Pet. 2:9, 10) The human representatives of this spiritual ruling nation will be the resurrected ancient worthies, who will establish the earthly phase of the kingdom in Jerusalem.

There the natural descendants of Abraham, having been regathered miraculously from among all nations, will be the first to receive the blessings of the new kingdom, and to co-operate therewith. As the news of the kingdom spreads, the peoples of other nations will fall in line until all the families, or nations, of the earth shall recognize the authority of the new kingdom,

and receive the blessings of life promised through the seed of Abraham. He will then be "father Abraham" to all nations.

After the confirmation of the covenant, Jacob journeyed to Ephrath. His wife Rachel died on this journey—died giving birth to his youngest son, Benjamin. Finally he moved on to Mamre, "unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac so-journed."—ch. 35:16, 17

Many years had passed since Jacob had left home to escape the wrath of Esau. Even at that time Isaac, his father, was an old man, and blind, but he was still living when Jacob returned. Nothing is said of their meeting, however. The last word we have concerning

Isaac is that he died at the age of 180, that he "gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people." Esau and Jacob buried him.

The biblical expression, "gave up the ghost," simply means that he ceased breathing, the word "ghost" being a translation of a Hebrew word meaning breath, or wind. As we have noted, Isaac's people to whom he was gathered were for the most part idol worshipers. We would not expect them to be in heaven, nor could we suppose that Isaac joined them in a place of torment. The expression simply denotes that they were all together in death. Job gives us the proper thought, saying, "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest."—Job 3:11-21

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## Letters of Interest

"My Dear Sirs: First I wish to thank you for my recent order of booklets, and the copy of 'Behold Your King.' They are all so very enlightening. I don't know where to start to tell you what they have done for me. Volume I of 'Studies in the Scriptures' has more than cleared a lot of doubts I have had for a long time. I am now studying all these publications. First I read them, then I study them. In this way I can understand what it is really all about. Will you kindly send me some circulars announcing the 'Frank and Ernest' broadcasts. I will gladly hand them to my friends. I have a few free hours some days to do this work, and will be happy to do it. Very sincerely yours. A. W., N. J."

...  
 "Dear Sirs: I listen to your broadcasts and I must say that your doctrine sounds more reasonable than anything I have ever heard. I have made a study of the teachings of a number of churches, and it seems that they all have something which does not harmonize with the Bible. I would like to know if there is a study group near here. Yours for a better world government under the King of kings, J. C. C., Ore."

## The Blood of Atonement

“For it pleased the Father that in him [Christ] should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”

—Colossians 1:19, 20

**B**LOOD is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of life, particularly life poured out as an atonement for sin. Leviticus 17:11 reads, “For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” God’s arrangement with typical Israel, through the priesthood and tabernacle services, called for much shedding of blood. While a degree of blessing accrued to the Israelites from these sacrifices, their main purpose was to point forward to Jesus’ sacrifice and the fact that he would shed his blood to make an atonement for the sins of both the church and the world—for “things on earth” as well as “things in heaven,” that is, for the restitution class as well as for those who are partakers of the “heavenly calling.”

A similar thought to atonement is expressed by the word “propitiation,” both meaning to expiate, or make satisfaction. In Romans 3:25 Paul, speaking of Jesus, says, “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his

blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” In I John 2:2 we read, “He [Jesus] is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

It was the love of God that made the provision for atonement through the blood of Christ. The need for atonement arose when Adam transgressed the divine law and brought the penalty of death upon himself and upon his progeny. Not until satisfaction, or propitiation, had been made for his sin could he or any of his condemned race be released from the penalty of death. Atonement for sin provided through the blood of Christ, therefore, leads to life for those who accept this gift of God’s grace.

### Typical Atonement

In the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, where the typical work of sacrifice is described, the word atonement appears seventy-three times. In the 16th chapter of Leviticus, a yearly atonement day and its sacrifices are

described. Apparently the nation of Israel received a measure of blessing from these yearly services, but they did not provide satisfaction for the sin and its penalty, death, which they inherited from father Adam; so they remained under adamic condemnation and continued to die.

Paul explains this matter in Hebrews 10:1, which reads, "For the Law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." Only by being made perfect, free from adamic condemnation, can one escape the penalty of death, and the yearly atonement-day sacrifices offered by Israel's typical priesthood did not result in perfection to those who sought benefit from them.

"The Law made nothing perfect," Paul writes, "but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." (Heb. 7:19) This "better hope" is based upon the atoning efficacy of the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ is efficacious to assure perfection, and therefore life, because his life, the life which he poured out, as symbolized by his shed blood, was an exact equivalent of the perfect life of Adam—the life which he forfeited when he sinned against his Creator. Paul emphasizes this basic aspect of the atoning work of Christ by the use of the word "ransom," saying that the

man Christ Jesus gave himself "a ransom for all."—I Tim. 2:3-6

### Received by Faith

God's love provided atonement for sin through Christ which, in turn, opens the way to life. But the mere fact that Jesus died as the Redeemer and Savior of the world does not in itself give life to Adam and his race for whom the sacrifice was made. Each one of the condemned race who receives life through this provision must believe therein, and individually accept the "gift." John 3:16 makes this clear—"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jesus again said, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [Greek, 'judgment']; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24) This is a most comprehensive statement, and can be properly understood only in the light of Jesus' further explanation. In the next verse he reminds us of the hope of the resurrection—"the dead shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live," in an hour, or time that is coming. (The words "and now is" are not in the old manuscripts.)

Then, after explaining that he had been given authority to execute judgment, and that it had been given him to have life in himself, Jesus again speaks of the resurrec-

*(Continued on page 34)*

## *Atoning Sacrifice Completed*

**“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.”**

—1 Corinthians 15:3

VARIOUS are the theories advanced in the name of Christianity and the Scriptures respecting the at-one-ment between God and man; some acknowledging that the work which our Lord finished in his death on Calvary is the basis of all human hopes respecting the life everlasting, and at-one-ment with the Heavenly Father; others persistently seeking to deny this, advancing theories to the effect that no ransom sacrifice was necessary to a reconciliation, that no fall took place, and that hence no restitution to primary conditions is necessary or desirable or was secured by the Lord's death. Many of these theories which deny the redemptive value of our Lord's death affect to do him greater honor by claiming that his work for humanity was solely that of a great teacher, and in no sense that of a Redeemer or purchaser. These false theories which ignore the ransom are becoming more numerous, more persistent, and more seductive day by day to those who are not well rooted and grounded in the divine Word and plan of the ages. It is appropriate, therefore, that we should call attention to the fact that according to the Scrip-

tures the entire plan of salvation is pivoted upon the great transaction of our Lord's sacrifice, which, beginning with his consecration at Jordan, was finished with his expiring breath at Calvary. Whoever believes this and accepts it is justified thereby, obtaining his share in the merit of that sacrifice. Whoever rejects it rejects the only name and the only faith by which he can ever be reconciled to God and attain to life everlasting.

## *“Only Believe”*

**“Jesus said . . . I am the resurrection, and the life.” —John 11:25**

THESE are the great lessons for all of the Lord's people to learn: (1) that death is a just penalty because of imperfection; (2) that God has had mercy upon us as a race, and has provided a ransom; (3) that the Ransomer is the divinely appointed and commissioned and empowered One who shall in God's due time bid all in the tomb come forth, and who will then additionally grant an opportunity to all to escape entirely from all the weaknesses and blemishes of the fall, and eventually, if they will obey him, secure the perfection of life which he purchased for all at the sacrifice of his own life. As faith is able to recognize Jesus as the Redeemer whose sacrifice is sufficient for the satisfaction of Justice,

as faith discerns that this ransom sacrifice was made to the intent that the blessing of the Lord might reach every individual of our race, as faith is able to look forward to the second coming of this Redeemer as the Life-giver to his people, in that proportion faith is able to rejoice and to permit even in the presence of sorrow, sighing, tears and dying, the looking forward beyond the tomb to the glorious morning of the resurrection.

### *"Are Ye Able?"*

**"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"**

—Matthew 20:22

ALL of our Lord's sufferings were foretold in the Scriptures. The crucifixion was pictured by the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness. All of his experiences were foreknown, forearranged, and necessary. When he came to earth to do the Father's will he did not know of all that was to come. But he learned obedience by the things he suffered, the things which were "written in the Book." He submitted himself to all the Father's will, and thus he proved his loyalty. Our beloved Lord drank of the bitter cup to its dregs, and did so thankfully. And we are to remember that he gave the cup to us, that we should drink all of it—not that we should have exactly the same experiences he had, but that we must all drink of the cup of suffering and death in the Father's own way. Unless we partake of his cup, unless we are immersed into death with him, we

can have no share in his kingdom of glory—we can never sit with him in his throne. Let us, then, count all things of this earth as loss and dross that we may attain this pearl of great price.

