

# The DAWN

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# The Future of Israel and the World

*“So all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them.”*  
—Romans 11:26,27

**IT IS APPARENT TO ALL** that man for the past hundred years has lived in the most rapidly changing world since the dawn of the human race. Change has impacted all aspects of life—social, economic, religious, and political. Speaking now of just the political changes, we see as a fact of history that virtually all the powerful pre-1914 hereditary ruling houses of Europe have been replaced by other forms of government. During this same period, much of the population of the earth has succumbed to the control of various types of dictatorships. Some of these have been godless, totalitarian governments. Others have been autocratic regimes, ostensibly based on religious ideologies. Still more have been the result of power-hungry individuals whose

desires have been simply to rule over as much of mankind as possible.

As a consequence, the period beginning with the outbreak of World War I has to a large extent been one of general deterioration and fragmentation of world governments. Yet, it is not altogether so, for during this same period a multitude of new nations have been born. In many cases, these new nations have been the outgrowth of the aforementioned loss of power of the old ruling monarchies, as their many colonial holdings throughout the earth clamored for, and achieved, independence from the “mother” countries of Europe.

One of the countries which has been “born” during the past hundred years is Israel. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that Israel was “reborn,” for this people had formerly been a nation, with its own government. However, the ancient nation of Israel enjoyed a distinction not true of any other people on earth, before or since, in that its government functioned under the direction of God. The kings of Israel are spoken of in the Bible as sitting upon “the throne of the LORD.”—I Chron. 29:23

The full end of Israel’s kingdom came when Zedekiah, the last king of the remaining two-tribe portion of the nation, called Judah, was dethroned by King Nebuchadnezzar. (Ezek. 21:25-27) Then the entire nation—all twelve tribes—became captives in the kingdom of Babylon. This captivity lasted for seventy years. Meanwhile, Babylon was conquered by the Medes and Persians, and it was King Cyrus of Persia who issued the decree of liberation permitting the Israelites to return to

their land, but not to re-establish their own government.

From that time on, Israel continued to be a subject people, vassals to whatever nation controlled their land, which at the time of Jesus' First Advent was the Roman Empire. In the years A.D. 69 to 73, Titus, leader of the Roman army, besieged and finally destroyed Jerusalem. Then the Israelites who were not destroyed in this terrible ordeal were scattered throughout the world. This situation remained through the centuries and is referred to by the Jewish people as the period of their Dispersion—or *diaspora* in the Greek language.

### **DISPERSION FORETOLD**

Moses, the lawgiver of Israel, foretold this scattering of the Israelites among the nations, and also their regathering as we have seen it taking place during the past century. This forecast is recorded in Deuteronomy 29:24 and 30:1-6. The latter part of the prophecy reads: "The LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

Moses also foretold how long the era of Israel's loss of independence and scattering would be. As we have seen, Israel was a nation under God, and for this reason it was subject to disciplinary measures for wrongdoing. Moses refers to certain corrective punishments to which they would be subject, and

then adds, “If ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.”—Lev. 26:18

This warning of “seven times more” of punishment is repeated four times. Students of prophecy believe that this is a time measurement. A symbolic “time,” the Scriptures indicate, is a period of 360 years, and seven of these would total 2,520 years. The Biblical key to this method of reckoning is recorded in Ezekiel 4:4-6. Since Moses’ prophecy indicates that this was to be a complete and all-encompassing punishment, we believe it is reasonable to conclude that it began with the loss of their national independence and kingdom.

“Seven times” from Israel’s loss of their kingdom brings us to A.D. 1914 and the events surrounding World War I. Out of that conflict came the ejection of the Turks from Jerusalem and the land of Palestine by British General Allenby. Additionally, in late 1917, the famous Balfour Declaration was made by the British government, which opened Israel’s ancient homeland to Jewish refugees and pioneers from all lands. This resulted in the infusion of the Zionist movement with new life and hope.

While there were temporary setbacks of one sort or another, the rehabilitation of the region by the Jews and their migration to their ancient homeland continued. Out of this came the birth of the new State of Israel in 1948. Thus seen, it was in 1914, after more than 25 centuries as a captive people to other nations and empires, that the chain of events began to unfold which led to national independence for this Biblical and historic nation.

## **TIMES OF THE GENTILES**

The full significance of Israel's liberation since 1914 can be seen more clearly by noting a forecast by Jesus, who is recognized by most leading Jews today as an eminent teacher and prophet. He was questioned by his disciples concerning the end of the present age. Part of Jesus' reply was, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24) At the time of this prophecy, the Jewish nation, symbolically referred to as "Jerusalem," was being "trodden down" by the Gentiles, and this was to continue until "the times of the Gentiles" were fulfilled.

Coincidental with the overthrow of Israel's last king, the Prophet Daniel, interpreting a prophetic dream which the Lord had given to the king of Babylon, foretold a succession of four world powers, beginning with Babylon. The second of these was Medo-Persia; the third, Greece; and the fourth, Rome. The division of the Roman Empire into the various states of Europe as they existed prior to 1914 was shown by the toes of the image.—Dan. 2:31-45

To King Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel said, "The God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory." (vs. 37) This does not mean that Nebuchadnezzar sat on the throne of the Lord, as had been the case with the kings of Israel. It was simply that, beginning then with Babylon, Gentile rulership over the earth would not be interfered with by God, and this dominion would extend even over God's own people, the Israelites.

However, this was not to continue indefinitely. Daniel's prophecy pointed out that it would last only until the days of the divided Roman Empire—"the days of these kings"—as depicted by the toes of the image. (vs. 44) Then the God of heaven would set up a kingdom, or government, that would "stand for ever." This is a reference to the long-promised kingdom of the Messiah.

It is manifest from the events of history, as they relate to both Israel and the great Gentile empires of the past, and the distinct prophetic testimonies given with respect to each, that the period which Jesus described as the "times of the Gentiles" is synchronous with the "seven times" of Israel's punishment and loss of national independence. This means that the "times of the Gentiles" also reached their prophetic end in 1914. It is important to remember that the fulfillments of Bible prophecy which came about at this point in time were just the small beginning of events to which the Scriptures refer, rather than their completion. World War I, which began in 1914, marked the beginning of the complete downfall of the divided remnants of the old Roman Empire. It also led to the national sovereignty of Israel.

The nation of Israel today is a free country. No longer are the Israelites without their own government. Israel is a nation among the nations of the world, no longer a vassal to Rome or to any other Gentile power. It has a population of over 6.2 million Jews, and boasts the third highest standard of living in Asia. It is among the leading countries in the world in many areas of endeavor. The nation of Israel is not without its difficulties, however,

having fought in several wars subsequent to 1948 in order to maintain its freedom. In spite of these, Israel remains a free country, and has even grown stronger, to the point where now, some sixty-seven years later, they are considered one of the most powerful nations in the world. The incidents which led to this began at the close of the “seven times” and “times of the Gentiles” foretold by Moses and Jesus.

### **INTERVENING EVENTS**

Many of the important experiences of the Israelites as a people during the period of their rise to freedom among the nations are also foretold in the Bible. One of the prophetic expressions describing this is that God would “bring again” their “captivity.” This expression appears in Joel 3:1,2, where the Lord says: “In those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.” It is important to note that the word “captivity” in this passage, according to *Strong’s Concordance*, means “a former state of prosperity.”

In verses 9-14 of this chapter a warlike gathering of the Gentile nations is foretold, and “the valley of Jehoshaphat” is described as “the valley of decision.” In this gathering of the nations there is a preparation for war in which, symbolically speaking, the nations are said to beat their “plowshares into swords,” and their “pruninghooks into spears.” We

have seen this taking place in the era beginning with 1914, and the prophecy points out that it would be during this time that the Lord would “bring again” the “captivity,” or former prosperity, of his people. It has, in fact, been the success of Israel and their relative prosperity during this period that has caused many nations to be gathered together against them.

