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A Herald of Christ's Presence

September 2010



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The Desolate Heritages

“Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.”
—Isaiah 49:8

THE PROPHET ISAIAH PRO-claims the wonderful words of God that relate to this present Gospel Age. It is the ‘acceptable time,’ and the ‘day of salvation’ during which the followers of Jesus are being called and chosen for the great work of Christ’s future kingdom that is soon to be established over all the earth. God promises to care for his people in a very special way by helping and preserving them. This commitment was later confirmed by

the Apostle Paul in his letter to the church at Corinth. He wrote, “We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted

time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)”—II Cor. 6:1,2

PREPARATION FOR DELIVERANCE

Paul’s teachings were spoken in connection with our Lord’s future kingdom and God’s arrangements for a new and better covenant than the old Law Covenant established with Moses as its Mediator. He explained that ‘The Christ’ would share with our dear Lord Jesus as the Mediator of that covenant. “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament [covenant]; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” (II Cor. 3:6) This wonderful hope is in accord with God’s promise as it was revealed to Isaiah. “I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.”—Isa. 42:6

ALL NATIONS TO BE BLESSED

Our loving Heavenly Father provided his beloved Son as the seed of promise for the ultimate blessing of all mankind under the administration of Christ’s future kingdom. “That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” (Gen. 22:17,18) Paul also made clear the promise as it was given to the faithful members of ‘The Christ.’ He explained, “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—Gal. 3:29

A DESOLATE INHERITANCE

In our featured scripture, Isaiah also spoke of the Heavenly Father's grand purpose for 'The Christ' to establish order and discipline over the earth and its people, which he refers to as the 'desolate heritages.' The word 'desolate' means to lay waste, and is an apt illustration of the death penalty imposed by God on our first parents because of disobedience, and the results of sin that have come upon the human family.

Isaiah further recorded God's purpose for his human creation and providing the means to take away the penalty of sin. "Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him."—Isa. 24:1,2

POLLUTION

Man is responsible for polluting the earth. Isaiah pointed to the voice of God that proclaims the dreadful scene of pride and selfishness among men and his plan to bring this violence to an end. The prophet further wrote, "The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled [polluted] under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws,

changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.”—vss. 3-6

ABUNDANTLY PROVIDED

When man was created to live upon this earth our loving Heavenly Father provided all things necessary to sustain life. “God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.”—Gen. 1:29,30

Our Father also prepared the earth to contain the fundamental resources for man’s use and enjoyment. Chief among these were pure water, rich soil, and life sustaining air. The waterways contained fish, the forests yielded lumber, and man eventually learned to harness the power of electricity. Abundant mineral deposits such as copper, iron, silver, and gold were buried in the earth. Coal, gas, oil, and many other valuable commodities were also stored under the earth’s surface.

A RAVAGED EARTH

Fallen man has plundered, ravaged, and polluted the very resources that were provided for him. He has poisoned his own natural environment with noxious chemicals, insecticides, and a multitude of other dangerous substances to the extent that the

sustaining of life, as we have known it, is in many instances being threatened.

God's human creation has miserably failed in carrying out the destiny that was originally designed for him. After more than six thousand years of man's existence upon this earth, he has ravaged it to the point where, if not overruled by the powerful hand of a loving Creator, man would destroy himself. As evidence of this horrific fact, World War II was ended with the dropping of an atomic bomb on two of Japan's cities in which they were completely destroyed.

A TIME OF SORROW

Today, sixty-five years later, the destructive power of nuclear weapons has been greatly improved and, along with chemical and biological weapons, threaten mankind in ways never before contemplated. Our Lord described the time of his second presence and the closing features of this present Gospel Age as being especially marked by violence. "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."—Luke 21:26

Jesus proclaimed that a time of great sorrow would be experienced over all the earth and its people. "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."—Matt. 24:7,8

CUTTING SHORT THE DAYS

The Master further explained that the level of violence and desolation would be so overwhelming that the time would need to be shortened to save

the human family from destroying themselves. “In those days will be distress, such as has not been from the beginning of the Creation, which God created, till now, nor ever will be. And except the Lord cut short the days, no person could survive; but on account of the chosen, whom he has selected, he has cut short the days.”—Mark 13:19,20, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*

Jesus emphasized that it was to be through the ‘chosen’ ones that the days are cut short. Wilson has included an Interlinear Translation of the Greek text in his Bible for the students’ reference, and the words ‘on account of’ have been translated from the Greek word *dia* which means ‘through.’ The word *Diaglott* is composed of two Greek words, *dia* and *glossa* meaning tongue. The roots of each of these words are found in English. For example, ‘diameter’ defines a line drawn through the center of a circle, and ‘glossary’ is a list of specialized words. In Matthew’s Gospel (24:22), he used the same word *dia* when recording Jesus’ teaching.