### *His Resurrection*

**"The Lord is risen indeed."**

—Luke 24:34

THE resurrection of our Lord is shown by the apostle to be the assurance of the resurrection of mankind. "For as in Adam all die, even so, in Christ all shall be made alive"; "for he is the propitiation for our [the church's] sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," all of whom, therefore, both the just and the unjust, shall come forth from the grave; and, by accepting Christ and yielding implicitly to his guidance, they may be made fully alive—be fully restored to the original human perfection lost in Adam. This doctrine of the resurrection is, however, very little heard or thought of today among professed Christians, and likewise the promise of the Lord's second coming, at whose presence the work of resurrection is due to be accomplished. It is his voice that shall awaken the dead, and his wisdom and grace that shall lead all the willing and obedient to the realization of full resurrection, or restitution, to all that was lost. Yes, "the Lord is risen indeed," and his resurrection is the sure pledge of the resurrection of all for whom he died—of the church first, and afterward of the whole world!

(Continued from page 31)

tion, explaining that those who have done good, the believers, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, who have not believed, shall come forth unto a resurrection of judgment. As explained in verse 24, the believers do not enter into judgment.

So when Jesus said that believers "have everlasting" life, it is obvious he meant that they have it upon the basis of faith, which means that God no longer looks upon them as sinners under condemnation to death, but as perfect in the righteousness of Christ, and having a right to live. However, from the human standpoint, these seem to die like everyone else; or, as the thought is expressed in Psalm 82:7, they "die like men." Actually, however, as is further explained in this prophecy of the church's part in the plan of God, they "fall [in death] like one of the princes."

The Hebrew word here translated "princes" literally means "head," and is used in the Old Testament to describe captains and generals in armies, or chief persons in any association. Its literal meaning, "head," lends itself to the fact that in this particular text the "princes" referred to are the "head" of the fallen human race, Adam, and Jesus who will be the "Head" of the regenerated race.

Both these "princes" died. The first died as a condemned sinner; the second died sacrificially on behalf of the first "prince" and his race; died to provide a way for

mankind to escape the penalty for sin, which was death. The prophecy states that the "children of the Most High" to whom it applies, while from the human standpoint "die like men," actually fall in death "like one of the princes."

They do not fall like prince Adam; that is, because sentenced to death. No, through their faith acceptance of the atoning merit of Christ's blood they have passed from death unto life, and are no longer under condemnation. They die, therefore, as prince Jesus died; that is, sacrificially. Their life is not taken away from them because of sin; rather, they lay it down by denying themselves and taking up their cross and following Jesus into death. They "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth" and thereby are led into death, even as he was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter."—Rev. 14:4; Isa. 53:7

#### **"A Living Sacrifice"**

There is much said in the New Testament to indicate that the followers of Jesus are his followers because they are co-sacrificers with him. Paul wrote, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) Yes, it is a "holy" sacrifice, and therefore "acceptable" to God. It is holy because faith in the atoning blood of Christ results in "perfection," not actual, but reckoned.

Paul speaks of being "crucified" together with Christ. In Romans 6:3-11 he reasons the matter out

for us in detail, and shows why we are given the privilege of laying down our lives in acceptable sacrifice to God. First he speaks of it as a baptism, or burial, into Christ's death—a sacrificial death. He says we are "buried with him" by baptism into death; also, that we have been "planted together in the likeness of his death"—dying, that is, "like one of the princes."

Paul further explains (vs. 6) that our "old man is crucified with him," that is, with Christ, "that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin"—the margin says, "justifieth from sin." These "bodies" that are freed from sin are not, therefore, the "body of sin" that is destroyed, but our own justified bodies that are willingly sacrificed.

What then, is the "body of sin" that is destroyed? Prof. Strong defines the Greek word here translated "body" as "body (as a sound whole) used in a very wide application, literal or figurative." We believe the "body of sin" mentioned by Paul is a symbolic "body"—the whole sinful polity that seized upon the human race in the Garden of Eden and which has been blighting humanity ever since. The atoning work of Jesus opens the way for the destruction of this "body" of sin, and our being crucified with him—our death baptism with him—is a further aspect of the divine arrangement whereby the evil reign of sin will be overthrown and destroyed.

Paul substantiates this in verse 10. Speaking of the death of Jesus, he says, "He died unto sin once." In verse 11 he continues, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin." There are two key words in this statement—"likewise" and "reckon." We are planted together in the likeness of Jesus' death, and Paul tells us that Jesus died "unto sin." Jesus was not himself a sinner, and did not die unto sin in the sense of destroying sin in his own body. He died unto sin as a sin-offering.

"Likewise" or in the "likeness" of his death, we "die unto sin." With our imperfect bodies we could offer nothing to the Lord in the way of an acceptable sacrifice; so, in order to be partners with Jesus in the divine plan of reconciling a world to God, we are authorized to "reckon" ourselves to be so doing. We can thus "reckon" because God reckons us as having passed from death unto life. If we be dead with Christ, our bodies, Paul says are "freed," or "justified," from sin's condemnation. So, on the authority of God's Word, we are privileged to reckon ourselves as participating in the "better sacrifices" of this age, and in the great sin-offering work.—Heb. 9:23

#### **Ransom and Sin-offering**

There is a distinct difference of meaning between the words "ransom" and "sin-offering." The word "ransom" as used in the Bible means a corresponding price. Thus Paul explains that the "man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all." (I Tim. 2:3-6) None but a

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perfect man could do this, for it was the perfect man Adam who sinned and brought death condemnation upon himself and his offspring. Since the undefiled Jesus gave himself a ransom, nothing needs to be, nor can be, added thereto.

A sin-offering is simply an offering for sin. A sin-offering can be anything which the Lord indicates his willingness to accept, and for any purpose which the Lord may design. Thus, in connection with the typical tabernacle services, bullocks and goats were offered for sins, and the Lord accepted them. By God's design certain blessings accrued to Israel from these offerings. They did not make the offerer perfect, nor give him life. Only the perfect sin-offering, the sin-offering which was a corresponding price, as offered by the man Christ Jesus, could do this.

But the fact that a ransom, a corresponding price, was provided by Jesus, does not in itself give life to Adam and his race. The world must be given a knowledge of this provision, and thus an opportunity to accept it. And even after they accept it, they will need sympathetic help and understanding in order to bring their lives into harmony with the righteous principles required of all those who will have the privilege of enjoying everlasting life.

It is in this connection that the church is invited to share in the work of reconciling the world to God, or of bringing the people into at-one-ment with the Creator that

they might live. Paul writes "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," and just before making this statement, saying that "God, who hath reconciled us [the church] to himself by Jesus Christ," adds that he has given unto us the "ministry of reconciliation." Thus we represent Christ, are his ambassadors, to carry to the world the "Word of reconciliation."—II Cor. 5:18-21

This co-operative plan in which the word of reconciliation is entrusted to the footstep followers of Jesus begins during the Gospel age, and while we are still in the flesh. The condition is that we share in death baptism with Jesus. If we are being planted together in the likeness of his death, and suffering with him, this suffering, first of all, is on behalf of Christ's body members; and also for the world of mankind during the next age.

Paul wrote, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." (Col. 1:24) This is a very practical matter. All those who eventually become members in the body of Christ were at one time in the world, and in darkness with the world. The truth which enlightens and draws them to the Lord is not flashed across the sky, but taken to them by those previously enlightened. Because darkness hateth the light, this ministry of the truth, the ministry of reconciliation, results in suffering.

Bitter, death-dealing persecution

**A Sympathetic Priesthood**

does not always result from bearing witness to the truth. It often did in the beginning of the age. Now the hatred of the light is more refined, often taking the form of ostracism and cold indifference. But faithfulness in the ministry of the truth will lead to weariness of the flesh. The responsibilities of the ministry, if faithfully discharged, will mean a measure of mental concern for the interests of the Lord's people. No true saint of God can ever be content to take life easy when there are brethren to be served, or when the truth can be proclaimed to reach those whom the Lord may be calling to become his brethren.

We have a wonderful example of this in the ministry of Paul. What a great deal of suffering was involved in his faithful ministry! Stripes, imprisonments, stonings, "perils in the sea" and "perils in the city," and even "perils among false brethren." All of this, he said, was for Christ's "body's sake, which is the church."—II Cor. 11: 23-28; Col. 1:24

But not alone for the church. In his masterful argument on the necessity of the resurrection, he again speaks of his suffering, and the suffering of all the body members. Why, he asks, are we thus "baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?" (I Cor. 15:29) Here again Paul is referring to our death baptism, and he says that it is on behalf of the dead; that is, the dead world of mankind.

Jesus is the great antitypical High Priest, and the church is clearly shown in the New Testament to be associated with him in the priesthood. (Heb. 3:1; I Pet. 2:5, 9) One of the principal functions of Israel's priesthood was the offering of sacrifice. So the priesthood of this age, beginning with Jesus and continuing with his faithful followers, also offer sacrifices—not animal sacrifices, but themselves. Jesus set the example of faithful sacrifice, even unto death, and we are "baptized" into death with him.

Based upon the sacrifices offered, the priests of Israel extended blessings to the people. For example, at the close of the typical sacrificial service outlined in Leviticus, chapter 9, "Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them." (vs. 22) Just so, the antitypical priesthood, composed of Jesus and his church, will, in the millennial age, be the channel of blessing to all mankind; and the blessing they will offer the people will be the opportunity to gain everlasting life made available through the ransoming blood of the Redeemer.