Equally striking is the prophecy which mentions the fact that the Lord would have “a controversy with the nations” in connection with his people and their land. (Jer. 25:31) Verse 2 of Joel 3 mentions the parting—or dividing—of the land. This also has occurred, for we know that the Gentile nations did not live up to the pledges contained in the Balfour Declaration and resolved the disputes by limiting Israel to less than half of the land which God promised. Although Israel has gained some of this land back, they still only control a portion of that which God gave to them.—Gen. 13:14,15

### **“FEAR” AND NOT “PEACE”**

Other prophecies also reveal that the period of the regathering of Israel would be fraught with many difficulties. Jeremiah wrote: “Lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, . . . and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. . . . For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. . . . Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.”—Jer. 30:3-7

The meaning of this prophecy is clear. It emphasizes that even when the time came for this historic people to be restored to their land, they were to experience fear and trembling—that it would not immediately be a time of peace and happiness for them.

To begin with, there was much rejoicing on the part of the Jews over the Balfour Declaration and its subsequent implementation by a mandate from the League of Nations. This mandate undertook to assure the Israelites a home in their Promised Land. In a very definite way the beginning of their return from their long captivity had begun.

However, not long after that, the Jews in Germany, Austria, and Poland were bitterly persecuted by the Hitler regime. This increased in intensity and continued throughout the years of World War II, during which an almost unthinkable holocaust took place, in which six million Jews were killed, and countless others were left homeless.

Meanwhile, because of Arab opposition, the door to their land of promise was closed to further immigration—closed at a time when this suffering people needed a homeland more than they ever needed one before. Truly it was “a voice of trembling, of fear,” which they heard, and not of peace.

Another prophecy which testifies in a general way to the same unusual combination of circumstances reads: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had

driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them.”—Jer. 16:14-16

This prophecy indicates that when the time came for the Israelites to return to their land, efforts would be made to induce them to return. The Lord said that he would send for “fishers” to “fish them.” This may well have been fulfilled by the Zionist organization, which was founded in 1896 by the late Theodor Herzl. Fishermen use bait to attract fish, and for many years the Zionist organization pointed out why Jews should go to their land, and the advantages that would accrue to them if they did.

However, not many Israelites were induced to go to the Promised Land by this method, although today Herzl is held in high esteem in modern Israel. One of the stirring sites in Jerusalem is the memorial garden honoring Herzl. The stone approach to his grave symbolizes the step-by-step progress of the Jewish state. Herzl’s work was not in vain.

The prophecy states that the Lord would also send for “hunters, and they shall hunt them.” Here more forceful methods are suggested. Among these undoubtedly should be included the bitter persecution at the hands of Hitler during the Holocaust. This particular driving method increased in intensity until nearly all the Jews of Europe who were not killed were made to long for their homeland and were anxious to go there when the opportunity was offered.

Another prophecy which is very much to the point along this line reads: “As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched

out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you: And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people.”—Ezek. 20:33-35

There has been much “fury” manifested during the one hundred years since 1914 in connection with the efforts of the Israelites to migrate from the various countries in which they have been domiciled, and to make a new home for themselves in the land of promise. As predicted, even those who are there are in “the wilderness of the people,” in the sense that they share with all people of the earth the distress and uncertainty of this chaotic time in human history. They have not yet found peace and security.

In next month’s issue of *The Dawn*, we will examine some of the future events described in Bible prophecy which relate to Israel and their role in God’s plan. We will also consider the glorious hope for Israel and the entire world of lasting peace, safety, and life which will be established through the righteous rule of Messiah’s kingdom—that for which so many millions have prayed for nearly two thousand years, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth.”—Matt. 6:10 ■

## **OBITUARIES**

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

Sister Pauline Trzeciak, Phoenix, AZ—April 11.  
Age, 94

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**MAY 7**—“Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”—I Corinthians 9:16 (Z. '03-174 Hymn 261)

**MAY 14**—“Speaking the truth in love, . . . grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.”—Ephesians 4:15 (Z. '03-200 Hymn 109)

**MAY 21**—“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”—II Timothy 3:16,17 (Z. '97-170 Hymn 22)

**MAY 28**—“Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body [so long as we feel entirely contented with present conditions—ourselves and our surroundings], we are absent from the Lord.”—II Corinthians 5:6 (Z. '97-305 Hymn 170)

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“Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits.”—Psalm 68:19

How loving and tender is our God, and how wise and strong! His promises have never failed those who have put their trust in him. We may feel that our efforts to be good and do good are very unproductive, that the opposition from without and within is very strong. But it is when we are weak, when we realize our own helplessness and incompetency, that we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. It is then that we may realize that his strength is made perfect in our weakness. The fact that we are weak and lame does not separate us from the love and power of our God, while we are striving to do his will; for “he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust.”

—*Songs in the Night*, May 5

# Coworkers with the Truth

**Key Verse:** “We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth.”  
—III John 8

**Selected Scripture:**  
III John

**AS IN THE PRECEDING** epistle, the author referred to himself as “the elder” and is widely accepted to be the Apostle John. He addressed this letter to “wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.” (III John 1) Although Gaius appeared to be frail in his physical health, John

acknowledged his spiritual vitality, and rejoiced in the testimony he received from brethren that Gaius “walketh in the truth.” (vss. 2-4) John especially commended Gaius for the hospitality and utilization of his personal resources in helping to provide for the needs of servants engaged in the Gospel ministry.—vss. 5-7

The Apostle Paul also stressed a need for believers to live in accordance with the example of Christian conduct manifested by faithful brethren of the Early Church. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.”—Phil. 4:8,9

Our Key Verse is an exhortation to us, as consecrated believers, to be alert to opportunities for providing whatever support we can lend towards other brethren who travel from place to place in promulgating God's Word. Such assistance may include entertaining such servants in our homes, and in some instances, as appropriate, it may involve rendering financial aid. In all cases, however, we have the privilege of supporting those able to be more actively engaged in the ministry through our prayers on their behalf, and by words of encouragement.

John continues, saying, "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."—III John 9-11

In contrast to faithful Gaius, it was needful for John to issue a public rebuke to Diotrephes, who manifested pride and a dictatorial spirit, even to the point of using his influence to prevent others from showing hospitality to John and other faithful laborers in God's service. As a conclusion to this epistle, John, by contrast, cites Demetrius as a trustworthy brother to Gaius, one whose Christian conduct stood approved.—vs. 12

A similar lesson to that of this epistle was also penned by the Apostle John, not only for those who lived in his day, but also for all consecrated followers of Christ throughout the entire Gospel Age. These words, given to John by the risen Lord, state: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10 ■

# Gifts of the Spirit

**Key Verse:** *“The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.”*  
—*I Corinthians 12:7*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*I Corinthians 12:1-11*

**PAUL IS HERE ADDRESS-**ing the brethren in Corinth who formerly were idol worshippers. He reminds them that those of Christ’s followers who had been recipients of certain miraculous gifts had such powers conferred upon them by no other source than God’s Holy Spirit. These gifts, when employed, would serve as a witness to strengthen the faith of prospective believers that the “good news” of the Gospel proclaimed an opportunity of salvation for all mankind from sin and death. They would further testify to the fact that Christ had laid down his life as a sacrifice, and was subsequently resurrected to glory and honor, being seated at the right hand of God. The invitation to become footstep followers of our Lord, to serve his cause faithfully unto death and reign with him in God’s kingdom, was another important aspect of this testimony. Thus, Paul said that any who would refer to Jesus as “accursed” would give evidence of not being associated with the Christian ministry.—*I Cor. 12:1-3*

Our lesson continues: “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.” (vss. 4-6) Then follows our Key Verse, which asserts that during apostolic times, all consecrated

believers had a “manifestation of the Spirit,” given for the purpose of helping to edify the body of Christ. Indeed, some brethren had multiple talents that could be employed in their service to God.

