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May 2010



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## The Dawn

199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073

Phone: (201) 438-6421 and 1-(888) 440-DAWN • Fax: (201) 531-8333

*e-mail: [DawnBible@aol.com](mailto:DawnBible@aol.com)*

*Visit the Dawn web page at: [www.dawnbible.com](http://www.dawnbible.com)*

# The DAWN

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**ARGENTINA:** El Alba, Calle Almirante Brown 674, Monte Grande 1842, Buenos Aires

**AUSTRALIA:** Berean Bible Institute, P.O. Box 402, Rosanna, Victoria 3084

**BRAZIL:** A Aurora, Caixa Postal 77204, Nova Iguaçu, Rio de Janeiro, CEP 26210-970

**BRITISH ISLES:** Associated Bible Students, P.O. Box 136, Chesham, Bucks HP5 3EB

**CANADA:** P.O. Box 1565, Vernon, British Columbia, V1T 8C2

**FRANCE:** Aurore, B. Boulter, 8 rue du Docteur Laennec, 95520, Osny

**GERMANY:** Tagesanbruch Bibelstudien-Vereinigung, Alzeyer Str. 8 (Postfach 252), D 67253 Freinsheim

**GREECE:** He Haravgi (The Dawn), 33-33 149th Street, Flushing, NY 11354 USA

**ITALY:** Aurora, Via Dei Borboni 2, Contrada Cannatello, Agigento 92100, Italy

**SOUTH AMERICA:** El Alba, Apartado 1390, Trujillo, Peru

**SPAIN:** El Alba, Via Dei Borboni 2, Contrada Cannatello, Agigento 92100, Italy

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# No More Curse

*“Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.”*

—*Genesis 3:17*

## **BECAUSE OF DISOBEDI-**

ence to the divine law of God, the sentence of death was placed upon Father Adam. There are two aspects of this judgment, however, which also includes the curse which was placed upon the physical earth and man's environment. This has contributed greatly to the overall decline in health and vigor in the human family, which ends in the grave.

From the scriptural record, we read the first part of this judgment. “The LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—Gen. 2:15-17

## **THE DYING PROCESS**

There is an important dimension in this pronouncement that is also revealed in the scriptural record, and which puts the matter in proper perspective. In connection with the instructions to not

eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil God said, ‘for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die [dying thou shalt die, *Marginal Translation*].’

We know that Adam did not die on the very day this sentence was pronounced but lived for 930 years. The record states, “All the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.” (chap. 5:5) In God’s reckoning, a day is a thousand years long, during which Adam experienced the dying process. “Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” (II Pet. 3:8) Therefore, Adam died within the period of a single day according to God’s method of counting time.

## **THE EARTH CURSED**

The second aspect of God’s judgment against sin and disobedience concerned the earth itself, and the very ground that Adam and his offspring would need to produce the food to keep themselves alive. “Unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”—Gen. 3:17-19

## **IN SORROW**

The scriptural account states, ‘In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.’ It would be

difficult to describe the depth of sorrow that was experienced by earth's first parents during their life span which ended in death. The word 'sorrow' means to worry, to grieve, or to be in pain, and was first used in connection with God's judgment toward mother Eve. "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Gen. 3:16) The psalmist explained, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."—Ps. 90:10

### **DAVID'S LAMENT**

The Psalmist David put into perspective the terrible results of sin, death, and a cursed earth that he had been experiencing. From one of his psalms, we read, "O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee."—Ps. 38:1-9

## THE POLLUTED EARTH

The Prophet Isaiah speaks of the cursed earth, and that sinful man has polluted it. He wrote, “Behold, the LORD lays the earth waste, devastates it, distorts its surface and scatters its inhabitants. And the people will be like the priest, the servant like his master, the maid like her mistress, the buyer like the seller, the lender like the borrower, the creditor like the debtor. The earth will be completely laid waste and completely despoiled, for the LORD has spoken this word. The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away. The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty. Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.”—Isa. 24:1-6, *New American Standard Bible*

## PESTILENCES

When Luke, the Bible historian, was writing about the events that would transpire during the closing years of this present Gospel Age, he included Jesus’ words that spoke of ‘famine and pestilence.’ They would especially identify and distinguish this particular age as the great time of judgment and trial. This was foretold to come upon the people of the earth during the closing years of this present Gospel Age. We are now living in the end of this age, and are witnesses of the great events that so mark our time in the world’s history. Luke wrote, “Great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and

famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.”—Luke 21:11

## **MAN'S CONSTANT STRUGGLE**

For more than 6,000 years, mankind has had to struggle against all kinds of adversity, and some of these many factors continue to cause the early loss of life among the human family. In many cases, this is derived from pestilence, plagues, and disease, and there are various methods of carrying them, such as insects and rodents. Man has also fallen victim to famine and starvation, often caused by bad weather conditions such as droughts, flooding, or freezing conditions. These have been major factors, and have seriously affected the world's supply of food. Loss of crops has also occurred because of insect or weed infestation, and the struggle against these foes of the human family has been endless.

As earth's population has increased during the past century, the adversities that confront the human family have become more difficult to control. In the past, farms were smaller and pest infestation was more limited and easier to control. In recent decades, farms have become larger, thereby making it possible for pests to advance over many acres of cropland.

## **SCIENTIFIC CONTROLS**

Supplying food for the more than six billion people now living on our planet is becoming ever more critical, and man is desperately trying to find solutions to the complex problems of pest control. Pesticides have been developed and are used widely to help save food crops from many types of insects and disease. Herbicides are also being used to control



the ‘thorns and thistles’ that were introduced in Adam’s generation, and continue to infest and inhibit the production of food. The divine sentence of a cursed earth is a continuing reality.

The use of pesticides has increased crop production and in many cases has ensured a higher quality of produce. However, pesticides are also toxic chemicals that are specifically designed to kill harmful insects, and some of these products cause severe problems when they are consumed by humans. In the case of animal food production, drugs such as antibiotics and hormones are being used to increase growth and cut down on feed consumption. Residues of these drugs can also be hazardous to humans. The level of harm from exposure to pesticides, and animal antibiotics and hormones is therefore related to the concept that the more you consume, greater is the risk.

