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February 2011



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Cyber Threats:

New Levels of Violence

*“This know also,
that in the last
days perilous
times shall come.”
—II Timothy 3:1*

IN THIS SCRIPTURE, THE Apostle Paul has used a Greek word which has been translated “perilous” in our English Bible. He chose it to describe the rapidly increasing levels of fear and violence that would identify the ‘last days’ in prophecy, and which we believe mark the closing features of this present Gospel Age.

PERILOUS TIMES

The word ‘perilous’ means to be grievous, violent or difficult to deal with. It has been used on only one other occasion where it is rendered “fierce.” When Matthew recorded an incident in which Jesus encountered the violent demons, he said they were “exceeding fierce.” This adds a very meaningful perspective on the word that Paul used in his letter to Timothy. We read, “When he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.”—Matt. 8:28

A TIME OF TROUBLE

When the Prophet Daniel recorded God's warning concerning events that would mark the end of this Gospel Age, he wrote, "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."—Dan. 12:1

INCREASE OF KNOWLEDGE

Daniel was then told that the great Time of Trouble would be identified by two other major and distinguishing characteristics. God told him, "Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."—vs. 4

It is noted that when J. B. Rotherham prepared his emphasized translation of the Bible, he included an interesting footnote in connection with the word 'knowledge' that is found in Daniel's prophecy. It was taken from the notes of C. D. Ginsburg, an eminent Hebrew Bible scholar who was appointed one of the original members of the committee that was commissioned to revise the common version of the English Bible in 1870. Among Ginsburg's other scholarly works was the completion of his Massoretico-critical edition of the Hebrew Bible in 1894.

In his footnote on Daniel 12:4, Ginsburg indicated that an alternate meaning for the word knowledge is "calamities" or "wickedness." This adds depth of meaning and perspective in connection with the foretold great Time of Trouble and

the increasing level of violence in our day. “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”—Prov. 1:7

KNOWLEDGE REVEALED

This prophetic verse indicates God’s great wisdom in concealing certain information until the proper time for its fulfillment. The proper time for increasing knowledge was to be at the end of this present Gospel Age. It is being revealed by the Holy Spirit of God especially to those who are watching the foretold events. Some scriptures had their fulfillment at the time of our Lord’s First Advent, and others are being revealed during the time of his Second Presence. “It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.”—Joel 2:28,29

CYBER THREATS

We are now living in a highly technical world that is run by computers. The term “cyber” is relatively new and is associated with the use of computers and the Internet. It is a prefix that describes those things that pertain to the age of information. During the past few decades, there has been a virtual explosion of knowledge, especially in the field of technology. Although statistics vary, analysts who study trends agree that the accumulated volume of knowledge is doubling every few years. Computers and the Internet are a major part of this growth,

and are becoming an essential part of everyday life. They are used in nearly every aspect of modern life—to store information, to process data, to send and receive messages, and to act as a social link.

The tremendous role that computers now play in our world has stimulated widespread criminal activity, and terrorists are using this technology as the preferred tool to attack vulnerable targets. They prey upon computer information systems, programs, and data with the intent to create violence in some form.

This transformation, in the focus of terrorist activity from the previously traditional roles to the new electronic methods, is becoming one of the greatest threats to modern society. To combat this new level of terrorism, there is much that has to be done at all levels of society, from the regional to national and international levels. This type of transnational crime becomes possible through the use of computers and telecommunications systems, and is designed to create maximum fear, confusion, and uncertainty. The goal is to shut down critical national infrastructure systems, such as energy, transportation and government operations. Cyber-terrorists have the potential to coerce, or intimidate, a certain government or its people to conform to a particular political, or social, ideology.

Efforts are being made to combat the increasing threat of cyber terrorism. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) labels terrorism as “the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.” Further to this,

the U.S. Department of State defines terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups, or clandestine agents.”

CYBER INCIDENTS

In recent years, the U.S. Department of Defense and intelligence agencies have become more aware of cyber incidents that involve certain foreign governments. This occurs when attempts are made to retrieve classified information through computer networks. It is believed that China may be involved in these high-level espionage incidents, and they have been code-named “Titan Rain.” Defense officials say that even if the information gained is not of a vital nature, it should raise serious concerns because of the potential threat. They point out that if small bits of information can be pulled together from various sources, it may yield useful intelligence. Although attacks on U.S. systems have never been linked directly to state-sponsored cyber attacks, they point to the incident in 1999 when Chinese hackers disabled three U.S. government sites after NATO bombers had mistakenly attacked the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.

ATTACK IN ESTONIA

A serious incident occurred on May 17, 2007, when a massive three-week wave of cyber attacks began in the small Republic of Estonia, which borders the Baltic Sea. The attack disabled the websites of government ministries, political parties, newspapers, banks, and various businesses. This was the first known cyber-related assault on a particular state, and it caused serious alarm across the

world. At the height of the crisis, Estonian banks were crippled, and people were unable to use their payment cards to buy bread or gas.

Russia and Estonia had been embroiled in a serious dispute that related to Estonia's decision to relocate a Russian military statue that had been previously erected in the capital city of Tallinn during the Soviet era. Tensions over the incident led to rumors of Russian state involvement in the cyber attacks. Investigators said that even if these suppositions can never be corroborated, Estonia's experience may be repeated elsewhere. It indicated the high level of vulnerabilities that have increased as the world becomes more networked. Estonia is one of the most wired countries in the world with their banking, and point-of-sale systems, and government all having moved to the Web. The cyber attacks had a serious effect on the country's total commerce.

WAKE-UP CALL

The United States faces many of the same vulnerabilities as Estonia. Public utilities, such as hydro-electric plants and nuclear power plants, are moving away from their previous and more secure systems, and toward open-standards-based systems that use common Internet protocols to connect to one another. Identifying adversaries in such a system is very difficult and leaves these files subject to cyber attacks. Many believe it is necessary to focus on reducing these vulnerabilities.

Analysts say that these cyber attacks may be compared to the Soviet Union's and China's theft of America's nuclear bomb secrets in the 1940s and

1950s. They say the possibilities of what we can lose in an all-out cyber war, including our individual and national security, is very serious, and to help remedy the situation, the United States needs a cyber force of 20,000 to 30,000 skilled experts to help fight cyber terrorism.

MALWARE

Modern cyber attacks may include the use of malware. The term ‘malware’ is a shortened form of the words ‘malicious software.’ Sometimes it is called scumware. These attacks are perpetrated by individuals, or organizations, and are intended to steal personal information, or to hijack a computer. They secretly access a computer system to perform a wide variety of hostile and intrusive actions. These may include viruses, worms, trojan horses, and other ‘bugs’ that are of a malicious nature. Symantec Corporation named Shaoxing, China as the world’s malware capital on March 29, 2010.

Another way that information may be obtained is by ‘phishing.’ Cyber criminals seek information via the Internet, including personal IDs, passwords, credit card numbers, and PINS. The information may then be sold to other criminals. Online bank accounts may be accessed, and funds transferred to another account owned by one of the criminals.

HIGH TECH BANK HEISTS

In October, 2010, international hackers used computer viruses to steal millions of dollars from bank accounts throughout the United States. Investigators reported that the modern, high-tech bank heist did not require a gun, a mask, a note, or a get-away car. It required only the Internet and

ingenuity, and it was accomplished in the blink of an eye, with just a click on the computer mouse.

Typically an e-mail is sent to computers that are located in homes, businesses, and government offices in the United States. When the e-mail is opened, the virus embeds itself in the victims' computer, recording their keystrokes and capturing user names and passwords as they log into bank accounts. Nearly \$4 million was stolen from victims in the United States. Another \$9 million was taken from accounts in England.

