

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

"THEN SHALL THE
RIGHTEOUS
SHINE FORTH
AS THE SUN
IN THE KINGDOM
OF THEIR FATHER."

Matthew 13:43

September 1968

Second-class postage paid at Rutherford, N. J. Published monthly by the Dawn Bible Students Association, Triangle, East Rutherford, N. J. 07073

SUBSCRIPTION RATE: English and foreign languages. \$1.00 a year. In sterling countries, five shillings.

BRITISH ADDRESS: 70, Station Road, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex, England.

AUSTRALIAN ADDRESS: Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew E 4, Victoria.

FRENCH ADDRESS: "Aurore," Association des Etudiants de la Bible "AURORE" B.P. 521-Mulhouse (68) France.

GREEK ADDRESS: He Haravgi (The Dawn) Odos K. Eslin 4 Ampelokipoi T.T. 602. Athens, Greece.

DANISH ADDRESS: Daggy Forlaget, Hyldebaervej 13, Copenhagen F, Denmark.

GERMAN ADDRESS: Tagesanbruch Bibelstudien-Vereinigung, 78 Freiburg i Br., Sachsenstrasse 12, Germany.

ITALIAN ADDRESS: Pubblicazione mensile della Associazione Studenti della Bibbia "Aurora," Caselle Postale 447 00100 Roma, Italy.

NEW ZEALAND ADDRESS: P. O. Box 1358. C. P. O. Auckland.

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God's Overruling in Human Affairs

"The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies. I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once."—Isaiah 42:13, 14

PRESIDENT Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "This generation has a rendezvous with destiny." We have no way of knowing what President Roosevelt had in mind in making this statement but he could very well have meant that world conditions had gone beyond man's ability to control; and in this he would have been right.

The Scriptures explain the "destiny" now being worked out with the nations in this time in which we live as "the day of the Lord." It is not the Lord's day in the sense that everything in the world is already brought into harmony with his laws of righteousness. Nothing could be further from the truth. But we believe there is now taking place a divine intervention in the affairs of men for the purpose of preparing the people for the blessings of a new social order which the Lord will establish in his due time.

God's intervention in human affairs today is manifested particularly in the overthrow of man's selfish social order, which is based largely on sin and selfishness. It is an expression of divine indignation against all those forces of unrighteousness which through the ages have contributed

to human unhappiness. The Prophet Isaiah summed it up thus: "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter."—Isa. 34:1, 2

This prophecy speaks of the destruction of the armies of earth as already having been accomplished, but he is here speaking of the ultimate purpose of God in displaying his wrath against Satan's social order, rather than recording the history of events already accomplished. That divine purpose is to prepare the way for Messiah's kingdom, and this necessitates the setting aside of sinful and selfish human arrangements which would interfere with the new kingdom.

Man's Unsolved Problems

One of the peculiarities of the "day of the Lord" in which we live is the utter failure of man to solve the problems of human selfishness. In every country on earth today there are unsolved problems. In many instances the problems of one nation are vitally related to the problems of another nation—perhaps of all the other nations. The world-wide political scene is such, and the pressures so great that an international holocaust might well be kindled almost any time.

We have not only international tensions, but chaos and stress within nations. There are race riots and student riots. There are demonstrations for peace in the midst of war. The elements of unlawlessness are on the increase everywhere. Meanwhile the rulers promise better things but seem unable to do much to fulfil their promises. The war on poverty lags while the war on humans escalates. While even in the affluent United States millions are under-

nourished, and the hunger even greater in many other countries, the "great society" in which there will be plenty for all seems ever to remain remote.

Meanwhile there is increasing unbelief in God. The question is asked over and over again as to what God is doing about all the suffering there is in the world; and when no answer is forthcoming unbelief increases, many concluding that if there ever were a God he is now dead. But the great God of the universe knows all about this situation. He knew that sin, which had its beginning in Eden, would bring mankind to this very dilemma. He knew that the time would come when man's "wisdom" would be unable to solve the problems created by his own selfishness and foolishness.

God's Way

Throughout the ages various ones, in their foolishness, have challenged God to prove his existence by "striking them dead." These have endeavored to bring God down to their own level, and have him deal with them as they wish. Of course God has ignored these conceited members of his human creation, and has gone steadily forward with his own plans for revealing himself to the sin-cursed and dying race. Think of that great act of love represented in the gift of his only begotten Son to be the Redeemer and Savior of the world. (John 3:16) How little this has been comprehended as yet by the darkened minds and hearts of God's fallen human creatures.

Since Pentecost God's Holy Spirit, or power, has been working in the hearts and lives of the faithful followers of the Master, preparing them to live and reign with Jesus in that kingdom of promise; that kingdom which will solve all human problems and give health, peace, and everlasting life to all who obey its laws. But this also has been unknown by an unbelieving world.

Now there is in progress the clearing away of Satan's social order. It is this that is being talked about in our text: "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war." How does the Lord stir up jealousy? One of the outstanding developments in this day of the Lord, this time of his preparation for the kingdom, is the great increase of knowledge of our day. (Dan. 12:4) This increase of knowledge has made possible wonderful communication between nations and races so that the poor, underprivileged people of earth have become aware of the affluence of the rich nations, and now they want to share in this abundance.

Thus has jealousy been stirred up among nations simply by the prophetic increase of knowledge. Knowledge in itself is good, but in this instance it is resulting in what is spoken of in Daniel's prophecy as "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1) Some years ago the various nations of earth were classified by one commentator as the "have" and the "have not" nations. The "have" nations are desperately striving to maintain their affluent standing among the family of nations, while the "have nots" are seeking to bring about a more equal distribution of the bounties of earth. This is leading to strife, a strife which eventually will lead to the complete dissolution of Satan's social order.

Nor is this jealousy limited to international relationships, for we know that within nations there are similar inequalities which are also leading to strife. The poor want to share in the abundance of the rich, and when they are denied this opportunity there are strikes, marches, riots, and demonstrations. Thus the social structures within nations and among nations are being gradually weakened, and will give place ultimately to the authority and power of earth's new King, Christ Jesus.

Our text continues, "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself." (vs. 14) From many quarters the question is raised as to what God is doing about all the suffering in the world today. Here the Lord informs us that he has remained silent up till now, that he has refrained himself from interfering in human affairs. Now the Lord is no longer refraining from using his power among his fallen human creatures, for the time is near for the full establishment of the long-promised messianic kingdom, and this requires the setting aside of all other authority and power in the earth.

As our text points out, when God breaks his silence and speaks to the nations it is not with a message of peace—not to start with, that is—but as a man of war. His strategy is exactly that which we see in operation throughout the earth today—jealousy has been stirred up among and within the nations. But those not acquainted with the plan of God, and with the Bible prophecies pertaining to our day, do not recognize the turmoil in the world as the voice of God. The vast majority have concluded that God is not interested in what is occurring throughout the earth today. Others go so far as to say that God is dead. Millions deny that a living and loving and powerful God ever existed.

But God is not concerned at the moment with the people's reaction to his preparatory work for the messianic kingdom. The vast majority of humanity have had little faith in his existence in any case, and it is not to be expected that their viewpoint will change when he speaks to the world in the thunderous tones of war, revolution, and anarchy.

However, those who are acquainted with the prophecies of the Bible know that when the time came for the Lord to break his silence the first message the world would receive from him would not be pleasant to hear. Our text declares that he would "cry like a travailing woman." In a prophecy

written by Paul the period in which this "time of trouble" develops is described as "the day of the Lord." We quote: "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." —I Thess. 5:1-4

Here we have Paul's confirmation that "the day of the Lord," the day in which the Lord no longer is "still," but stirs up jealousy among the nations and cries "like a travailing woman," is indeed a time of destruction. It is the time in which Satan's social order is destroyed, and the pattern of destruction is described as being like "travail upon a woman with child." This is in spasms. The first of these great spasms of "travail" came upon the world in 1914. Men called it a World War, and it was just that. What human wisdom did not realize was that God was speaking. Men thought that after the war the world could be restored to "normal." But that was not to be, for God had decreed otherwise.

There was a short period of relative prosperity, then came the great financial crash which further weakened the fabric of Satan's social order. Then the Second World War. Then the Korean War. And since then there have been brush fire wars and revolutions almost everywhere, with the Viet Nam struggle heading the list. All of these are, true to Paul's prophecy, the spasms of travail—the birth pangs, so to speak, of a new social order which will be the kingdom of Christ.

The Objective of God's Zeal

Zephaniah 3:8 is another prophecy of interest in this

connection. We quote: "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the [symbolic] earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy [Hebrew, "zeal"]." While the world has little or no faith in God, his own people are here encouraged to "wait" on him, and they are assured that in due time he would "rise up to the prey"; that is, he would interfere in the affairs of sinful man, and the first visible evidence of this would be the "devouring" of the symbolic earth with the "fire" of his zeal.

God's zeal in the accomplishment of his plan of deliverance of the world from sin and death has been in evidence in many ways to those who have been blessed with "eyes to see." God's zeal raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus had died to redeem the world from sin and death, and doubtless Satan thought he had gained a great victory over the Creator. God's zeal has operated to prepare the followers of Jesus to live and reign with him in his kingdom. Now we see God's zeal operating to destroy Satan's empire, and soon his zeal will accomplish the full establishment of the messianic kingdom.

We are told that with Satan's world destroyed by God's zeal, the Lord will turn to the people a pure language, or message of truth, and that as a result of this they will call upon the name of the Lord and serve him with one consent. (Zeph. 3:9) Then the earth will be filled with a knowledge of the Lord. (Isa. 11:9) This assurance of peace and good will on the earth indicates the ultimate result of increasing knowledge, when that knowledge includes an understanding of God and of his plan. What a glorious prospect! And how wonderful to be assured in God's Word that all who have suffered and died will be awakened from death to enjoy those blessings!

THE BIBLE ANSWERS TV SCHEDULE

ALABAMA

Birmingham WBRC-TV Channel 6
Saturdays, 5:30 a.m.
Decatur WMSL-TV Channel 23
Saturdays, (Time to be announced.)
Florence WOWL-TV Channel 15
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

ALASKA

Anchorage KHAR-TV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

ARIZONA

Phoenix KTAR-TV Channel 12
Fridays, 6:00 a.m.

CALIFORNIA

Clovis KAIL-TV Channel 53
Sundays, 8:00 p.m.
Hollywood KXLA-TV Channel 40
Sundays, 2:00 p.m.
Fresno KMJ-TV Channel 24
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.
Mt. Wilson KMTW-TV Channel 52
Sundays, 8:30 p.m.
Los Angeles KTTV Channel 11
Sundays, 7:00 a.m.
Los Angeles KWHY-TV Channel 22
Saturdays, 6:00 p.m.
San Jose KNTV-TV Channel 11
Sundays, 11:30 a.m.
Visalia KICU-TV Channel 43
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

CONNECTICUT

Hartford WHCT-TV Channel 18
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)
Waterbury WATR-TV Channel 20
Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

FLORIDA

Fort Pierce WTVX-TV Channel 34
(Day and time to be announced.)