## **MODERN CHALLENGES**

The challenge is to balance a reliable, high quality food supply with the need to protect people from unnecessary exposure to chemicals. The limits for human consumption has a wide margin for safety, and past experience has shown that a pesticide that is thought to be safe for human consumption may have undesirable effects. DDT is such an example because of its environmental persistence and ability to accumulate in body fat. Attempts have been made to stop its use in food production, but it is still used in many places.

Antibiotics are drugs that are designed to kill bacteria but are also used in animal food production to promote growth and cut down the amount

of feed required. Overuse of these drugs increase the possibility of breeding antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria. Control of antibiotics is required to help reduce the amount of antibiotic residue left behind in meat products.

In spite of these newly developed chemicals which our forefathers never heard of, the struggle against the agelong pest population and weeds continues. This is strong evidence that the curse placed upon our planet earth as a result of sin and death has not yet been lifted.

The effect that chemicals have had upon our environment is a dividing issue among many scientists. Some have accepted the chemical control of pests as the lesser of two evils, while others have not. Agricultural scientist Norman Borlund was known as the father of the green revolution. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970 for his work in high-yield crop varieties and for bringing other agricultural innovations to the developing world. Many experts in the field have credited the green revolution as the means for substantially increasing world food production, and thereby averting global famine during the last half of the twentieth century.

Borlund had developed a more productive strain of wheat which could double the food production of an acre of crop anywhere in the world where it was grown. He was opposed to the banning of DDT and said, "If DDT is banned in the United States, I have wasted my life's work. I have dedicated myself to finding better methods of feeding the world's starving population. Without DDT and other important agricultural chemicals, our goals are simply unattainable."

The earth and its people are cursed because of disobedience to God, and the reality of that condemnation rings ever more clearly in our day. 'Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'

## **NATURAL CONTROL**

Those scientists that oppose the use of all forms of agricultural chemicals state that the use of chemicals is the greater of the two evils. They have called attention to the fact that certain species of helpful insects or birds may be used to control those that are harmful and destroy food crops. Using natural insect control and organic pest control methods to prevent harmful insects from infestation is preferable to having to kill them with insecticides.

Natural control can have positive and negative effects. Most of the time control is introduced to an area to protect it from a harmful and invasive pest that has moved into its area. The control is introduced to lessen the competition among the invasive species. However, the introduced control species does not always target the intended pest population only. Control agents that are not restricted to a single species, or a small range of species, do not always make good biological control agents, and may become invasive species themselves.

The praying mantis is known to devour huge quantities of harmful insects every day. The ladybird, or ladybug, will also eat mites and aphids that often attack fruit trees. Finding and using natural

methods may sometimes be as easy as introducing some of these natural enemies such as parasites, predators, pathogens, or competitors into a food crop. Other helpful predators include spiders or lacewings that are also able to control pest populations.

Some plants such as dill or basil repel unwanted bugs, while others attract helpful insects such as butterflies. Diseased plants attract pests more readily than do healthy plants. Therefore, it is important to keep the plants healthy by building up the soil with organic fertilizer, mulch, and compost. Introducing crop rotation is another positive method. Planting different varieties of crops each year will inhibit a buildup of certain harmful insects and weeds.

With further research and scientific experiments, biological control could potentially help lessen future pest infestation of the world's food crop production. Biological control is being used more today and may hopefully reduce the use of many pesticides and herbicides.

## **DIVINE WISDOM MANIFEST**

Man has never been able to invent, or develop, any type of control or method that will completely eliminate harmful insects or weeds. The problems are too widespread and varied wherever the human food supply is grown. However, natural scientists point out the simple fact that the earth would have been totally overrun by insects and weeds long ago except for the many species of helpful birds and insects that eat the unwanted species, and this has helped keep the infestation under control to a limited point.

Thus is seen the great wisdom and controlling hand of a loving Heavenly Father that will not allow the total devastation of all flesh upon the earth. Without his guidance all flesh would have been destroyed long ago, and there would no longer be any hope for the perfecting of the sin-sick and dying human race. God created the earth to be inhabited, and it will never pass away. From the words of Solomon, we read, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever." (Eccles. 1:4) God has given man certain limited insights into basic physical laws and principles, but all knowledge comes from him. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us."—vss. 9,10

## **GOD'S POWER**

The marvelous working power of God may be employed to bring either a curse or a blessing. This was demonstrated in the life of the nation of Israel when they were in bondage to Egypt. This serves to illustrate mankind's bondage to sin and death under Pharaoh, who illustrated Satan. Israel's release from bondage pictures the human family being released from the sentence of death.

Thus did God bring forth upon Egypt the plagues as recorded in Exodus, chapters 7 to 12. First, water was turned to blood, and then came the frogs. Next, came the plagues of lice, flies, and the disease of murrain. Then were the boils, and the hail accompanied

with storms and darkness. All of the plagues were under the control of God, and he was the only one who could stop them. During this time, God's power was also used to spare the nation of Israel. (Exod. 9:4-7) The psalmist also provides an overview account of God's marvelous hand to free the people of Israel from their bondage in Egypt.—Ps. 78:44-51

## **REVERSING THE CURSE**

The Prophet Isaiah foretold God's future plan to bring blessings to all of earth's people. He wrote, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God." (Isa. 35:1,2) When describing this wonderful scene in symbolic language, Isaiah also wrote, "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes."—vss. 6,7

In reference to this future time under the administration of The Christ, the psalmist also said, "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the

springing thereof. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.”—Ps. 65:9-13

## **A COVENANT OF PEACE**

Our loving Heavenly Father will establish a ‘covenant of peace’ with the people. “I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.”—Ezek. 34:23-27

## **NO MORE CURSE**

All the obedient of mankind will be restored to a perfected earth, and the curse that has existed since the early days of creation will be no more. The reign of The Christ will be set up with power

and authority over the affairs of the world and its people. John, the revelator, wrote of God's vision that speaks of this wonderful hope for the human family, and brings it into perspective. "He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him."—Rev. 22:1-3

## **NO MORE SORROW**

The ultimate plan and purpose of our loving Heavenly Father is to restore the obedient of his human creation to perfect life here on a perfected earth. The prophet of God looked down the long stream of time from his day and described this wonderful scene. He wrote, "The redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."—Isa. 51:11

The revelator, too, was moved by the Holy Spirit of God, and wrote, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said



unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.”—Rev. 21:4-6 ■

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**MAY 6**—“As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”—Romans 8:14 (Z. ’03-173 Hymn 196)

**MAY 13**—“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”—I Samuel 15:22 (Z. ’03-218,219 Hymn 307)

**MAY 20**—“A peculiar people, zealous of good works.”—Titus 2:14 (Z. ’97-95 Hymn 322)

**MAY 27**—“In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.”—Philippians 2:3 (Z. ’97-296 Hymn 312A)

## OBITUARIES

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

Sister Faye Trammell, Douglasville, GA—February 16. Age, 78

Brother Stephen C. Mengos, Phoenix, AZ—March 6. Age, 84

Brother Joseph Mitchka, Clearwater, FL—March 10. Age, 92

Sister Verna Hopstetter, San Antonio, TX—March 22.