The Heavenly Father has been calling and selecting the special class of chosen ones during this present Gospel Age. ‘The Christ’ will be composed of the Head—our Lord Jesus—and the 144,000 faithful members of his body. When this number has been completed they will be exalted to power and authority as the ruling body of Christ’s future kingdom. Together they will share in the great work of blessing the whole human family. Jesus promised, “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.”—John 14:3

DESOLATION IN THE GULF

At the time of this writing, more than two months have passed since an explosion occurred on the Deepwater Horizon drilling platform located several miles off the coast of Louisiana. Since that time, extensive efforts have been underway to plug the oil leak a mile below the water's surface. Crews have also been busy cleaning up the sickening mess of poisonous sludge that continues to destroy ecologically fragile areas, and the livelihood of many people living in the Gulf States.

Several attempts to cap the well have ended in failure. To further emphasize the seriousness of the situation, we quote in part from a report submitted by Terrence Aym of Republic Broadcasting Network, pointing out the potential danger this poses in the Gulf of Mexico and beyond. Aym said, "Disturbing evidence is mounting that something frightening is happening deep under the waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Warnings were raised as long as a year before the Deepwater Horizon disaster that the area of seabed chosen by British Petroleum (BP) geologists might be unstable, or worse, inherently dangerous.

"The same methane that makes coal mining operations hazardous and leads to horrendous mining accidents deep under the earth also can present a high level of danger to certain oil exploration ventures. Some geologists rang the warning bell that the Deepwater Horizon exploratory rig might have been erected directly over a huge underground reservoir of methane gas.

"Documents from several years ago indicate that the subterranean geologic formation may contain

the presence of a huge underground lake of methane gas compressed by a pressure of 100,000 pounds per square inch that could be released by BP's drilling effort to obtain the oil deposit. Current engineering technology cannot contain gas with that much pressure. By some geologists' estimates, the methane could be a massive 15 to 20 mile toxic and explosive bubble trapped for eons under the Gulf sea floor. In their opinion, the explosive destruction of the Deepwater Horizon wellhead was an accident just waiting to happen. According to worried geologists, the first signs that the methane may burst its way through the bottom of the ocean would be fissures or cracks appearing on the ocean floor near the damaged wellhead. Evidence of fissures opening up on the seabed have been captured by the robotic submersibles working to repair and contain the ruptured well. Smaller, independent plumes have also appeared outside the nearby radius of the bore hole itself.

“According to some geological experts, BP's operations set into motion a series of events that may be irreversible. Step-by-step the drilling team committed one error after another. Congressmen Henry Waxman and Bart Stupak, in a letter sent to BP's CEO Tony Hayward, identified 5 missteps made by BP during the period culminating with the explosion. Waxman, chair of the Congressional energy panel and Stupak, head of the subcommittee on oversight and investigations, said, ‘The common feature of these five decisions is that they posed a trade-off between cost and well safety.’ The two Representatives also stated in the 14-page letter to Hayward that ‘Time after time, it appears that BP

made decisions that increased the risk of a blowout to save the company time or expense.’

“Called by some insiders investigating the ongoing disaster a perfect storm or catastrophe, the wellhead blew on the sea floor catapulting a stream of mud, oil, and gas upwards at the speed of sound. In describing the events that transpired in a matter of seconds, they note that immediately following the rupture the borehole pipe’s casing blew away, exposing a straight line 8 miles deep for the pressurized gas to escape. The result was ‘cavitation,’ an irregular pressure variance sometimes experienced by deep diving vessels such as nuclear submarines. This ‘cavitation’ created a supersonic bubble of explosive methane gas that resulted in an explosion killing 11 men and completely annihilating the drilling platform.