What wisdom and love are revealed in this arrangement! The antitypical priesthood are the Gospel-age "sons" of God, and we read that "it became him, for whom are all things, . . . in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. 2:10) Jesus had never been imperfect.

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The thought of the text is that through suffering he was trained or perfected as the "Captain" of our salvation.

This training through suffering made Jesus a sympathetic High Priest. Paul wrote, "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:18) Again, "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. 4:15, 16

These references describe Jesus' relationship as High Priest to his church, but the same principle will hold true in the next age in the relationship of the world of mankind to the divine priesthood made up of Jesus and his glorified church. The entire priesthood is perfected for that high office through suffering, so that when the due time comes, the world will be dealt with sympathetically, understandingly.

### **Only Jesus' Blood**

It is Jesus' blood alone that provides atonement for both the church and the world. It is his blood, his life, that constitutes the ransom, the corresponding price. But, as we have seen, those who suffer and die with him during the present age are "reckoned" as having a share in the great sin-offering work based upon the ransom. The sacrifice and suffering of the church contribute to the future blessing of the world. We are

"baptized for the dead." Because this offering is a part of the divine arrangement for destroying the "body of sin" and releasing sin-cursed humanity from death, it is properly styled a sin-offering. Or, as Paul puts it, we, like Jesus, are dying unto, or for sin.—Rom. 6:10, 11

All the sin-canceling merit is in the ransom. The church's share in this wonderful plan of reconciliation and salvation is merely in being the channel through which the merit of the ransom is made available to the world. The sacrificial work of the church during this age is, as we have seen, designed to prepare us to be the kind of priesthood which will offer the life provided by the ransom under the most favorable circumstances. Thus every painful circumstance faithfully endured will result beneficially to the world when the life-giving blessings of the ransom are being offered to them.

A simple illustration would be the case of a person threatened with certain death by cancer. He is taken to a hospital. Only one surgeon in that whole institution is capable of successfully removing that cancer, and he, of course, is glad to serve. But suppose nothing more were done than to remove the cancer. Suppose the patient were left on the operating table, with no one doing anything further for him. Even with the cancer removed he would still eventually die.

But he is not left on the operating table to die. The surgeon has done that which only he could do, and now the hospital doctors and

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nurses take over and, with the cancer removed, the man is restored to health. Obviously, all the training and preparation of the hospital personnel contributes to the recovery of the patient. All help to make the removal of the cancer a real start on the way to life. All the hours and days of training of every assistant in the hospital contributed to the recovery of the cancer patient.

Through original sin, all mankind became blighted with the "sting of death." There was only one "Physician" capable of removing the venom of sin, because to do this called for a "corresponding price." Jesus "gave himself a ransom for all" and thus provided that price. But the divine plan goes further. The patient is not, as it were, left on the operating table to die. The merit of the ransom is of no use unless made available. It must be offered to the patient, and accepted, and used in harmony with the divine arrangements.

So the entire Gospel age is utilized in training—not nurses, and doctors, as in our illustration, but

a priesthood—an understanding, sympathetic priesthood to carry the healing powers of the ransom to the world. These offer themselves to die with Jesus that they might share in ridding the world of sin and its blighting effects upon humanity. Their sacrifices and sufferings add nothing to the sin-canceling merit of the ransom. It is simply God's way of making the merit of the ransom available to the dying race.

And what a wonderful way! God could have emblazoned the truth of the ransom across the sky, and said to mankind, Accept this provision, or else continue to die. But in his love he has provided this better way, a way in which members of the fallen race, touched with the feeling of the world's infirmities and needs, may sympathetically bring the provisions of the ransom to the attention of mankind, and lovingly instruct the people in the ways of life.

Truly, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out" in all their glorious beauty!—Rom. 11:33

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**APRIL 7**—"My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."—Phil. 4:19 (Z. '96-163. Hymn 293)

**APRIL 14**—"He hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors."—Isa. 53:12 (Z. '99-125. Hymn 86)

**APRIL 21**—"We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly

unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. 4:15, 16 (Z. '98-23. Hymn 56)

**APRIL 28**—"We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."—Rom. 5:3-5 (Z. '96-31. Hymn 90)

# Resurrection in Old Testament

**According to Acts 23:8 the Pharisees of Jesus' day believed in the resurrection of the dead. Upon what did they base their belief; for the New Testament Scriptures had not then been written, and the Old Testament Scriptures do not even contain the word "resurrection"?**

THE Pharisees were an influential sect in the religious life of the Jewish people. They professed strict conformity to the Mosaic Law and complete abhorrence of pagan religious customs. They put great credence in many erroneous traditions, for which they were justly condemned by our Lord (Matt. 15:2-6); but they also, as you have stated, firmly believed the truth of the resurrection of the dead.

History does not record the source of their belief, but it is impossible to accept the teachings of the Old Testament without believing with complete conviction that there will be a resurrection from death. It is true that the word "resurrection" does not occur in the Old Testament. It is also true that without actually using the word "resurrection," the Old Testament clearly teaches that those who have gone into death will return. In proof of this may we call your attention to the following

texts, all of which are from the Old Testament:

Hosea 13:14—"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."

Daniel 12:2—"And many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting [age-lasting] contempt."

Isaiah 26:19—"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

Psalms 104:29, 30—"Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth."

These are but a few of the texts with which the Pharisees should have been familiar and from which they could have been assured of the great truth of the resurrection. It is in the New Testament, of course, that the Lord has supplied many of the details which enrich our vision of this great doctrine, summarized by the Apostle Paul in Acts 24:14, 15 which reads: "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call her-

esy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

## Paul's Great Desire

I have enjoyed many of your frank and earnest discussions of the Bible, although I do not always agree with you. For instance, surely Paul didn't expect to go to sleep when he died, for did he not say in Philippians 1:23, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ"? Surely Paul expected to "be with Christ" immediately after departing this life, and I believe he was.

THIS text has been the source of much discussion among students of God's Word. The truth of a text does not always lie upon the surface, but when found, we may be sure it will be in harmony with all divine revelation, and will not contradict other portions of the Bible.

We do not believe that the apostle expected to go to heaven at the time of his death; for in speaking of his death as his "departure" he says, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me

only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (II Tim. 4: 6-8) He thus expressed his hope of reward to be fulfilled at the second coming and appearing of the Master.

What, then, is the meaning of the text of our question? An analysis of the text convinces us that not two things, but three, are mentioned by the apostle. Two things, "life" or "death," were, under the circumstances, of about equal consequence to Paul, and presented merely a problem of choice. To live meant that he would continue to labor for the Lord and endure the attendant sufferings; to die meant for him rest from toil and struggle. The apostle was indifferent as to whether life or death would be his lot—verses 21 and 22 read, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not."

But beside these two possible things between which it was difficult to choose, there was a third which he really "desired." He did not wish to express a choice as to whether he continued to live in the flesh, or died and went to rest; but upon the third, although at the time impossible, he did not hesitate, saying it was "far better" than either of the other two. In order to better understand what was the third thing, we quote the **Emphatic Diaglott** translation of Philippians 1:21-24 as follows: "Therefore, for me to live is for Christ, and to die, gain. But if to

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live in the flesh, this is to me a fruit of labor; and what I should choose I do not exactly know. I am indeed, hard pressed by the two things—(I have an earnest desire for the returning, and being with Christ, since it is very much to be preferred)—but to remain in the flesh is more requisite on your account.”

The apostle had in mind the return of Christ as the center of his hope. This truth is emphasized in II Timothy 4:6-8 which is quoted above, and also in I Thessalonians 4:13-18, which we trust you will study. Paul was a prisoner in Rome when he wrote the epistle to the Philippian brethren. It did not matter to him whether Nero set him free or cut off his head: but the returning of the Lord did matter—he desired it; to him it was “far better” than either of the other two, for then he would be resurrected from the dead and so be forever with the Lord, in full possession of his “crown of righteousness,” which is the heritage of all the faithful of this Gospel age.—Rev. 2:10

## Ways to Life

**Please explain the “gates” and the “ways” of Matthew 7:13, 14.**

THE text to which you have referred reads as follows: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Ever since Adam entered through the “wide gate” of disobedience to God, the human family has walked down the “broad way” to destruction and death. This broad way is slippery from sin; and man’s ability not to walk in the way of least resistance has constantly weakened. The broad way of our text is the easy way, the worldly way, the selfish way, which is followed by the majority and which leads to death.

It was not until our Savior, Jesus Christ, “brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel” (II Tim. 1:10) that it was possible for anyone to find and enter through the “strait gate.” While the multitude still follow the way of disobedience to God, a few see the narrow door of complete and unreserved consecration to him, and take the step that leads through the gate and are then able to see the “narrow” path of sacrifice and devotion which leads upward to eternal life. Each Christian must walk in this narrow way to prove his faithfulness, for it is the path the Master trod. He left us an example that we should follow in his steps.—I Pet. 2:21

Besides the “broadway” and the “narrow way,” the Bible also tells of a “highway.” Isaiah 35:8, 9, reads, “And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein, . . . but the redeemed shall walk there.” This also is a way to life—life right here on earth.