# A Faithful Community

**Key Verse:** *“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.”*  
—Colossians 1:9

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Colossians 1*

**PAUL ATTRIBUTES HIS** apostleship to the will of God, affirming he did not receive his calling to this station through any human ordination, but rather his ministry was carried out solely through a realization that the Heavenly Father had appointed him to his office. The epistle of Colossians is addressed to saints and faithful brethren who are leading lives of holiness. Paul bestows upon them his usual benediction of grace and peace from God the Father and the Son, Jesus

Christ, while expressing his thanksgiving for these believers that he had never actually met; but he was encouraged by the reports he had received regarding their faith in the Master and their love shown to all fellow believers.—Col. 1:1-4

In the Key Verse of our lesson, Paul proceeds to pray on their behalf that they might receive a knowledge of God's will, characterized by spiritual wisdom and understanding. His petitions on behalf of the brethren continue in succeeding verses and cover several areas. He desired that the Colossians would live in a manner that would glorify and please God and that they would walk worthy of their calling. This would be evidenced by

putting on the fruits and graces of the spirit in their character. Growth in their knowledge of God's will is also a part of this walk.

Paul further reminds the brethren as to some of the wondrous results of their relationship with God. They would be partakers of a great and heavenly inheritance if they persevere in their course of obeying the Word of God. They have been delivered from Satan's control and translated by faith from darkness into the kingdom of light if they submit to the authority and leading of their Master, Christ Jesus. Additionally, these believers, purchased by the blood of Christ—no longer belonging to themselves—have received the forgiveness from sin.—vss. 10-14

Christians today should be grateful that the Heavenly Father has explained through the Apostle Paul his dealings with these early believers, because they form a blueprint as to the benefits of our relationship with him even now at the close of this present Gospel Age.

There have been many examples of faithful individuals whose exploits have been chronicled in the Bible for our admonition. The Book of Hebrews records the names of several Old Testament personalities who had the testimony that they were pleasing to God, often under extremely difficult circumstances. They did not have the hope of a heavenly calling because they lived prior to the First Advent of Christ, who brought "life and immortality to light."—Heb. 11:39,40; II Tim. 1:10

In addition to these noble examples of the past, are faithful brethren of the early Christian church. "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus." (Heb. 12:1,2) Let us emulate the supreme example of our Master by following in his footsteps as we strive to be a part of the body of Christ. ■

# An Established Community

**Key Verse:** *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”*  
—Colossians 2:8

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Colossians 2:1-19*

**CHRISTIANS WHO ARE NOT** privileged to engage in public ministry may take comfort from Paul’s example in praying for the Colossians, as well as brethren in the neighboring city of Laodicea whom he had not met. As believers, we may serve God on our knees as we remember others at the throne of grace. In his petitions to the Heavenly Father, Paul desired that the brethren’s hearts might be comforted and kept together in love as they understood the mystery of God and of Christ.

This mystery can be viewed from the standpoint of the message it contains which relates to God’s eternal purpose for mankind. Additionally, another important aspect of this mystery is the fact that The Christ is composed of our Lord who is the Head, and the church which is his body.—Col. 2:1,2

Since all knowledge and wisdom are found in Christ, believers should not be deceived by persuasive words set forth by false teachers.—vs. 4

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and

stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.”—vss. 6,7

Our Key Verse reminds us that if we have been convinced as to the accuracy of God’s plan as revealed to us through Jesus Christ, in order to maintain our spiritual life and standing, it is imperative that we be established and rooted in the faith rather than seeking additional knowledge through various man-made theories and philosophies.

Furthermore, as Christ is God’s unspeakable gift to us, he represents the fullness of every divine provision for our eternal welfare, and through his all-sufficiency we may be completely acceptable to the Heavenly Father. The work of regeneration in believers is identified as circumcision and unlike the typical rite of Judaism in which there was a minor surgical operation applied to the flesh of the male child, Christian circumcision relates to a heart transformation of the believers, associated with receiving the Holy Spirit. It is a burial of our wills, baptism into Christ’s death, and walking in newness of life. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”—Rom. 6:3,4

This new life in Christ was for the purpose of stimulating believers to activity in his service. Additionally, those Jews who had accepted Christ were no longer bound by the ordinances of the Mosaic Law that had continued to be in effect upon them. Gentiles who were never under the Law Covenant, but have accepted Christ and devoted their lives to following in his footsteps, are no longer under the original condemnation that befell Adam when he sinned back in the garden of Eden. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”—Col. 2:10-15; Rom. 8:1 ■

# A Chosen Community

**Key Verse:** *“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.”*  
—Colossians 3:12

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Colossians 3*

shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”—vss. 2-5

The biblical standard for Christian living is very searching and although certain sins may have been practiced before one’s conversion, the Apostle Paul makes it clear that unrighteous conduct persisted in will debar such from being joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom.—I Cor. 6:9-11

Having been redeemed at great cost by the precious blood of Christ, the Apostle Paul continues to identify several fleshly weaknesses that New Creatures in Christ must continually exercise vigilance against. These traits include anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy,

**THOSE WHO HAVE RE-**  
nounced their former lifestyles and are devoted to following Jesus are described as being “risen with Christ.” As such, they are exhorted to demonstrate this change by their actions.—Col. 3:1

“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.