WIKILEAKS

At the time of this writing, the international organization known as WikiLeaks has once again been brought to the attention of the American people. Their website was established in 2006, and they claim to have built up a database of one and a quarter million documents during the first year of their operation. Its founders are various journalists, mathematicians, and dissidents from many locations around the world. In recent months, they have revealed numerous private, secret, and classified documents to the media, which has caused serious concern.

The organization's founder, spokesperson, and editor-in-chief is Julian Paul Assange—a journalist, publisher, and Internet activist from Australia. Assange was an Internet hacker during his youth and has worked as a computer programmer. He has lived in several countries, has published material on many varying subjects, and has received several awards and nominations. These include the Economist's New Media Award in 2008, and in

2009 the Amnesty International Media Award for publishing material concerning the extrajudicial killings in Kenya. In 2010, the *New York City Daily News* listed WikiLeaks as being the first website that could totally change the news. Later in the year, Assange was named the Readers Choice in *Time* magazine's Person-of-the-Year award.

EXPOSED DOCUMENTS

In April, 2010, WikiLeaks posted video from a 2007 incident in which Iraqi civilians and journalists were killed by U.S. forces. In July, 2010, the "Afghan War Diary" was released, a compilation of more than 76,900 documents concerning the war in Afghanistan that had not been previously seen. In October, 2010, the organization released 400,000 documents known as the "Iraq War Logs," and in November, 2010 they began releasing U.S. State Department diplomatic cables.

REACTION

Reaction from around the world in connection with the leaked U.S. embassy documents has ranged from anger and bitterness among some, to extreme indifference among others. Several U.S. government officials were quick to criticize WikiLeaks for exposing secret and classified government information. They point out that such careless actions harm national security and compromise international diplomacy.

In the meantime, Assange was arrested in London, England in December, 2010, and is currently out on bail at the time of this writing, and under house arrest in England pending an extradition hearing. The U.S. government is expected to request

his extradition and prosecute him for espionage. During World War I, the U.S. government enacted the Espionage Act of 1917, which made it a crime to willfully communicate secret government information that could expose national secrets. Many believe that these proceedings could provide a test to decide whether the First Amendment's protection for a free press may be permitted to extend to a worldwide website with an extended audience.

Several human rights organizations have also made contacts with WikiLeaks to inform them that they are not properly editing the names of civilian workers that are associated with international forces. Some journalists have criticized a perceived lack of editorial discretion when releasing thousands of documents at one time, and without providing sufficient analysis. Among negative public reactions in the United States, some people have characterized the organization as being irresponsible, immoral, and illegal.

HACKER'S REVENGE

Media supporters have commended the WikiLeaks organization for exposing state and corporate secrets, therefore increasing transparency, supporting freedom of the press, and enhancing democratic discourse, while challenging powerful institutions.

In what they called "Operation Payback," the network of online activists targeted financial firms including MasterCard and Visa over the recent incident involving the released U.S. diplomatic cables. The group is known as "Anonymous" which is believed to have about 2,000 hackers. They were

able to disrupt the websites of these credit card companies, and that of the Swedish prosecution authority.

Their attack came after the financial giants, along with the online payment firm PayPal, announced they would no longer process donations to the anti-secrecy group. Former U.S. Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin reported that her website had also been attacked by “Anonymous” and that personal credit cards belonging to her and her husband had been disrupted. She told *ABC News* that this is what happens when you exercise the First Amendment and speak against these sick un-American espionage efforts, and that Assange should be pursued like al-Qaeda.

The hackers also targeted Amazon, the internet retailer, which provoked their fury by withdrawing server space being used by WikiLeaks to host the government documents. PayPal admitted it had blocked payments to the group which was embarrassing the U.S. government, by steadily releasing a cache of more than 250,000 cables amid pressure from the State department. “Anonymous” distributed denial of service attacks, which have become the standard weapon of cyber warfare, and which temporarily crippled the companies websites. They also brought down the sites of the Swedish prosecutors who are pursuing Julian Assange, founder of WikiLeaks.

The group encouraged volunteers to download a piece of software that would allow them to remotely take control of their computers and harness their power for further attacks on their targeted firms. While the companies sought to play down the potential

impact on consumers, a spokesman for MasterCard said that its customers were experiencing a complete loss of service, and that they were working to restore normal service levels. Hackers have threatened to turn their attention on to Twitter—the microblogging website which it accuses of censoring WikiLeaks. In a statement from the group, they responded by saying, “We will fire at anything or anyone that tries to censor WikiLeaks, including multibillion-dollar companies.”

CYBER COMMAND

The U.S. Department of Defense launched the new Cyber Command (CyberCom) on May 24, 2010, that will synchronize the department’s various networks and cyberspace operations, to better defend them against cyber attacks. This recognizes the need to oversee the nation’s digital infrastructure as a strategic and national asset, and addresses the vulnerabilities of cyber attacks on U.S. military systems.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates approved the birth of Cyber Command that is a unified subdivision of the country’s Strategic Command. It will manage the Defense Department’s resources of 15,000 computer networks across 4,000 military bases in 88 countries. About 1,000 people will work at CyberCom at Fort Meade, Florida, with most of them moving over from existing jobs. Concerns have been raised over the segregation that currently exists among the different cyber networks and information resources across the military. Gates said, “This segregation detracts from natural synergies and ignores our experience in organizing to

operate in the air, land, sea, and space domains. The establishment of U.S. CyberCom will remedy this problem in the cyber domain.”

EVERY IMAGINATION OF EVIL

Jesus compared the trouble of the ‘last days’ to the time of Noah in his great prophecy in Matthew 24. God brought judgment upon the horrendous evil that predominated at the time of Noah’s flood. Concerning this, the Apostle Peter wrote, “Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.” (II Pet. 3:6) We learn from the Scriptures the reason for God’s severe action. “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”—Gen. 6:5

The time since Adam and Eve disobeyed the divine law, until the establishment of Christ’s future kingdom of righteousness, is termed the dark night of sin and death. “Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.”—Isa. 60:2

Satan has been permitted to exercise his powers of darkness and evil. “In whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (II Cor. 4:4) “The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”—Rev. 12:9

THE NIGHT IS FAR SPENT

The Apostle Paul proclaimed, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." (Rom. 13:12) However hopeless the world's present chaotic situation appears, we are assured that the nighttime of sin, death, and darkness is 'far spent,' and that the promised king of righteousness will soon be manifest. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."—I Cor. 4:5

HOW LONG, O LORD?

Considering the evil hearts of men, we read, "The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes. When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge. The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: but God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness."—Prov. 21:10-12

God has promised that this wicked spirit will be taken away, and men's hearts will be cleansed. "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins." (Ps. 7:9) Again, we read, "O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself. Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud. LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they

utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?”—Ps. 94:1-4

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

In his second epistle, Peter foretold the great events that would mark the closing features of this present Gospel Age and the approaching day of God’s fiery judgments. “The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”—II Pet. 3:7

Peter further explained, “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”—vss. 10-13

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

The Prophet Isaiah recorded God’s ultimate purpose to bless the poor sin-sick world, and to give them an opportunity to learn of his wonderful knowledge of truth and righteousness. This will take place during Christ’s future kingdom, when men will no longer be allowed to use knowledge to further their own evil or wicked pursuits. Under the leadership of the Christ, every injurious word

or action will be met with an immediate response, and with punishment for their misdeed. “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”—Isa. 11:9 ■

*When tempest clouds are dark on high,
His bow of love and peace
Shines sweetly through the troubled sky,
A pledge that storms shall cease.*

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

FEBRUARY 3—“My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.”—Proverbs 4:20,22 (Z. ’96-180 Hymn 264)

FEBRUARY 10—“Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”—I Timothy 4:12 (Z. ’95-251 Hymn 145)

FEBRUARY 17—“Take my yoke upon you, . . . for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”—Matthew 11:29,30 (Z. ’00-137 Hymn 284)

FEBRUARY 24—“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”—Romans 8:3,4 (Z. ’02-248 Hymn 190)

Jesus is the Messiah

Key Verse: “*He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.*”
—Mark 8:29

Selected Scripture:
Mark 8:27-9:1
ets.”—Mark 8:27,28

NEAR THE END OF OUR
Lord’s ministry, Jesus began to prepare his disciples for his shameful crucifixion. “Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, one of the proph-

In our Key Verse, the Master pointedly inquired of the disciples as to their estimation of him, and Peter declared that he was the promised Messiah.