Paul then delineates some of the many gifts which those begotten of the Holy Spirit might possess. He mentions wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing powers, working of miracles, prophecy—that is, the ability to elucidate God’s Word. He cites the discerning of righteous versus evil spirits, the ability to speak in different languages and dialects, as well as the gift of interpreting these so that the Gospel message would be comprehended by the hearers in their local language.—vss. 8-10

All of these aforementioned gifts were provided by the Holy Spirit, though they were distributed among the believers in accordance with the will of God. The recognition of this truth should have served to prevent the recipients from feelings of pride or superiority as compared to others without that particular gift. “Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”—I Cor. 4:7

Our lesson concludes as Paul uses the human body as an illustration of both unity as well as diversity. It is one, but is composed of many members. Just as there were diversities of gifts during the period of the Early Church, consecrated believers all down through the age have been different in various respects, as members of the body of Christ. From God’s standpoint, this is essential towards the fulfillment of his eternal purpose.—chap. 12:11,12

May we ever appreciate the fact that this entire arrangement is under divine supervision. When the church is united in glory with Christ Jesus, those who will be with him are all spoken of as “called, and chosen, and faithful.”—Rev. 17:14 ■

# One Body by the Spirit

**Key Verse:** *“By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”*  
—*I Corinthians 12:13*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*I Corinthians 12:12-31*

“Jews or Gentiles” by birth, or “bond or free.” All members of the body are baptized into Christ, and are to look to him as their “head.” Thus, they are to be considered separate from the world and manifest oneness of devotion to God.

“The body is not one member, but many,” Paul continues. “If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?”—vss. 14-17

**THE HUMAN BODY, AS** described by Paul, is illustrative of the body of Christ. It is composed of many members which are diverse, but who function together in a cohesive manner. He states: “As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.”—I Cor. 12:12

In our Key Verse, Paul emphasizes the fact that each member of this “one body” is begotten of the same Holy Spirit, regardless of whether they be

The members of the body of Christ are composed of those who are willing to be directed by the Lord, just as the human body is controlled by the head, where the brain is in control and the various components of the body respond to its direction. To the degree that the human mind is functioning normally, the actions of the various body parts will perform in a proper manner.

In the illustration of the body, it is not reasonable to expect that someone who is rightly exercised will use one member of the body to inflict pain or suffering upon another body part. Thus, it would not be normal for someone to use their feet to run into the midst of busy traffic, knowing of the high potential for being struck by a vehicle. Likewise, it would be abnormal for someone to use his hands to pick up a sharp instrument and thrust it into some other part of the body, realizing the harmful effects of such action.

The “body of Christ” is composed of many different members, but there is only one spirit—God’s Holy Spirit—that should be reflected in each of these. The standard for determining whether this “one Spirit” is found in each consecrated believer might be found by applying the following criterion: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”—Phil. 2:5

When we surrender ourselves to the will of God, he will guide us in many ways—how we spend our time, the way we use our talents, the things we say, where we will go, and what we will do. His direction will govern our very being. If we have fully given our all in consecration, then it will be true that we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. (Rom. 6:3,4; Col. 3:3) This “burial” by baptism into Jesus’ death means our daily renouncing of earthly aims, hopes, and ambitions. If we are faithful in so doing, not only will we walk in newness of life now, but we also have the hope of a glorious heavenly reward in God’s kingdom.—I Cor. 15:49,53

# Gift of Languages

**Key Verse:** “*What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.*”

—*I Corinthians*  
14:15

**Selected Scriptures:**  
*Acts* 2:1-7,12;  
*I Corinthians*  
14:13-19

## **THIS LESSON COMMENCES**

with a dramatic manifestation of God’s Holy Spirit bestowed upon the Early Church. “When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as

the Spirit gave them utterance.”—Acts 2:1-4

This occurrence was in fulfillment of a promise made by Christ to his disciples following his resurrection and prior to his ascension to the Heavenly Father. He had appeared to them on several occasions to strengthen their faith by giving them proofs that he was no longer in the tomb. Additionally, they were to be “endued with power from on high,” which would enable them to carry out their mission of proclaiming the Gospel throughout the world. This privilege has continued to be exercised by faithful Christians even to this very day.—Luke 24:48,49

At the time this miracle occurred, devout Jews from various countries had made a religious pilgrimage to Jerusalem and were conversant only in the language of their adopted country. Nevertheless, as Christ's disciples testified concerning Jesus' resurrection and the Gospel of the kingdom, their hearers were amazed that as Galileans, these unlearned followers of Jesus had the ability to declare such a profound message, which they were each able to understand in their own language.—Acts 2:5-12

The Apostle Paul emphasized the importance of publicly expounding God's promises and purposes for mankind in a manner that would edify the hearers, as opposed to merely speaking in an unknown language to impress others that he had been favored with this special gift. Thus, any words spoken to others without interpreting them for the benefit of the listeners would be unprofitable, and an evidence of lacking in the proper spirit of love.—I Cor. 14:1-13

In our Key Verse, Paul underscores the fact that even the great privilege and necessity of public prayer should be done with a view to blessing others. This can only be achieved when the words expressed are understood and the listeners thus enabled to acquiesce to the spirit of the petition.

Although as an apostle, Paul was greatly used by God in declaring many aspects of the divine plan of salvation, he also gave appropriate utterance as to how his gift of language should be used. "Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."—vs. 19

May we as believers similarly witness to others in a manner that will assist them in understanding God's glorious plan of salvation that will bless all the willing and obedient members of the human family. Let us strive to have all our words "excel to the edifying of the church."—vs. 12 ■

# The Greatest Gift Is Love

*Key Verse: "Now  
abideth faith,  
hope, charity, these  
three; but the  
greatest of these is  
charity."  
—I Corinthians  
13:13*

*Selected Scripture:  
I Corinthians 13*

He said love was of greater importance than the ability to comprehend the great mysteries of God, witnessing to the cause of Christ, or even sacrificing one's earthly possessions to benefit others. Without the genuine, heartfelt motive of love prompting such actions, they would be profitless.—I Cor. 13:1-3

Paul then articulates characteristics related to true charity, or "love" as it would be more appropriately rendered. "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."—vss. 4-7

After describing the qualities possessed by those who exercise the spirit of love, Paul contrasts the permanent nature of love with the temporary character of the various

gifts of the Spirit. He notes that love “never faileth,” meaning it will continue throughout eternity, whereas the miraculous gifts were both temporary and partial. (vss. 8-10) Some Christians teach that the miraculous gifts which were prevalent during the Early Church continue to be manifested even today. Paul asserts in our lesson, however, that these gifts conferred by the laying on of hands from the apostles would cease. (Acts 8:18) They would no longer be necessary since the inspired writings of the Bible, when completed, would be acknowledged as the source of God’s truth.—II Tim. 3:15-17

Since the earth is to be “filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea,” the ability to accumulate information and understand God’s word will not cease. (Hab. 2:14) It is, rather, the miraculous inspirations and revelations of divine truths at the forepart of the Gospel Age which appear to be referenced in the Scripture passages of our lesson.—I Cor. 13:8-10

Paul also contrasts the gifts of the Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit. The former he likens to childlike immaturity in Christ. The mature believer, however, would focus upon an increased development of the Holy Spirit and its various fruits and graces as more desired qualities.—vs. 11