When Christ, who is our life,

filthy communication, and lying.—Col. 3:6-9

Not only must the old man be put off, which relates to those tendencies of an unregenerate nature associated with sins connected to the Adamic fall, but the new man, which represents the believer's standing with God through Christ, must continue to grow in grace.—vs. 10

Our Key Verse delineates some of the characteristics that should be found among those who will be part of the elect church, and worn as a garment, including compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and longsuffering.

There are additional evidences in this chapter that help us as believers to evaluate the degree to which we are becoming more Christlike. "Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."—vss. 14,15

In this troubled and perplexing world, if we are fully consecrated to the doing of the Heavenly Father's will, we shall enjoy the peace of God that will rule in our hearts and relieve us of anxiety because of the assurance that all of our endeavors will be directed and supervised in accordance with our highest spiritual welfare. We should also manifest a thankful heart because of our special relationship as sons of God. (I John 3:2) As we mature in our spirituality, thankfulness should ever be on the increase in our lives despite outward circumstances or trials of any nature, and it will be evidence that we are developing the type of characters that our Creator desires. Thankfulness will enable us to render praise to the Almighty, not only for what has been done for us in our lives, but also for the blessings that will accrue to the human family when the kingdom of righteousness commences.—vs. 15

"Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name."—Ps. 103:1 ■

# At Home in the Community

**Key Verse:** “*Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.*”

—**Philemon 21**

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Philemon**

**ONE CHARACTERISTIC OF** worship in the Early Church was that believers often met together in private homes. In this epistle, Paul, identifying himself as a prisoner of Christ Jesus, addresses it primarily to Philemon in whose home the believers gathered together for prayer and Bible study.—Philem. 1,2

In his prayers, Paul thanked God for having Philemon as a fellow laborer in Christ, mentioning especially his demonstrated love and faith towards other saints who were refreshed by this beloved brother.—vss. 4-7

The heart of Paul's letter was to plead to Philemon to receive back and forgive Onesimus, a runaway slave of his who had been converted to Christ as a result of the apostle's ministry while he was in prison. Paul also mentioned his own aged condition, appealing to Philemon perhaps as a father would to his son in the faith.—vss. 8-10

At the time when Onesimus had fled from Philemon as a slave, he would not have been viewed in a favorable light by his master. However, Paul mentioned how useful Onesimus had been to him personally during his confinement in bonds, since his conversion, thus



implying if Philemon would receive him back, he would prove to be a better slave than he was at the time he ran away.—vs.11

In his letter to Philemon, Paul suggested the Lord might have permitted this experience to result in some greater good (Rom. 8:28) and that Onesimus should be regarded by his master, not as a slave, but rather as a brother in Christ with whom he would now be able to share mutually rewarding spiritual fellowship. The apostle also punctuates his appeal by indicating if Philemon considered Paul as his partner in Christ, to receive Onesimus on the same basis.—vss. 15-17

In order to remove any potential obstacles for complying with his request, Paul indicated his willingness to assume responsibility for any loss that Philemon might have sustained, and therefore indicated, “Put that on mine account.”—vs. 18

Our Key Verse reflects Paul’s confidence in Philemon that he would do even more than the apostle had requested. The matter of denouncing slavery might naturally be a concern in the minds of some who might wonder why the apostle did not criticize Philemon for having slaves. As an inspired servant of God, Paul recognized that the kingdom of God would be the time when all such practices would be done away with, and his primary concern was that of preaching the Gospel and helping to establish the church which, under Christ, would eradicate every practice on earth that would not be approved by the Heavenly Father.

Whether or not Onesimus was ultimately given his freedom is not revealed in this epistle. Of greater importance, perhaps, was that of encouraging Philemon to fulfill the spirit of a scripture that is applicable to all believers in so many situations they experience during their Christian sojourn. “Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”—Eph. 4:32 ■

# At Risk in the Community

**Key Verses:** *“Of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”*  
—**Jude 22,23**

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Jude**

## **GOD USED RIGHTEOUS**

Jude (not Iscariot who betrayed Christ) to address faithful believers with a message designed to inspire vigilance and avoid succumbing to deception introduced by apostates. Although “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient” (II Tim. 2:24), Christians must “earnestly contend for the faith” to insure being established in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.—  
Jude 1-3

Jude identified a dangerous condition whereby self-serving individuals infiltrated congregations of believers introducing false doctrines and unrighteous practices, causing unsuspecting Christians to follow their leading. Although this was a problem in the Early Church, such practices are ever-present dangers throughout the entire Gospel Age.—vs. 4

Three examples of God’s judgment against unrighteousness are cited, including Israel’s unbelief after receiving many promises of blessings for obedience. The angels who sinned caused the termination of the dispensation before the flood, and the destruction of Sodom

and Gomorrah because of gross immorality.—vss. 5-7

A discussion of how apostates operate in the church ensues, including defilement of the flesh, rejection of authority provided by the Lord's counsel, and speaking evil of true servants of God.—vs. 8

Jude continues with a graphic description as to the outlook for these false teachers, whose actions are destructive to the spiritual growth of believers who are striving to serve the Heavenly Father. "These speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."—vs. 10,11

A time of just recompense is promised for all such evil conduct, assuring that wickedness will not always seem to flourish and the necessity of being prepared to resist any encroachments by the Adversary. "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. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Eph. 6:13-17) Those in harmony with the Lord's way appreciate the promise that righteousness will prevail.—Jude 14,15

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."—vs.21

Our Key Verses exhort faithful believers to be watchmen, warning fellow Christians when we note danger lurking among the brotherhood. "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—James 5:20 ■

# Voice of the Shepherd

*“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”*

—*John 10:27*

**THE APOSTLE JOHN WAS** one of our Lord’s closest companions, and in his gospel he has recorded many of the important events and marvelous words which were spoken by the great Master Teacher during his earthly ministry. John has devoted the entire tenth chapter to the subject of the shepherd and his sheep, from which our featured scripture is taken. These scriptures reveal the closeness that marked Jesus and his people who have faithfully followed him throughout this present Gospel Age.