Jesus then charged the twelve that they should not reveal this truth to anyone, and also began to tell them about his ignominious death at the hands of his enemies—“that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and be killed”—as well as his subsequent resurrection after three days.—vss. 30,31

Peter could not accept the idea that Jesus would have to suffer and die, in view of the many miraculous deeds the Lord had performed. Furthermore, he was unable to understand how, as the Messiah, Jesus could bless all the families of the earth, yet he be put to death as a malefactor. In view of this seeming contradiction, Peter

began to chide the Master for proclaiming his forthcoming death.—vs. 32

“When he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.”—vs. 33

The time had come for the disciples, as well as others who had been favorably impressed by Jesus’ ministry, to understand the necessity for self-denial and cross bearing if they were to have a share in his kingdom. “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” (vs. 34) The Lord continued to emphasize that his followers would be tested as to whether they would be more interested in attaining earthly hopes, aims, and ambitions or in submitting to the divine will by participating in present sufferings associated with the privilege of proclaiming the righteous principles of Christ. These righteous principles were exemplified by his willingness to sacrifice life itself in the face of opposition by the ungody in this sinful world.—vss. 35-38

The Apostle Paul elsewhere exhorts believers to faithfulness in their Christian endeavors. “If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”—Rom. 8:17,18

The need for full devotedness to God, and the counting of present earthly attainments as being unworthy in comparison to the spiritual inheritance promised to those who set their affections upon heavenly pursuits, continues to inspire the hearts of the consecrated followers of Christ to this very day. Let us ever maintain our efforts to be diligent in following the Master to the very end of our Christian sojourn. “He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.”—Rev. 17:14 ■

This is My Beloved

Key Verse: *“There was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.”*
—Mark 9:7

Selected Scripture:
Mark 9:2-13

as bright as the sun. What an awe-inspiring experience this was for the three disciples who accompanied the Lord. The Bible also indicates that the figures of Moses and Elijah were seen talking with the Master. “After six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow. . . . And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.”—Mark 9:2-4

Peter assumed this was a fulfillment of the words spoken earlier (vs. 1) that some of them would not taste death until they saw the glory and power of God’s kingdom. He proposed that three tabernacles be erected, possibly with the thought that the Israelites might later ascend the mountain and pay homage to the glorified Lord as the kingdom was inaugurated.—vss. 5,6

IN OUR PREVIOUS LESSON, Jesus had foretold of the suffering, reproach, and death which was to be his portion, and the portion of those who would be his followers.

About one week later, Jesus took Peter, James, and John into a high mountain where he was transfigured so that his countenance and garments became radiant and his face shone

In our Key Verse, a voice from heaven came out of a cloud affirming that Jesus was God's 'beloved Son.' Jesus told his disciples that what they had seen was a vision and they should not tell anyone about it until after the Lord was resurrected from the dead. "As they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead."—Matt. 17:9

Several years later, after receiving the Holy Spirit, the apostle recalled this event. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."—II Pet. 1:16-21

Moses and Elijah had died well before Jesus came to earth and could not literally have been on the mountain with Christ. (Heb. 11:13,39,40) It may be that, in the vision, Moses represented the faithful of past ages and Elijah represented the Gospel Age members of the Christian church. The time for this glorious kingdom is still a future event. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."—Matt. 25:31

May each of us, who is desirous of sharing in blessing the human family, faithfully complete our vows of consecration, and thus assist in fulfilling God's eternal purpose. ■

Jesus Came to Save

Key Verse: *“Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”*
—Mark 10:45

Selected Scripture:
Mark 10:35-45

desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.” (Matt. 20:20,21) Even though his impending death must have been on the Lord’s mind, he did not issue any reproof concerning the petition to occupy these two positions of chiefest favor, but he inquired whether they were able to drink of his cup and participate in his baptism.—Mark 10:35-38

“And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.”—vss. 39,40

FOLLOWING JESUS’ PRE-

diction of his crucifixion, James and John approached the Master and expressed a desire that they might be close to him in the kingdom, one on his right hand and the other on his left. In another account, it was their mother who made this request on behalf of her sons. “Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping him, and

The ‘cup’ in the foregoing text relates to difficult experiences; for example, here is one expression from the Lord, “Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”—John 18:11

The Heavenly Father required Jesus to have tests of obedience under adversity before he could be qualified to receive the divine nature and become the Captain of our salvation. Similarly, his baptism did not refer to water immersion, but the daily fulfilling of his vow to lay down his human life according to God’s will. (Luke 12:50) Jesus assured James and John that they also would suffer even unto death as they followed in the Lord’s footsteps.

The other disciples were greatly displeased that James and John desired to have prominent positions in the kingdom, but Jesus gave them all important lessons that each of them would be rewarded based upon faithfulness in rendering service to others. “Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.”—Mark 10:42-44

Our Key Verse identifies the Master as the greatest servant of all because he willingly gave his life to save the entire human race from sin and death.

Believers who hearken to the Master’s words will pursue a course of life that opposes the spirit of the world and a desire for self-exaltation. On the contrary, the Apostle Peter provides sage counsel for all who desire to be with the Lord and help to restore the human family from the present condition of sin and death. “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”—I Pet. 5:6 ■

Coming of the Son of Man

Key Verse: “Then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.”
—Mark 13:26

Selected Scripture:
Mark 13

for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.”—Luke 21:25,26

The above passage is a parallel account to the words found in chapter 13 of Mark’s gospel. The earth is often used as a symbol in scripture. “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.” (Isa. 1:2) As the LORD speaks to the earth, it is apparent the physical planet is not being addressed, but rather, the people of the earth. Another Biblical symbol is the sea. “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.” (Isa. 57:20) The Bible often refers to the sea, not as literal water, but rather as a symbol for wicked people.

MUCH OF THE INFORMATION concerning the Second Advent of Jesus Christ is written in figurative language. “There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and

Our Key Verse affirms that at the Lord's Second Advent he will be seen coming in the clouds with power and glory.

The foregoing is yet another symbolic passage that needs to be harmonized with other scriptures which indicate that a literal interpretation of those words would not be accurate. "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." (I Thess. 5:2) The Lord's return occurs at a time when the world at large would be unaware of this fact, because a 'thief in the night' would not be discernable to anyone who was not expecting him. Furthermore, Jesus specifically indicated to his disciples, just prior to his crucifixion, that the world would see him no more after his death.—John 14:19

Christ gave his life for the world, and is now a powerful spiritual being who cannot be seen by the human eye—"being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (I Pet. 3:18) In due course, however, when Christ's kingdom is established, everyone will see (understand) that he has returned, because peace and prosperity will exist throughout the world.

The forepart of this Day of the LORD is prophetically described in a manner that coincides with conditions that presently exist in this troublesome world. "That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness."—Zeph. 1:15

A special message of encouragement is provided to believers even now as we view current events, assured that sin and death will pass away. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."—II Pet. 3:13,14 ■

The Salt of the Earth

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”

—*Matthew 5:13*

THIS SCRIPTURE IS TAKEN

from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. He had just finished teaching his followers many wonderful lessons called the Beatitudes (vss. 3-12), and was now directing his listeners to the important characteristics of ‘salt’ and how its unique qualities relate to the Lord’s people and their con-

secrated walk in newness of life.