"Life" is a very comprehensive word, for it is found in many forms. The narrow way of sacrifice and devotion which has been open during the Gospel age leads to spiritual life, to immortality, which is the reward of those who are now faithful; for they have been called to "joint-heirship" with Jesus Christ. (Rom. 8:17) The highway over which the ransomed of the Lord will walk during the thousand years of Christ's reign leads to perfect human life, life such as Adam enjoyed in Eden before sin entered and man started down the broadway to destruction. During Christ's reign, this highway of holiness will lead the willing and obedient of the human family back into harmony and communion with God. Thus they "shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isa. 35:10; Rev. 21:1-5

## Strength to Endure

**Is it true that walking in God's "narrow way" leads to a life of greater difficulties and burdens than does the serving of self or the world?**

I CORINTHIANS 10:13 reads: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." According to this text, the burdens and difficulties in the lives of Christians are no greater than those which come to others. The

important thing is how we meet life's trials, and in this the child of God has an advantage; for he has the sustaining power of God's grace, and "God is faithful."

All of us have seen some persons overwhelmed by a trivial experience, while others, with far more serious problems, are able to manifest an inner peace because they discern the Lord's providences in their affairs and are thus able to live above discouragement. While it requires faith to do this, nevertheless the Christian who exercises it, finds his burden far lighter than those who do not have Christ as their yokefellow. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. 11:28-30

Those who walk the "narrow way" should have a faith that realizes God has promised a way of escape. And sometimes no other escape is provided but the strength of spirit to endure: bearing up under severe trial because of faith in the assurance of Romans 8:28, which reads, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." God has never said he would spare us from the stresses and strains of life, but he has promised that he will be with us in all of our experiences and will give us the inner strength necessary for our spiritual peace.

## Seeking Things Above

*"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."* —COLOSSIANS 3:1-3

CHRIST himself was raised from the dead nearly two thousand years ago and, as our text declares, now "sitteth on the right hand of God," or as we read in Hebrews 12:2, "is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." In Ephesians 1:19-21 Paul again affirms the fact of Jesus' resurrection, speaking of the "mighty power" which God "wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

Paul stresses the importance of Jesus' resurrection by the effective use of the word "if"—"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."—I Cor. 15:14-19

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept," Paul affirms. This means that our preaching is not vain, that we are not false witnesses. It guarantees that those who have fallen asleep in Christ have not perished. It means that we have an "Advocate with the Father," who has appeared in the presence of God for us, therefore that we are not still in our sins. (I John 2:1) It means that our hope in Christ is not limited

to this present short span of life, but one which is "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus."—Heb. 6:19, 20

Because we have such a glorious and stedfast hope, we are not "of all men most miserable." Indeed, we are not miserable at all, but are rejoicing in our glorious hope, even though in order to attain to its consummation it is necessary to sacrifice the flesh and its interests, and continue day by day to set our affection on things above, not on things of the earth.

Paul indicates why we would be "most miserable" if there be no resurrection of the dead. For then we would be "found false witnesses of God" testifying to an untruth. Furthermore, he asks, "Why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" This was quite literally true in Paul's case. Being determined that he would be faithful to the truth and to his Lord no matter what the cost might be, he never knew when he might be called upon to endure severe suffering, or even to die. He had "fought with beasts at Ephesus," been beaten, stoned, and imprisoned. "I die daily," he wrote, but he was not "miserable," for he knew that his Redeemer lived. Therefore, he wrote, "I protest [the no resurrection error] by your [margin, "our"] rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord."—I Cor. 15:30-32

If we are to maintain the hope in Christ in which we rejoice, we must, like Paul, "die daily" with him. Paul speaks of this in Romans 6:3-5 as being buried with Christ by baptism into death. If we have taken the step of full consecration to the Lord which leads to being "planted together in the likeness of his death," and prove faithful unto death, "we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." This will be our actual resurrection and exaltation to be with Jesus and to "see him as he is."—I John 3:1-3

But Paul speaks of a figurative resurrection which constitutes part of our present inheritance. He says "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) It is impossible for us to understand with any degree of fulness the great change experienced by Jesus when he was raised from the dead. It was a change from the human to the divine nature; from association with fallen mankind to being with the Heavenly Father. Every aspect of his life was different, higher.

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It is this reality that Paul uses to illustrate that by faith we now "walk in newness of life." We do not have the new life, but we hope for it; and it is the transforming power of this glorious hope that changes every aspect even of the present life. Our text speaks of it as being "risen with Christ," and signifies the great change this should make in our lives by saying that since this is true we should "seek those things which are above," setting our affections on things "above, not on things on the earth."

Thus, we might say, our new way of "walking" is one of "seeking," or striving after heavenly things. By faith we are even now seated together with Christ in the "heavenlies," and it is by daily "seeking" to have our thoughts, words, and doings conformed to this heavenly pattern that we will eventually gain an abundant entrance into the actual glories beyond the veil "where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

### How We Seek

"Seek, and ye shall find," said Jesus. (Luke 11:9) If we are to be successful in our "seeking" we must have faith to believe that God will fulfil all his good promises on our behalf. Paul wrote, "Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Heb. 11:6

Faith is most important in seeking those things which are above, and diligence is also essential. We will never attain unto the heavenly reward if we are half-hearted in our seeking. The Psalmist wrote, "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." (Ps. 119:2) With the "whole heart"—no half-hearted seeking will suffice.

And we must do our seeking in the Lord's way—"Blessed are they that keep his testimonies," his words of instruction, his revealed will. Enthusiasm alone is not enough. There is a zeal which is not according to knowledge. The general outline of the Lord's will in this matter is set forth by Paul in Romans 12:1, 2, where we read, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

To seek those things which are above, it is essential that we

renew our minds. Our fleshly minds naturally seek the things of the earth, so our minds must be renewed by the directives and promises of God in order that our affections be set on things above. This means, as Paul indicates, that as human beings we must be sacrificed, our bodies, symbolically speaking, given to be burned.

Seeking those things which are above involves a great deal more than doing the best we can to live apart from sin. Many dedicate themselves to righteous living, but continue to set their affections on the good things of the present life. These will have their reward, but it will not be a heavenly reward; for they are not seeking those things which are above, but have been quite content with the good earthly things here below.

#### **“Seeking” First the Kingdom**

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus expressed another essential of “seeking.” He said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.” (Matt. 6:33) “First” in this connection means “primarily.” The kingdom of God and his righteousness is to be our chief consideration, today, tomorrow, and every day—and all the time, with our “whole heart.”

In giving us this admonition, Jesus is contrasting our proper interests as new creatures, with the interests of those who are not setting their affections on things above. In verse 25 he says, “I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, . . . nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” The thought here in the Greek text is not to be anxious or overly concerned about our physical needs.

“For after all these things do the Gentiles seek,” Jesus said. (vs. 32) The temporal things of life—food, clothing, a comfortable home, and the pleasures of this world are the chief concern of the unconsecrated and of those who are devoted merely to righteous living. But those who are presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, and are setting their affections on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, are making the “kingdom of God” their first consideration, so are not anxious over what measure of good earthly things may be theirs during the present life. These are glad to take the advice of David, who wrote, “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.”—Ps. 55:22

Paul wrote along a similar line, saying, “Be careful for nothing [that is, be not overanxious about anything]; but in everything by

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prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. 4:6) Paul again wrote, "Be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Heb. 13:5) One of the most difficult lessons every Christian has to learn is to be content with the measure of temporal needs which the Lord supplies. The triumphant Christian who is "seeking first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" will, at all times, cast all his care upon the Lord.—I Pet. 5:7

The proper relationship between seeking first the kingdom, and making proper provision for our temporal needs is illustrated by Jesus' parable of the rich man whose "ground brought forth plentifully." (Luke 12:15-23) To illustrate that life does not consist of the abundance of things which a man possesseth, he told of this rich man, who, when he found that his barns were not large enough to store all that his fertile land had produced, "thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

"So is he," Jesus said, "that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God"—has not been laying up treasure in heaven, not seeking those things which are above. Then, in the next verse, Jesus says, "Therefore, . . . take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment."

The lesson is clear. The admonition to take no thought for the morrow means not to take the kind of thought as did the man in the parable, who, being blessed by God with a reasonable supply of "fruits" and "goods" was not satisfied; and, instead of devoting whatever surplus his land provided for the blessing of others, decided to hoard it for himself. This man obviously set his affections altogether on temporal good things, and laid up no treasures in heaven. He did not "seek first" the kingdom of God.

### What Not to Seek

On another occasion Jesus said, "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it." (Luke 17:33) Here Jesus is referring to those who respond to

the call of the harvest message during the time of his second presence. In the preceding verse he says, "Remember Lot's wife." Those who lose their lives for Jesus' sake (Matt. 10:39) therefore, are those who have covenanted to die with the Master, to follow in his footsteps even unto death; those who are presenting their bodies a living sacrifice. These are the ones who are being baptized into Christ's death, and at the same time are risen to walk in newness of life, and are seeking those things which are above. For these now to seek to save their earthly lives by taking themselves off the altar of sacrifice would result in the loss of eternal life, because it would mean a repudiation of their covenant of sacrifice.