## **A TRUE BONDING**

There is a particular intimacy that exists between a shepherd and his sheep, basically because they live together. Shepherds know the lay of the land, where the best grazing is, where the fewest predators are, and where they can best guard and care for their flock. At the time our Lord spoke these words, the average shepherd was responsible for caring for about one hundred sheep. Often,

however, several shepherds would combine their flocks with those of other shepherds who may have been grazing their animals nearby. Despite the seeming confusion that might result from this practice, all of the shepherds knew their own sheep and all of the sheep knew their own shepherd.

The psalmist wrote, “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice. . . .” (Ps. 95:6,7) In another of the psalms, we read, “Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.”—Ps. 100:1-5

The Prophet Isaiah also draws our attention to the shepherd and his care over the sheep. “Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”—Isa. 40:10,11

## **THE SHEEPFOLD**

Jesus had been preaching to the people who had come to hear his teachings when certain Jews

encircled him with demands to reveal to them his identity and purpose. The words of our featured scripture were directed to those Jews whose hearts had not been open to accept his wonderful message, nor to appreciate the miraculous works which he accomplished during his earthly ministry.

The Master explained to them, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.”—John 10:1-6

## **PLACE OF REST**

The sheepfold represents the place of rest and protection which our loving Heavenly Father has prepared for his consecrated people during the long centuries of this present Gospel Age. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”—Acts 4:12

Sheep are known for their gentleness, meekness, and obedience to the shepherd in whom they have put their trust. “Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the

sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”—John 10:7-10

## **THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

Jesus spoke of himself as being both the ‘door’ and the ‘good shepherd.’ There was only one door which no one else could open, and he opened that door of redemption by giving his life for the sheep. This wonderful feature of the Heavenly Father’s plan and purpose will be made known to all people under the administration of Christ’s future kingdom, and for the blessing of all the families of the earth. As the true sheep know their shepherd, so also does the shepherd know his sheep.

Thus the Master made clear, “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.” (John 10:11-15) The Heavenly Father knew Jesus intimately, had full confidence in him, and entrusted the care of the sheep to him.

## OTHER SHEEP

Jesus also taught that there would be other sheep for him to look after. When 'The Christ' will be set up in power and authority during Christ's future kingdom, the whole human family will be given opportunity to learn the ways of truth and righteousness, and the obedient will receive the right to life here on a glorious and perfected earth. This will include the countless numbers of mankind who will be resurrected from the grave and given opportunity to walk up the highway of holiness. The Prophet Isaiah wrote concerning this future blessing, saying, "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. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isa. 35:8-10

Our Lord was speaking of that blessed future time, and also explained, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."—John 10:16-18



From the Gospel of John, we again read, “There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind? And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon’s porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.”—vss. 19-24

In response to the Jews angry inquiry, John recorded, “Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.”—vss. 25-31

## **FALSE SHEPHERDS**

The Israelites were the covenant people of God, and he dealt exclusively with them through their mediator Moses. However, through pride, ambition and arrogance the religious leaders of the Jewish people were not good shepherds to those who looked to them for guidance and instruction. The Prophet Ezekiel addressed this fact. “The word of the LORD came unto me, *(Continued on page 35)*

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*(Continued from page 31)* saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?" (Ezek. 34:1,2) They were not willing to lead their people to the green pastures of God's wonderful word of Truth, nor to the still waters of spiritual refreshment.

The prophet further wrote, "Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered."—vss. 3-5

The false shepherds have permitted God's character and his ultimate plan and purpose to be misrepresented. "My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the

LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.” (vss. 6-10) In an antitypical sense, some of the Lord’s true people have been led astray by false shepherds throughout the long centuries of this present Gospel Age.

## **JESUS CONFRONTS THE JEWS**

The Master attempted to reason with those who were questioning him, but was unable to persuade them that he had ministered in his Heavenly Father’s name and done many wonderful things. “Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.”—John 10:32-38

It was apparent that the Jews’ hearts were hardened against him. Therefore, he travelled elsewhere to deliver the wonderful message of Truth

to those who had ears to hear and accept his words. John records, “They sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand, And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there.”—vss. 39-42

## **A PSALM OF DAVID**

The psalmist wrote concerning the special relationship that exists between the shepherd and his sheep and declared, “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” (Ps. 23:1) The word ‘LORD’ which David used in this scripture is in reference to Almighty God—the great over-shepherd of all things. The Apostle Paul said, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Rom. 8:28) In turn, our Heavenly Father has appointed his only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus, to oversee the little flock of Jesus’ faithful followers. “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”—Luke 12:32

David speaks of his realization of the shepherd’s personal and loving care over him. “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”—Ps. 23:2-4

‘To lie down in green pastures’ illustrates the rest of faith that the Lord’s people are promised,

and the spiritual refreshment that they are provided. We are being led to streams of truth and blessing, while being shielded from all foes and dangers. We can put our trust in the Lord even as the sheep trust in the wonderful care of the shepherd. To walk in the 'valley of the shadow of death' suggests that the Lord's people have been called from the sin-sick and dying human family, yet with the realization that our Lord is with us to the end of our walk in faith.

The psalmist was truly thankful for the shepherd's care and said, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever." (vss. 5,6) The truly consecrated child of God is feasting at the wonderful table of Truth that has been provided, especially during the harvest years of this present Gospel Age. His 'goodness and mercy' will follow us until the end of our consecrated walk, and then we will share in the blessings of the heavenly state in the Heavenly Father's house.

## **THE SHEPHERD'S PRAYER**

The great shepherd was constantly in an attitude of prayer, but he turned aside from the pressing issues that were before him to seek his Heavenly Father's special counsel and guidance. His earthly ministry was rapidly drawing to a close and John recorded the wonderful words which he spoke. "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify



thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”—John 17:1-3

Our Lord had left his heavenly home to provide a ransom for the whole human family. He would soon die to fulfill that most important work. During his earthly ministry, the invitation was given to certain men that would become his apostles, and others who were to be of the Early Church. In his prayer, he said, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”—vss. 4,5

The Master then turned his attention to his beloved disciples. They were truly consecrated men, and had come to Jesus as their shepherd. “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:14) “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”—Phil. 2:13

In his prayer Jesus said, “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.”—John 17:6-8

John recorded further Jesus' wonderful words on behalf of his disciples. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."—vss. 9-14