“With the emerging evidence of fissures, the quiet fear now is the methane bubble rupturing the seabed may explode into the Gulf waters. If the bubble escapes every ship, drilling rig and structure within the region of the bubble will be in danger. If the huge methane bubble breaches the seabed it will erupt with explosive force. A gas gusher would surge upwards through miles of ancient sedimentary rock, layer after layer and past the oil reservoir. It could explode upwards propelled by 50 tons psi, burst through the cracks and fissures of the compromised sea floor and rupture miles of the ocean floor.”

A POSSIBLE WIDENING DISASTER

The potential of a widening disaster is also confirmed in a News-4-Us report (July 1, 2010) under

the heading “New Evidence Suggests the Oil Spill in the Gulf Could Only be the Beginning.” Quoting in part from the article, we read, “Could it be true that the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is only the beginning of what is being touted as possibly the worst possible natural disaster known to man? New evidence was unearthed during the week by United States scientists that indicate the warnings which surfaced as long as a year before the British Petroleum (BP) Deepwater Horizon catastrophe occurred may well be true.

“Unknown to the majority of the public, this particular area that was chosen by (BP) geologists has been described as unstable and even dangerous due to the possible super-sized methane beds embedded deep in the earth’s crust. Some geologists believed this to be so and voiced their opinions early on, but to no avail. Now twelve scientists from Texas A & M University, who have been running tests in the area within a 5-mile radius of the drill site, have found high levels of methane under the seabed. In some pockets of the ocean the concentrations of methane gas levels are up to 100,000 times the norm or even more.

“The effect of these levels of methane gas under the ocean can be devastating, as it depletes the oxygen in the water, and at these levels scientists say they could create a dead zone. Oxygenated water is crucial to sustaining marine life and in some close by areas of the well site it has dropped by 30 percent. As carbon dioxide is a by-product of breathing in air, so methane is a natural by-product of a breathing, living ocean that is filled with life. Science has since proven that where higher

concentrations of methane gas exist, there is a common side effect which occurs. The smaller microbes outgrow the marine life dramatically and end up consuming much more oxygen.

“Another factor that could contribute to positive signs of a large methane gas reservoir would be cracks or fissures appearing on the ocean bed near the capped well opening. The appearance of these cracks is now becoming evident from footage sent up by the underwater robots working on the damaged well. Fissures of gas eruptions entering the ocean are also being reported further along the outer radius of the drill site. Scientists are still studying the numbers on the data they have collected over the recently completed 10-day research expedition. More available facts should come to light soon.”

WAITING ON THE LORD

The psalmist wrote, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made

in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”—Ps. 46:1-11

Human efforts will surely fail if left in the hands of fallen, selfish men. However, we need not fear that the wonderful words ‘Be still, and know that I am God’ are true and will soon come to pass. Readers of *The Dawn* magazine know that our Heavenly Father has all matters concerning the earth, its people and their eternal welfare under his loving control. We trust that he will not allow his human family to destroy itself. His watchful eye and powerful hand will deliver them from all potential dangers and he is ready to quickly act on their behalf. This is true whether in connection with nuclear warfare or through the destruction of the earth and its environment by way of pollution on a scale never before contemplated.

Because of our understanding of God’s Word, we are assured of Christ’s coming kingdom that will bring peace, blessings, and life to a poor and groaning human creation. Nearly six hundred years before the birth of our Lord Jesus, Ezekiel recorded the prophetic words of God concerning the marvelous and pure waters of life that are associated with Christ’s future kingdom.

“He said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were

very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.”—Ezek. 47:6-9

“And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.”—vs.12

Many centuries later, and after our Lord had finished his earthly ministry, John the revelator received the wonderful promises of God as confirmation of Ezekiel’s prophecy. “He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.”—Rev. 22:1-3

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

SEPTEMBER 2—“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently”—I Peter 1:22 (Z. '03-207 Hymn 95)

SEPTEMBER 9—“That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.”—Philippians 2:15,16 (Z. '03-358 Hymn 230)

SEPTEMBER 16—“The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.”—Psalm 29:11 (Z. '96-163 Hymn 202)

SEPTEMBER 23—“Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”—Jude 3 (Z. '03-423 Hymn 164)

SEPTEMBER 30—“The love of Christ constraineth us.”—II Corinthians 5:14 (Z. '03-55,58 Hymn 166)



*All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful:
The LORD God made them all.*