Jesus made this same remark to Peter when this impetuous apostle, not understanding the plan of God for his Master, endeavored to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem where his enemies were waiting to arrest him and put him to death. This was when Jesus said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan: . . . for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it." Yes, find it with Jesus "at the right hand of God." But only if that life is sought by actually laying down the present life in sacrifice. This is what Jesus did, and it was on his way to Jerusalem and to the cross that he gave this admonition to his disciples. It was as though he said to them that if he now avoided death by not going to Jerusalem, as Peter advised, it would be contrary to the will of his Father, and he would die eternally.

The same is true with us. We seek the things which are above by renouncing the things which are below, and turning our backs upon them. It is a serious matter, a "strait" and "narrow" way in which to walk. It is more, much more, than a philosophy to read and to study. We need the reading and the studying, but these fall short of their objective if we do not go on to perform, to carry out the terms of our consecration.

Nor does seeking the things above consist of renouncing earthly things for a time only. If we are actually to attain unto the heavenly inheritance we must continue our seeking, daily and hourly, and faithfully, even unto death. The reward will be only to those who "by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor

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and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) Only those who through patience, endure, and continue seeking unto the end, shall be given the crown of life.—Rev. 2:10

### "Not Her Own"

On the negative side, Paul said, "Love . . . seeketh not her own." (I Cor. 13:5) Love, that great principle which prompted the Heavenly Father to give his Son to be the Redeemer, and motivated Jesus in laying down his life for us and for the world, must be the motive behind our seeking those things which are above. In our association with the brethren, and with others, we have the opportunity of determining the extent to which this divine principle of unselfishness is really ruling in our hearts.

How do we react in situations in which it may seem that others are taking advantage of us, that our "rights" are being ignored, or perhaps trampled upon? Do we resent this, and strenuously insist that we obtain everything which we claim to be ours, irrespective of how others might be affected? If so, it might indicate that we do not yet appreciate the spirit of sacrifice as we should, or do not realize that if we would attain to the things above which we are seeking, we must willingly and gladly give up all claims to earthly advantages, foregoing these temporary benefits in order that we may attain to the heavenly riches.

"Here have we no continuing city," wrote Paul, "but we seek one to come." (Heb. 13:14) If we attain a proper sense of values, we will realize that all things temporal are of little worth compared to the "eternal weight of glory" which we are seeking. (II Cor. 4:17) What matters it, then, if someone else attains some earthly advantage which we may think properly belong to us? We cannot afford, as new creatures, to spend thought and time in seeking our own in unloving ways. To do so would mean that our attention had been diverted from the more important "seeking," of those "things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

### "Fulness of Joy"

Everyone desires to be happy, to be joyful. The Lord wants his people to be happy. He wants us to rejoice even while we are laying down our lives in sacrifice. God takes no pleasure in unhappiness. All creation was designed for his pleasure, and he wants his creatures to enjoy life and the good things of life which he has provided. Sin blighted much of the happiness of the human race, but

his plan of redemption and salvation looks to the destruction of sin and the restoration of man to his edenic perfection and happiness.

And even while this plan is in the process of development, much joy is provided for those who are co-operating with the Lord. It is a great joy to be a child of the Lord and to realize the daily fulfillment of all his good promises of grace to help in every time of need. Besides this, as it was in the case of Jesus, there is a joy set before us. This joy enabled Jesus to endure the cross and despise the shame; and for us, also, it gives strength and courage to continue seeking the things above, a "seeking" which involves sacrifice and death.

One of the precious promises of the Heavenly Father which meant much to Jesus is the one recorded in the 16th Psalm. In verses 8 and 9 Jesus is prophetically represented as saying, "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope." These same things may be true of us while we are seeking those things which are above. Our hearts should be glad, and we can "rejoice in the Lord alway."—Phil. 4:4

The prophecy continues to express the Master's hope—"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." (vs. 10) We know that Jesus' soul, his being, was restored, brought back from *sheol*, the death condition. That is why he is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. That is why we are setting our affections on things above. That is why, even though we are laying down our lives in sacrifice, we are not "of all men most miserable," and why we are, instead, rejoicing; for we know that because he lives we, too, shall live.

Jesus had full confidence that his soul would not be left in hell. Therefore he said to his Father, as he was dying, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit," my life, my soul. (Luke 23:46) Jesus knew, as is recorded in the 11th verse of this wonderful 16th Psalm, that the Heavenly Father would show him the path of life, and had, indeed, already revealed it to him. That path of life for Jesus led through death. That is the reason he would have lost his life had he endeavored to avoid death. And Jesus knew something else. He knew that in his Father's presence, his literal presence, beyond the veil of death, there would be fulness of joy, and that at his right hand there were "pleasures for evermore." Thus was the "joy"

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set before the Master which helped him to endure the cross, that "fulness of joy" in the presence of his Heavenly Father.

And this same joy is set before us. It is one of the incentives for seeking those things which are above "where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." No wonder Paul spoke of this exaltation as a "prize," the "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14) But attaining this prize depends on our continuing to set our affections on things above, "not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

Are we "dead"? Are we really being planted together in the likeness of Jesus' death? Are we dying daily? (I Cor. 15:31) Are we presenting our bodies a living sacrifice? Are we seeking to lose our lives, sacrificially? God has made every provision necessary that we may attain that for which we are seeking. It remains only for us to do our part. If we "seek" diligently we know that we shall "find" the reward.

We must also continue to seek "first" the things above, and with our "whole heart." Yes, and we will have need of patience in our seeking—"patient continuance in well-doing." Besides all this, we are to "seek" in prayer. It is a glorious hope which is set before us, a hope in which Paul says we rejoice. But to realize its fulfillment we will need not only to be "patient in tribulation," but also "instant in prayer."—Rom. 5:2; 12:12

We have been begotten to this "lively hope," or hope of life, "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (I Pet. 1:3, 4) Yes, this rich and glorious inheritance is "reserved," waiting for us to claim it by our worthiness in continuing faithfully, patiently, prayerfully, and wholeheartedly to "seek those things which are above."

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We'll take up the cross and in faith follow thee,  
And bear thy reproach, thy disciples to be.  
Blest Savior, for courage to thee we will fly;  
Of grace thou hast promised abundant supply.

## Testing Days

**IN CHOOSING** a bride for his Son, the Father is making a selection from those who accept the Gospel message and desire to draw near to him. An early test is whether or not they will make a full consecration to God. Then after having made their consecration, will they conquer the flesh and bring it into subjection? Further, will they strive always to keep the flesh in subjection, even to the end of the earthly pilgrimage?

The Lord is watching our course continually. His eye is ever upon us to see to what extent we are zealous in crucifying our flesh. Those who are sincere and earnest in this matter are the ones whom he is seeking. He seeks a godly seed—those who have the disposition of the Master, who ever loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and gladly laid down their lives in sacrifice, in harmony with the divine will. And, so the Father, even to this day, seeks those who pre-eminently love righteousness, hate iniquity and are glad to be living sacrifices, delighting to do his will.

In proportion as we manifest the spirit which actuated our Lord—a love for the truth and for that which is right; a promptness to fight against all sin in ourselves; a developing of a spirit of loving

sacrifice—we shall be copies of God's dear Son. Maintaining the proper zeal and energy in this respect, and proving to be faithful unto death, we shall be granted the reward promised, "the pride of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

### Our Lord's Second Presence

Today, the Lord's true people, having received the truth in the love of it, are being instructed and very richly blessed spiritually, by our present Lord and Head. For all such fully consecrated followers of Jesus, light is being shed upon the Holy Scriptures as never before. We are feasting spiritually upon the richest bounties of his grace, and are rejoicing greatly. By faith we are seated at our Master's table, and he himself, according to promise, has come forth and is serving us.—Luke 12:37

Notwithstanding all these wonderful spiritual blessings which, by divine grace, are ours today, there is abundant evidence that delusions of error abound around us, and that deceptive teachings are rampant. These peculiar and trying circumstances now prevailing were referred to by the Apostle Paul (II Thess. 2:8-12) when writing about our Lord's second presence: "And then shall that Wicked [the Man of Sin] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness

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[bright-shining] of his presence: whose presence is after [or accompanied by] the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. And with all de-ceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send [permit to come upon] them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be condemned [judged unworthy] who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness [un-truth, error].”

### Strong Delusion

It may be asked, Why should the Lord permit the Adversary to exercise this deceptive power? Doubtless Satan is actively and energetically maneuvering to avoid his complete binding and restraining, while God, on the other hand, is willing to permit his activity because it can now serve a purpose, a sifting work, which must reach and touch every class and condition of professed Christians everywhere—to test and prove them.

Note specially the Apostle Paul’s forceful words respecting this particular day of trial in which we live: “God shall send [permit to come upon] them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” Why? that they who fall might be manifested as not right, as out of harmony with God, as unfit to be of the “bride” class. But why so? Because they received not the truth in the love of it, but had pleasure in untruth.

These are not those who never heard the truth, but those who, having once heard and understood it, turned from it, rejected it, and had pleasure in error and unrighteousness—not necessarily in gross wickedness, but in some measure of unrighteousness. Often a desire for a little more liberty of self-will, instead of close conformity to the divine will, and consequently a preference for the error which would grant such liberty and silence the promptings of conscience and the voice of truth.