There are many Scriptures which emphasize love as being essential towards pleasing our Heavenly Father. During his earthly ministry, when questioned on this matter, Jesus indicated the importance of loving God supremely and loving one’s neighbor as himself as being the means of fulfilling the Law. (Matt 22:36-40) He also set forth the standard by which believers should measure their attainment of this all important characteristic. “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” (John 13:34) Thus, in summary, our Key Verse emphasizes that the greatest of all gifts is the possession of “*agape*” love—the hallmark of an advanced Christian. Let us strive to attain that goal! ■

# Parables of Luke 15

The Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, and Lost Son

*“I say unto you,  
there is joy in the  
presence of the  
angels of God over  
one sinner that  
repenteth.”*

—*Luke 15:10*

## **THE THREE PARABLES**

found in Luke chapter 15 are not recorded in any of the other gospel accounts. This, however, in no way diminishes their importance to us. They were addressed particularly to the scribes and the Pharisees, but within the hearing of “the publicans and sinners” who “drew near . . . to hear” Jesus.—vss. 1-3

As they had done on previous occasions, the scribes and Pharisees murmured because Jesus associated himself with sinners, even eating with them. It was the attitude of vaunted self-righteousness of these Jewish religious leaders, and their resentment of the fact that Jesus showed interest in the publicans and sinners, which gave rise to the three parables of our lesson. Of equal importance is that Jesus also taught, by these parables, that upon the basis of true repentance, sinners could attain the favor of his Heavenly Father.

## THE LOST SHEEP

In the parable of the lost sheep, we are told of a shepherd who had a hundred sheep, ninety-nine of which were safely in the fold. However, one had gone astray and was lost. The parable shows that the shepherd under such circumstances would leave the ninety-nine, “and go after that which is lost, until he find it.”—vs. 4

As a rebuke to the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees, the application of this lesson is evident. These religious leaders of Israel considered themselves to be in harmony with God and therefore safe within the “sheepfold” of divine care. To them the publicans and sinners were outside the realm of God’s blessings, and were “lost.” Yet, they were doing little or nothing to find and rescue them, and murmured against Jesus when he showed an interest in them.

On another occasion, and for the same reason, the scribes and Pharisees questioned the propriety of Jesus’ eating with publicans and sinners. The account says, “When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Mark 2:17) The sinners being called to repentance in this lesson would correspond to the lost sheep of the parable.

Actually, the scribes and the Pharisees were as much “lost” as were the publicans and sinners. Outwardly they made professions of holiness, but inwardly they were “full of dead men’s bones,” and were hypocritical in most of their professions. (Matt. 23:16-33) However, the lesson of the parable

was based upon the professions of this hypocritical class, not what they actually were. They claimed to be the shepherds of Israel, but showed little concern for those who had gone astray, and they resented it when Jesus displayed interest in these “lost” sheep.

The parable clearly sets forth the divine attitude toward those who are lost in sin and condemned to death. That attitude is one of sympathy and love which is reflected in that most precious text, “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) This love was demonstrated toward us “while we were yet sinners.” (Rom. 5:8) Paul wrote that “Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”—I Tim. 1:15

Since this is the loving attitude of our Heavenly Father and of Jesus toward those not yet within the special fold of divine care, it should be ours also. We should shun the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees, and make ourselves available to assist the “lost” and needy ones in the world around us. This does not mean that we are to lose interest in our brethren who are safely within the fold in order to seek and help the lost. Rather, our love should be extended beyond those who love us and with whom we are closely associated.—Matt. 5:46-48

In applying this general lesson of the parable, we do not need to make a specific application of the proportion of those in the fold to the lost sheep, which is ninety-nine to one. The reverse of this has been more nearly true, for the vast majority of mankind in all ages have not been among those safe in the fold of special divine care. Even within

the nation of Israel at the time of our Lord, the publicans and sinners doubtless outnumbered those who made serious professions of endeavoring to be pleasing to God.

The ratio of the professed righteous to the sinners, however, could have been the Master's way of driving this lesson home with greater force. The thought would be that even if it were true that there was only one lost sheep, those who really loved the Lord and desired to be guided by his spirit of love could not be content until that sheep was found and brought back to the fold. This is the principle which should guide all of the Lord's people.

There is also a possible further meaning of the parable, based on the fact that in many respects the nation of Israel was typical of all mankind. We might think of the lost sheep as representing God's entire human creation, while the ninety-nine sheep which did not go astray could represent the many orders of creation which remained in harmony with God. Among these are the holy angels, "principalities and powers," "thrones," and "dominions."—Eph. 3:10; Col. 1:16

In this view, Jesus would be the "good shepherd," the representative of the Heavenly Father, the even greater shepherd. (John 10:11; Ps. 23:1) The work of recovering the lost sheep began at our Lord's First Advent. Here Jesus left the "ninety and nine"—the various orders of heavenly hosts—and came to earth "to seek and to save" the lost sheep. (Luke 19:10) This required that he be made flesh, and that he give his flesh, his humanity, in sacrifice for the sins of the world. (Heb. 2:9,14; John 1:14; 6:51) This phase of Jesus' rescue mission has already been

accomplished. The lost sheep—the fallen Adamic race—has been “found,” so to speak, but is not yet restored to the fold of the Creator’s favor and care.

When created perfect, man not only had the opportunity to live forever in what would have become a worldwide paradise, but he was also given dominion over all of God’s lower earthly creatures. (Gen. 1:27,28) The return of the lost sheep to the fold implies the restoration of this dominion which was lost because of sin. Paul wrote, “We see not yet all things put under” man, “but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” (Heb. 2:8,9) In other words, the rescue work has begun, and eventually—at the end of the Messianic kingdom—the lost sheep will have been returned to the fold.

This work of rescuing the sin-cursed and dying race from death is made possible by the death of Jesus as man’s Redeemer. Paul wrote that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, . . . and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” Because of this, “we are ambassadors for Christ.” (II Cor. 5:19,20) The followers of Jesus are associated with him in the work of reconciling the world to God. During the Gospel Age these are being prepared to be “kings and priests unto God” to assist in bringing back the lost sheep during the age to come.—Rev. 1:6

The parable states that when the shepherd returned home after rescuing the sheep, “he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.”

To this, Jesus added, “I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”—Luke 15:6,7

The fact that Jesus speaks of the joy in heaven that results from the shepherd’s return with the announcement that the lost sheep has been recovered, lends weight to the thought that there is a proper larger application of the parable to the entire human race as the lost sheep, and to the ninety and nine as representing the heavenly hosts. Certainly there will be joy among all God’s intelligent creatures on every plane of existence when sinful man has been reconciled to the Creator and restored to the fold of his loving favor and care.

In this we are also reminded that all who are filled and guided by God’s Holy Spirit are of necessity pained to realize that there are those who are alienated from him through sin and its effects. We can also be sure that even now, whenever a member of the Adamic race is led to repentance through the “word of reconciliation,” and surrenders himself fully to do God’s will, there is rejoicing in heaven. Indeed, there should also be gladness among all of the Lord’s people here on earth on such occasions.

## **THE LOST COIN**

The parable of the lost coin is similar in import to that of the lost sheep. Indeed, by comparing the introduction to each it becomes evident that Jesus intended one to supplement the other. (Luke 15:4,8) It was customary among Jewish women at that time to wear on the forehead a fringe of coin bangles.

These might be of gold or silver, and sometimes represented her dowry. Therefore, the loss of one of these coins would be of greater significance than merely what was represented by its intrinsic value.

The search for the coin would mean that, instead of being abandoned as something of little consequence, it was considered of great importance. The neighbors, learning first of the loss, and then of the recovery, rejoiced greatly with the woman who suffered the loss. Jesus points out, as he concludes the parable, that it is another illustration of the joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.—Luke 15:8,9

In addition to the larger application of this parable to the recovery of the human race from sin and death, it further impresses the principle of interest in, and consideration for, those who are in need of help. Even one human life is of great value to our Heavenly Father, and should likewise be to us. It is important that we manifest this interest in others in our daily lives.