GEORGIA

West Point CATV-TV
Wednesdays, (Time to be announced.)

HAWAII

Honolulu KHON Sundays, 7:00 a.m.
Wailuku KALL Sundays, 7:00 a.m.
Hilo KHAW Sundays, 7:00 a.m.

INDIANA

Terre Haute WTHI-TV Channel 10
Alternate Sundays, 11:00 a.m.
South Bend WSJV-TV Channel 28
Sundays, 12 noon

MASSACHUSETTS

Springfield WHYN-TV Channel 40
Sundays, 8:30 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Alexandria KCMT-TV Channel 7
Alternate Sundays, 7:30 a.m.
Hackensack KNMT-TV Channel 12
Every Third Sunday, 8:00 a.m.
Walker KNMT-TV Channel 12
Every Third Sunday, 8:00 a.m.

MISSISSIPPI

Columbus WCBI-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 7:30 a.m.

NEBRASKA

Omaha WOW-TV Channel 6
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

NEVADA

Reno KTVN-TV Channel 2
Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

NEW MEXICO

Farmington CATV-TV
Sundays, 8:30 p.m.

NEW YORK

Binghamton WNBF-TV Channel 12
Sundays, 8:00 a.m.
Buffalo WKBW-TV Channel 7
Sundays, 8:00 a.m.

OHIO

Cambridge WHIZ-TV Channel 80
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.
Cincinnati WCPO-TV Channel 9
Thursdays, 1:30 a.m.

TV BROADCAST

Coshocton WHIZ-TV Channel 71
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

Kettering WKTR-TV Channel 16
Sundays, 8:30 a.m.

Zanesville WHIZ-TV Channel 18
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

PENNSYLVANIA

Lebanon WLYH-TV Channel 15
Sundays, 10:30 a.m.

Wilkes Barre WBRE-TV Channel 28
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

SOUTH CAROLINA

Anderson WAIM-TV Channel 40
Mondays, (Time to be announced.)

SOUTH DAKOTA

Aberdeen KXAB-TV Channel 9
Sundays, 10:30 a.m.

TEXAS

Fort Worth KFWT-TV
Sundays, 7:30 p.m.

San Antonio KWEX-TV
Sundays, 3:15 p.m.

UTAH

Salt Lake City KUTV Channel 2
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

VIRGINIA

Roanoke WRFT-TV
Sundays, 12:00 p.m.

WASHINGTON

Bremerton KBTW
Sundays, 5:00 p.m.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston WCHS-TV Channel 8
Mon.-Fri., 6:30 a.m.

Fairmont WDTV
Sundays, 1:00 p.m.

Huntington WHTN-TV Channel 13
Mondays, 7:30 a.m.

Oak Hill WOAY-TV Channel 4
Fridays, (Time to be announced.)

Weston WDTV-TV Channel 5
Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

WISCONSIN

Eau Claire WEAU-TV Channel 13
Sundays, 7:30 a.m.

BERMUDA

Hamilton ZFB-TV
Sundays, 11:00 p.m.

SPANISH RADIO BROADCASTS

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Radio Quisqueya
9.505 mc, 6.090 mc, 3.215 mc.
Sundays, 6:15 p.m.

PHILIPPINES

Zamboanga City DXJW 9:45 p.m.

SURINAM

Paramaribo 620 kc.
Tuesdays, 8:15 p.m.

TEXAS

San Antonio KUKA 1250 8:00 a.m.

URUGUAY

Montevideo Radio El Espectador
810 kc. Fridays, 2:15 p.m.

"Frank and Ernest" BROADCAST SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

ALABAMA

Decatur WMSL 1400 11:15 a.m.
Haleyville WJBB 1230 12:00 p.m.
Mobile WGOK 900 10:45 a.m.

ARIZONA

Phoenix KMEO 740 8:30 a.m.

ARKANSAS

Jonesboro KBTM 1230 12:05 p.m.

CALIFORNIA

Chico KPAY 1060 10:35 a.m.
El Centro KICO 1490 10:30 a.m.
Los Angeles KBIG 740 10:00 a.m.
Redding KVCV 600 7:45 a.m.
Sacramento KGMS 1380 8:30 a.m.
San Diego XERB 1090 9:45 a.m.
San Francisco KSAY 1010 10:00 a.m.

COLORADO

Fort Collins KZIX 600 10:00 a.m.

DELAWARE

Wilmington WTUX 1290 10:15 a.m.

FLORIDA

Orlando WTLN 1520 9:45 a.m.
Tampa WFLA 970 9:30 a.m.

IDAHO

Lewiston KRLC 1350 9:35 a.m.
Sandpoint KSPT 1400 10:15 a.m.

ILLINOIS

Chicago WEAU 1330 10:00 a.m.
WEAU(fm) 105 Mondays, 12:30 a.m.
La Salle WLPO 1220 9:45 a.m.
Rockford WRRR 1330 8:30 a.m.
West Frankfort WFRX 1300 9:15 a.m.

INDIANA

Gory-Hammond WJOB 1230 8:30 a.m.
Indianapolis WIBC 1070 10:30 a.m.
Muncie WLBC 1340 8:45 a.m.

IOWA

Clinton KROS 1340 7:15 p.m.

KANSAS

Goodland KLOE 730 7:45 a.m.

KENTUCKY

Bowling Green WLBJ 1410 12:05 p.m.
Louisville WAVE 970 8:15 a.m.
Newport WNOP 740 9:10 a.m.
Winchester WWKY 1380 10:30 a.m.

MAINE

Bangor WABI 910 10:30 a.m.

MARYLAND

Ocean City WETT 1590 12:05 p.m.

MASSACHUSETTS

Orange WCAT 1390 9:15 a.m.

MICHIGAN

Detroit WJBK 1500 9:45 a.m.
Detroit WLDM(fm) 95.5 9:00 a.m.
Saginaw WSGW 790 10:30 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis KQRS 1440 12:30 p.m.

MISSISSIPPI

Biloxi WLOX 1490 12:00 p.m.
Waynesboro WABO 990 2:00 p.m.

MISSOURI

Farmington KREI 800 9:00 a.m.
Kansas City KCMO 810 9:40 a.m.
St. Louis KWK 1380 8:00 a.m.

MONTANA

Baker KFLN 960 8:00 a.m.
Great Falls KFBB 1310 9:15 a.m.
Miles City KATL 1340 9:15 a.m.

NEBRASKA

Grand Island KRGI 1430 10:05 a.m.

NEW JERSEY

Newark WJRZ 970 8:15 a.m.

NEW MEXICO

Silver city KSIL 1340 10:05 a.m.

NEW YORK

Albany WEEE 1300 9:00 a.m.
Buffalo-Niagara Falls
Kingston WHLD 1270 12:00 noon
New York WBZ 1550 9:45 a.m.
New York WJRZ 970 8:15 a.m.

there is No Peace"

LESSON FOR SEPTEMBER 1

Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall

MEMORY VERSE: "Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem."—Nehemiah 2:20

NEHEMIAH 2:17, 18; 4:15-20; 6:1, 3, 15, 16

NEHEMIAH, an ardent Jew, probably of the tribe of Judah, was at Shushan, the winter residence of the kings of Persia, when he dedicated himself to the task of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem. He held high office as the cupbearer of King Artaxerxes. In the twentieth year of the king's reign certain Jews, one of whom was a near kinsman of Nehemiah's, arrived from Jerusalem and gave Nehemiah a deplorable account of the state of Jerusalem, and of the residents in Judea.

Nehemiah immediately conceived the idea of going to Jerusalem to better the condition of his people. In due time an opportunity presented itself to make his desire known to the king, and he obtained the king's consent to his mission. The king not only gave his consent for Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem, but provided him with a troop of cavalry, and letters to the

various satraps of the provinces through which he would have to pass. In addition, a letter was given him to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, to supply him with timber.

On reaching Jerusalem Nehemiah's great work was rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem, which had lain in a state of ruin since before the beginning of the seventy years' captivity in Babylon. After arriving at Jerusalem, and perhaps to confirm the report which had been brought to him in Persia, Nehemiah made a thorough inspection of the broken-down walls of the city. (Neh. 2:12-16) Up to this point he had not told anyone of the purpose of his being in Jerusalem.

This personal inspection convinced him of the need, and probably also helped him to make his plan of procedure in the rebuilding work. Then he announced to the people, "Ye see the distress that we are in,

how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach."—Neh. 2:17

Then Nehemiah told the people of the overruling providences of God in connection with his coming to Jerusalem, and of the fact that the king had given his consent and help. The people said, "Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work."

But as is so often the case, when the Lord's people set out upon some "good work," there were certain enemies on hand to oppose. This time it was Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian. These tried to discourage Nehemiah from undertaking the task, implying that to do so would be rebellion against the king. Nehemiah's reply to these is found in our memory verse. Nehemiah had great faith in the overruling providences of his God.

Nehemiah was well aware of the dangers involved in this undertaking, and in chapter 4:15-20 we are given the details of the manner in which he protected the builders against these dangers. Apparently no serious incidents occurred during the work of rebuilding, and finally the walls were completed with

the exception of hanging the gates.

Then Sanballat and his friends, realizing that they had failed to prevent the rebuilding of the wall, sought to make an alliance with Nehemiah. But Nehemiah sensed that they were not sincere in this: "They thought to do me mischief." He replied to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"—Neh. 6:3

The work was completed in fifty-two days. The enemies of the Jews were much cast down over this achievement, "for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God." Here we have a typical situation. One would think that there would be great rejoicing in the fact that God had wrought this work, but not so. However, a witness was given by Nehemiah and his co-workers concerning the power and glory of God, and that, too, was a good accomplishment.

QUESTIONS

Who was Nehemiah, and what was his position in the kingdom of Persia?

Who were the enemies of the Jews who sought to prevent the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem?

What measures did Nehemiah take to prevent their enemies from hindering the work?

Confession and Covenant

MEMORY VERSE: "Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."—Ezra 7:10

NEHEMIAH 8:1, 8; 9:32-38

OUR memory verse indicates that Ezra was a devoted servant of God and that he had dedicated himself to do God's will as expressed at that time through the Law which had been given to Israel at Mt Sinai. He "prepared his heart" not only to know and do God's will himself but also "to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."

Ezra's influence among the returned exiles had been a wholesome one. Under his leading they had been brought to realize the need of maintaining separateness from the non-Jewish people of the land. They had also repented of their sins against the law of God. And now, in the opening verse of this lesson, we find the people gathered together and asking "Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which

the Lord had commanded to Israel" that it might be read to them.

Ezra readily acceded to this request and brought the book of the Law "before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding. . . . And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law."—ch. 8:2, 3

Verse 8 reads, "So they read in the book of the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." An important truth is here set forth; namely, that the meaning of the Lord's Word needs to be explained in order for his people to understand and appreciate it.