SALT A SYMBOL

In the Bible, salt is used as a meaningful symbol in many and widely varying applications. In some cases, the word is used to point to that which is incorruptible and free from decay. In other scriptures, salt symbolizes that which is corruptible, or desolate. In our featured scripture, Matthew has recorded Jesus’ statement wherein he used both illustrations of salt to emphasize important lessons concerning two very distinct characteristics of his followers.

Salt is known as a preserving and cleansing element, and keeps that which is good from decay or putrefaction. It also represents fidelity and other wholesome qualities. Our Lord was pointing out that those of his followers who manifest these Christ-like qualities are being faithful to their High Calling, and he referred to them as the ‘salt of the earth.’ They have been salted with the Truth, and heed the instructions and commands of righteousness. The Apostle Paul said, “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”—Col. 4:6

SOME NOT WORTH THEIR SALT

In other applications, salt illustrates that which has become corrupt and barren. A worthy example concerns Lot and his wife as they were leaving Sodom and Gomorrah. From the scriptural account, we read, “His wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.” (Gen. 19:26) Our Lord later recalled this episode by saying, “Remember Lot’s wife.” (Luke 17:32) Jesus was pointing to those who have the wrong spirit and have become careless with their faith. They love the world, and remain in sympathy with it and its worthless allurements that should have been left behind. Their salt has lost its savor and thus they are not worth their salt.

SALT AND ITS SAVOR

The word ‘savor’ indicates that which is pleasing to the senses of taste or smell. To be ‘unsavory’ suggests not only the opposite effect on these senses, but also points to those who are morally offensive and disagreeable. Thus are they cast off from

God's favor. In his letter to Titus, Paul clarified this, and said, "This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."—Titus 1:13-16

COMPARATIVE LESSONS

Valuable lessons concerning the significance of salt, and its applications concerning the Lord's people, are also recorded in the gospels of Mark and Luke, which provide further perspective and insight. From Luke's gospel, we read, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."—Luke 14:33-35

FORSAKING ALL THINGS

Luke included Jesus' statement that his disciples must forsake all things. This is vital among those who have given their lives in full consecration to the Heavenly Father and are striving to walk faithfully in the narrow way of sacrifice. They are admonished to deny themselves by giving up all earthly interests and pursuits, and to walk even as Jesus walked in newness of life.

As clarification of this important point, we note Jesus' further reference to this. "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 will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—Matt. 16:24-26

The Apostle Paul also explained, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:1) "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."—vss. 4-6

SALTED WITH FIRE

In Mark's record of the significance of salt, Jesus said, "Every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another."—Mark 9:49,50

In this scripture, Jesus brings to our attention the fact that his followers will be salted with fiery trials. Their faithfulness will be tested in proportion to the quality of the salt that was used in their sacrifices. Paul wrote, "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because

it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (I Cor. 3:13) The Apostle Peter also said, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—I Pet. 1:7

PROPERTIES OF SALT

The chemical and physical properties of salt, or sodium chloride, demonstrate its fitness as a spiritual symbol. It is abundant in nature and is found in all parts of the earth. Vast underground deposits of rock salt have been found, some of which are several thousand feet thick. Also, the oceans of the world contain about 2.7 percent sodium chloride in solution. A cubic mile of seawater holds approximately 124 million tons of salt.

The Dead Sea is up to six times more salty than ocean water, and has provided the Israelites with a readily available supply of salt through evaporation of the Dead Sea waters. There are also salt bearing hills in the southern region of the Dead Sea.

SALT AND THE HUMAN BODY

Every cell in the human body contains salt, and it is therefore an essential nutrient. Mankind, as well as all other animals, cannot live without it. It plays a crucial role in keeping our bodies functioning properly. When we do strenuous work or exercise, our bodies become very warm, and salt maintains the balance of fluids which carry oxygen and nutrients to all parts of our system. Our bodies adjust the amount of salt we consume by making us

thirsty when it needs to dilute the salt. A healthy body processes the right amount of salt it needs, and the kidneys dispose of any excess.

SODIUM AND CHLORIDE

Two major elements of salt are sodium and chloride, and each play a variety of crucial roles in maintaining a healthy body. Sodium enables the transmission of nerve impulses. It regulates the electrical charges that move in and out of the cells, and that control taste, smell, and other processes. It helps our muscles, including the heart, to contract.

Chloride is essential for the digestion process. It preserves the acid balance in our body and absorbs potassium. It also helps blood carry carbon dioxide from respiring tissues to the lungs. If there is an insufficient amount of salt in our body, we may experience muscular weakness and cramps, and our body cannot perform all its vital functions.

PECULIARITIES OF SALT

Salt has the peculiar ability to lower the freezing, or melting point, of water. Ice forms when the temperature of water reaches 32 F (0 C). If a 10% salt solution is added, the temperature drops to 20 F (-6 C), and with a 20% solution it freezes at 2 F (-16 C).

Highway maintenance personnel take advantage of this peculiarity by sprinkling salt on icy roadways during the winter months. Salt lowers the freezing point of the ice, and dissolves it into liquid water. The ice immediately around the grain of salt melts, and the melting spreads out from that point. If the temperature of the roadway is lower than 15 F,

the salt will have little or no effect. In that case, sand is sprinkled over the ice to provide better traction.

This peculiarity of salt is also taken advantage when making homemade ice cream. The temperature around the ice cream mixture must be lower than 32 F to make the mixture freeze. Thus, salt is mixed with ice to create a brine, and the temperature can be lowered to around 0 F. The brine becomes cold enough to easily freeze the ice cream mixture.

A FOOD ADDITIVE

In ancient times, man learned that salt could be used to keep food safe, and to preserve it by retarding the growth of micro-organisms that cause spoilage. It also became very effective as the world's oldest food additive. This is confirmed by Job who said, "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?"—Job 6:6

Salt is still an important commodity in the modern food industry, and is used for the preservation of our foods, and to make them safe and palatable. Food technologists rely on salt to satisfy consumer preferences such as color, texture, appearance, and aroma. The majority of people use too much salt in their daily diets because it adds extra flavor and zest to their food. It has the remarkable ability to enhance certain flavors to make them taste better. It can also mask naturally bitter foods, such as chocolate, to make them more palatable. Evidence suggests that most people prefer the many and varied attributes that only salt can offer.

SALT MONEY

During the early period of the world's history, salt was used as a unit of exchange. In the early

days of the Roman Empire, the price for salt was under strict control. Its cost could be increased to raise money for wars or other matters, or it could be lowered again to enable poor people to afford this important part of their diet.

At that time, Roman soldiers were given a ration of salt each day, but this practice was later replaced by an allowance of money. This was called their ‘salt money’ (*salarium*, Latin) which is the basis for our English word ‘salary.’

To supply the expanding city of Rome with increasing amounts of salt, roads were built for its transport. Thus the Via Salaria was built leading from Rome to the Adriatic Sea, from which supplies of salt were taken. The Tyrrhenian Sea was much closer to Rome than the Adriatic, but it did not have as good a supply, or quality, of salt. The Adriatic Sea had a higher salinity content because of its shallower water.

SALT AND FIDELITY

The wonderful Word of God provides interesting and important information relative to the use of salt. In the writings of Ezra, we read, “Now because we have maintenance from the king’s palace [*Marginal Translation*, We are salted with the salt of the palace], and it was not meet for us to see the king’s dishonor, therefore have we sent and certified the king.”—Ezra 4:14

This scripture was recorded at a time when salt was under the control of the monarchy, or the ruling powers of the elite. Thus, the thought of ‘eating of the prince’s salt’ was synonymous with receiving pay, accepting sustenance, or being in that person’s

service. It was also a symbol of friendship and hospitality.