In this regard, we should examine ourselves and pose certain questions as to our daily dealings with mankind. How do we manifest God's spirit of love toward our fellowmen? What are we doing from day to day that substantiates our professed interest in humanity in general? How are we showing our concern for neighbors, coworkers, friends, and family? How much are we doing to help others who are sincerely trying to find their way back to God? How much are we sacrificing of time and energy in seeking to find those who may be a "lost sheep" or "lost coin?"

We know, of course, that this is not the time in God's plan for the recovery of humanity as a whole from sin and death. However, if we are to be

associated with Jesus in that great future rescue work, it is essential that we demonstrate our enthusiasm now by the spirit of love which will be the basis of that great kingdom work. This we can do only by diligently, and at whatever cost may be involved, doing all we can to bless those all about us. We should be happy to provide any and all who may have a hearing ear the knowledge of God and his loving provision to restore all who are lost back to the fold of his gracious care through the Good Shepherd.

### **THE PRODIGAL SON**

The third parable of Jesus recorded in Luke chapter 15 is an interesting story, and one which might well have been true in the experience of many throughout the centuries. A certain man, apparently of means, had two sons who, in the ordinary course of events, would inherit their father's estate. The younger of these two sons said to his father, "Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." The father granted the son's request, and a short time later "the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living."—vss. 12,13

Not surprisingly, as the parable continues, difficulties then came to pass. "There arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine." (vss. 14,15) However, this was far from satisfactory. "He would have been glad to eat what the pigs were eating, but no one gave him a thing."—vs. 16, *Contemporary English Version* (Continued on page 36)

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*(Continued from page 31)* In this degrading situation of dire need this younger son finally “came to himself,” in that he realized he had acted very foolishly, and became repentant. He reflected upon the contrasting situation at home, where even his father’s hired servants had plenty to eat. (Luke 15:17) He was now so humbled that he decided he would be glad to return to his father as merely a servant, not feeling worthy to be called a son any longer.

Thus, with this repentant attitude, the younger son said, “I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.” He carried out this purpose, and upon arriving home offered himself to his father as a servant.—vss. 18-21

Then comes the important lesson of the parable. The father forgave his son, and received him back into his family. Indeed, a feast was arranged to celebrate the occasion of the prodigal son’s return, including the killing of a “fatted calf.” (vs. 23) The feast and its accompanying merrymaking were in progress when the elder son came in from the field. However, when he learned what had happened, he was not at all pleased.

The elder son refused to take part in the celebration. He complained to his father that although he had served him faithfully throughout the years that his brother had been wasting his life, no celebration had ever been arranged for him. For him no “fatted calf” had ever been killed and no opportunity given to make merry with his friends.—vss. 28-30

This parable plainly illustrates the sin of jealousy in connection with a matter of no less importance

than life itself. Unlike the elder son, who was jealous of the favor which returned to his younger brother, the father looked upon the homecoming of his wayward son as though he had received him back from the dead. (vs. 24) His sin had not destroyed the father's love for him. In fact, the father seemed to have even greater love for him than before he went astray.

It is important to note that the prodigal son had repented of his wrongdoing, and had returned humbly to his father, not even asking to be reinstated as a son, but merely that he might become one of the servants. Here we have illustrated an important principle in God's dealings with all his intelligent creatures, whether angels or men, Jews or Gentiles, Pharisees or publicans. The humble realization of one's mistakes and true heart repentance are essential in order to receive God's forgiveness.

God's love for the sin-cursed and Satan-blinded human race motivated him to send his beloved Son to be man's Redeemer and Savior. Thus he made provision for the reconciliation of mankind. As individuals, however, no one receives any lasting benefit from this except upon the basis of repentance and humble dedication to do the Father's will. This fact points out to us that there are two aspects of a sinner's return to God. There is God's part in providing the atoning blood, and there is the sinner's part of repentance and consecration.

As for the scribes and Pharisees to whom the parable was addressed, they were very much like the elder son, who thought that he was entitled to special consideration because of his superior conduct. Nothing is said in the parable to indicate that the

elder son had been hypocritically righteous, although Jesus had charged the scribes and Pharisees on other occasions with hypocrisy. Evidently the Master wanted us to know that even those who sincerely serve God, and to the best of their ability endeavor to be righteous, have no right to be jealous when sinners repent and are accepted with rejoicing into the favor of the Lord.

On the other hand, the lesson might also be that no matter how outwardly righteous one might appear, to take the attitude of the elder brother in the parable would itself indicate an impure heart condition. It would surely reveal a lack of true godlikeness. Our Heavenly Father stands ready to embrace all who return to him in humility and true repentance. This is illustrated in the brief parable Jesus gave on another occasion of the Pharisee and publican who went up to the temple to pray. The Pharisee thanked God that he was not like other debased men, especially the publican. The publican, however, smote upon his breast, and asked God to be merciful to him, a sinner. He went away justified, but the Pharisee did not.—Luke 18:10-14

Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, “Ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.” “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”—Matt. 23:13,23

From these denunciations it is obvious that the scribes and Pharisees had little or no compassion

for those whom they considered at variance with their own standards of holiness. Justice and mercy, based on true faith in the divine arrangements of love, had little place in their viewpoints and attitudes.

In the parable of the prodigal son, the father spoke of having received him back from the dead. (Luke 15:24) To him it was as though the young man had really been dead. Certainly we can understand the heart rejoicing and sympathetic understanding of this loving father when he saw his son “when he was yet a great way off,” walking toward him.—vs. 20

Sadly, the father’s sentiments are not shared by many, even today. Most are not willing to believe that sinners who have gone into death will be restored to life, or can possibly receive any consideration from the Heavenly Father. How thankful we are to have learned that the love of God is broader than the measure of many human minds which have been distorted by erroneous views concerning him.

The important lesson of the parable to us is that we are to maintain a sympathetic and loving attitude toward mankind. We should also rejoice at any evidence of repentance and endeavors by fallen man to walk in the ways of the Lord more uprightly. Our attitude toward those who repent of their wrongdoing should be based upon what they are today, rather than on their erroneous conduct of yesterday. Only thus we will be like our loving and merciful Heavenly Father. ■

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# Being “Determined”

*“I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”*

—*I Corinthians 2:2*

## **THE WORDS OF OUR TEXT**

should be familiar to each of us as followers of Christ. They speak of the serious mindset we must have if we are to prove faithful to our Heavenly Father. In our consideration of this subject we, as consecrated children of God, must understand the importance of this verse and others similar to it in significance, as they should help us focus all of our attention upon attaining unto “the hope of the gospel.” (Col. 1:23) Having responded to the heavenly call, the gospel message should compel us to be zealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of this “good news,” leaving all other subjects, however interesting, behind. If this is not done fully, we may be “turned out of the way,” and fail to make our “calling and election sure.”—Heb. 12:13; II Pet. 1:10

## **KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM OF THIS WORLD**

In this day, we have constant access to knowledge and information that is available in the world, and

it can be easy for us to become distracted. Literally, within the palm of our hand, we can simply ask a question to a “smart” phone, and in seconds a voice will give us an answer. This and countless other examples provide much evidence that we are indeed living during the time prophesied when “knowledge shall be increased.” (Dan. 12:4) The single focus emphasized in our opening verse in no way means that we are not to take advantage of the amazing tools of technology that we readily have at our disposal to advance the message of truth. Much is being done by the Dawn, and in many other circles of the brotherhood around the globe, to spread the Gospel of the kingdom through the use of today’s technology. We rejoice in the reports of these efforts, and thank the Heavenly Father for these opportunities.