We may think of the entire Bible as the inspired Word of God—both the Old and New Testaments. The ancient prophets, our Lord Jesus, and the apostles have contributed in the Lord's providence to provide us with this inspired Book. However, Paul explains that the Lord has also provided for his church of the Christian era, pastors, teachers, and evangelists for the work of the ministry. These are not inspired servants, but they are used by the Lord to give "the sense" of what has been written.

Nehemiah 9:32-38 is the conclusion of a prayer in which the Israelites acknowledge their sins, and thank God for his mercy in preserving them throughout all the years of their national existence. According to the strict demands of the Law, the Israelites were seldom in a position in which they could expect much in the way of blessing from the Lord. However, despite the fact that God had punished them in various ways, he had not destroyed them as a nation, but had been merciful to them; and he still continued to be.

God had not been unjust in the punishments which he had brought upon Israel, for their kings, princes, and priests had not kept the Law as they should have done. God had blessed the Israelites with a "large and fat

land" but they had not been faithful to him, and had been taken out of that land to serve as exiles in Babylon for seventy years.

Now they were back in their land—at least a part of them were—but still they did not have their freedom. "Behold, we are servants this day," they said, in the land which God gave to their fathers. The land was yielding much increase, but the benefit was going to the kings "whom Thou hast set over us because of our sins," the people said.

"Also," they continued, "they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress." (ch. 9:36-38) Because of this they then made a "sure covenant" with the Lord, but they were not given their freedom. Israel continued to be a subject people, and finally, in A.D. 70 were dispersed to the far corners of the earth. Israel regained her freedom in 1948.

QUESTIONS

Was Ezra an appreciated leader in Israel?

Do the Lord's people need help in understanding the Bible?

When did Israel finally regain her freedom?

Esther Saves Her People

MEMORY VERSE: "For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"—Esther 4:14

ESTHER 4:8, 13-16; 7:1-7

WHEN King Cyrus issued his proclamation granting liberty to the captive Israelites to return to their own land, some accepted the opportunity with gladness. Among these were Ezra and Nehemiah, who served the Lord and their people so faithfully in connection with the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, and the wall of the city. But large numbers did not return, but remained in the land of their captivity. Among these was Mordecai, the uncle of Esther of our present lesson.

These lived in Shushan of Persia, which was a part of the Medo-Persian Empire that succeeded Babylon as a world power. Shusan was where the Persian king's principal residence was located. Ahasuerus was the king at the time of our lesson, and one called Haman was prime minister. Haman dis-

liked Mordecai and, frustrated in his effort to bring injury to him, succeeded in getting a decree from the king calling for the slaughter of all the Jews in the realm beginning with a certain date. The decrees of the Medes and Persians were irrevocable, so the Jewish people were in a most precarious position.

Under the wise guidance of Mordecai, and in the providence of God, his niece, Esther, was named queen. When the decree for the massacre of all the Jews in the empire became known, it was on Mordecai's earnest advice that Esther undertook the perilous task of interceding with the king on their behalf. The decree of slaughter was the direct result of Mordecai's refusal to bow down before Haman, the prime minister.

Mordecai was shown a copy of the decree, and he sent word

to Esther in the palace charging her "that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people."

This was a dangerous procedure for Esther, for the king had not shown her any special consideration for thirty days, so she hesitated. But Mordecai pressed his request, pointing out to Esther that if she did not use this opportunity to save her people she and her household would surely perish. He ended his plea with the question, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Esther then consented, stating that she would do the best she could. She was resigned to accept any eventuality, but was brave, and said, "So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."

But Esther did not perish. She found favor in the king's sight. He knew that she desired a favor, and asked her to make her request known. Her first request was that he attend a banquet she had prepared. The king and Haman came to the banquet, and then the king asked Esther to present her real request. She invited them to another banquet the following day when she made request for

her life and that of her people. Esther spoke of her people having been sold for slaughter by the decree which Haman had requested. Until then, the king did not know that his beautiful queen was one of the Jewish people who might well be slain under his decree.

Upon the king's request Esther identified Haman as the one responsible for the horrible situation in which the king found himself. This information, and the indiscretion of Haman in his pleading with Esther for mercy, brought forth the king's command that he be hanged on the gallows Haman had prepared for Mordecai. The king could not lawfully rescind his decree, but he issued another which granted permission for the Jews to arm and defend themselves when the time came. Thus they were saved from slaughter.

In this we have a general lesson of the Lord's overruling providences in the lives of his people. We learn from it that severe trials often result in rich blessings.

QUESTIONS

Name the principal persons involved in this lesson, and the parts they played.

What general lessons may we derive from the story in the Book of Esther?

Mission to the Nation

MEMORY VERSE: "And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil."—Jonah 4:2

JONAH 3:1-5, 10; 4:1-4, 11

THE story of Jonah and the "great fish" which swallowed him is known by many. Jesus referred to it, and made a very meaningful application of it. The scribes and Pharisees were pressing Jesus to give them a sign to prove that he was the Messiah. Jesus said that no sign would be given them except "the sign of the prophet Jonas," or Jonah.

Jesus explained further: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matt. 12:39, 40) Here Jesus indicates that Jonah's "burial" in the stomach of the great fish, and his subsequent escape, represented his own death and resurrection. What greater sign could the people of Jesus' day have of his messiahship than

the fact that although he had been put to death, he was raised from the dead by the power of his Heavenly Father!

Telling of his own experience in the stomach of the fish, Jonah says that he prayed to the Lord "out of the belly of hell." (Jon. 2:2) The Hebrew word here translated "hell" is *sheol*. It is the only Hebrew word in the Old Testament that is translated hell. It means the state of death. So far as Jonah was concerned he was as good as dead, had not the Lord delivered him.

When Jonah was first commissioned to go to Nineveh, he fled and embarked on a ship going to Tarshish. It was this attempt to flee from the service of the Lord which led to his being swallowed by the great fish.

Subsequently "the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the

second time," bidding him to go to Nineveh, and pronounce judgment upon the city. This time Jonah obeyed, and when he delivered his message to the people of that great city they repented, including their king. Then "God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." In Jeremiah's prophecy (ch. 18: vss. 6-10) the Lord informs us that in situations of this kind he would repent.

In our memory verse Jonah expresses his belief in the fact that the Lord would repent, and he did not want to be in the position of having declared what the Lord would do and then be overruled. He gives this as his reason for having attempted to go to Tarshish instead of Nineveh when the Lord had first asked him to go.

Doubtless Jonah was basically loyal to the Lord, but seemingly he did not possess a generous, understanding heart. He was one who apparently could not bear to be overruled, even by the Lord. Imagine one's making the effort that Jonah did to avoid obedience to the Lord's command simply because he knew that the Lord was gracious, and would probably repent of his intention to destroy Nineveh!

A man with a larger heart would have rejoiced under such

circumstances, for he would see in this experience an exemplification of the goodness and love of his God, and would welcome the opportunity of presenting the truth concerning his God to the repentant Ninevites. But not Jonah. He would rather die in his shame at being overruled, even though it was by the graciousness of the God of Israel whom he worshipped.

But the Lord was in turn gracious to Jonah, and permitted a plant to grow up to shield him from the sun. The Lord asked Jonah, "Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern their right hand and their left hand?"

We are glad to know that eventually, during the messianic kingdom, the whole world will learn of God's goodness. Some who have presented him as a god of torment will temporarily be shamed, but eventually these also will rejoice.

QUESTIONS

What is the "sign" of Jonah referred to by Jesus?

In what sense was Jonah in "the belly of hell"?

What reason did Jonah give for disobeying the Lord when he was first asked to go to Nineveh?

Living in Hope

MEMORY VERSE: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."—Isaiah 65:17

ISAIAH 61:1, 2, 8-11; Luke 2:25, 26

WHEN Jesus began his preaching, in the synagogue at Nazareth, he declared that the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1, 2 was being fulfilled through him. (Luke 4:18, 19) Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit, or power of God, and thus authorized by his Heavenly Father to proclaim the glorious Gospel of the kingdom, and also to implement the promises of God pertaining to the blessing of all the families of the earth.

The "good tidings" referred to in the prophecy of Isaiah are the same as those announced by the angel when Jesus was born—good tidings of salvation, based upon the fact that a Savior was born, even Christ, the Messiah of promise. (Luke 2:10, 11) These good tidings are intended for the "meek"; indeed, the proud and arrogant

pay no heed to them. Jesus was faithful in ministering to those who, in meekness and humility, sought comfort and help from him.

Jesus also proclaimed "liberty to the captives." By nature all of Adam's posterity are slaves of sin, being held captive by this cruel taskmaster. But Jesus offered freedom from sin. Through faith in his blood and dedication to the Lord's will, one becomes a free man in Christ.

Jesus also proclaimed "the opening of the prison to them that are bound." This refers to the resurrection of the dead, for the Bible likens the dead to captives. Jesus announced that the time would come when all in the graves would come forth. (John 5:28, 29) Not only so, but he demonstrated that this would be possible by awakening Lazarus and others from the sleep of death.

"The acceptable year of the Lord" mentioned in verse 2 is a reference to the Christian era, when believers are invited to follow Jesus into sacrificial death. Paul refers to this as a "living sacrifice," which, he said, would be acceptable to the Lord.

Jesus did not quote that section of verse 2 which speaks of "the day of vengeance of our God." This is a reference to the great time of trouble which would come upon the world at this end of the age, and it was not the time to announce it in Jesus' day. However, this commission of the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel of the kingdom also applies to his dedicated followers, and it is our privilege today to proclaim the day of vengeance, for that great time of trouble is already upon us.—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21, 22

One of the original promises of God to bless mankind was given to Abraham. In this promise the Messiah is referred to as a "Seed" which would bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 12:3; 18:18) In the New Testament we are told that Jesus and his faithful followers are this "Seed" of blessing. (Gal. 3:8, 16, 27-29) Through these, the knowledge of God's glory will fill the earth.

These will be the rulers in the messianic kingdom. (Rev.

20:6) All mankind will be the subjects; and the natural descendants of Abraham will be the first in line of the living generation to receive those blessings. It is for this reason that they are now being assembled in Palestine.

The "robe of righteousness" is the merit of Christ's sacrifice, provided for all who are now laying down their lives in God's service. By wearing this "robe" their imperfect works are acceptable to God.

The new heavens and new earth mentioned in our memory verse are not a new universe. These terms are used to symbolize the spiritual and earthly phases of the messianic kingdom. Peter refers to this promise in his second epistle, chapter 3, verse 13. The Apostle John sees them in vision, and is assured that when they are established there will be no more death.—Rev. 21:1-4

QUESTIONS

How do we know that Isaiah 61:1, 2 applies to the Lord's people of the present age?

What is the "robe of righteousness" referred to in Isaiah 61:10?

What are the new heavens and new earth of Isaiah 65:17?

ARCHEOLOGY PROVES THE BIBLE

Chapter 2

The Testimony of Babylonian Cities

THE lands of Shinar and Asshur referred to in the Bible comprised the general area known as Mesopotamia, meaning "the land between the rivers." This ancient country is now called Iraq, although a small section of its northern point is in Turkey. In earlier times the southern section of the country was known as Babylonia, and the northern area as Assyria. Still earlier, the southern plain was called Sumer, and the northerly, Accad. The area is approximately 600 miles long and 250 miles broad. It is, generally speaking, a flat land through which flow two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates.