A CLEANSING AGENT

Salt was also used as a cleansing agent, and as a disinfectant on newborn babies. When writing about the abominations of Jerusalem, the Prophet Ezekiel used salt, or the lack thereof, as an illustration of God's condemnation upon his people. "As for your birth, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water for cleansing; you were not rubbed with salt or even wrapped in cloths."—Ezek. 16:4

DESOLATING EFFECTS

As a symbol of Moab's and Ammon's desolation, it is recorded, "Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them."—Zeph. 2:9

In another illustration, we note that salt was also used as a desolating agent in military practice, by salting the earth of an enemy. This was an ancient custom whereby salt was strewn over a conquered city, or the land, to curse it and to make it barren. An example of this practice is recorded in Judges. "Abimelech, and the company that was with him, rushed forward and stood in the entering of the gate of the city [Shechem]: and the two other companies ran upon all the people that were in the fields, and slew them. And Abimelech fought against the city all that day; and he took the city,

and slew the people that was therein, and beat down the city, and sowed it with salt.”—Judg. 9:44,45

The Prophet Ezekiel records God’s message concerning the waters of life that will be offered to the human creation under the administration of Christ’s future kingdom. Also recorded are the judgments that will be placed upon those who disregard the blessings available to all. We read, “The miry places thereof and the marshes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.”—Ezek. 47:11

THE TABERNACLE SERVICES

Salt was an important part in the making of the incense used in the Tabernacle services, which had to be made exactly as shown to Moses in the Mount. The directions for the composition of the sweet spices, and the ingredients, and their quantities are found in the scriptural records. “Then the Lord said to Moses, Take for yourself spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each. And with it you shall make incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, and holy.”—Exod. 30:34-36, *New American Standard Bible*

It is noted that one of the ingredients of the sacrificial offerings was salt. This was significant because it pointed to the importance of fidelity, loyalty, and purity. More importantly, it foreshadowed the sweet-smelling savor of our prayers that ascend to our loving Heavenly Father. They are called sweet-smelling because they are well salted with fidelity. The scriptural record states, “When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and

the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”—Rev. 5:8,9, *NASB*

In the eighth chapter of Revelation, we again read, “Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel’s hand.”—Rev. 8:3,4, *NASB*

Thus did the Apostle Paul admonish, “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.”—Eph. 5:1,2

THE SALT OF GOD’S COVENANT

From the early days of human creation, salt was widely known because of its freedom from corruption and decay. In men’s minds, therefore, it represented permanence, loyalty, and fidelity. These distinctive qualities made it a peculiar and fitting symbol, and the accepted medium used in the sealing of contracts and business arrangements. Salt was a chosen component of the ceremonial offerings and for the sealing of covenants. The preservative qualities of salt made it an excellent symbol of an enduring compact, and indicated a pledge of fidelity. God also used it to show that his covenants and promises would stand forever, and that his Word is sure. Thus, God’s instructions to Moses were, “Every oblation of thy meat offering shalt

thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.”—Lev. 2:13

The requirement of adding salt to the meat offerings stressed the importance of the fidelity, loyalty, and purity of God’s covenant. “All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: it is a covenant of salt for ever before the LORD unto thee and to thy seed with thee.”—Num. 18:19

THE WHOLE CREATION AT PEACE

When Christ’s future kingdom is established over all the earth, the whole human family will rejoice in the salt of God’s promises. The animal creation will eat ‘salted fodder,’ and be secure and living in peace and harmony with mankind in a restored earth. Speaking of God’s everlasting promise, Isaiah wrote, “Then He will give you rain for the seed which you will sow in the ground, and bread from the yield of the ground, and it will be rich and plenteous; on that day your livestock will graze in a roomy pasture. Also the oxen and the donkeys which work the ground will eat salted fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork.”—Isa. 30:23,24, *NASB*

HEALED WATERS

There will be no more death, because the waters of life will be cleansed and made pure. “The men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth:

but the water is naught, and the ground barren. And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.”—II Kings 2:19-22

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

In our featured scripture, Jesus proclaimed, “Ye are the salt of the earth.” (Matt. 5:13) Our Lord is the principle figure in this reference, and the faithful members of the Christ will share in the salt’s preservative, cleansing, and healing qualities. Together, they will carry out the Heavenly Father’s ultimate plan and purpose to reconcile the sin-sick human family from the terrible results of sin and death.

When Christ’s future kingdom of righteousness is established, the salt of God’s covenant will be manifest to all as true, faithful, and forever. This was long ago typified by King David and his sons, who represent Jesus and his body members as they then share in blessing all the families of the earth. “Ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?”—II Chron. 13:5 ■



The Holy Spirit of God

*“The Spirit of God
moved upon the
face of the waters.”*
—*Genesis 1:2*

THE BIBLE’S TESTIMONY

concerning the ‘Spirit of God’ and its relationship to all his mighty acts is a very important subject. The Spirit of God is referred to hundreds of times in the Bible. In the New Testament, it is usually called the “Holy Spirit”—often mistranslated “Holy Ghost” in the *King James Version*. In the Old Testament, “spirit” is translated from the Hebrew word *ruwach*, which Prof. Strong defines as ‘wind.’ The same word is many times translated ‘breath.’ In the New Testament, “spirit” translates the Greek word *pneuma*, meaning, according to Prof. Strong, ‘breath, or current of air.’

Let us not conclude, however, that the Holy Spirit of God is merely wind, or a blast of air. The ancient Hebrew and Greek languages did not contain specific words for everything, and this was particularly true in expressing thoughts pertaining to God and his mighty works. However, through use, many words with specific meanings took on

additional meanings. Thus *ruwach* in the Hebrew language and *pneuma* in the Greek language, because of their original application to the invisible power of the wind, came to mean any invisible force or power, and were used to describe the invisible power of God.

GOD'S INVISIBLE POWER

Broadly speaking, then, the Spirit of God is the invisible power of God. It is the invisible, indefinable energy of the Creator by which he accomplishes all his good purposes. It is that mighty power which cannot be thwarted, and which enables the Creator to accomplish all the good pleasure of his will. God says, "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isa. 46:11) The Creator also says, "My word . . . that goeth forth out of my mouth . . . shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isa. 55:11

The Spirit, or power, of God is manifest throughout all creation. It was the Spirit of God that transformed this planet from an empty, shapeless mass into the beautiful earth which it is, and made it capable of sustaining countless varieties of things animate and inanimate. In this work of transformation, it was God's Spirit which set the bounds of the mighty oceans so that the Creator could say, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."—Job 38:11

It was God's power that brought forth the grass and herbs in the earth. It was his Spirit that implemented his decree, "Let the waters bring forth

abundantly the moving creature that hath life." Surely, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1:2,20) It was God's Spirit that fulfilled his Word, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind." (Gen. 1:24) It was his power that operated in the creation of man.

It is the power of God, directed in secret processes known only to him, that enables all life on earth to reproduce its kind. Solomon wrote, "Thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." (Eccles. 11:5) Solomon was the wisest of all men in his day, but he acknowledged his ignorance of how the Spirit of God operates, and our scientists today can do no better than say "Amen" to Solomon's confession.

We cannot understand the workings of divine power. We can merely marvel at what it accomplishes. Like the wind, it is truly an invisible power. Gravitation is one of its manifestations—He "hangeeth the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7) But the earth is only an infinitesimal speck in God's great universe. Think of the countless billions of suns and stars and planets, all of which are likewise hung upon 'nothing,' yet they spin around in the orbits designed for them, kept in place by laws designed by God.