The things we are to resist are those which pertain to the wisdom of this world, and its general spirit of pride. This spirit comes from the Adversary, who desires to distract us from being about our “Father’s business.” (Luke 2:49) We are to divest ourselves of selfishness, which seeks fleshly gratification and advancement, and which envies others. The importance of this is illustrated in these words from James 3:14-17, which reads: “If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” How true it is that the trend of worldly wisdom is mostly in this direction. James continues, “The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

These words from James complement those of Paul in our theme text, as they provide further insight concerning what we should be “determined” to know and do in our consecrated walk. The wisdom from above, which has the qualities of purity, peaceableness, gentleness, and those others that James cites, was personified in “Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” Thus, to be “determined” only to know him, means that we will seek to obtain this same kind of “wisdom from above.” The Book of Proverbs also speaks of this wisdom, telling us that “Wisdom is the principal thing,” and “The fear [reverence] of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.”—Prov. 4:7; 9:10

### **FOLLOWING CHRIST’S EXAMPLE**

Just as Christ embodies the wisdom described by James, he also exemplifies the wisdom which from eternity has been an attribute of God, the Creator. Part of God’s wisdom, shared by his Son, is the desire to impart the divine revelation of his plan to those earnestly seeking to know and understand it. Those who desire this heavenly wisdom, and who possess the proper humble attitude of heart and mind to receive such instruction from the Lord, are sure to be given a knowledge of whatever truths are needful for their spiritual development. To them, it will be provided as “meat in due season” for their nourishment and strengthening.—Ps. 145:15; Matt. 24:45

The wonderful truths of the Bible fit in exact harmony with those things we should be desirous of in our spiritual life, and also with respect to our message to others. We are commissioned to be “ministers of Christ.” (I Cor. 4:1) This includes the

instructions: “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. . . . Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist [preacher of the gospel], make full proof of thy ministry.” (II Tim. 4:2,5) As ministers of Christ, we are to preach the Word with patience, gentleness, forbearance and sound doctrine. Thus, our ministry will resound loudly to the glory of God, and his Son Christ Jesus. If faithful, we have the assurance that we will, in the full sense of the word, be made “able ministers of the new testament [covenant]” in Christ’s kingdom.—II Cor. 3:6

## **OUR FOCUS**

In further consideration of the admonition in our text to be fully “determined” to know “Jesus Christ, and him crucified,” we here suggest three specific aspects of endeavor upon which we should particularly focus. To be truly single-minded in our divine service requires that we:

1. Carefully and continually study God’s plan as revealed in his Word, which he has hidden “from the wise, . . . and hast revealed . . . unto babes.”—Luke 10:21

2. Have our hearts and minds illuminated, and have our life led, by the power and influence of God’s Holy “Spirit of truth.”—John 16:13; Eph. 1:18; Col. 1:9

3. Possess an enthusiastic zeal for the accomplishment of God’s will in our life, and a desire to be “zealous of good works.”—Titus 2:14

Fulfillment of these endeavors means that we will concentrate our energies upon those things which

will successfully lead us beyond the veil. The Apostle Paul refers to this, and points out that gaining such a complete victory is not an assured thing, and we must be very careful in all aspects of our Christian life. “If possibly I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already received it, or have been already perfected; but I pursue, if indeed I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ.” (Phil. 3:11,12, *Emphatic Diaglott*) The Lord has “laid hold” upon us, calling us out of darkness. He desires that we keep our hearts loyal to him, and through character development and sacrifice “lay hold on that for which” we have been called. Paul describes this grand invitation as both a “holy” and a “heavenly calling.” (II Tim. 1:9; Heb. 3:1) If we “attain to the [first] resurrection,” we will be given the great privilege of showing forth God’s great character to the world of mankind, and of blessing them, in the kingdom.

## **PRESSING ON**

Reading further Paul’s words to the brethren at Philippi, he says, “This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark [along the line, *Emphatic Diaglott*] for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.” (Phil. 3:13-15) This “one thing” that Paul did, which we are also to do, is actually made up of many related requirements. However, it can be summarized as having everything in our life centered on one purpose—that is, to please God in thought, word, and deed. “The thoughts of the righteous are

right.” (Prov. 12:5) If we have “right” thoughts, they will be in accord with the new mind and will—the New Creature—and we will strive to put off the “old man with his deeds.”—Col. 3:9

Later, in this same chapter, we are told, “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” (vs. 17) This harmonizes with Jesus’ admonition that “unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.” (Luke 12:48) There is a great responsibility which comes to us if we are counted as God’s chosen people—his “elect.” As his ambassadors, our actions and words should properly represent our Lord and bring honor to his name at all times. We each are to be an “epistle, . . . known and read of all men.” (II Cor. 3:2) In order to make this a reality, we must strive to meet the requirements of the “race” set before us. It is important to note that these are the same for each one running the race, but they may be attained at different rates among the body members. For all, however, it is a narrow way which leads to glory, honor, and immortality. We may indeed develop individually at different rates, but we all must progress and “press on.”

Paul said concerning himself, “I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.” (I Cor. 9:26) We must follow his example in this regard, laying aside “every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and . . . run with patience the race that is set before us.” (Heb. 12:1) We have the strength to do this because the Heavenly Father grants it to us. We also have the assistance provided by “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set

before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him . . . , lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”—Heb. 12:2,3

### **“NOT TO KNOW ANY THING”**

Looking further at the life of Paul as an example to us, we see that following his conversion on the road to Damascus, his days and years were as though he knew nothing else, “save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” The course that he chose to follow after, being called and chosen of God, was one of self-abandonment and sacrifice. His knowledge on other subjects, which was extensive, or the many things which might have otherwise tended to distract him from fulfilling his consecration vows, he knew must be put behind him.

As previously noted, we too must forget “those things which are behind,” and “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling.” As it was with Paul, it is critical that we set proper priorities and standards in our life, both concerning our conduct as well as our understanding of God’s Word. With regard to daily conduct, we are told, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” (Col. 3:2) This includes the putting away of pride, selfishness, and those things which may promote and call attention to the flesh and self-interest. In connection with our understanding of God’s Word, we must give no “heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” (I Tim 4:1) False doctrines and creeds of men add error upon error, and Jesus warned that these would “seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.”—Mark 13:22

The records of the experiences from the life of Paul and other faithful followers of Christ are provided as examples for us in our own experiences and Christian walk. They should serve to help us in fully applying ourselves to do the “one thing” to which we were called. “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”—Phil. 1:21

### **“AMONG YOU”**

Our one goal, as was our Lord’s and his disciples such as Paul, is to prove acceptable to the Father, and to do so with all our might and energy. It is to be done to the extent of giving up our own wills entirely and presenting our “bodies a living sacrifice,” which is deemed a “reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1) Part of our privilege in this regard is that of helping others run the race, that we all might reach the goal and gain the “victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (I Cor. 15:57) We should be motivated by a sincere desire to be determined to know “among you”—our fellow brethren—nothing other than the one goal that we all are striving for. This is the highest form of love in action, and is exemplified in the words of the Master: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”—John 15:13

Paul was fully activated by God’s divine teachings, summed up in love. He said, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,” even though it brought him much ridicule and persecution. How was Paul able to make this claim? Continuing, he answers that the “gospel of Christ” demonstrates “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” (Rom. 1:16) His

further explanation concerning the importance of this method of reasoning is found in the next verse: “Therein”—in the salvation provided by the power of God—“is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”—Rom. 1:17

In considering Paul’s reference in this text to “The just,” we realize that, according to the flesh, “There is none righteous, no, not one.” (chap. 3:10) There are none perfectly sound in mind and body. Being justified by faith in the blood of Christ, however, the truly consecrated are reckoned as upright before God, covered with the “robe of righteousness” provided through Jesus. (vss. 24,25; Isa. 61:10) Through this arrangement, our Adamic imperfections are covered. Additionally, by claiming Jesus Christ as our Advocate, the merit of his sacrifice is ever efficacious to keep us blameless in the sight of justice. Thus is shown “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.”—Rom. 3:22

We read in I Peter 3:12, “The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” This verse indicates it is not enough to be counted as “justified” by the blood of Jesus, but our deeds also must be, so far as possible, upright and good. We are to daily strive to be righteous and pure in our intentions, thoughts, words and deeds. Although perfection cannot be attained, nothing short of our maximum effort will be found to be fully acceptable to the Heavenly Father.