## **BRINGING MANY SONS TO GLORY**

The words of this prayer were spoken by our Lord on the night of his betrayal. He was on his way from the upper room, where he instituted the memorial of his death with his disciples, to the Garden of Gethsemane. It was given on behalf of his disciples and those who would be his special followers during the present Gospel Age. Afterward, during the administration of his future kingdom of righteousness, the whole world would have the opportunity to believe on him. The very next day after offering this prayer he died as the ransom price for the sin-sick human creation. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace

of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”—Heb. 2:9,10

## **THE FLOCK OF GOD**

The Apostle Peter spoke of the good shepherd and the little flock of God, and put the wonderful relationship in perspective when he wrote his first epistle. He wrote, “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”—I Pet. 5:1-4

The Apostle Paul also spoke of the good shepherd who makes us lie down in green pastures, and leads and guides us in the way of quiet waters. He is always ready to care and assist us in the ways of righteousness and Truth. If found faithful, we will share in the marriage ceremony as his faithful bride. “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”—Heb. 13:20,21 ■

# Pressing Toward the Mark

*I press toward the  
mark for the prize  
of the high calling  
of God in Christ  
Jesus.”*

—*Philippians 3:14*

## **THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS A**

noble and very powerful example of one who had a clear, definite, and chief objective toward which he concentrated all of his energies. His de-

sire was to faithfully run the Christian racecourse in total consecration to his Heavenly Father. He did this with wholehearted sincerity and effort, that he might receive the most wonderful prize of the spiritual reward which he knew the Heavenly Father would give him in due time.

## **PRESSING FORWARD**

In our key verse, Paul used the word ‘press’ to emphasize his intention to ‘pursue after,’ or to ‘run swiftly toward’ the goal of the High Calling in Christ Jesus. He used the word again, when he explained, “Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.”—vs. 12, *New American Standard Bible*

## THE MARK

Paul said he was ‘pressing toward the mark’ of the ‘High Calling’ in Christ. The word ‘mark’ suggests a certain goal, or end view that he was striving to achieve. He put this in perspective in his letter to the brethren at Corinth, when he wrote, “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”—II Cor. 4:18

He explained, “We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” (Phil. 3:3) “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”—vss. 7-12

## THE PRIZE

The ‘prize’ that the apostle was striving for is the highest form of life—the divine nature. Our loving Heavenly Father has promised to give this reward

to all of the faithful class of Jesus' followers. The psalmist wrote, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." (Ps. 16:11) David said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (chap. 17:15) In his letter to the church at Rome, Paul spoke of this great hope. "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."—Rom. 2:7

Throughout the present Gospel Age, the overcoming class is being developed by the Holy Spirit of God, that they might be faithful in receiving the prize of the High Calling in Christ Jesus. These wonderful promises are outlined in the various messages that were given to the seven churches. To the church at Ephesus, we read, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Rev. 2:7) To the brethren at Smyrna, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." (vs. 11) To the Pergamos ecclesia, the promise is, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."—vs. 17

To the faithful brethren at Thyatira, our Lord promises, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star." (vss. 26-28) To the church at Sardis, "He that overcometh, the same

shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”—chap. 3:5

To the Philadelphia church, we read, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” (vs. 12) To those living at Laodicea, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”—vs. 21

## **AN INCORRUPTIBLE CROWN**

The apostle admonishes, “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beatech the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.”—I Cor. 9:24-27

The apostle testified, “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as

many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.”—Phil. 3:13-15

In his letter to the church at Rome, Paul wrote, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”—Rom. 8:28-30

## **GIVING DILIGENCE**

The Apostle Peter also spoke of the wonderful promises of God. “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”—II Pet. 1:3,4

He emphasized the importance of becoming well established in the Truth, and wrote, “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.”—vss. 10-12



## **SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM**

Jesus encouraged his followers to greater heights of faithfulness by saying, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matt. 6:33) He led the way in doing those things that would be pleasing to the Heavenly Father. “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”—Rom. 6:8-11

Jesus was never alive unto sin in the sense of being a sinner. He laid down his human life in sacrifice as a sin offering for Adam and his entire race. The apostle tells us that we should likewise reckon ourselves to be dead by reason of sin, laying down our little all on the altar of sacrifice. The prospective members of The Christ do not add anything to the ransom merit of Jesus, but we do share in his sacrificing experiences. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”—Rom. 6:3-5

## **A NOBLE EXAMPLE**

Paul was not only a teacher who taught the Lord's people to seek first the kingdom, but he set

us a noble example. This is shown by his words to the church at Ephesus, when he said, "I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) The strong ones should always be ready and willing to help the weaker ones. They have learned that the words of Jesus are true, and that those who have the Holy Spirit of love will receive a great blessing when they strive to help the weaker ones, and to carry their burdens.

### **AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST**

We are reminded of our responsibilities as brethren in Christ in the apostle's letter to the Corinthians. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." (II Cor. 5:20) An ambassador is an official and responsible representative of a particular government, and as such is expected to further the interests of the country that he represents. He is not expected to voice his own private opinions on sensitive matters, but he is obligated to carry out the policies and instructions of his government. He must avoid doing or saying anything that would cast a harmful reflection upon his country. In a similar way, the Lord's people are also ambassadors for Christ and we must remember who it is that we represent, and that our actions will often speak volumes. Therefore, it is important that we be careful to honor our loving Heavenly Father and our dear Lord, not only with our lips but also with our deeds.

When Jesus revealed himself to Saul on the road to Damascus, Saul asked, "What wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6) His life experience was about to change abruptly, but in any event he was ready to serve the Lord. Our prayer each day to the Lord should also be a request that he show us what his will is for us, not only in the big things but also in the little everyday things of life.

Even when the Apostle Paul was in bonds he was well aware of his blessings and responsibilities toward the brethren and the Truth. He encourages, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."—Eph. 6:18-20

## **THE ARMOR OF GOD**

The consecrated people of God are reminded of the trials and tests that are to develop them in the narrow way of sacrifice. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."—Eph. 6:10-12

In symbolic language, the Christian's armor consists of important safeguards that are necessary to overcome the temptations of the world, the

flesh, and the adversary. “Wherefore 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. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”—vss. 13-17

The apostle has urged the followers of Jesus to study the Word of God, to meditate upon it, and to prepare our hearts and minds for the spiritual development of the New Creature in Christ Jesus. By doing so, we may be able to withstand every form of error or evil that is permitted to come upon us. He warns, however, that the conflict will be with Satan—the prince of darkness—and the wicked spirits that are associated with him.