This area has long been considered by scholars as the cradle of the human race, and it is here that certain important cities mentioned in the Bible were located. Ur is one of these. To believers in the Bible the city of Ur is important because the patriarch Abraham sojourned there. Genesis 11:31 reads, "And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there."

The reason Abram, or Abraham, left Ur to go to Canaan is stated in the first three verses of Genesis 12: "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy father's house, unto a land [Canaan] that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and

I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." In the New Testament the Apostle Paul explains that this promise which God made to Abram was in reality a statement of the Gospel of Christ: God "preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."—Gal. 3:8

For a long time higher critics of the Bible insisted that no such person as Abraham ever lived; that the stories told in the Bible about him were merely allegories, or fairy tales, including the account of his leaving the city of Ur. No such city as Ur ever existed, these critics claimed. The claims of these unbelieving critics destroyed the faith of many in the validity of the Holy Scriptures. Since God's promise to Abraham was in reality an early statement of the Gospel, the Gospel would have no real foundation in fact if God's reported dealings with and promises to Abraham are merely allegories.

The Discovery of Ur

In this period of the Christian age when frontal assaults are being made on the Bible by higher critics and others, it is most reassuring to learn that archeologists are discovering one after another of the ancient landmarks mentioned in the sacred Word, and among them, the city of Ur. Today Ur is a railway station 120 miles north of Basra, near the Persian Gulf, and one of the many stops on the Baghdad railway. When the passengers alight from the train at this stop they do not, of course, see the ancient city of Ur. What they do see is a red mound, and it is this mound that led the archeologists to the discovery of the city of Ur nearby.

This mound was known to the Arabs as "Tell al Muqayyar." In ancient times when cities were destroyed by enemies or by storms they would be rebuilt upon their

ruins. As this process continued the cities would become elevated. Ultimately they would be abandoned, and the whole elevation would in time be covered with sand or earth. The word "tell" was used to denote the difference between these more or less artificially made elevations and the natural hills.

Arriving at Tell al Muqayyar in 1923 was a group of archeologists from the British Museum and the University of Pennsylvania. In charge of the expedition was Sir Charles Leonard Woolley. Back about the middle of the nineteenth century an archeologist named Taylor, arriving at Tell al Muqayyar, was impressed by the height of the great mound and started his men working from its sides and top. It turned out that he had discovered a great religious tower and sanctuary which, as was later learned, contained a shrine for the moon god of Ur.

However, great strides had been made in the science of archeology from the time Taylor's men picked away at Tell al Muqayyar until Woolley and his expedition arrived at the same location in 1923. Woolley's trained eye noted the smaller mounds that arose all around him and it was these that he decided to investigate, rather than the large mound. Werner Keller wrote, "Similar mounds exist in great numbers, large and small in the Middle East, on the banks of the great rivers, in the midst of fertile plains, by the wayside on the routes followed by caravans from time immemorial. No one has yet been able to count them. We find them from the delta of the Euphrates and Tigris on the Persian Gulf to the highlands of Asia Minor where the river Halys tumbles into the Black Sea, on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, in the valleys of Lebanon, on the Orontes in Syria, and in Palestine by the Jordan.

"These little eminences are great quarries for archeological finds, eagerly sought and often inexhaustible. They are not formed by the hand of Nature but are artificially

created, piled high with the legacy of countless generations that came before; vast masses of rubble and rubbish from a bygone age that have accumulated from the remains of huts and houses, town walls, temples, and palaces.”—“The Bible as History,” pp. 14, 15

Beginning in 1923 the Anglo-American Archeological Expedition under Woolley worked for three winters excavating the mounds surrounding Tell al Muqayyar. And then, as we read beginning on page 18 of “The Bible as History,” “Under the red slopes of Tell al Muqayyar lay a whole city, bathed in the bright sunshine, awakened from its long sleep after many thousand years by the patient burrowing of the archeologists. Woolley and his companions were beside themselves with joy. For before them lay Ur, the ‘Ur of the Chaldees’ to which the Bible refers.”

Not Abraham's Birthplace

From the limited references given to us in the Bible it would appear that Ur of the Chaldees was not Abraham's home city. Ur was in southern Mesopotamia and on the west of the Euphrates. This river is sometimes referred to in the Bible as “the flood.” Joshua said to the Israelites, “Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nachor.” (Josh. 24:2) When Abraham sent his servant Eliezer to seek a bride for Isaac the servant was specifically instructed to go to Abraham's own people, and he “went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.”—Gen. 24:4, 10

It would appear that for some reason Abraham and his father and other relatives had traveled from northern Mesopotamia to Ur, and that when they left Ur to go to Canaan, the land which God had promised to Abraham and his posterity, they traveled north to Haran first. Haran might well have been Abraham's home city, and he remained there until the death of his father. Perhaps he wanted to bury his father among his own people.

While the route from Ur to the Promised Land through Haran was a long one, had Abraham and his family attempted to travel the shortest route they would have been forced to cross what is now the Arabian Desert, which, no doubt would have been practically impossible, especially since he took his flocks and herds with him. The city of Ur was surrounded by rich grazing land, and it was here that Abraham pursued his occupation as a farmer, while possibly living in the prosperous, well-appointed city of Ur.

Abraham's birthplace was probably in the ancient kingdom of Mari. Haran and Nahor were cities within this kingdom. The city of Mari was one of the largest and richest of that period. It contained superb housing, and a richly appointed palace containing hundreds of rooms and courtyards. This was the palace of the kings of Mari. This mammoth building covered nearly ten acres. It was the most enormous building the archeologists had yet brought to light.

Clay tablets by the thousand were dug up in this ancient metropolis. These tablets confirm the existence of the progenitors of Abraham. The Bible says: "Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu; . . . and Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug: . . . and Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor: . . . and Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah: . . . and Terah lived seventy years and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran."—Gen. 11:18-26

"Names of Abraham's forefathers emerge from these dark ages as names of cities in northwest Mesopotamia. They lie in Padan-Aram, the plain of Aram. In the center of this plain lies Haran, which, according to its description, must have been a flourishing city. . . . Haran, the home of Abraham, father of the patriarchs, the birthplace of the Hebrew people, is here for the first time historically attested, for contemporary texts refer to it. Further up the

same Balikh valley lay the city with an equally well-known biblical name, Nahor, the home of Rebecca, wife of Isaac."—"The Bible as History," pp. 51, 52

Thus the information found on the clay tablets unearthed in the kingdom of Mari are found to produce further evidence that the accounts of the patriarchs which are presented in the Bible are not merely legends. They are true historical records of God's dealings with his chosen people. It is these records which furnish us with a reliable foundation for the great theme of God's love in his promised blessing of all the families of the earth, as he gave it to father Abraham.

Man Is Fallen

The excavation of the ruins of ancient cities—cities that existed in the days of Abraham, and even before—reveals that a high state of civilization existed at that time. The late Prof. Palmer Hall Langdon of the Institute of Metals, London, upon his return from extensive work in Mesopotamia in 1929, described his findings of a great "flood deposit" at a considerable depth, and of the layers below it, which contain relics of the civilization which thrived there before that event. We quote from his article which then appeared in the London Times:

"Below this Flood layer was another, thirteen feet in thickness. In the lower part of this stratum were found the remains of brick buildings, which had been abandoned and silted up for many feet . . . in which were brick tombs. . . . This layer thus represented two periods—the earlier, when buildings were erected near its base; the later, when, after these buildings had been silted up, these shafts were sunk into it for the great tombs. In this layer [below the flood layer] were found a number of objects of copper, silver and gold, stone bowls, and a quantity of unpainted pottery."

How vividly this reminds us of the statement concerning Tubal-cain that he was "an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron." (Gen. 4:22) Of Jubal the Bible states, "He was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." (Gen. 4:21) These brief bits of information indicate that the people of that day, only a few short years after man's fall into sin and death, were indeed intelligent and civilized. And now the spade and pick of the archeologist confirm this.

Evidences of a high degree of civilization in ancient times are further confirmed by the findings of Woolley in excavating the ruins of the ancient city of Ur. Sumerian temples, workshops, law courts, and beautiful dwellings were discovered. He also discovered "the graves of the kings of Ur." These stone vaults were nothing short of priceless treasure chests, for they were filled with the glamorous and costly things which were to be found in Ur at that time.

There were golden drinking cups, exquisitely shaped jugs and vases. There was bronze tableware, and musical instruments. It is said that even the tomb of Tutankhamen was no richer in its contents. These treasures were not the products of a half-man, half-ape sort of creature. They reveal again that man had been created perfect, possessing a high intelligence; that he sinned and was condemned to die, and that through the millennia since, his retrogression has continued. Thus Paul's statement in I Corinthians 15:21, "As in Adam all die," is confirmed.

The Flood Attested

Woolley had his men continue to dig, even below the graves of the kings. In his diary he wrote concerning this further effort: "Almost at once discoveries were made which confirmed our suspicions [that the tombs were not located on virgin soil]. Directly under the floor of one of the tombs of the kings we found in a layer of charred wood

ash numerous clay tablets, which were covered with characters of a much older type than the inscriptions on the graves. Judging by the nature of the writing the tablets could be assigned to about 3,000 B. C. They were therefore two or three centuries earlier than the tombs."

So Woolley instructed his men to continue their digging. As they went deeper and deeper, new strata, with fragments of jars, pots, and bowls, kept appearing. However, the pottery remained the same. It was exactly like that which was found in the graves of the kings. The experts gathered from this that Sumerian civilization had remained essentially the same for a long time. Their high level of civilization was reached at a very early date indeed.

Finally, as the men continued to dig, some of them reported to Woolley that they had found ground level—the virgin soil. Woolley made a personal inspection and found, as he thought, that the report of his men was correct. But as he prodded the ground himself just to make sure, he received a great surprise. He discovered that it was not the nature of the ground common to the area, but sand—pure sand, of a kind that could only have been deposited by water.

How could there be mud in a place like this, he thought. At first he concluded that it must be the accumulated silt of the river Euphrates at a time when it flowed near the ancient city of Ur, for it is believed that this river did at one time flow very close to this ancient and famous city. But upon further reflection he ruled out this possibility, one reason being that the level of the sand deposit was much too high to permit of this explanation of its being there. Woolley said, "I saw that we were much too high up. It was most unlikely that the island on which the first settlement was built stood up so far out of the marsh."

No, the mud could not be river deposit. Woolley could not find an explanation, nor could his associates, so he

decided to have his men dig down into this mud deposit. Deeper and deeper they sank their spades, with nothing but pure mud showing up. When they reached a depth of nearly ten feet the layer of mud ended as suddenly as it had begun.