The just, Paul says, shall “live by faith.” What great importance is given here to the quality of

faith. We are told that we “should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 3) “The faith” is God’s Word of truth, and we must have absolute belief in his holy utterances. God’s Word provides us the details of his great plan of the ages, and his precious promises assure us of its fulfillment and completion. We are also to “live . . . by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”—Matt. 4:4

The “Word of God,” or *Logos* in the Greek, also refers to his only begotten Son, Jesus. Since his creation by God, he has been the Heavenly Father’s faithful mouthpiece, both in his prehuman existence and as a perfect human being upon the earth. “The Word [*Logos*] was with God. . . . All things were made by him.” (John 1:1-3) God’s Son was daily his Father’s delight while in his prehuman heavenly existence. As the perfect man Jesus, we are told that, beginning at a very young age, he “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” (Luke 2:52) When this “Word of God” was baptized in the River Jordan, “the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”—Matt. 3:16,17

### **GOD’S WORD IS SURE**

Paul knew that the Gospel message—“good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people”—would withstand the darkness and confusion of Greece and Rome, and the attacks of the so-called scholars of that day. Therefore, he was not fearful of bringing it into contrast with all of the philosophies

of men. Rather, he said, “For necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”—I Cor. 9:16

The attacks against the plan of God, even his very existence, and the truth concerning his only begotten Son, Jesus, are in many ways the same today as they were in Paul’s day, although they may be presented in a more subtle manner now than in former times. With his many deceptions, Satan will appear as an “angel of light.” (II Cor. 11:14) However, he is the ruler of darkness, and “hateth the light.” (Eph. 6:12; John 3:20) This will be so until his reign over mankind is brought to an end, and sin and evil are destroyed forever. In Messiah’s kingdom, Satan and his evil influences will be fully restrained, and the whole world will come to a knowledge of the blessed and glorious character of the Heavenly Father. They will then know that “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” (I John 1:5) Mankind will also praise and honor his Son, Christ Jesus—“the light of the world.”—John 9:5

As consecrated believers, who at the present time have been blessed with an understanding of the Gospel message, its hope is so grand that we should desire to hear it again and again, with thanksgiving. Each of us, in our own personal meditation, should reflect on the words of the Master, “Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.” (Matt. 13:16) We are indeed privileged to have had our eyes opened, and our ears unstopped, through the power of the Holy Spirit, in order that we might receive and understand the message of truth.

We are assured by the Scriptures, and by our faith in the promises of God, that his plans and

purposes are being thoroughly worked out. We continue to claim the promise made to Abraham, through the oath-bound covenant given to him by God, that “in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 22:18) Laying claim to such a grand promise should instill within us a renewed desire to be faithful to our vows of consecration. It should incite us to daily seek to know more of God’s wonderful character, and to partake of his guidance and instructions which he so graciously provides for our spiritual benefit. We should also be energized, as light-bearers, to impart God’s promises to others, telling the poor, groaning creation that a time of great rejoicing will soon come to all mankind. We can share the wonderful truth given by Peter on the Day of Pentecost: “The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus.” (Acts 3:13) God has given him “all power . . . in heaven and in earth.”—Matt. 28:18

### **“JESUS CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED”**

The primary lesson of these words is that we fully understand and appreciate the importance of Jesus’ death as the ransom price, provided for Adam and his posterity. He “gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” (I Tim. 2:6) This is the essence of the Gospel message. Paul says, “I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, . . . wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved. . . . That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” (I Cor. 15:1-4) Jesus death as man’s Redeemer

was necessary only once. There was no need for him to ever be crucified “afresh.” (Heb. 6:6) Later in his epistle to the Hebrews, Paul reminds us of this important fact. “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.” “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”—Heb. 9:28; 10:10

The divine promises of present and future blessings are for our special benefit, that we might be “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” (I Pet. 1:5) The phrase “unto salvation” signifies the goal before us. We must remember that a work still must be done within us—a work of transformation and sanctification. “This is the will of God,” Paul said, “even your sanctification.” (I Thess. 4:3) “Christ . . . loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”—Eph. 5:25-27

In conclusion, let us keep constantly before our hearts and minds the many promises given to those who are “determined” to fulfill their consecration vows. “Your life is hid with Christ in God.” “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Have “boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us.” “Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.” “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.”—Col. 3:3; Phil. 2:13; Heb. 10:19,20; Ps. 116:15; I Cor. 15:51,52 ■

# General Convention Bulletin

July 18-23, 2015

**THE 2015 GENERAL CONVENTION** will be upon us in less than three months. If you have not yet made plans to attend, now is the time to do so. We encourage as many as are able to join in the blessings of this annual gathering of the Lord's people. The convention will be held on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Hotel-like rooms with private bathrooms in the Living-Learning Center (LLC), family style apartments (also air conditioned) with private bathrooms (APTS), and housing with two rooms sharing one bathroom (not air conditioned) in other facilities are available on campus. A child may sleep on a bedroom floor at no charge in their own sleeping bag if both beds are occupied.

The convention program appears in this issue of *The Dawn*, on the pages following the General Convention registration form. Included on the program is a panel discussion on the subject, "Comparing Jesus in Hebrews to: Angels, Moses, Aaron, and Typical Sacrifices." We believe consideration of this subject will provide a fruitful discussion of the "better" things provided for man's benefit through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

All room and meal costs for children 12 years old or younger will be paid by the convention. In addition, 100% of the cost of those from ages 13 through 17 will

be refunded if the young person attends at least 75% of the studies for his or her age group. This subsidy does not cover meals paid in cash at the door.

The convention will provide one shuttle bus leaving the Pittsburgh airport in the early evening for the college in Johnstown on Friday, July 17. There will also be shuttle bus service leaving the college in the morning hours for the Pittsburgh airport on Friday, July 24. There will be a \$10 charge per person each way for this service.

We encourage you to make your plans now to attend and participate in the blessings of this year's convention. ■

	Ages	18 & up	***13-17
Breakfast		\$7.00	\$6.00
Lunch		9.00	8.00
Dinner		13.00	12.00
Total, three meals		\$29.00	\$26.00
Lodging (per night)			
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)		\$37.00	\$32.00
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)		\$32.00	\$30.00
**single occ (LLC)		\$68.00	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)		\$37.00	n/a
PKG: 7 nights, 18 meals			
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)		\$375*	\$340*
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)		\$240*	\$205*
**single occ (LLC)		\$546*	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)		\$284*	n/a
If no breakfasts, deduct—*\$35    **Air conditioned ***100% of these costs will be refunded if the young person attends 75% of the studies for his/her age group.			