Consider the power of the great Creator which energized our sun with power which is given off under a controlled process that furnishes our earth with light and heat. We are told that the sun gives off as much energy in one second as man has used ever since he has been on the earth. Consider, too,

that all the power, or energy, utilized by man has its origin with God. Man cannot produce power except through utilizing the created things of God.

The tremendous energy that is locked up in a single atom is now known to man. Try to figure out the number of atoms contained in all of God's vast creation. It is impossible for the human mind to fathom, but the mere contemplation of it may help us to grasp a little more realistically the almighty power of God. For a Creator possessing the power to lock such unlimited energy into the atom, the preparation of the earth for human habitation was a simple matter.

THE POWER OF LIFE

The Spirit, or power, of God can also be a life-giving power. In Genesis 6:17, *ruwach* is translated "breath" in the expression, "breath of life." We could say, then, that the *ruwach*, or Spirit of God, which moved upon the face of the waters, is also the Spirit of life. Confirming this, we read in Job 12:10 concerning the Creator, "In whose hand is the soul [margin, 'life'] of every living thing, and the breath [*ruwach*] of all mankind." It is this thought that Paul expressed in his sermon on Mars' Hill, when he said of God, "In him we live, and move, and have our being."—Acts 17:28

God's Spirit is the power that created vegetable as well as animal life. "Only God can make a tree," a poet wrote, and this highlights the fact that, but for the Spirit of God, there would be no trees, no flowers, no grass, no fruit, and no vegetables. Scientists can put together all the elements in a blade of grass, but they cannot make it live. In his sermon

to the Athenians, Paul said that God is “not far from every one of us.” (Acts 17:27) Certainly the Spirit of God is manifest all around us—in the beauty and fragrance of the flowers; in his loving provision of food; and in the gorgeous landscapes which enrapture us with their beauty, formed by the blending of myriads of forms of life.

When Paul sought an illustration of Christian activity in proclaiming the Gospel, he likened it to the sowing and watering of seed, but explained that it is God who gives the “increase.” (I Cor. 3:7) How futile would be the work of a farmer in sowing seed in the springtime if God did not give the increase. Some may realize when they see the tiny plants push up the earth and spread forth their leaves that the Spirit of God is working to give the increase, but many do not. How much more every manifestation of life with which we are surrounded would mean if we could just keep in mind that what we see is not merely a chemical process, not a fortuity of ‘blind nature,’ but the working of the Spirit of God.

GOD’S SPIRIT IN MAN

Marvelous though the various manifestations of God’s Spirit are as seen all around us every day of our lives, the Bible reveals that there is a more personal exercise of this power in the lives of his human creatures, especially those who serve him. This comes to light in God’s dealings with Joseph in the land of Egypt. Pharaoh told Joseph his dreams—the dreams which were prophetic of seven years of plenty in the land, to be followed by seven years of famine. “Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of

Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.” (Gen. 41:25) God ‘shewed’ Pharaoh through his dreams, interpreted by Joseph. Later, Pharaoh said concerning Joseph, “Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?”—vs. 38

The ‘Spirit of God’ was in Joseph. In this instance, God used his power, first to impress the two dreams upon the mind of Pharaoh, and then to reveal to Joseph the prophetic meaning of the dreams. How could that be done, some may ask? The simple answer is that we do not know. Neither do we know how God makes a tree. Surely the mighty power that hangs the earth and every other heavenly body in the universe upon nothing, that gives life to every living thing, would have no difficulty impressing certain thoughts upon the mind of one of his creatures, and giving another the ability to interpret those thoughts.

It was the Creator who designed the human brain, with all its marvelous nerve and blood connections by which it normally functions. It would be a simple matter for him to cause thoughts to enter the brain other than through the normal pathway of the five senses. All life is a miracle so far as our ability to understand its functions is concerned. Once we recognize this, and then accept the fact of the mighty power of God as manifested in all his creative works, the miracles recorded in the Bible will not be stumbling stones to our faith. We will see them to be but commonplace activities in the outworking of the Creator’s wise designs toward his human creatures.

ALL MANNER OF WORKMANSHIP

Another, and different, manifestation of God's Spirit was given to Bezaleel at the time of the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. The need for this is apparent. The Israelites had been held slaves in Egypt for generations, and it is quite unlikely that they were permitted much opportunity to learn the skills of that day, in the use of metals and other materials. When it came time to build the Tabernacle and provide its furnishings, a need arose along this line, and God took care of the situation.

The Lord said to Moses concerning Bezaleel, "I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee."—Exod. 31:3-6

When Moses received the instructions from the Lord concerning the building of the Tabernacle and the making of all its fine and intricate furnishings, he probably wondered just how it could be done. He may have questioned that any of the Israelites were capable of such an understanding, but it was no problem to God. He, whose Spirit had created the universe and had deposited all the basic metals in the earth, would have no problem in revealing to those whom he chose the needed wisdom

to fashion those metals, to carve the wood of the trees, and to work in 'all manner of workmanship.' He could have commissioned the angels to do this skilled work had he chosen to do so, but in his wisdom he saw best to give some of his human servants the ability to do the work. And, in this, we have still another manner in which God exercises his power, his Spirit.

In connection with the building of the Tabernacle, our attention is called to still another way in which God's Spirit made the undertaking possible. It was marvelous that God gave certain ones the needed ability, but this would have been useless unless they had materials with which to work. At that time, the Israelites were in the wilderness. They could not embark on mining expeditions to secure the needed metals, but even this did not pose a problem to the Lord. By his providences, the Israelites had obtained jewelry of various sorts which they took with them when they left Egypt.—Exod. 12:35,36

THE TABERNACLE SERVICE

When the time came to build the Tabernacle, Moses "spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the LORD commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair." (chap. 35:4-6) Moses continued the list of all the things which would be needed for the Tabernacle and its furnishings. Then, in verse 21, we

read, “They came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his [the LORD’s] spirit made willing, and they brought the LORD’s offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.” Here we see the power of the Lord operating in the hearts of his people, stirring them up to donate the needed materials for the Tabernacle which he had instructed Moses to build. Here again, however, we cannot comprehend how it was done.

Still another and different manifestation of God’s power is mentioned in connection with his dealing with Israel during the period of the judges, in which the nation had no central government. This lack of organization made them easy prey to their enemies. When they became oppressed, and destruction threatened, the Lord intervened. He did this by raising up a leader, or a judge, whom he would bless in dispersing Israel’s enemies. The record is that the Lord put his Spirit on these; that is, he empowered them to accomplish his purposes.—Judg. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6

When Zerubbabel was rebuilding the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and encountering much opposition, the “word of the LORD” came to him saying, “Not by might [margin, army], nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Zech. 4:6) This is true of every aspect of our existence if we are endeavoring to serve the Lord and are looking to him for guidance and help. His Spirit, when enlisted on behalf of his people, can overcome every obstacle in order to accomplish his design in their lives.

In Matthew 12:28, Jesus indicates that his mighty miracles were accomplished by the Spirit of God. He shows that this will be true of all the blessings which will reach the people when the kingdom of God is functioning in the earth. Thus, again, we are assured that the promises of God concerning the healing of the sick and the raising of the dead are sure to be fulfilled. His Spirit will allow no defeat of the divine purpose. How thankful we are that such unlimited power is under the control of a just and loving God—a God who is also infinite in wisdom. Because of this, we know that his Spirit will never be used to crush, or injure, his people, but always to lift up and bless.