Naturally the diggers supposed that now at last they had reached the real virgin soil, but instead, what they found was rubble, ancient rubbish, and potsherds. What did this mean? Simply that below the mud deposit of nearly ten feet they had discovered evidence of human habitation. There was pottery there, not like the pottery found above the mud deposit, which gave evidence of having been turned on a potter's wheel, but handmade pottery.

Woolley, without doubt then reached the proper conclusion, a conclusion that was confirmed by Prof. Langdon, that the mud deposit had been laid by the biblical Flood. This was a find that warranted publicity, and the day that Woolley reached this conclusion he flashed the information back to his home base, "We have found the Flood." Here again, and in this remarkable manner, the truth of the Bible had been attested, as the archeologists dug deeper and deeper into one of the cities of ancient Mesopotamia.

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

SEPTEMBER 5—"Jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire which hath a most vehement flame."—Canticles 8:6 (Z. '03-330 Hymn 130)

SEPTEMBER 12—"In your patience possess ye your souls."—Luke 21:19 (Z. '03-361 Hymn 312 A)

SEPTEMBER 19—"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word

is truth."—John 17:17 (Z. '03-377 Hymn 1)

SEPTEMBER 26—"Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Ephesians 2:20-22 (Z. '03-443 Hymn 58)

Knowledge that Leads to Life

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."—Jeremiah 9:23, 24

THE desire to acquire wisdom and understanding is in itself a laudable one, and has motivated human behavior from the very beginning. Eve was influenced by the desire for wisdom when she partook of the forbidden fruit: "It was a tree to be desired to make one wise." (Gen. 3:6) Eve's desire to be wise was not in itself a sin. It was her act of disobedience to God in order to attain wisdom that constituted her wrongdoing.

In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said to this young king, "Ask what I shall give thee." Solomon's reply was, "Give . . . thy servant an understanding heart." The Lord was pleased with this request, and replied to Solomon, "Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given

(Continued on page 34)

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(Continued from page 31)

thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days."—I Kings 3:5-13

Solomon became renowned for his great wisdom, and his fame spread abroad among the nations. But as time went on it became apparent that this wise king was not using his wisdom wholly to seek out and to do the Lord's will. He allowed the worship of false gods to become rampant throughout the land of Israel. In order to increase his riches and glory he overtaxed the people, placing burdens upon them which after his death led to rebellion. It was good to have the wisdom. Indeed, God had endowed Solomon with great wisdom, but this ambitious king of Israel misused God's gift to his own injury, and because of this he found later that it was all vanity.

Throughout the ages there have been many wise men and women in various areas of activity. Today, as never before, the world is seeking wisdom. Wisdom is the proper application of knowledge, and never before has so much stress been laid upon the importance of education. But alas, the more the world learns and endeavors to apply the knowledge, the deeper humanity seems to sink into chaos and misery. This is not because knowledge and wisdom themselves are evils, but because sin and selfishness thwart human efforts to use these advantages properly. Human happiness does not stem alone from much knowledge.

Strength Not the Answer

Our text continues, "Neither let the mighty man glory in his might." Throughout human experience there have also been many "mighty" men. Some have been mighty warriors; others have been mighty in commerce, or in government, and so forth. Many have endeavored to use

their positions of strength for the betterment of their fellow men; others have been selfish and arrogant and have used their power to exploit and oppress. But none have found true satisfaction and peace of mind simply in the fact that they have been "mighty." In many instances they have ended up weak and disillusioned.

Riches Futile

Our text continues: "Let not the rich man glory in his riches." Like being wise and strong, to be rich is, in itself, not wrong. It all depends on how the riches are acquired, and what use is being made of them. Some have become rich by fraudulent means. This is contrary to the law of God under any circumstances. Others have become wealthy through inheritance or wise planning of their business. Many of these make the acquisition of wealth an end in itself, and are never satisfied with the extent of their riches. These are they of whom it could be said that they "glory in . . . riches."

On the other hand, some who become wealthy see their opportunity to use their affluence in the service of the Lord and of his people; while others who are given the same opportunity find the sacrifice too great. An example of this is the rich young man who went to Jesus and asked what good thing he could do to inherit eternal life. Jesus invited him to sell what he had and give it to the poor, and take up his cross and follow him. The man went away sorrowful because the cost was too high. —Matt. 19:21, 22

This rich young man had not learned the lesson contained in Paul's admonition to Timothy when he wrote, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." (I Tim. 6:17) The rich young man did not realize, or else he did not have sufficient faith to believe, that if he gave up all in the

Lord's service all things really needed would be supplied him. He decided instead to put his trust in his riches, rather than in the living God.

Paul further admonished Timothy "that they [the rich] do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate." (I Tim. 6:18) Actually throughout the age not many of the Lord's followers have been rich according to worldly standards. The Lord's people have been mostly those of modest means. But as with the widow and her "mite," or those who have been able to do more, the Spirit of the Lord has imbued his people with zeal to serve him, both with their means and with whatever other talents they have possessed. In this we have the ideal example of the proper use of whatever the Lord may have entrusted to us.

Knowing God

Our text continues, "Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me." Here the words "understandeth" and "knoweth" are from different Hebrew words. Together they convey the thought that we should not only desire to know about the Lord, but we should become acquainted with him through an intelligent grasp of the glorious attributes of his character.

To know the Lord is a knowledge which in itself is richly rewarding. In addition, this is a knowledge which, if we are faithful to it, leads to glory and honor and immortality, eternal life. (Rom. 2:7) Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) It is necessary to know God in order to love and serve him, and it is through our loving obedience to his will that we will prove worthy of the eternal life which he has provided through the redemptive work of his beloved Son, Christ Jesus.

But how can we know God? We cannot see him, neither can we touch him. He dwells in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see. (I Tim. 6:16) Knowing God is more than an emotional experience, although there is great joy in realizing that we do know him. This is a knowledge in which we can truly glory, and it is the basis for that wisdom which is from above, which, as James wrote, is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

—James 3:17

To a limited extent we can become acquainted with God through his works of creation. The psalmist wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." (Ps. 19:1, 2) We see the wisdom of God in the delicacy and beauty of a flower. We know how true it is that "only God can make a tree." But the heavens and the flowers and the trees do not explain the suffering and death of an innocent baby, nor the apparently useless destruction of thousands by earthquakes, storms, and other upheavals of nature.

Yet in our text we read, "I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." How can we know that God delights to exercise loving-kindness in the earth when all around us there is suffering and death? It is difficult to see the loving-kindness of God reflected in a funeral parlor; and certainly the groanings of the suffering on agonizing beds of sickness is not the language of a loving God.

Through His Word

We can know the loving-kindness of God in fullest measure only through his plan of salvation as set forth in

his Word of truth. First of all the Word reveals that what is taking place in the earth now is the result of sin—original sin, the sin of our first parents in the Garden of Eden. Paul wrote, “As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”—Rom. 5:12

The penalty of death is afflicting all—the young and the old, the rich and the poor. Its manifestations are all around us, and the dying process is evidenced in many ways. God is not now interfering with the outworking of this penalty, for he has a larger plan for the future blessing of all. That plan was mentioned by Paul when he wrote, “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5:8) And again, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John 3:16

God’s love for his human creatures is so great that even before they called on him for help he set in motion a plan to deliver them from their afflictions. True, not many have as yet learned about this plan. Some have; that is, those to whom he has revealed himself and invited to co-operate with him in extending his loving-kindness throughout the earth in his own due time. He is allowing the others to fall asleep in death where they are “still” and “quiet,” and where they are “asleep” and “at rest.”—Job 3:13

God’s loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness are revealed in his plan of redemption through Christ. Paul wrote that God “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” (I Tim. 2:4-6) The philosophy of the ransom is not too difficult to understand. It is a matter of simple justice

—a man's life for a man's life—Jesus' life for Adam's life; and, of course, with the redemption of Adam there comes also the redemption of his offspring.

So much for the fact, as a teaching of the divine plan. But think of what was involved! In order to accomplish this great feature of his plan it was necessary that the Logos be "made flesh." And then he further humbled himself and became obedient unto death. Paul wrote, "Let this disposition be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, though being in God's Form yet did not meditate a Usurpation to be like God, but divested Himself, taking a Bondman's Form, having been in the Likeness of Men; and being in condition as a Man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross."—Phil. 2:5-8, Diaglott

"Obedient unto death"—think what this meant for Jesus! Yes, "even the death of the cross." Here was Jesus, the beloved Son of God, being crucified as a blasphemer and an imposter. Those who watched him die called upon him to come down from the cross. "He saved others; himself he cannot save," they cried. (Mark 15:31) Little did they realize that by Jesus' refusal to save himself he was providing salvation for them, and for all mankind—"all the families of the earth."

In addition to this mental anguish which Jesus endured, he suffered excruciating physical pain; not because he had sinned, but because he was performing his part in the great plan of his Heavenly Father to extend his loving-kindness throughout the earth.

And in all this the Heavenly Father himself suffered—suffered to see his beloved Son enduring such great contradiction of sinners against himself. God was willing thus to suffer, and was willing to see his Son suffer—

voluntarily, of course—because he was and is delighted to exercise “loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth.”

Further Preparation

However, the death and resurrection of Jesus did not fully prepare the way for the manifestation of God's loving-kindness in the earth. There was a further feature of his plan to be developed; namely, the calling from mankind of a “little flock” who will be associated with Jesus in the dispensing of divine blessings of health, joy, and life to the teeming millions of the sin-cursed and dying race.

God had promised to shower blessings upon all mankind. He had promised this to Abraham. (Gen. 12:3) Paul explains that Christ is this promised “seed,” and then adds that all who are baptized into Christ are also counted by God as being a part of the seed of blessing. So now for nearly two thousand years the work of calling these from the world has gone on. They are called through the message of the Gospel which goes out from the Word of God. But then they have to be tried and tested; and if they pass faithfully through the experiences which God in his wisdom permits to come upon them they make “their calling and election sure.”—II Pet. 1:10; Rev. 17:14

This class is invited to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, and to suffer and die with him. Jesus said to them, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33) Fiery trials come upon these followers of the Lamb, and by their faithfulness in these trials they prove their worthiness to live and reign with Christ a thousand years.—Rev. 20:4, 6

These, even as the Heavenly Father and his beloved Son, are sympathetic toward the poor, groaning creation,

but they realize there is little they can now do about it except faithfully to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, that they might be worthy of sharing the power and glory of his kingdom—that reign of righteousness which will reveal God's "loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness" to the whole world of mankind.

These realize that the wise course for them now is to follow the instructions of the Lord as they are contained in his Word; that any other course would be following human wisdom, and the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. God's wisdom is displayed in many ways throughout his Word, one of these ways being that his people accomplish his will through their preaching of the cross of Christ. It is through the knowledge of the cross and what it signifies in the plan of God that those whom God calls are drawn to him, and he has given to his consecrated people this work of preaching.

Paul wrote, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." —I Cor. 1:18-24

Only those who truly know the Lord are prepared to be guided by his wisdom. There is today, and always has been,

a professed people of God. The Lord tells us about these. We quote; "Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men; therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."—Isa. 29:13, 14

Jesus said in prayer concerning the hypocritical people of his day, especially the scribes and Pharisees, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. 11:25, 26) Thus we see the wisdom of being childlike in our humility and faith. It is only to such that our Heavenly Father and his beloved Son reveal themselves.