Such prefer the error to the truth. Those who receive not the truth in the love of it are not worthy of it; and they therefore must go away from it into the outer darkness that envelops the world. To these, error comes in its most deceitful forms, and they quickly fall a prey to the delusion.

It is quite possible that some of these trials, siftings, and delusions may come closest upon those possessing the largest degree of the light of present truth. How all-important it is that we keep ourselves in the love of God; that we have not only a knowledge of the truth, which alone might merely puff up, but that additionally we have the spirit of Christ, which it should produce—love to God and to each other, and toward all.

### Take Heed

The Scriptures repeatedly exhort us to be on guard: “Take heed that ye be not deceived.” (Luke 21:8) “Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.” (Luke 11:35) “Take heed, breth-

ren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." (Heb. 3:12) "Let every man take heed how he buildeth."—I Cor. 3:10

During the days now upon us it is of vital importance that we take special heed to that which has been written aforetime for our learning and instruction. In this connection, Jude verse 6, is a very illuminating text of Scripture: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto [until] the judgment of the great day."

In "Studies in the Scriptures" Volume 6, pages 619 to 624, also in the booklet on Spiritualism, the test or trial which came to the angels of God through the fall of man is discussed at considerable length. Reference is made to the fallen angels in Genesis 6:1-5; II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6. These wicked spirit beings have been restrained in Tartarus, the atmosphere of our earth, and thus separated from the holy angels.

The "chains" of darkness have, since the Flood, hindered these demons from freely materializing in human form as hitherto, and obliged them, if they would have anything to do with humanity, to do so secretly, or through agents, or mediums. These lying spirits seek, and very largely accomplish, the ensnarement of the human family by the propagation of false doctrines; amongst others, that the dead are not dead, but alive as

spirit beings—by pretended communications with these in which these evil spirits impersonate the dead, and communicate matters perhaps unknown to other human beings.

Thus they seem to corroborate their claim that the dead are alive, and thereby confirm Satan's original lie, "Ye shall not surely die." This is the very reverse of God's plain declaration, "Thou shalt surely die."—Gen. 2:17; 3:4

We are now living in "the judgment [krisis, trial] of the great day." The restraint of darkness placed upon these fallen angels was to last only **until** the crisis, or judgment, of "the great day." It can be expected that the loosing and liberating from the chains of darkness will increase, and that their vicious natures will lead them to beset mankind with the grossest immoralities, also every evil work and teaching, "insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."—Matt. 24:24

It may be also that the fallen spirit beings, still in opposition to God, will discover and use new power and fresh methods of materialization—further lying wonders—deceiving mankind.

Today, there are in Christendom, and as never before, severe challenges to our most holy faith. Some of the deceptions, delusions, and temptations around us are: Many freshly invented unscriptural fantastic ideas and strange doctrines; much publicity given to the gift of tongues, also faith-healing; incentives to go back into Babylon midst

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confusion and error, instead of maintaining loyalty to the Lord's instructions, "Come out of her, my people"; efforts to find and proclaim "new light," instead of earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints; movements tending to a slackening of full consecration, a lukewarmness, living as though varying degrees of consecration will suffice and be pleasing enough to the Lord; popular inducements to lower the standard of the truth, and allow the spirit of the world to come into the life; a weariness, failing to let our light shine in the world, holding forth the Word of life; a lack of zeal and interest in the proclamation of the **whole** will of God, as recorded in the Scriptures. Because of these influences, the love of many has become cool.

### Who Shall Stand?

With the Psalmist we may well enquire, "Who shall ascend into the hill [kingdom] of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? The answer comes, "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul [being] unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." (Ps. 24: 3-5) Here are the people among whom the delusions of error can make no headway. These have a standpoint of observation from which every error appears in its true colours, and every truth in its proper light.

Note the peculiar features of this class. They have "clean hands."

Their work for the Lord may be very imperfect; they may tell the story of his love and grace in a very halting, awkward manner. They may minister to the temporal or spiritual necessities of the saints or others from a very sparing and plain store, but their work will be clean. Their story will be free from self-emulation and human glorying, and their work will be free from pride and parade. What they do will be done with simplicity and meekness, as unto the Lord, and not for the praise of men.

They have "pure hearts." Under divine inspection, their motives are seen to be pure. Their whole purpose and endeavor is to glorify God and to bless their fellow-men, especially the household of faith.

They have not lifted up themselves to vanity. They have no vain worldly ambitions, either secretly or openly cherished and ministered to behind the outward profession of entire consecration to God. No ambition to be great or good or wise in the eyes of men; nor to grasp the fleeting earthly treasures once consecrated to God.

Nor have they "sworn deceitfully." They have not made a covenant with God of full consecration to his service with a secret determination to keep back part of the price; nor have they, since making the covenant, repudiated its obligations.

The whole course of this class is one of sincerity and truth. Their character is that of meekness and faith. They seek to be righteous

and have the desire to be moulded and fashioned after its principles. They correspondingly hate wickedness and every evil way. With a realization of their own shortcomings from the standard of perfection, they put no confidence in the flesh, but humbly and confidently submit their will and judgment to the will and plan of God.

How great is the responsibility of our present position before God, the great Judge of all hearts! He has specially favoured us in revealing to us the wonders of his plan, and in setting before us the grand prize of our high calling. Thus far we were counted worthy of those favours, and eligible for the prize of joint-heirship with Christ. How worthy have we proved ourselves since receiving this knowledge? Have we received it with meekness and humility, and with that gratitude which manifests itself in active service of the truth, in proclaiming it to others, and in defending it, and standing by it nobly in the midst of all the reproaches hurled against it?

If we are not thus zealous for the truth, we are not worthy of it, and some of the deceptions of this "evil day" will surely number us among its victims. For it is in this time of the Lord's presence that Satan is permitted to work mightily with lying wonders of error. His various schemes will appear to prosper greatly, in comparison with which the success of the truth will seem to be small; for with these, as with Gideon's band of old, it will be a time of sifting, and a

question of "who shall be able to stand?"

But let those who stand, gird themselves about with divine truth and hence fear nothing. The Lord is permitting these delusions that they may serve his own wise and benevolent purposes in the separating of the worthy from the unworthy, and for the manifestation of those who are at heart loyal to him.

### Children of the Day

"Ye are all the children of the light, and the children of the day." (I Thess. 5:5) We belong to the new dispensation and our citizenship is in heaven. By faith we are dead to the world, and we live towards God, therefore we are counted as children of the light and of the day, even during present "world" darkness.

We are in harmony with God and have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and by the Word of truth, to the new nature, and are promised, if faithful, joint-heirship with our Lord in the heavenly kingdom. Let us, who are of the day, cast off superstition and ignorance—"the works of darkness"—and "put on the armour of light."—Rom. 13:12

Our Lord indicated that at his second presence he would, symbolically speaking, give such a knock as would arouse his faithful ones and lead to the trimming of their lamps that they might know of the presence of the Bridegroom and be prepared to enter with him into the wedding festival.

The glorious prospect is that

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soon the church will be complete beyond the veil. Soon, the Sun of Righteousness will shine, and its wondrous rays will penetrate to the uttermost parts of the earth. Every child of Adam, sharer in his curse, shall ultimately be a sharer in the benefits of Messiah's great work of blessing, by being brought under the influence of that great Light which shall constitute the millennial age, a day of divine blessing and of glory, and of the knowledge of the Lord.

"Let us walk honestly, as in the day." (Rom. 13:13) We are not yet in the fullest light of the millennial day, but we belong to the new era, and are therefore to live, even in this present time, as nearly as possible up to the perfect standards of the future. Each one should see to it that he is honest, not only in pounds, shillings, and pence, but honest in his dealings with his neighbours, in his treatment of the brethren, and indeed all people; honest also in his confessions respecting his God and his faith. The tests are being made along this line, and those who love the favour of man rather than the favour of God, and who dishonestly are willing to confess and profess a lie, will be given up to their falsehood. They will be permitted to blight their eternal interests, proving themselves unfit for the kingdom.

The Scriptures urge us that in view of the time now present, and that we are children of the day, we should not engage in worldly revelries, time-killing pleasures,

harmless though they would seem to be to most people. We must not be intoxicated with the spirit of the world. Some folk have an intoxication for money, wealth, or business; others for dress, music, art; but as the Lord's people, who have a glimpse of the new day and the great work of God which is to be accomplished during that kingdom, our hearts are so absorbed with the will and the work of God that those matters which would be thought proper enough, and right enough for the world in general, can have no place whatsoever in our conception and our course.

### Armour of God

"Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Eph. 6:13) We are to come reverently to the Word of God to learn his will and way, and with a desire to walk accordingly. Here we are enabled to receive the divinely provided armour of God, which will protect, all who carefully put it on, from all the fiery darts of the enemy. Without this complete armour, no child of God is safe in this evil day.

Today we are living in "perilous times"; peculiarly perilous to Christian faith; because of the many subtle and delusive forms of error now springing up to intercept the progress of the truth. But God's provision for his saints is equal to the emergency.