GOD'S SPIRIT EVERYWHERE

Some mistakenly speak of the 'omnipresence' of God, meaning that he is present everywhere at the same time. This tends to deny the personality of the Creator. However, God's Spirit, his power, is everywhere present, and all at the same time. There is no situation in the whole universe over which he does not have full control, or could not exercise his power. David wrote, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell [*sheol*, the death condition], behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."—Ps. 139:6-10

Here David is expressing his confidence that even in death—that is, in 'hell'—he would not be

beyond the reach of divine power. How strange the psalmist's statement would be if hell were a place of fire and torment; but, when we accept the scriptural fact that hell is the state, or condition, of death, this expression becomes rich with meaning. It is simply David's poetic way of affirming his belief in the promises of God to restore the dead to life. It means that God's Spirit will reach down into the death state and awaken the dead. This was confirmed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead by the almighty power of the Father. God did not leave Jesus' soul, his being, in "hell," in *sheol*.—Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27,28,32; Eph. 1:19,20

In his original perfection, man enjoyed the favor of God. The Lord caused his face to shine upon him. In the light of God's countenance man enjoyed life, for, as David wrote, in God's favor there is life. (Ps. 30:5) God provided a beautiful garden home for his human creation, instructing him to multiply and fill the earth, and subdue it—that is, make it all like the garden spot which God had provided. This provision of a home and of life was dependent, however, upon man's obedience to divine law, and he disobeyed. Then God hid his face from man, and his human creation became fearful and troubled. They began to die and to return to the dust. Through the sentence of death the breath of life was, so to speak, removed.

RESTORED FROM DEATH

This was not the end of human experience; it was not the final destiny which God had decreed for man. Through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, God made provision for man to be

restored from death. This was to be accomplished by divine power, the same power that gave man life in the first place. The psalmist explains it this way: "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth." (Ps. 104:30) The Spirit of God which 'moved upon the face of the waters'—that mighty power which brought into being every atom in the whole great universe, that gave life to every living thing—will, in God's due time, reach down into death and restore the dead to life.

Many have supposed that in order to experience life beyond the grave there must be no cessation of life, but this is false reasoning, which does not take into consideration the Spirit, or power, of God. The psalmist uses a good word to help us over our weakness of faith in the power of God. He said, 'Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created.' When the breath of life reverts to God who gave it, and the body returns to dust, the person has actually ceased, temporarily, to exist. He is as though he "had not been." (Eccles. 12:7; Job 10:18,19) Thus, what is actually accomplished by the Spirit of God in the resurrection is a re-creation of the individual.

In the original creation of Adam, while he was given a perfect brain, with perfect capacity to think, to reason, within the limits of the human mind, no thoughts were implanted in his brain. These he received later, being impressed upon his mind through his five senses. In the re-creation of the dead, described in the New Testament by the word 'resurrection,' the original bank of thoughts which the individual had built up during his former span of life will be implanted in the new brain,

and thus he will again be David, or Isaiah, or John Smith.

REMOVING THE CURSE

The psalmist further explains that when the Spirit of God is sent forth for the re-creation of the human race, the ‘face of the earth’ will also be renewed. When God sentenced our first parents to death, he said, “Cursed is the ground for thy sake.” (Gen. 3:17) During the thousand years of Christ’s reign, when the Spirit of God is restoring the dead to life, this curse upon the earth will also be removed. The Revelator declares that “there shall be no more curse.” (Rev. 22:1-3) Then the whole earth will become one vast paradise home in which the restored human race will have the glorious privilege of enjoying God’s favor forever.

How wonderful it is to realize that the Spirit of God which moved upon the face of the waters, and prepared the earth for human habitation, will again manifest itself in restoring the dead to life, and in restoring paradise. God’s Spirit will be exercised to provide blessings of health and life for all mankind. Then God’s human creatures will join in the song of praise first sung by David, “O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.”—Ps. 104:24 ■

“The works of the LORD are great, . . . The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.”

—Psalm 111:2,7,8

The Man Born Blind

“As Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?”

—John 9:1,2

WHEN JESUS AND HIS DIS- ciples were walking together, they happened to pass a blind man who was begging. They learned that he had been blind from birth. In our featured scripture, John has recorded the disciples' question concerning the reason for the man's blindness. The Master then proceeded to teach important lessons in connection with sin, and the divine permission of evil.

It is apparent that the man could not have sinned before he was born, or that the tragic loss of his sight had been connected with any specific sin that either he, or his parents, had committed. Many of those who were living at that time did not understand why God would permit evil. They generally believed that their present condition of life was connected with their conduct. Even some of our Lord's followers may also have thought that the

man's blindness had been caused by some particular sin he had committed. The Master, however, dispelled any further questioning. "Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."—John 9:3

THE PERMISSION OF EVIL

The blind man and both of his parents had inherited the penalty for sin as a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience to the laws of God. The calamities of sickness and disease, crime, strife, and war are part of that penalty, and ultimately culminate in death and the grave. However, under the long-promised administration of Christ's future kingdom, the penalty will be lifted, and all mankind will be given an opportunity to obey the laws of God. At that time, they will compare their present experiences under the reign of sin and death, and contrast them with the wonderful blessings that will be made available to them. All the families of the earth will be blessed by the Christ, and the arrangements of a new and better covenant.—Gen. 22:17,18

At that time, each person will be able to intelligently judge for himself whether or not he wants to serve God and righteousness, and obtain everlasting life on a perfected earth. They will come to know and appreciate our Lord who died for them. Eventually, God's glorious attributes of justice, wisdom, love, and power will be made known to all. An understanding of the permission of evil is an important part of the Heavenly Father's plan and purpose for his human creation, and their ultimate reconciliation.

The Apostle Paul has explained, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—I Cor. 15:21-28

The Scriptures clearly teach, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) "But 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."—Heb. 2:9

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Jesus had left his heavenly home and was made a perfect man to minister to, and die for, the poor groaning human creation. He had come to do mighty works in the name of his Heavenly Father. As recorded in John's gospel, he said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the

night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”—John 9:4,5

During the few short years that Jesus was upon this earth, he performed many miracles, and preached the Gospel of the kingdom. “Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.” (Matt. 4:23-25) “It came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him.”—Luke 8:1

Jesus understood that the divine purpose was that he lay down his perfect human life in obedient sacrifice for the sin-sick world. When establishing his authority, we read, “He [John] was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”—John 5:35-39

PREACHING THE GOSPEL

This commission to preach the Word of Truth is also applicable to those who become disciples of Christ during this present Gospel Age. In his prayer for his faithful followers, Jesus said, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” (John 17:17-20) After his resurrection from the grave, Jesus again said to the disciples, “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”—John 20:21

During this present Gospel Age, the Lord’s consecrated people do not have the same privileges of healing, or performing miracles, that were performed by him or the apostles; however, we do have the commission to preach the Gospel of the kingdom. It is our privilege to tell the glad tidings of joy and the wonderful blessings to be realized at that time. Satan will then be bound, and the opportunity will be available to all people for attaining everlasting life, health, peace, and joy. Mankind will return to full favor with God as part of his perfect family of human sons.

Our Lord proclaimed, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:14-16) The Apostle Paul encourages us by saying, “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”—I Thess. 5:5,6

THE BLIND MAN HEALED

When performing miracles, Jesus was illustrating the marvelous work that would be accomplished during his future kingdom. The giving of sight to the man who had been born blind is one of these miracles. From John’s gospel, we read, “When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”—John 9:6,7

Healing the man who had been blind since birth, pictures those whose eyes of understanding have been opened to an appreciation of the Truth and the true meaning of Jesus’ sacrificial death for the sin-sick human creation. His consecrated followers are being called from the world during this present nighttime of sin and death, and will share in blessing the poor and blind human creation during Christ’s future kingdom.

Jesus applied a mixture of the dust of the ground from which Adam had been formed, with his ‘spittle.’

“The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Gen. 2:7) With this clay, he anointed the eyes of the blind man, which enabled him to see.