*He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who has made all things well.*

—selected

God's Revelation to Moses

Key Verse:
“Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.”
—*Exodus 3:6*

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 3

study of the Bible that God had prepared a place for his people Israel in the land of Egypt. Due to adverse conditions in their homeland of Canaan he transported them to a new land at the invitation of Joseph. (Gen. 46) Here in the best of the land he gave them great temporal prosperity during the lifetime of the first generation. However, prosperity had given way to cruelty under the reign of Rameses I and II, and continued with Menephtah I, who “knew not Joseph.” (Exod. 1:8) It was their goal to keep the Israelites in a weakened condition, and they accomplished this through years of oppression and cruelty.

The Heavenly Father had “seen the affliction” of his people (Exod. 3:7), who, for nearly three centuries, had lived in a foreign land and had also been forced to serve as slaves in bondage to the Egyptians. In our lesson theme text, God is reminding Moses of the special covenant that he had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for an everlasting covenant. In this manner, God was assuring Moses that he had not forgotten the good things which he had promised. He also was demonstrating to

Moses that he was both willing and able to grant deliverance at the appropriate time.

Moses, however, 'hid his face' as an act of reverence toward God. He did not feel that he was worthy to be used of the Lord, and doubted his own ability to carry out God's plan to deliver the people from the control of Pharaoh. This is demonstrated by the words spoken by Moses, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exod. 3:11) At the age of eighty, Moses had spent 40 years in the land of Midian being prepared for this day. Perhaps, during that time, he had wondered if the Lord really cared for his people in that he allowed them to be oppressed for so long by the Egyptians. So thoroughly discouraged by his past failure, he now had become so distrustful of himself that he even apologized for his lack of fitness to be used in God's service. The Lord reassured Moses that he himself would be responsible for delivering the nation, and he spoke these words to him, "I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain."—Exod. 3:12

The Father in his ultimate wisdom knew that the deliverance of his people would be a great task. Moses stated that the Egyptians would not let the people go. He felt that their intentions were to keep the Israelites as slaves, and that the Israelites would not believe that God had actually appeared to him. Answering these objections, the Lord gave Moses certain signs, convincing him that he was talking to the Almighty God. (Exod. 4:1-9) He then assured him that these same signs would be convincing to the Israelites and the Egyptians. By way of making this matter more forceful, God declared that Moses would lead the people and that they would come to that very mountain, "the mount of God" and worship him there.—Exod. 18:5 ■

God's Covenant with Israel

Key Verse: *"I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me."*
—Exodus 20:2,3

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 20

Israel made at Mt. Sinai was that if they should perfectly keep the Ten Commandments they would then demonstrate that they were perfect men and worthy of everlasting life. It would then be possible for them to attain to the chief blessing under the Abrahamic Covenant. They would become the spiritual seed of Abraham through whom God had promised that he would bless the world. "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." "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth."—Gen. 12:2,3; 28:14

The Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, is a brief synopsis of the whole Law. It would serve as a code of worship and morals for a now free people of Israel to live by. The Covenant given to Israel through Moses expressed the righteous will of God. (Exod. 20:1-26) The 'judgments' governed the social life of Israel. (chap. 21:1-24:11) The 'ordinances' governed the religious life

of Israel. (Exod. 24:12-31:18) These elements formed “the law” as termed in the New Testament. (Matt. 5:17,18) The Commandments and the ordinances formed one religious system.

The first tables of the Law were prepared and written by the Lord God. This represents how man was a perfect image of his Creator. God’s law to man, however, was not originally given at Mt. Sinai. That statement of the Law was not given to mankind in general, but to the Jewish nation for the eventual blessing of all nations. God’s original law was given in Eden when man was created. God’s law was written in Adam’s heart, in the sense that he was created in the divine image. Man was given attributes of mind and heart fully in accord with that of God’s. He was a lover of righteousness, and of doing the will of his Heavenly Father. After the fall of man, the human race was marred by sin, and lost its love for the Heavenly Father and for their fellow man. “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”—Ps. 51:5

We might look at the Law and question why the Jews were not able to perform it fully and satisfactorily. It might appear to be simple, until we see the depth of meaning not seen on the surface. This was not seen until Jesus magnified the law and made it honorable. (Isa. 42:21) None but Jesus has ever been able to keep this Law since the fall of Adam.