For some years past the Lord has been handing us this armour, piece by piece, and has been tell-

ing us to put it on and wear it. He has wanted us to become accustomed to it, to feel at ease and at home in it, because the time would come when it would be impossible to stand without it.

Some have been heeding the counsel. Carefully they have buckled on every part of the armour as fast as they received it, and in consequence, today they stand completely clothed with the truth.—Eph. 6:11-18

Their loins are girt about with truth; their feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; and their heads (their intellectual faculties) are covered as a helmet of salvation (salvation from the snares and delusions of error). Then, they have on the breastplate of righteousness—justification in Christ and a righteous character, which the truth has developed in them. In their hands they bear the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God.

They have a wonderful shield of faith, and this is able to quench all the fiery darts of the enemy, not merely some of them, so that the flying evil arrows do not even jar the armour or for a moment stun the inner man.

Praise God for such an armour! We must not be satisfied with the idea that we can get along as well as our fathers did with only a part of it. The time is now upon us when we must have it complete, or we shall surely fall. The portions of the armour presented to the saints of the past were sufficient for their day and trial, but a

greater trial of faith in this “evil day” necessitates a more complete defense.

Some, with mere “curiosity” interest have spent much valuable time in looking at the various parts of the armour as presented to them for the past few years, instead of earnestly buckling them on, and proving them; and they have become so used to merely looking at the beautiful pieces of the armour, that they seemingly expect the process of bringing forward new pieces to continue forever.

All such should wake up to the fact that the armour is already complete, and that no more can rightly be added to it—anything more would be a superfluity. If we think to change our helmet of salvation for some other helmet, we will very soon want another breastplate to match it. And we shall want another sword, for the sword of the Spirit will not match with any other helmet. And the true shield of faith will not match with any other armour.

We must not allow our head to grow too big for the helmet which the Lord has provided and then go around hunting for a new helmet to fit our swelled head and wrong ideas. If the helmet supplied in God’s Word will not fit us, we must not fancy the increase is real wisdom and then endeavour to stretch that helmet, or try to get a new one, but freely apply the liniment of humility until the helmet our Father has provided does fit.

Put on the whole armour of God, and make sure that we accept no

## THE DAWN

spurious brand. Put the armour on piece by piece quickly. Buckle it on securely, and having done all, stand. The position thus suggested implies an attack. The attack will surely come, and indeed has already come to many. Are we ready to do good service as a valiant soldier of Jesus Christ? Stand! do not retreat nor run away. Stand your ground and battle for the truth!

God permits the strong delusions to take possession of all who have pleasure in unrighteousness, and who, therefore, do not believe the truth. Such are unworthy of the truth, and sooner or later every such one must fall. All such are judged as unworthy of membership in Christ, the true Vine.

And, as the time for the exaltation of the completed church draws nearer and nearer, the testing may be expected to increase, until all the unworthy ones are weeded out. The Lord has arranged to have gathered out of his kingdom, all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, who practice sin, who are not fully in sympathy with the principles and ways of righteousness as laid down in the Scriptures. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13:41, 43

If we would escape the delusions of this evil day, let us see to it that we are in deed and in truth, lovers of righteousness. Let us receive the truth, in the love of it, and in meekness, holding it always with humility and thankfulness, ever serving it with a joyous energetic zeal.

## Encouraging Radio Letters

### Nearer to God

"Dear 'Frank and Ernest': I am sending for a copy of *The Dawn Magazine*, hoping that many more will also be asking for a copy, and will be listening to your broadcasts every Monday, even as I am determined to do. I would not miss your programme for anything, because every broadcast I hear brings me a step nearer to knowing my Heavenly Father. God bless you! Yours faithfully, T. W., England"

### Very Interested

"Dear 'Frank and Ernest': Will you please send me a copy of your book, 'When a Man Dies.' I have listened with much interest to your programmes from Luxembourg. My little daughter, aged seven years, died recently and I am very interested in what happens after death. Yours faithfully, M. N., Scotland"

### Growing Spiritually

"Dear 'Frank and Ernest': I do find your programmes a great help and blessing. You have already sent me two very helpful booklets and I feel I am growing spiritually every day. Could you please send me your further booklet, 'Man's Creation and Final Destiny.' I am praying for you. Thank you very much. Yours sincerely, V. G., England"

### Great Blessing

"Dear 'Frank and Ernest': Thank you very much for *The Dawn Magazine*. I look forward very much to receiving each copy, and I must tell you that they are always a great blessing to me. I am quite young in the glorious truths you proclaim, but I must let you know that already my Bible has become a new book to me, since I came out of darkness into the glorious light of divine truth. I thank you, and may God continue to bless you. Yours truly, A. H., England"

## THE BRITISH SECTION

### SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

<b>W. CLARKE</b>			
Anerley .....	May	15	
<b>C. A. CORNELL</b>			
Letchworth .....	April	3	
Oxford .....	May	22	
<b>C. E. DICKINSON</b>			
Liverpool .....	April	24	
Dublin .....		26/27	
Clonelly .....		28/29	
Londonderry .....		30	
Belfast .....	May	1	
<b>G. A. FORD</b>			
Letchworth .....	May	8	
<b>J. LESLIE MC KEOWN</b>			
Clonelly .....	April	3	
Clonelly .....	May	1	

<b>J. H. MURRAY</b>			
Guildford .....	April	3	
Ossett .....	April 30/May	1	
Eastleigh .....		8	
Coventry .....		22	

<b>W. E. PAMPLING</b>			
Luton .....	April	17	
Anerley .....		24	
Lincoln .....	May	15	

<b>W. F. READER</b>			
Ipswich .....	May	22	
<b>G. RUSSELL POLLOCK</b>			
London .....	June	25	

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### HENRY E. ANDERSON

New Haven, Conn. (Morning) .. April 17  
 Waterbury, Conn. (Afternoon) ..... 17

### SAMUEL BAKER

Hendersonville, N. C. .... April 1, 3  
 Charlotte, N. C. .... 4  
 Greensboro, N. C. .... 5, 6  
 Enfield, N. C. (Afternoon) ..... 7  
 Rocky Mount, N. C. (Evening) ..... 7  
 Norfolk, Va. .... 8  
 Richmond, Va. .... 10  
 Lynchburg, Va. .... 11  
 Roanoke, Va. .... 12  
 Blue Ridge, Va. .... 13  
 Charleston, W. Va. .... 14  
 Morgantown, W. Va. .... 17  
 Cumberland, Md. .... 18  
 Martinsburg, W. Va. .... 19  
 Washington, D. C. .... 20  
 Wilmington, Del. .... 21, 22  
 New York, N. Y. .... 24  
 Rutherford, N. J. .... 27

### K. BARRETT

Minneapolis, Minn. .... April 3-6  
 Fergus Falls, Minn. .... 7  
 Havre, Mont. .... 10  
 Great Falls, Mont. .... 11  
 Kolispell, Mont. .... 12  
 Spokane, Wash. .... 13  
 Seattle, Wash. .... 14

### JULIUS BEDNARZ

Paterson, N. J. .... April 9, 10

### WALTER Blicharz

Flint, Mich. .... April 3

### DAVID BRUCE

San Diego, Calif. .... April 10

### ALFRED BURNS

LaSalle, Ill. .... April 17

### EUGENE BURNS

Paterson, N. J. .... April 9, 10  
 Boston, Mass. .... 23, 24

### JENS COPELAND

Milwaukee, Wis. .... April 10  
 Gary, Ind. .... 17

### RUSSELL DEAN

Philadelphia, Pa. .... April 17

### ORLANDO D. DEIFER

Poterson, N. J. .... April 9, 10

### DAVID DINWOODIE

Poterson, N. J. .... April 9, 10

### EDWARD E. FAY

Wilmington, Del. .... April 2, 3

### WILLIAM J. HOLLISTER

Gary, Ind. .... April 9, 10

### DANIEL KAZIAK

London, Ont. Can. .... April 10

### ARTHUR H. KRUMPOLT

Wilmington, Del. .... April 2, 3  
 Wallingford, Conn. (Morning) ..... 17  
 Hartford, Conn. (Afternoon) ..... 17

### PETER KOLLIMAN

Baltimore, Md. .... April 17

### RAYMOND J. KRUPA

Wilmington, Del. .... April 2, 3  
 Paterson, N. J. .... 9, 10

### LUDLOW P. LOOMIS

Paterson, N. J. .... April 9, 10  
 Wilkes-Barre, Pa. .... 17

### EDWARD G. LORENZ

Riverside, Calif. (Morning) .... April 17  
 Pomona, Calif. (Afternoon) ..... 17

### JOHN Y. MAC AULAY

Portland, Ore. .... April 1, 3  
 Yakima, Wash. .... 4, 5

## SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Walla Walla, Wash. ....	6
Lewiston, Idaho .....	7
Spokane, Wash. ....	8, 19
Wenatchee, Wash. ....	12
Tacoma, Wash. ....	13, 14
Seattle, Wash. ....	7, 22
Bremerton, Wash. ....	18, 19
Allyn, Wash. ....	20
Suquamish, Wash. ....	21
Bellingham-Lynden, Wash. ....	24

### JOHN A. MEGGISON

Ft. Worth, Tex. ....	April 15-17
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### MARTIN C. MITCHELL