Our Lord’s spittle represents the fruit of his lips, and the spirit of grace and truth that poured forth from his mouth. “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.” (Heb. 13:15) By anointing the blind man’s eyes with the mixture of clay, Jesus illustrated that the eyes of our understanding have been opened to a deeper and spiritual perception.

THE WATERS OF SILOAM

When Jesus commanded the man who was given sight to wash in the waters of Siloam, he also taught an important lesson of faith. In order for the healing to have its proper effect, trust and obedience were required. The blind man was told to manifest his faith by obediently bathing in the Pool of Siloam. Siloam represents ‘the sending forth’ or ‘the fountain’ of Truth and blessings. It was the means by which the blind man’s eyes were literally opened. Jesus is the ‘sent of God’ and the means whereby our eyes are opened to the life-giving water of Truth. “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” (John 3:17) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”—chap. 5:24

The many wonderful miracles Jesus performed during his earthly ministry portray the blessings which will be poured out without measure upon the human family by the Great Physician. The grand work of restitution will be administered by the Christ during the future kingdom of blessing. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness."—Zech. 13:1 ■

*I lift mine eyes; the cloud grows thin;
I see the blue above it:
And day by day this pathway smooths,
Since first I learned to love it.*

*The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
A fountain every springing;
All things are mine since I am his—
How can I keep from singing?*

—*Hymns of Dawn*

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 Eldina Kinion, Fort Collins, CO—December 7. Age, 87

Sister Yonnie Stafek, Salem, OR—December 10. Age, 96

Brother Oscar Domanico, Taguig, Philippine Islands—January 8. Age, 53

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

DAILY MANNA

DawnBible: Heavenly Manna [*Daily Heavenly Manna* book] is very useful to develop my day to day spiritual devotion. May the Almighty God give more Spirit to do your ministries. Thank you.—INDIA

MP3 DISCS

Dear Dawn: Thank you for sending the MP3 discs of General Convention 2010. It is great to listen to the different discourses during driving to work.

In the Netherlands, Bible Students are uncommon. For six years I read *The Dawn*. The subjects for the weekly studies are smart and coherent.

Thanks a lot for using the Bible as the only reference we have. The Heavenly Father gives free to all open ears, eyes, and hearts. Be blessed in the Lord.—NETHERLANDS

ADDED INSPIRATION

DawnBible: Your website is a great help for those who need added inspiration in writing their own text.

Likewise, it enriches our soul in finding real honest expression of Bible scriptures.

Thank you so much, and I wish you more power to carry on your mission of serving God's people. I love you.—CA

CHRISTIAN JOY

DawnBible: You guys do a great job! I've never felt so close to God and the Christian joy I received after receiving your excellent material.

Knowing how good God is and how loving he is toward the human being is awe inspiring! God bless you.—UNKNOWN

HUNGER AND THIRST

DawnBible: Hello, and God bless you. I wanted to say that this is a great source of materials for anybody who hungers and thirsts after righteousness.

Many times this site has blessed me in studying and materials, and I hope more people will drop by. They will never be sorry!—MS

TRUTH ABOUT HELL

Dear Dawn: Thank you for directing me to a brother in Idaho who studies the Bible.

He gave me much information regarding the truth about hell. I was so happy to hear that through this little booklet. [*The Truth about Hell*]

My fellow Christians say you will either go to heaven or to hell. How revealing this tract was to me. Please send me the four booklets as soon as possible.—ID

CONVERTED CHRISTIAN

DawnBible: My self converted Christian. Before that I belonged to the Muslim community. Now I know about the Lord Jesus, and I'm in the way of the Lord.—INDIA

FARMERS ALMANAC

DawnBible: My friend brought me this ad from *Farmers Almanac* he cut out.

We are very devout Christians and I intend to do my studying on your site from now on. We all need to know why God per-

mits evil. Very nice. Thank you!—CA

JESUS CHRIST

DawnBible: Thank you for this site. I have longed to find a site that explained the Bible and sayings of Jesus Christ our Savior. Thank you from my heart.—LA

EDUCATIONAL

DawnBible: The booklets you send are educational literature about Jehovah God and his Son Jesus Christ. Keep it up printing the books.—MO

REAL HOPE FOR MANKIND

DawnBible: I enjoy listening to the sermons on your site. I like listening to the real hope for mankind and also the hope for this beautiful earth. Jehovah's love can surely be seen here on earth.—AR

VERY INSPIRATIONAL

DawnBible: I find *The Dawn* very inspirational with deeper truth and revelation. It is also very simple to read and study.—GHANA

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

Sacramento, CA
February 18-20

K. Fernets

AUSTRALIA February 1-7
Melbourne
Canberra
Sydney
Sacramento, CA 18-20

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

G. Balko

Sacramento, CA
February 18-20

S. Jeuck

Sacramento, CA
February 18-20

M. J. Balko

Sacramento, CA
February 18-20

B. Keith

Sacramento, CA
February 18-20

C. Chandler

Sacramento, CA
February 18-20

H. Montague

Sacramento, CA
February 18-20

R. Goodman

Louisville, AL February 13

J. Panucci

Sacramento, CA
February 18-20

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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.

SACRAMENTO CONVENTION, February 18-20—

Holiday Inn Express, 2224 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821. Contact J. Freer, 8012 Vintage Way, Fair Oaks, CA 95628. Phone: (916) 879-4655

SOUTHWEST CONVENTION, February 26,27—

Boys & Girls Club of Scottsdale, 8250 E. Rose Lane, Scottsdale, AZ (same location as previous convention). Room reservations, contact G. Nicolosi. Phone: (602) 821-5599. Other information, contact C. Humphreys. Phone: (480) 226-9076

FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 5-7—

Magnuson Grand Hotel (same site as last year, hotel name changed), 230 West State Road 436, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714. Room reservations, call (407) 862-4455, and specify “Florida Bible Students” for special rate, until February 20, 2011. Other information, contact, M. Balko. Phone: (407) 339-7580

NEW YORK CONVENTION, March 27—

Double Tree Hotel, Mahwah, NJ. Contact D. Szybinski. Phone: (212) 998-2095

FRESNO PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April

1-3—Fresno Quality Inn, 4278 W. Ashlan Avenue, Fresno, CA 93722. Contact R. Evans. Phone: (559) 291-4710

COLUMBUS PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION,

April 2,3—Der Dutchman Restaurant, 445 S. Jefferson Avenue, Plain City, OH. Phone: (614) 873-3414. Contact E. Crisan, 1357 Clydesdale Avenue, Columbus, OH 43229. Phone: (614) 843-0655

GREATER NEW LONDON PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 3—Bayview Lodge, 32 Society Road, Niantic, CT. Contact V. Grillo, 154 Case Street, Norwich, CT 06360. Phone: (860) 823-7099

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 9,10—Quality Inn - Troy, 2537 Rochester Court, Troy, MI 48083. For reservations, phone: (248) 689-7500. Specify "Detroit Bible Students Ecclesia." Deadline for special rate is April 2. Other information, contact P. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

ALBUQUERQUE CONVENTION, April 22-24—Sheraton Albuquerque Airport Hotel, 2910 Yale Boulevard SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. Contact S. Thomasen. Phone: (505) 268-8170

BOISE CONVENTION, April 22-24—Owyhee Plaza Hotel, 1109 Main Street, Boise, ID. Contact D. Allers, 7558 W. Hathaway Lane, Boise, ID 83714 by April 1. Phone: (208) 375-6873

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, June 25-30—University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Johnstown, PA. Contact M. Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Phone: (310) 454-5248

NIGERIA GENERAL CONVENTION, August 19-21—Emmanuel College Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. Contact C. O. Egbu. Phone: 2348033339949 or 2348082146621

*"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us,
and his love is perfected in us."
—I John 4:12*

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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 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