Continuing, Jesus said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. 11:27) And then Jesus pointed out some of the qualities we would learn concerning him if we accepted his invitation to come unto him. We quote again; "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. 11:28-30

The Father and the Son

Jesus said to his disciples the night before he was crucified, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there

ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." To this Thomas replied, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" Then Jesus said to Thomas, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him."—John 14:3-7

Then "Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."—John 11:8-10

Thus it is that through Jesus—through his teachings and through his example—we are able to know the Father, and it is in this knowledge that we delight to glory as our text indicates. We see the meekness and lowliness of Jesus; we see his faithfulness and zeal; we see his willingness to suffer and die that the loving-kindness of our Heavenly Father may ultimately be extended throughout the earth.

On the other hand we see the emptiness of earthly wisdom, earthly might, and earthly riches as compared with a true knowledge of God. We may be foolish, according to the standards of this world; but the Lord makes us wise unto salvation through the instructions of his Word. We may be weak according to the flesh, but the Lord gives us strength so that we are strong in him and in the power of his might. We may be poor in this world's goods but the blessing of the Lord makes rich, and he adds no sorrow thereto.

Thus the Lord provides all our needs and enables us to "glory" in the fact that we know him and are assured of his justice, his righteousness, and his loving-kindness. One of the very precious points of knowledge concerning our Heavenly Father which causes our hearts to rejoice is the assurance that he causes all things to work together for good to those who love him and who are called according to his purpose.—Rom. 8:28

And how sweet the prospect of seeing our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus face to face when we have finished our course faithfully in death! That will be glory indeed. Jesus prayed to his Father to this end:

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."—John 17:24-26

With the faithful followers of Jesus all taken home to glory to be with him and with the Heavenly Father, then the promised blessing of all mankind will begin to flow out to the world of mankind. It will then quickly follow that all will know the Lord and realize that he is indeed a God who delights in exercising loving-kindness in the earth. (Isa. 9:11) Meanwhile, let us continue to "glory" that even now, and in advance of the world, the great and loving God has revealed himself to us through his word; and may this knowledge ever stimulate us to greater faithfulness in his service.



"Have Salt in Yourselves"

THESE are the words of Jesus as recorded in Mark 9:50. A choice companion scripture is found in Matthew 5:13: "Ye are the salt of the earth." The Lord knew that his people, with all their "salt" and indeed with all their "light," as the light of the world, would not be able to accomplish for the world in general more than a very limited profit until the appointed time when they would be, with himself, exalted to power and great glory. But even these blessings, limited as we know their effect to be, have been of value in the world, preparatory to the future work of restitution, and also in facilitating the special work of the Gospel Age of taking out a people prepared for the Lord, to be future kings and priests unto God.

So then, dearly beloved heirs of the exceeding great and precious promises of God,

"have salt in yourselves"! And forget not that being thus salted "ye are the salt of the earth," so that on all occasions your very presence, as you speak and act, will be a rebuke to iniquity, a living testimony to the beauty of holiness, and a witness to the true Gospel of the kingdom.

Common salt is put to many uses. In a general sense it is a necessity of diet; and its preservative properties upon many foods are well known. Greater quantities are required for industrial use than for domestic purposes, and it is widely employed for agricultural needs. Also it has important medicinal uses.

Indispensable as salt is to us today, it was even more essential to the Hebrews of old. Not only was it an appetizing condiment in food, both of man and of beast (Job 6:6; Isa. 30:24, R. V., margin), and a valuable antidote to the effects of the hot climate upon animal food, but it also entered largely into the religious services of the Jews in

connection with the various offerings presented on the altar. Leviticus 2:13 reads: "And 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." In this sense the property of salt to preserve and to arrest the spread of corruption can well illustrate the contribution of the Lord's people in the midst of sin and vice.

Salt as a Symbol

"Ye are the salt of the earth," and the true Christian, in the present evil world, is to endure as a purifying influence. Our speech is always to be "with grace, seasoned with salt."—Col. 4:6

Further, as a savory article of diet at the meal table, common salt can symbolise hospitality; and as an antiseptic it signifies purity and healing qualities.

Reference is made in the Scriptures to a "covenant of salt," betokening an indissoluble alliance between those concerned. (Num. 18:19; II Chron. 13:5) And in Ezra 4:14,

margin, it is recorded, "We are salted with the salt of the palace," giving us a picture that they were bound by sacred obligations of fidelity to the king; just as we are to be loyal and faithful to our heavenly King and to his household.

Among the Jews and Arabs in our Lord's day deceit and betrayal, it is said, were somewhat common. But there was a code of honour recognised, according to which no one would eat the food of the person he would in any wise injure. As food was seasoned with salt, it was probably this custom that was associated with what was known as "the covenant of salt"—the covenant of faithfulness. To succeed in having an enemy eat at your table, or partake of your food seasoned with salt, was at that time, among those people, the equivalent of a pledge of lasting friendship.

The Diaglott renders our opening scripture: "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another." Here is another beautiful quality that the Lord's people should manifest. Other scriptures exhort us to "live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be

with you." (II Cor. 13:11) "Be at peace among yourselves." (I Thess. 5:13) "Pursue peace with all, and that holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord."—Heb. 12:14

When we comply with Romans 12:1 and present our bodies a living sacrifice, let us remember that in the type salt was required to be offered with the sacrifice. Here salt symbolises purity, and fidelity, and loyalty—indeed lasting or enduring loyalty. While ours is a "living sacrifice," it is understood that it is consecrated to death. Henceforth it is counted or reckoned "dead."—Col. 2:20; 3:3

Let us, then, come what may, keep our sacrifice—all that we have and are—upon the altar of God's holy will, "salted with salt"; so well-cleansed and purified by the wondrous provision made for us in Christ Jesus, our beloved Lord and Saviour, that it shall continue to be an acceptable sacrifice; permeated through and through also with fidelity and loving faithfulness to the Lord, until our sacrifice is completely consumed. "Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar" (Ps. 118:27), for "precious in

the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."—Ps. 116:15

Progress unto Maturity

Weymouth translates Mark 9:50 as follows: "Salt is a good thing, but if the salt should become tasteless, with what will you restore the saltiness? Have salt within you and live at peace with one another." Should we discern that the salt within us is becoming tasteless and less effective, how may its saltiness be restored? By our giving earnest heed to the cause of slackness on our part and, by divine grace and strength, becoming more and more fully acquainted with the Lord through the inspired Word; also by emptying ourselves of self-will, thus enabling us to receive an increasing measure of the Holy Spirit. And we shall need to partake of that spiritual nourishment referred to in Hebrews 5:14 as "strong meat." The whole context; namely, Hebrews 5:15 to 6:3, is here quoted from Weymouth's rendering:

"For although, considering the long time you have been believers, you ought now to be teachers of others, you really need some one to teach you

over again the very rudiments of the truths of God, and you have come to require milk instead of solid food. By people who live on milk I mean those who are imperfectly acquainted with the doctrine of righteousness. Such persons are mere babes. But solid is for adults—that is, for those who through constant practice have their spiritual faculties carefully trained to distinguish good from evil. Therefore leaving elementary instruction about the Christ, let us advance to mature manhood, and not be continually re-laying a foundation.”

The following might be considered to represent some of the foundation truths, or elementary teachings:

- (1) Repentance from lifeless (dead) works.
- (2) Faith in (toward) God, and in the merit of Christ's sacrifice.
- (3) Teaching about ceremonial washings (doctrine of baptisms).
- (4) That which is implied by “the laying on of hands” in the Early Church—a receiving of the Holy Spirit.
- (5) The resurrection of the dead.
- (6) The last judgment.

It will be noted from the foregoing that certain brethren were chided because they were not advancing beyond the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, or beyond the “milk” stage. They should have progressed to the deeper spiritual nourishment that has to do with the full development of the “new mind,” the “new creature,” enabling them to go on toward full maturity in Christlikeness.

The lesson for us here, then, is that having been engaged in laying these foundation teachings, we are not to stop there. But leaving the first principles—by no means forgetting or ignoring them—let us go on unto maturity, remembering that we are to become well “acquainted with the doctrine of righteousness” (rightness, justice), and that through constant practice we will have our spiritual faculties carefully trained to distinguish, in a very full sense, good from evil.

Great Divine Truths

“Every one who continues to feed on milk is obviously inexperienced and unskilled in the doctrine of righteousness, for he is a mere infant.”

(Heb. 5:13, Amplified Bible) Concerning our being instructed in this "doctrine of righteousness," we know that all Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfected, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—II Tim. 3:16, 17

Here we are instructed to consider attentively and grapple with the great divine truths and principles respecting our Heavenly Father's character and his wonderful kingdom, letting them operate, as far as possible, in our every thought, word, and deed.

We are to cleanse our hands and purify our heart, bringing our whole life in line with the great pattern set before us, being more and more conformed to the image of our beloved Lord and Head, Christ Jesus. In all this we shall need an increasing measure of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, in harmony with Luke 11:13, let us earnestly pray to our Father for this holy influence, taking special care that we empty ourselves more and more of self, so that we can

the more readily be filled with the Holy Spirit.

"Whom the Lord loves, he disciplines." "If you endure discipline, God deals with you as with sons." And he is doing this "for our advantage, in order that we may partake of his holiness. But all discipline, indeed, as it respects the present, seems not to be of joy, but of grief; yet afterwards it returns the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."—Heb. 12:6, 7, 10, 11, Diaglott

And in this process we are to become "imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, even as the Anointed one loved us, and delivered himself up on our behalf."—Eph. 5:1, 2, Diaglott

It was not too much for our dear Lord to exhort his early disciples by saying, "Have salt in yourselves," and this exhortation is a great lesson for us. "Have salt in yourselves": there is nothing superficial about this; nothing which pertains only to the surface, to act as a kind of veneer. This wise counsel refers to an inward state, even as indicated in Psalm 51:6, "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts."

Since those early days, the unfolding of the Scriptures by the holy influence has revealed that Christ, by his spirit, is to be in us. Then we experience a marvellous, most wonderful inner life; and how grateful we are for this unmerited grace and favour! Christ dwelling in our heart by faith (Eph. 3:17); Christ being formed in us. (Gal. 4:19) So the exhortation comes to us: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Col. 3:16) "Let the mind of Christ be in you." (Phil. 2:5) "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."—Col. 3:15

Awake to Righteousness

Reverting to the question of our being acquainted with the teaching concerning "righteousness," I Corinthians 15:34 reads: "Awake to righteousness, and sin not"; in other words, live "uprightly, justly, rightly." (see Young) Other scriptures exhort: "Yield . . . your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." (Rom. 6:13) Be "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:11) "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." (Eph. 5:9) "Let no one deceive

you. He who practices righteousness, is righteous."—I John 3:7, Diaglott

Arising from the facts expressed in Hebrews 5:13, 14 (Weymouth), it is good to question, "Am I skilful, or experienced, in the matter of righteousness? Am I being rightly exercised by the chastenings and disciplines of life while walking with God? Is my judgment being developed by the experiences of the consecrated life? Am I through constant practice having my spiritual faculties carefully trained so as to distinguish, in an increasing measure, good from evil?