Jesus spoke of this conflict, and said, “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”—Luke 21:34-36

## **MATURITY**

As we grow in maturity of Christian character, we have also learned to understand the various circumstances of life, and to appreciate the message

contained in the Lord's Word. When we falter the Lord may reprove us, but as we grow in grace and seek more carefully to judge ourselves, our mistakes should be fewer. We should rejoice as we find it easier to discern what the Lord's will is for us in each experience of life.

When we came into the light of present Truth and were begotten by the Holy Spirit, we have appreciated the fellowship of others "that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (II Pet. 1:1) We should never lose our first love for the brethren as it could indicate a cooling off of the spirit of Christ.

John tells us, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."—I John 4:7-13

## **BEING PROVEN**

The Apostle Paul gave wise counsel when he wrote, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou

also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."—Gal. 6:1-9

The children of God must develop the resiliency of meekness, cheerful endurance, and fortitude. This can only come by meeting the storms of life in the spirit of full obedience to God and with one purpose in mind—seeking first the kingdom of God. Only those who remain fully loyal will be victorious. May we also say, "None of these move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."—Acts 20:24

The Apostle Paul urges all the consecrated who are running in the race to bend every effort to win. He writes, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."—Heb. 12:1 ■

# General Convention Bulletin

July 17-22,2010

**THE 2010 GENERAL CONVENTION** will be upon us in less than three months. If you haven't yet made plans to attend, now is the time to do so. We encourage as many as are able to join in the blessings of this annual gathering of the Lord's people. The convention will be held on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Hotel-like rooms with private bathrooms in the Living-Learning Center (LLC), family style apartments (also air conditioned) with private bathrooms (APTS), and housing with two rooms sharing one bathroom (not air conditioned) in other facilities are available on campus. A child may sleep on a bedroom floor at no charge in their own sleeping bag if both beds are occupied. If a child is alone in a bedroom sharing the bathroom with other adults, the double occupancy rate will apply to all family members.

The convention program appears in this issue of *The Dawn*, on the pages following the General Convention registration form. Included on the program is a dialogue between two brethren on the subject, "The Decade in Review," which we believe will be of special interest and encouragement to the Lord's people as they view and are touched by the events of the time in which we are living.

All room and meal costs for children 12 years old or younger will be paid by the convention. In addition,

100% of the cost of those from ages 13 through 17 will be refunded if the young person attends at least 75% of the studies for his or her age group. This subsidy does not cover meals paid in cash at the door.

The convention will provide one shuttle bus leaving the Pittsburgh airport in the early evening for the college in Johnstown on Friday, July 16. There will be one shuttle bus leaving the college in the early morning hours for the Pittsburgh airport on Friday, July 23. We encourage you to make your plans now to attend and participate in the blessings of this year's convention. ■

Ages	18 & up	***13-17
Breakfast	\$7.00	\$6.00
Lunch	8.00	7.00
Dinner	11.00	10.00
Total, three meals	\$26.00	\$23.00
Lodging (per night)		
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)	\$30.00	\$25.00
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)	\$25.00	\$23.00
**single occ (LLC)	\$55.00	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)	\$30.00	n/a
PKG: 7 nights, 18 meals		
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)	\$325*	\$290*
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)	\$195*	\$160*
**single occ (LLC)	\$460*	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)	\$235*	n/a
If no breakfasts, deduct—*\$35    **Air-conditioned ***100% of these costs will be refunded if the young person attends 75% of the studies for his/her age group		



# General Convention Registration

1425 Lachman Lane — Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

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

	Brkfst	Lunch	Dinner	Bed
Friday, July 16, 2010				
Saturday, 17th				
Sunday, 18th				
Monday, 19th				
Tuesday, 20th				
Wednesday, 21st				
Thursday, 22nd				

Check for package: 7 nights, all 18 meals ☐  
**or** 7 nights, 12 meals (no breakfasts) ☐

Check: ☐ private bath **or** ☐ shared bath  
☐ double occupancy ☐ single occupancy  
☐ interested in APTS

Names and ecclesia name (age if under 18)

Address:

# Saturday, July 17

Chairman: Byron Keith, *Seattle WA*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Orientation by College

10:00 **Welcome Address**

Timothy Thomassen  
*Albuquerque NM*

10:45 Intermission

11:15 Discourse

Brian Montague  
*Highland Park NY*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse

Joe Megacz  
*Chicago IL*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse

Ray Luke  
*Jersey City NJ*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

Randy Shahan  
*New York NY*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **The Three Temptations of Jesus:  
Stones**

Doug Rawson, *San Francisco Bay Area CA*  
**Temple**

Aaron Kuehmichel, *Chicago IL*

**Worship me**

Leo Houlmont, *Grand Rapids MI*

8:15 Songs in the Night

# Sunday, July 18

Chairman: Todd Alexander, *Columbus OH*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Discourse                      Agripino Polistico  
*Philippines*

10:30 Intermission

11:15 **Theme Discourse—Matthew 6:33**  
“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his  
righteousness; and all these things shall  
be added unto you.”  
Tim Alexander, *Columbus OH*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Praise and Testimony              Erwin Kalinski  
*Chicago IL*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse                      George Tabac  
*Chicago IL*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 **Winds of Doctrine** (Ephesians 4:14)  
O. B. Elbert, *Delaware Valley PA*  
Homer Montague, *Highland Park NY*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **The High Calling**  
Michael J. Balko, *Orlando FL*

7:45 Vesper Service

8:15 Songs in the Night

# Monday, July 19

Chairman: Len Griehs, *Delaware Valley PA*

## 9:30 Morning Devotions

## 9:45 Discourse

Walter Blicharz  
*Detroit MI*

10:30 Intermission

## 11:15 Discourse

Robert Goodman  
*Orlando FL*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse

James Parkinson  
*San Gabriel Valley CA*

## 2:45 Intermission

### 3:15 Praise and Testimony

Mark Nemesh  
*Detroit MI*

4:00 Intermission

## 4:30 Discourse

Austin Williams  
New York NY

### 5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

## 7:00 Did God forsake his Son on the cross?

(Matthew 27:46)

Yes, he did.