Wilmington, Del. ....	April 2, 3
Groton-New London, Conn. ....	16, 17

### DANIEL J. MOREHOUSE

Indianapolis, Ind. ....	April 10
Ft. Worth, Tex. ....	15-17
Muncie, Ind. ....	20
Piqua, Ohio ....	21
Columbus, Ohio ....	22
Pittsburgh, Pa. ....	24
Lewistown, Pa. ....	25
Paterson, N. J. ....	26

### N. MOLENAAR

Whittier, Calif. ....	April 17
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### ARTHUR NEWELL

Ft. Worth, Tex. ....	April 15-17
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### LEON H. NORBY

Wilmington, Del. ....	April 2, 3
Paterson, N. J. ....	9, 10

### GUSTIN P. OSTRANDER

Cleveland, Ohio ....	April 17
East Liverpool, Ohio ....	18
Shadyside, Ohio ....	19
Columbus, Ohio ....	20
Newark, Ohio ....	21
Dayton, Ohio ....	22
Cincinnati, Ohio ....	24
Salem, Ind. ....	25
New Albany, Ind. ....	26, 27
Madisonville, Ky. ....	28, 29
Cape Girardeau, Mo. ....	May 1

### HARRY PASSIOS

East Liverpool, Ohio ....	April 10
Monessen, Pa. ....	24

### WILBUR N. POE

Indianapolis, Ind. ....	24
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### G. RUSSELL POLLOCK

San Jose, Calif. ....	April 2
San Francisco, Calif. ....	3
Ft. Worth, Tex. ....	16, 17
New York, N. Y. ....	24
Asbury Park, N. J. ....	24
(Y. M. C. A. Building, 7:30 p. m.)	
Lisbon, Spain ....	26
Madrid, Spain ....	27
Barcelona, Spain ....	May 1
Rome, Italy ....	3, 16
Cairo, Egypt ....	4
Jordan-Jerusalem ....	5
Istanbul, Turkey ....	13
Athens, Greece ....	14
Zurich, Switzerland ....	26
Paris, France ....	30
Frankfort, Germany ....	June 3
Amsterdam, Holland ....	17
Capenhagen, Denmark ....	19
London, England ....	25

### GEORGE P. RIPPER

Fresno, Calif. ....	April 10
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### W. W. RYBA

Gary, Ind. ....	April 9, 10
Adrian, Mich. ....	17

### ALFRED L. SMITH

York, Pa. (Morning) ....	April 17
Lancaster, Pa. (Afternoon) ....	17

### MICHAEL A. STAMULAS

Wilmington, Del. ....	April 2, 3
Paterson, N. J. ....	9, 10

### J. I. VAN HORNE

Duquesne, Pa. ....	April 3
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### FELIX S. WASSMANN

Wilmington, Del. ....	April 2, 3
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### CLAUDE R. WEIDA

Wilmington, Del. ....	April 2, 3
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### GEORGE M. WILSON

Paterson, N. J. ....	April 17
New York, N. Y. ....	24

### W. NORMAN WOODWORTH

Paterson, N. J. ....	April 9, 10
Asbury Park, N. J. ....	17
(Y. M. C. A. Building, 7:30 p. m.)	

### ERNEST G. WYLAM

Cincinnati, Ohio ....	April 3
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### CHRISTIAN W. ZAHNOW

Batavia, Ill. ....	April 7, 8
Gary, Ind. ....	9, 10
Ft. Wayne, Ind. (3:00 p. m.) ....	17
(Y. M. C. A. Bldg., Washington and Barr Sts.)	

## CONVENTIONS

### For Mutual Fellowship, Edification, and Service

**WILMINGTON, DEL., April 2, 3**—Pre-Memorial Convention opens Saturday at 10:30 a. m., in the Church Auditorium, 807 West Street. Saturday evening services beginning at 7:00 o'clock will be held in the Adventist Church, 11th and Adam Streets. On Sunday beginning at 9:30 a. m., all sessions will be held in the DuBarry Room of the Hotel Dupont, 11th and Market Streets. There will be a baptismal service Saturday evening and any desiring to symbolize their consecration will please notify the secretary in advance. For further information and room reservations, write the secretary, Mrs. Peter Kolliman, 404 West 31st St., Wilmington 2.

**ALBANY, ORE., April 3**—Home gathering to be held at 3596 Bernard Street.

**SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., April 3**—All day gathering to be held in regular hall, 1136 Eddy Street.

**GARY, IND., April 9, 10**—Convention opens Saturday evening at 7:00 o'clock in the Y. M. C. A. Building, Room B (Basement). On Sunday the services will start at 9:45 a. m. in the same building. For further information and room reservations, write the secretary, Mrs. Anna Belush, R. F. D., 1, Box 271, Griffith, Indiana.

**PATERSON, N. J., April 9, 10**—The convention opens Saturday at 1:15 p. m. in the Y. M. C. A. Building, Ward and Prince Streets. On Sunday, the convention will open at 9:30 a. m. in the same building. For further information and room reservations, write the secretary, Mr. Nick Kasperowicz, 257 Grant Avenue, Cliffside Park, N. J.

**COLUMBUS, OHIO, April 10**—Convention opens 10:00 a. m. in the Women's Benefit Association, 53 E. Gay Street.

**SAGINAW, MICH., April 10**—Convention opens 10:00 a. m. in the Women's Club, 311 N. Jefferson Street.

**FT. WORTH, TEX., April 15-17**—Convention opens 7:00 p. m. Friday, and will be held in

the Midland and Waco Rooms of the Hilton Hotel, 601 Main Street. Any desiring further information or room reservations should write Mr. George B. Wilmatt, 2609 Angle, Ft. Worth 6.

**CLEVELAND, OHIO, April 17**—Convention opens 9:30 a. m. in the Y. M. C. A. Building, Prospect Avenue and East 22nd Street.

**SALEM, ORE., April 17**—Third Sunday in the month gathering starts at 11:00 a. m., 2339 State Street.

**BOSTON, MASS., April 23, 24**—Convention will open at 2:30 p. m. Saturday in the Arlington Street Church Chapel, 355 Boylston St. Sunday sessions will begin at 9:30 a. m. in the State Suite of the Sheraton Plaza Hotel, Copley Square. For room reservations and other details, write Miss Florence Child, 64 Thurston St., Somerville 45, Mass.

**CHICAGO, ILL., April 24**—Convention opens 10:00 a. m. in the Masonic Temple, 912 N. LaSalle Street.

**DETROIT, MICH., April 24**—Convention will be held in the Maccabees Building, Woodward Avenue at Putnam.

**NEW YORK, N. Y., April 24**—Convention opens 10:00 a. m. in the regular meeting place, Y. M. C. A. Building, Seventh Avenue and Twenty-third Street.

**NEW CENTERTVILLE, PA., May 15**—Convention will be held in Firemen's Hall. For further information write the secretary, Mrs. Raymond Siesky, R. F. D. 3, Box 105, Conneltsville, Pa.

**LANCASTER, PA., May 1.**

**PIQUA, OHIO, May 1.**

**WALLINGFORD, CONN., May 15.**

**ALLEN TOWN, PA., May 28-30.**

**CHICAGO, ILL., May 28-30.**

**SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., May 28-30.**

**VANCOUVER, B. C. CAN., May 28-30.**

**WICHITA, KANS., May 28-30.**

**CINCINNATI, OHIO, May 29, 30.**

**PITTSBURGH, PA., May 29.**

**YORK, PA., June 19.**

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**ITALIAN:** The Divine Plan of the Ages, 50 cents; Daily Heavenly Manna, 50 cents; Hymn Book, cloth \$1.00, flexible 50 cents; God and Reason, 10 cents; God's Remedy for a World Gone Mad, 5 cents.

**FRENCH:** "Behold Your King," 50 cents; Daily Heavenly Manna, 50 cents; God and Reason, 10 cents; God's Plan, 10 cents; God's Remedy, 10 cents; Our Lord's Return, 10 cents; Jesus, the World's Savior, 10 cents; Father, Son, Holy Spirit, 10 cents; When a Man Dies, 10 cents.

**LITHUANIAN:** "Behold Your King," 25 cents; Spiritualism, 10 cents.

**GREEK:** "Behold Your King," 25 cents; Hymns of Dawn, without music, 25 cents; God and Reason, 10 cents.

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**POLISH:** The Divine Plan of the Ages, cloth, \$1.00, paper 50 cents; Daily Heavenly Manna, \$1.00; "Behold Your King," 50 cents; God's Kingdom, 10 cents.

**ROUMANIAN:** Where Are the Dead?, 10 cents.

**HUNGARIAN:** What Can a Man Believe?, 5 cts.

**HEBREW:** God's Plan in Brief, 75 cents.

**SLOVAK:** God's Kingdom; The Day of Jehovah, 5 cents each.

All 5 cent booklets, 25 for \$1.00; 10 cent booklets, 12 for \$1.00

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to us

the SCRIPTURES

clearly teach . . .

That the church is "the temple of the living God"—peculiarly "his workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—I Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

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

That the basis of hope for the church and the world lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5, 6

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be a "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4

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

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