We are admonished frequently in the Scriptures in the matter of "rightness" to help us clearly to discern good from evil. "Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, . . . avoiding profane and vain babblings." (I Tim. 6:11, 12, 20) "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." (Heb. 10:24) "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the

Word of truth." (II Tim. 2:15)
And many others!

"Have Salt in Yourselves"

Let us have within ourselves the beautiful qualities symbolised by ordinary common salt: those healing, purifying influences, preserving that which is truly good; the ability to bring out the best in others, arresting the spread of corruption. Let us do all things without murmurings and disputings, as we shine as lights in the world, holding forth the

Word of life. May we have within us hospitality, fidelity, purity, faithfulness, and self-sacrificing love; and an increasing measure of the Holy Spirit. And let us also, by God's grace, manifest the required diligence in making our precious calling and election sure, even to the obtaining, in due time, of the divine nature, to experience an abundant entrance into that promised "everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:3-11

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The Portrush Convention

THE first item on the agenda at the 1968 convention at Portrush was "tea." This is always the case at Portrush, and, as far as one knows, there has never yet been a complaint that so admirable an Irish custom is in any way unsuited to the introduction of a spiritual feast such as that which invariably awaits us as the programme unfolds. And, moreover, this is no ordinary tea which our generous hosts provide; it is what is termed in Britain, "high tea," a really substantial meal designed, one feels, to impress the partaker with a sense of appreciation of those temporal blessings which, although of secondary importance, are nevertheless, as the Apostle James so rightly points out, necessary to the subsequent enjoyment of that spiritual food which is the main objective of the gathering.

A Preliminary Talk

Although the convention proper was scheduled to commence on Saturday, the first of June, quite a number of friends arrived before that day, and advantage was taken of their presence to have a preliminary talk by one of the visiting brethren. This centered around II Thessalonians 3:16, from which we were reminded of our Heavenly Father's own peace, always maintained and ever abiding, to protect us from care and anxiety in every circumstance—a gift from God, as the apostle says, "by all means." Peace in times of energy and action, peace in quiet moments, peace in time of storm such as that which is raging in the world today as the end of the age draws

nearer. Our vision of God's great purposes brings peace; the Lord's very presence in our hearts brings peace; and we have a lovely word in Isaiah 32:17-18: "Quietness and assurance forever . . . my people shall dwell . . . in quiet resting places."

Peace comes to us by prayer, through believing, and as a result of the operation of the Holy Spirit. It is one of God's great gifts to his people, and in these perilous days we do well to accept it in full measure, as the apostle expresses it, "always by all means." We thoroughly enjoyed this foretaste of good things to come, and the evening closed with general fellowship, in happy anticipation of the morrow's blessings.

"The Way of His Steps"

Saturday, the first of June, saw a steady influx of brethren from England, Scotland, and other parts of Ireland. We were most happy to welcome friends from America and Canada, and it soon became evident that the total number attending would be well up to the average of between fifty and sixty, which, by our standards, is a goodly company. It must, of course, be remembered that here in Britain what we may lack in numbers we make up for in zeal and warmth of fellowship, as visitors from abroad are usually quick to testify.

After tea—already referred to—our dear Brother Tom Lang, of Londonderry, opened the convention with some well-chosen words of welcome, in which he emphasised the joy we all felt at being able to gather together for worship and praise, as we had done, in the Lord's providence, on so many previous occasions. We looked back with grateful hearts on the way along which we had been led since last we met, and we rejoiced at the prospect of renewed fellowship in love and unity of heart. We had come to God's house, and we awaited his blessing according to the

precious promises given us in his Word. With the psalmist we **could indeed say**, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord."

The evening discourse took us back to the wonderful days of our Lord's first advent. Based on the words of Psalm 85:13, we saw that "the way of his steps" was a "trodden path." (Ps. 27:11) We saw the picture of the shepherd going before his sheep to mark out the way, and to meet its many dangers and pitfalls before they could injure his charges. As our Lord said, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me." It is for us, not only to follow the Master in the "trodden path," but to help one another by reflecting his spirit of love and compassion, that our brethren might be encouraged and lifted up as they too endeavour to walk "in the way of his steps"—the "trodden path."

After our evening meeting we gathered in general fellowship and conversation, followed by a short session of hymn singing to bring the opening stages of our convention to a happy close.

The First Full Day

Sunday presented our first full day's programme, and it also brought still more brethren to swell our numbers. Some of these were Irish friends who lived near enough to travel each day to Portrush instead of staying overnight. The day's fellowship commenced with the reading of the "Manna," and discussion of the text and comment for some ten minutes or so, after which we listened to a most helpful discourse, based upon I Peter 4:12-19, and carrying the somewhat intriguing title, "God Meant It unto Good." We soon saw the trend of our brother's thinking as he pointed back to Joseph's experiences. Sold into Egyptian slavery, he rose to great honour and was able finally to bless his brethren who had so cruelly used him. Certainly God

meant this unto good, for seventy went into Egypt and over a million came out. Like Joseph we are being tested and tried, often by strange experiences from unexpected quarters, but our trials are for an infinitely greater end than even Joseph saw, and we too can surely say, "God meant it unto good."

Our Privileges and Responsibilities

Following on this helpful exhortation came an examination of the privileges and responsibilities which accrue to those who have been brought to a knowledge of what we term "the truth." The faith once delivered to the saints was the truth, and still is. It has, of course, been enlarged and verified by careful study of the Word. By this means, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we have developed our knowledge of the ransom, the meaning of consecration, the high calling, or "upward calling" as a speaker preferred to describe it, as well as many other aspects of truth which have become increasingly clear as we have grown in grace and knowledge.

So it is that this increased knowledge and understanding brings with it increased responsibility and greater privileges of service to all concerned. We speak those things which we know, according to the Scriptures, and in so doing we verify truth. Growth in grace and knowledge should be kept in balance so that our preaching and example are of the greatest possible help to fellow members of the body. It is neither helpful nor wise to be continually telling people what they already know; namely that the world is in a state of turmoil and trouble, unless at the same time we tell them of the remedy for these conditions—the early establishment of God's kingdom of righteousness and peace.

Lunch time provided an opportunity for discussing some of the points which our morning sessions had brought to mind. Many also took advantage of the two-hour "break"

to stroll by the sea and over the cliffs which form such an attractive feature of this beautiful Irish resort.

Testimony Meeting

The entire Sunday afternoon session was given over to prayer, praise and testimony, an arrangement which was very generally appreciated. The tendency in Britain, in recent years, has seemed to be to relegate testimony meetings to the background. This is a pity, for whenever such meetings are held the response is warm and sincere, and surely nothing can be more desirable than that the "redeemed of the Lord" should say what is in their hearts, in appreciation of, and love for him, and for their brethren of "like precious faith."

So we were glad to have this opportunity of testifying by word and song and prayer, to the continued blessings which all had received at our Heavenly Father's hand during days which had passed, and many were the expressions of joy and thankfulness as experiences were recalled, and their lessons relearned by sharing with others the happiness of fulfilled hopes, as well as the humble acceptance of trials and discipline designed, in our Father's wisdom and love, to draw us nearer to him. This was indeed an afternoon well spent!

Moses' Mission and Our Vision

Two discourses were scheduled for the Sunday evening sessions, and although the messages brought to us were not obviously related, yet, as is so often the case, we saw in them a relationship of teaching which emphasised the importance of obedience to our Heavenly Father's requirements in widely differing circumstances of responsibility.

The first of these discourses centered around Moses at the burning bush, and lessons were drawn in a most interesting manner from this experience of God's faithful

servant entrusted with the mission to deliver "my people Israel." The quietness of the desert, where Moses turned aside to see this phenomenon, reminds us that much of our Father's great work is done in quietness and obscurity. The message to Moses was for Israel alone, but we too have been given a message of joy and hope for all mankind—the message of deliverance from sin and death in the righteous kingdom of our Lord and Saviour so soon to be established.

It is not uncommon for a bush to be seen burning, but this one was not consumed, neither did it throw out sparks, nor was there any smoke. The lessons to be drawn are that no spark of human pride, and no smoke of human error, should prevent us drawing near to God to hear his everlasting Word, and to receive that word into good and honest hearts as is so graphically pictured in the words of Jeremiah, "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and I could not stay."

Following this lesson of the burning bush we had an earnest plea for "Obedience to the God-given Vision," based on Paul's words to King Agrippa (Acts 26:19), "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." The lesson for the Lord's people today is to prove all things, and not to allow the leaven of wickedness and false teaching to penetrate our hearts and destroy our faith. The experiences through which the world is passing are confirmation of the fact that our Lord has come forth to serve his people; these experiences constitute a "shout" of encouragement to all those who are watching the signs of the times and who see in them the proof of our Lord's return and the near approach of the kingdom.

Can we say that we have seen the vision of "present truth" as it has come through the ministry of Brother

Russell? We should be able to say this, for only those who make the truth their own can stand. There has been some disappointment that the kingdom has not already been fully established, but this should not diminish our faith in the vision. Rather we should remember the words of the Prophet Habakkuk (2:3), "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not [really] tarry." So in full obedience and subjection to our Heavenly Father's will we should see our commission to preach the Word and bind up the brokenhearted, proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord and the blessed prospect of the coming kingdom of righteousness and peace.

Our Sunday's fellowship was brought to a close by an hour or so of happy hymn singing intermingled with general conversation and discussion of the things which had been opened up to us by the ministry of our brethren during a very full and satisfying day.

The Things of the Spirit

Monday's meetings opened with a discourse under the title, "The Things of the Spirit," things which Paul referred to when he wrote, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2:14) At Pentecost, when Jesus had entered into the presence of God for us, the Holy Spirit came upon his apostles, and has since been poured out upon the whole church. Hence we are new creatures in Christ Jesus, having changed our minds and way of life—we have crucified the flesh.

This involves denying ourselves, with the consequent realisation that as the lessons of life are learned, so we come into closer relationship with our Lord through the Spirit, and walk increasingly in obedience to the truth. We

must, of course, be doers of the Word and not hearers only, as our Lord himself emphasised in speaking of the Pharisees. He said that the people should obey those who sat in Moses seat, but they must not imitate their lives, for while these leaders tell others what to do they do not follow their own teaching. (Matt. 23:1-3, Weymouth) God's richest blessing comes to those who are obedient to the Spirit of the Word, and such must expect to endure hardness as good soldiers if they are to prove finally acceptable as overcomers.