Rick Suraci

*New Haven CT*

No, he did not.

Michael Nekora

*Los Angeles CA*

8:00 Songs in the Night

## 8:15 Elders' Meeting

## **Tuesday, July 20**

Chairman: Arbur Fernets, *Vernon BC*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 **Baptismal Discourse**

Ernie Kuenzli  
*Orlando FL*

10:30 Intermission

11:00 **Immersion Service**

Chris Kuenzli  
*Milwaukee WI*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Praise and Testimony

Stephen Jeuck  
*Orlando FL*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 **The Decade in Review**

Jonathan Benson, *New London CT*  
Russell Marten, *Chicago IL*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

Bernd Eckholt  
*Jersey City NJ*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

## Wednesday, July 21

Chairman: John Trzeciak, *Grand Rapids MI*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Convention Business Meeting

10:30 Short Recess

10:45 Convention Business Continues

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse

Richard Doctor  
*Milwaukee WI*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Praise and Testimony

David Christiansen  
*Seattle WA*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

Rick Sconyers  
*Orlando FL*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **Christian Suffering**

Ken Fernets  
*The Dawn*

7:45 Vesper Service

8:15 Songs in the Night

## Thursday, July 22

Chairman: Edmund Blicharz, *Orlando FL*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Praise and Testimony                      Bill Dutka  
*Detroit MI*

10:30 Intermission

11:00 **Question Meeting**

Jonathon Freer, *Sacramento CA*

Peter Mora, *Vernon BC*

David Rice, *San Diego CA*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse                                      Mike Balko  
*Dawn Pilgrim*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse                                      Allan Allers  
*Boise ID*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse                                      Kent Humphreys  
*Phoenix AZ*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **Closing Discourse**                      Carlton Chandler  
*Portland OR*

7:45 Melodies of Praise

8:30 Love Feast

# SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

## **M. Balko**

Buffalo, NY                      May 15,16

## **K. Fernets**

Agawam, MA                      May 15,16  
Los Angeles, CA                      29-31

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

## **E. Blicharz**

St. Augustine, FL                      May 23

## **S. Jeuck**

Agawam, MA                      May 15,16

## **D. Christiansen**

Agawam, MA                      May 15,16

## **E. Kalinski**

Janesville, WI                      May 9

## **O. B. Elbert**

Hartford, CT                      May 2  
Los Angeles, CA                      29-31

## **E. Kuenzli**

Chicago, IL                      May 29-31

## **R. Gorecki**

Los Angeles, CA                      May 29-31

## **H. Montague**

Chicago, IL                      May 29-31

## **L. Griehs**

Los Angeles, CA                      May 29-31

## **C. Willis**

Buffalo, NY                      May 15,16

*“By love serve one another.”  
—Galatians 5:13*

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# CONVENTIONS

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

**JACKSONVILLE CONVENTION, May 2**—Holiday Inn, 620 Wells Road, Orange Park, FL 32073. Contact C. Hires, 2405 Hugh Edwards Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32210. Phone: (904) 781-0506

**AGAWAM CONVENTION, May 15,16**—Agawam Senior Citizen Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA 01001. Contact L. Bovat. Phone: (413) 883-6421

**BUFFALO CONVENTION, May 15,16**—**New Location**—Holiday Inn Buffalo International Airport, 4600 Genesee Street, Buffalo, NY 14225. Contact R. Morin for reservations by April 30. Phone: (585) 322-7459

**CHICAGO CONVENTION, May 29-31**—Addison Park District Recreation Center, 120 E Oak Street, Addison, IL 60101. Contact S. Morgenstern, 256 Durham Lane, Bloomingdale, IL 60108. Phone: (630) 539-8696

**LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, May 29-31**—Radisson Hotel, 4545 MacArthur Blvd., Newport Beach, CA 92660. For programs and room reservations at the special convention rate of \$59/night (no tax), contact M. Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Phone: (310) 454-5248

**WATERBURY CONVENTION, June 5,6**—Saturday afternoon in Morris, CT. Sunday at the Litchfield Firehouse Hall, Rt. 202, Litchfield, CT. Contact H. Tsimonis, Phone (860) 567-0109 or Waterbury Bible Students; P.O. Box 1494; Waterbury, CT 06721-1494

**PORTLAND CONVENTION, June 18-20**—Ramada Inn Portland, 6221 NE 82nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97220. Contact D. Grudzien, 11970 SE Zion Hill Drive,

Damascus, OR 97089. Phone: (503) 658-4757

**PRINCE ALBERT/SASKATOON CONVENTION, July 2-4**—Siwak Farm. Contact A. Siwak, RR 1, Stn. Mpp, Prince Albert, SK, Canada, S6V 5P8. Phone: (306) 764-7692

**OKANAGAN CONVENTION, July 9-11**—Shubert Centre, 3505 30th Avenue, Vernon, BC, Canada. Tourist area, reserve early. Schell Motel (1 block away). Phone: (888) 772-4355 or (250) 545-1351. For other information, contact B. Blencowe. Phone: (250) 545-0780

**BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 17-22**—University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, PA. See “General Convention Bulletin,” page 53, this issue. Contact M. Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Phone: (310) 454-5248

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 8-13**—Baia Mare, Romania. Contact Tom Machacek. Phone: (219) 662-8107 (International Youth Seminar follows, August 16-20.)

**ALBERTA CONVENTION, August 13-15**—Pioneer Lodge, 4324 47th Avenue, Red Deer, AB, Canada. For hotel reservations, call Stanford Inn, (403) 347-5551. Contact A. Baumgarten. Phone: (403) 356-0004

**SEATTLE LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 4-6**—Seabeck Christian Conference Center, 15395 Seabeck Hwy NW, Seabeck, WA 98380-9583. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (253) 838-3822

**HUNTSVILLE CONVENTION, September 10-12**—Radisson Inn Huntsville Airport, 8721 Madison Blvd., Madison, AL 35758. Reservations: (800) 395-7046 or (256) 772-8855. Mention Huntsville Bible Students. Deadline for rooms: August 31. Contact J. Cothren, 1300 Huntsville Hills Drive, Huntsville, AL 35802. Phone: (256) 852-8505

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

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

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

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

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

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