## General Convention Registration

330 Jasmine Road—Casselberry, FL 32707

E-mail: [ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com](mailto:ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com) (407) 670-4189

	Brkfst	Lunch	Dinner	Bed
Friday, July 17, 2015				
Saturday, 18th				
Sunday, 19th				
Monday, 20th				
Tuesday, 21st				
Wednesday, 22nd				
Thursday, 23rd				

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

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

Names and ecclesia name (age if under 18)

Address:



# Sunday, July 19

Chairman: Tom Gilbert, *Southern Wisconsin*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Discourse

Bill Dutka  
*Detroit MI*

10:30 Intermission

11:15 **Theme Discourse—Hebrews 12:2**  
**“Looking unto Jesus . . .”**

Tom Ruggirello  
*Chicago IL*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Praise and Testimony

Allan Allers  
*Boise ID*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse

Richard Doctor  
*Chicago IL*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 **Women of the Bible**

Byron Keith, *Seattle WA*  
David Christiansen, *Seattle WA*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **“Speaking the truth in love . . .”**  
**—Ephesians 4:15**

Jonathon Freer, *Sacramento CA*

7:45 Vesper Service

8:15 Songs in the Night

# Monday, July 20

Chairman: David Stein, *Allentown PA*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Discourse Rick Suraci  
*New Haven CT*

10:30 Intermission

11:15 Discourse Douglas Rawson  
*San Francisco Bay Area CA*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse Carlton Chandler  
*Portland OR*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Praise and Testimony Peter Karavas  
*Chicago IL*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse Tim Krupa  
*Cannon Beach OR*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **How Far Reaching is God's  
Providence?  
God's Providence**

Michael Balko, *Orlando FL*

**Our Response**

Erwin Kalinski, *Chicago IL*

8:00 Songs in the Night

8:15 Elders' Meeting

## Tuesday, July 21

Chairman: Nathan Austin, *Portland OR*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 **Baptismal Discourse**

Mark Nemesh  
*Detroit MI*

10:30 Intermission

11:00 **Immersion Service**

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Praise and Testimony      Rafal Niemczyk  
*Vancouver BC*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 **Justification and Sanctification:  
Their Distinctive Qualities and  
Interrelationships**

Stephen Jeuck, *Orlando FL*  
Peter Mora, *Los Angeles CA*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

George Passios  
*New York NY*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

## Wednesday, July 22

Chairman: Brad Sweeney, *Yorkton SK*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Convention Business Meeting

11:00 Short Recess

11:15 Convention Business Continues

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse

Robert Gray  
*New Brunswick NJ*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Praise and Testimony

Randy Shahan  
*New York NY*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

Jim Parkinson  
*Los Angeles CA*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **“Discerning God’s Will”**

Stephen Suraci  
(1928-1999)

7:45 Vesper Service

8:15 Songs in the Night

## Thursday, July 23

Chairman: Todd Alexander, *Columbus OH*

- 9:30 Morning Devotions
- 9:45 Praise and Testimony      Tim Thomassen  
*Albuquerque NM*
- 10:30 Intermission
- 11:00 **Panel Discussion: Comparing Jesus in  
Hebrews to: Angels, Moses, Aaron,  
and Typical Sacrifices**  
Moderator, Ernie Kuenzli, *Orlando FL*  
Mark Davis, *Los Angeles CA*  
George Balko, *West Newton PA*
- 12:00 Close of Morning Session
- 2:00 Discourse      Robert Goodman  
*Orlando FL*
- 2:45 Intermission
- 3:15 Discourse      John Trzeciak  
*Grand Rapids MI*
- 4:00 Intermission
- 4:30 Discourse      Dan Wesol  
*Albuquerque NM*
- 5:15 Close of Afternoon Session
- 7:00 **Closing Discourse**      Len Griehs  
*Delaware Valley PA*
- 7:45 Melodies of Praise
- 8:30 Love Feast

# SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

<b>D. Christiansen</b>		<b>B. Keith</b>	
Boise, ID	May 2,3	Boise, ID	May 2,3
		Vernon, BC	16,17
<b>J. Freer</b>			
<u>Germany:</u>			
Bruchhausen	May 22		
Korbach	23-25		
<u>France:</u>			
Mulhouse	26		
Valenciennes	27		
Lamorlaye	28		
Nucourt	30		
<u>Germany:</u>			
Hamburg	31-June 2		

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

<b>T. Alexander</b>		<b>T. Krupa</b>	
Jacksonville, FL	May 3	Los Angeles, CA	May 23,24
Los Angeles, CA	23,24	<b>B. Montague</b>	
<b>E. Blicharz</b>		Agawam, MA	May 17
Louisville, AL	May 24	<b>J. Mottie</b>	
<b>O. B. Elbert</b>		West Newton, PA	May 3
Hartford, CT	May 3	<b>J. Parkinson</b>	
Agawam, MA	17	Metro Detroit, MI	May 2,3
Los Angeles, CA	23,24	<b>T. Ruggirello</b>	
<b>R. Goodman</b>		Hartford, CT	May 3
Metro Detroit, MI	May 2,3		
Chicago, IL	23-25		
<b>S. Jeuck</b>			
Los Angeles, CA	May 23,24		

## CONVENTIONS

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

**JACKSONVILLE CONVENTION, May 3**—Holiday Inn, 620 Wells Road, Orange Park, FL 32073. Contact C. Hughes. Phone: (904) 781-0506 or Email: Clanky3@att.net

**WEST NEWTON CONVENTION, May 3**—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact G. Balko. Phone: (724) 771-0139

**AGAWAM CONVENTION, May 17**—Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA. For accommodations, contact M. Wardak. Phone: (413) 789-6198 or Email: mtwardack@verizon.net. For other information, contact A. Gonczewski. Email: aga49@yahoo.com

**CHICAGO CONVENTION, May 23-25**—Prisco Community Center, 150 W. Illinois Avenue, Aurora, IL 60506. Contact A. Schneider. Phone: (847) 533-1874 or Email: secretary@chicagobible.org

**LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, May 23,24**—Burbank Auditorium, 406 Irving Drive, Burbank, CA 91605. Contact J. Wojcik. Phone: (818) 438-1086 or Email: jrbwojcik@yahoo.com

**DELAWARE VALLEY CONVENTION, June 7**—Sheraton Bucks County Hotel, 400 Oxford Valley Road, Langhorne, PA. Contact R. Griehs. Phone: (267) 456-8889 or Email: rgriehs@gmail.com

**VANCOUVER CONVENTION, June 13,14**—Jaycee House, 1251 Lillooet Road, North Vancouver, BC V7J 3H7. Contact B. Smith. Phone: (604) 576-6070 or Email: bas@telus.net

**DETROIT JOINT CONVENTION, June 14**—Pleasant Ridge Community Center, 4 Ridge Road, Pleasant Ridge, MI. Contact G. Zandler. Phone: (248) 399-8843 or Email: ngzandler@wowway.com

**PORTLAND CONVENTION, June 19-21**—June 19 at BSRC. Remaining days at Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel, 8235 NE Airport Way, Portland, OR 97220. Contact B Hislop. Phone: (503) 691-2699 or Email: bwhislop@aol.com

**PRINCE ALBERT-SASKATOON CONVENTION, July 3-5**—Siwak Farm. Contact A. Siwak, RR 1 Stn Mpp, Prince Albert, SK, Canada S6V 5P8. Phone: (306) 764-7692 or Email: ahsiwak@inet2000.com

**EAST SASKATCHEWAN CONVENTION, July 10-12**—Sturgis Community Hall, Highway #9, Sturgis, SK. Contact N. Paley, Box 1522, Canora, SK S0A 0L0. Phone: (306) 563-5441 or Email: thepaleys@sasktel.net

**BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 18-23**—See this issue pages 53-61. Contact E. Kuenzli, 330 Jasmine Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 670-4189 or Email: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com

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*Come ye that know and love the Lord,  
and raise your thoughts above;  
Let every heart and voice accord  
to sing that "God is love."  
This precious truth his Word declares,  
and all his mercies prove;  
Jesus, the gift of gifts, appears,  
to show that "God is love."  
—Hymns of Dawn*