In harmony with "The Things of the Spirit," our thoughts were next directed to "The Beauty of the Lord." (Ps. 90:17) When, at the time of the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai, Moses was with God, or in God's presence, the record states that as he came down from the mountain the skin of his face shone, although he was not himself aware of this. Here the beauty of the Lord is shown reflected in the face of Moses; and Paul, writing to the Corinthians (II Cor. 3:18), directs this lesson to us, saying, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." We behold by conscious effort, but the work of reflecting is God's—"Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone." Because of our relationship as sons, we are able to look with unveiled face upon the beauty of the Lord, and in so doing we reflect his glory in our daily lives.

With the psalmist we say, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands." (Ps. 90:17) And again, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may . . . behold the beauty of the Lord, and inquire in his temple." (Ps. 27:4) This means to abide in a condition of complete consecration to God, so that the object of all our studies, all our

efforts, should be that we might know him, and that his beauty might be reflected in our lives as it was in the face of his servant Moses.

"How Beautiful upon the Mountains"

The well-known words of Isaiah 52:7 formed the subject of the next discourse which followed appropriately upon the lesson we had just learned. The prophet speaks of God's name being continually blasphemed by some, but his people shall know his name; that is, they shall understand his character through the Word of truth. Such scriptures, we were told, apply particularly in our day when so much of the Adversary's influence is abroad. The proclamation of the kingdom message is a great privilege, and the work of those who are proclaiming it is beautiful in God's sight. Paul refers to this same preaching of the Gospel in his day, but it is only now that we, as the "feet" members, can say, "Thy God reigneth." The "feet" are beautiful by reason of their faith in the sacrificial death of our Lord, and because of that faith they say, "Here am I; send me," when the question is asked, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"—Isa. 6:8

To reign means to exercise supreme authority, and this, the speaker claimed, is already being exercised, and will finally effect the full deliverance of mankind from the bondage of sin and death. Truly it is a wondrous privilege to be among those of whom Isaiah speaks in this remarkable chapter—"How beautiful . . . are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, . . . that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

A Final Word of Encouragement

So to the closing discourse of the convention. This was a very helpful and practical talk on the blessings and trials which come to the Lord's people in everyday experience.

Paul in writing to the Philippians (chapter 4) speaks of those things which we should cultivate as elements of Christian character. He mentions abounding, and being abased; being full and hungry; rejoicing, and suffering need. There is no miraculous change with respect to such experiences when we "come into the truth." We still have the anxieties and the testings, the setbacks and the difficulties which were with us before, but such experiences now bring us closer to the Lord, and at his invitation we place our burdens upon him. Peter has it, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." Frequently the weightiest burdens are the ones we make for ourselves and try to carry ourselves.

We must not be discouraged by our personal faults. Remember that the Lord knew all about these before he called us. If our past experiences and present failures discourage us, we should think upon our great High Priest who was tempted in all points like as we are, and who also learned obedience by the things which he suffered. God deals with us as individual sons, and he will not allow us to be tempted (tried) above that which we are able to bear, "but with the trial, will also direct the issue, that you may be able to bear it."—I Cor. 10:13, Diaglott

This blessed, stimulating discourse brought to an end the scheduled sessions of our 1968 Portrush Convention. Some of the friends were to return home the next day, but others stayed to enjoy for a while longer the beauties and benefits of this very delightful little Irish holiday resort. To so many it has become a place of hallowed memories; a resting place set by the sea; a place sanctified by that warmth of affection and genuine fellowship which year by year marks the gathering together of brethren from near and far to enjoy the blessings of ministry and spiritual relationship at the Portrush Convention.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

These speakers are associated with the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn.

O. D. DEIFER		Boston, Mass.	8
York, Pa.	Sept. 29	Buffalo, N. Y.	10
EDWARD E. FAY		Cleveland, Ohio	11
Fiji Islands	Aug. 30	Toledo, Ohio	12
Auckland, N. Z.	Aug. 31, Sept. 1	Indianapolis, Ind.	13
Wellington, N. Z.	2, 3	HARRY PASSIOS	
Christchurch, N. Z.	4	New York, N. Y.	Sept. 1, 2
Melbourne, Aust.	5	New York, N. Y.	4
Geelong, Aust.	6	(Greek Class)	
Melbourne, Aust.	7, 8	Allentown, Pa.	5
Nambour, Aust.	9	E. K. PENROSE	
Toowoomba, Aust.	10	New York, N. Y.	Sept. 1, 2
Brisbane, Aust.	(evening) 10	Rochester, N. Y.	3
Sydney, Aust.	11	Buffalo, N. Y.	4
Adelaide, Aust.	12	Lockport, N. Y.	5
Perth, Aust.	14-16	Akron, Ohio	6
G. HOMER HAMLIN		Cleveland, Ohio	8
Seattle, Wash.	Sept. 1, 2	Toledo, Ohio	9
Kuna, Idaho	5	Jackson, Mich.	10
Laramie, Wya.	7	Grand Rapids, Mich.	11, 12
Grand Island, Nebr.	9	Saginaw, Mich.	13
Minneapolis, Minn.	10	Detroit, Mich.	15
(Fillmore)		Greencastle, Ind.	23
Minneapolis, Minn.	11	Columbus, Ind.	24
(Cedar Ave.)		Indianapolis, Ind.	25
Chicago, Ill.	13	Muncie, Ind.	26
Cincinnati, Ohio	15	Gary, Ind.	27
Pittsburgh, Pa.	16	Chicago, Ill.	29
New York, N. Y.	22	LaSalle, Ill.	30
G. M. JEUCK		LEO POST	
Allentown, Pa.	Sept. 22	Baltimore, Md.	Sept. 22
A. H. KRUMPOLT		Philadelphia, Pa.	22
Catawissa, Pa.	Sept. 15	H. W. PRICE	
R. J. KRUPA		Kalispell, Mont.	Sept. 1, 2
Paterson, N. J.	Sept. 8	Sagle, Idaho	3, 4
J. Y. MAC AULAY		Spokane, Wash.	5
New Haven, Conn.	Sept. 29	Wenatchee, Wash.	6
Waterbury, Conn.	29	Seattle, Wash.	8
ADAM MISKAWITZ		Bremerton, Wash.	9, 10
New York, N. Y.	Sept. 1, 2	Tacoma, Wash.	11
New Haven, Conn.	3	Bellingham, Wash.	12
Waterbury, Conn.	4	Langley, B. C.	13
Agawam, Mass.	5		

H. J. TIEMEYER		F. S. WASSMANN	
Sayville, N. Y.	Sept. 8	New London, Conn.	Sept. 15
Hartford, Conn.	29	C. R. WEIDA	Sept. 15
		Pottstown, Pa.	

The listings in this schedule have been arranged by local ecclesias co-operating with the Dawn.

C. M. CHUPA		D. J. MOREHOUSE	
Pontiac, Mich.	Sept. 8	Gury, Ind.	Sept. 15
CARL HAGENSICK		ARTHUR NEWELL	
Suginaw, Mich.	Sept. 15	Grand Rapids, Mich.	Sept. 15
ARTHUR JEZUIT		(Lafayette St.)	
Milwaukee, Wis.	Sept. 1	FRANK NIEMCZAK	
GENE JEZUIT		Adrian, Mich.	Sept. 15
Beloit, Wis.	Sept. 1	GEORGE TABAC	
DANIEL KAZIAK		LaSalle, Ill.	Sept. 15
London, Ont.	Sept. 8	JOHN TRZYNA	
HENRY KWOLEK		Minneapolis, Minn.	Sept. 15
Saginaw, Mich.	Sept. 1	(Cedar Ave.)	
ADAM MISKAWITZ		L. W. ZBIK	
St. Louis, Mo.	Sept. 15	Chatham, Ont.	Sept. 15

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CONVENTIONS

JACKSON, MICH., Aug. 31, Sept. 1, 2—YMCA, 127 W. Wesley St. Mrs. Ralph Gaunt, 510 Golf Ave.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Aug. 31, Sept. 1, 2—IOGT Hall, 2922 Cedar Ave. Mrs. Doris Borowiec, 10410 Fifth Ave. Circle South.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Aug. 31, Sept. 1, 2—Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, 50th St. and Park Ave. Mr. G. M. Jeuck, 81 Blauvelt Road, Nanuet, N. Y. 10954

SAN DIEGO, CALIF., Aug. 31, Sept. 1, 2—Temple Beth Israel, 2512 Third Ave. Mrs. Gilbert L. Rice, 4005 Olympic St.

SEATTLE, WASH., Aug. 31, Sept. 1, 2—Norway Center, 300 Third Ave. W. Mrs. John Keith, 22515 95th Place W., Edmonds, Wash.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Sept. 15—Brotherhood of Railway Clerks Bldg., Court and Vine Sts. Mrs. Margaret Ellis, R. 1, Box 71, Melbourne, Ky.

ANTIOCH, CALIF., Sept. 21, 22—IDES Hall, Tenth St. by City Park. Mrs. Wilson Lynn, 206A San Joaquin.

PITTSBURGH, PA., Sept. 21, 22—Bellevue YMCA, North Borough Branch, 629 Lincoln Ave. Mr. Carl S. Boughton, 126 Slater Drive.

CHICAGO, ILL., Sept. 22—Central Masonic Temple, 912 N. LaSalle St. Mr. Edmund Jezuit, 4327 S. Christina Ave.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Sept. 22—YWCA, Ninth & Walnut Sts. Mrs. W.

N. Poe, One W. Ridge Pl., Newport, Ky.

DETROIT, MICH., Sept. 29—McGregor Memorial Bldg., Second Blvd. and W. Ferry. Mr. Henry F. Kwolek, 38231 Richland, Livonia, Mich.

BUFFALO, N. Y., Oct. 5, 6—Sweet Home Masonic Hall, 641 Sweet Home Rd., Amherst, N. Y. Mr. Allon Mac Alister, 37 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N. Y.

ST. LOUIS, MO., OCT. 5, 6—St. Louis Gateway Hotel (formerly Statler-Hilton), Ninth & Washington Ave. Mrs. John H. Forsythe, 4840 Towne South Rd.

AGAWAM, MASS., Oct. 6—Agawam Senior High School, 760 Cooper St. Mrs. Leslie W. Hindle, Route 1, Box 127, Depot St., Broad Brook, Conn.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH., Oct. 12, 13—Walker Junior High School, 4252 Three Mile Rd., N. W. Mrs. B. Fuerst, 604 Conger St., N. E.

MILWAUKEE, WIS., Oct. 12, 13—Aurora Lodge, 734 N. 26 St. Mrs. Violet Pazucha, 4454 S. 14 St.

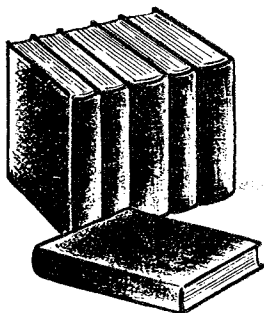
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIF., Oct. 12, 13—Mrs. Elfrieda Croker, 1594 Ocean-air Drive.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Oct. 19, 20

PHOENIXVILLE, PA., Oct. 27

PORTLAND, OREG., Nov. 9, 10

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to us the

SCRIPTURES

clearly teach

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

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

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

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

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

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