The Great Teacher explains that the first table of the law pertaining to man’s duties toward his Creator means more than just avoiding idol worship and profane things. It means that God should have first place in the human heart. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.” (Luke 10:27) This also shows that any division of the heart or strength or mind violates this commandment. We should not let anything take away our minds and hearts from the Lord. ■

God Versus Gods

Key Verse: *“They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.”*
—Exodus 32:8

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 32

(Exod. 25-31) He was gone for forty days, which was a long time to be away from the people with regard to the events that had transpired since they had fled Egyptian bondage. The children of Israel had looked to Moses constantly for guidance and direction. They had come to view him as God’s representative in a very special way through experience, and seeing firsthand the miracles that he had performed.

THE ISRAELITES EXPERIENCED a severe trial of faith and obedience soon after they had entered into a covenant relationship with God. In this trial they were “a stiffnecked people” (Exod. 32:9), and they completely failed their trial. The covenant that God made with them through Moses was about to be broken.

The circumstances involving the words spoken by the Heavenly Father in our key verse involve Moses in the mount. Taking Joshua with him as his servant, he went up into Mt. Sinai. He had been called up to receive the gracious instructions concerning the tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifices.

They had to have remembered the hard experiences that they endured. The Egyptians and slavery were behind them. They had already endured an attack from the Amalekites, who were still their enemies. (Exod. 17:11) Who would help them now against their enemies if their leader continued to delay his return?

As Moses' absence from them grew longer, worldly wisdom would come into the picture. Aaron, the high priest, and Moses, also his representative in leadership, were troubled as how to keep the people from complete discouragement. Unable to fully trust in God who they could not see, they desired to make a god who they could see. The leaders of the people took counsel together and decided to make their own god—an image that they could look upon and could use as an instrument of worship. “Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.” (Exod. 32:1) Under Aaron's direction, they brought all of their gold together and he fashioned a “molten calf” and “he built an altar before it.” (vss. 4,5) Having this idol before them they rejoiced in it, and took part in singing, dancing and completely “corrupted themselves.” (vs. 7) The people had broken the first commandment of God. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”—chap. 20:3

In the meantime, Moses, following God's instruction, returned from the mount with the tables “written with the finger of God.” (Exod. 31:18) Upon returning to the place where the children of Israel were camped and seeing what they people had done, “Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.” (chap. 32:19) As God's representative, he went down to the people very angry with them. Armed with divine authority, he inflicted upon them a just penalty for their sin of turning away from God who had so recently delivered them.—vss. 19-28 ■

God Promises an Awesome Thing

Key Verse: *“The LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.”*
—Exodus 34:6

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 34: 1-10

a prayer that Moses had offered on behalf of the children of Israel.

Prior to this event, the Lord God came to the tabernacle and appeared in a ‘cloudy pillar’ as he talked with Moses after he had pitched the tent of meeting outside of the camp. (chap. 33:9) The people had seen Moses go to the tabernacle, and after observing him enter, and when also seeing the cloudy pillar they worshipped God. “The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.” (vs. 11) “Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me

THE SCENE OF OUR LESSON is set once again on Mt. Sinai. Moses had been called back up to the presence of God to receive the second tables of the law. Unlike the first time, Moses was instructed by God to make the tables, and to come to the mountain in the morning alone. “Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables.” (Exod. 34:1,2) This visit to the mountain was permitted by God as an answer to

now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight, and consider that this nation is thy people.” (Exod. 33:13) In addition to this petition made by Moses, he also asked God for a vision to help him accomplish the renewed task of leading the people to the promised land of Canaan. The request was granted to the man Moses by a gracious God. “The Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by.” (vss. 21,22) God actually had one of his special messengers represent him—the angel of the Lord would appear—since “no man [can] see me, and live.”—vs. 20

Now, as we go back to the awesome thing that God promised, we will see that it involves a loving Heavenly Father revealing himself to his people through his attributes of wisdom, justice, love, and power. “I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.” (Isa. 63:7) He particularly states in our key verse the fact that he is ‘The Lord, the Lord God,’ and that he is full of grace, mercy, goodness, and truth. It would serve as a reaffirmation that God was with them, and he would indeed bless them, and through his chosen people bring blessings to all the families of the earth.—Gen. 28:14

Think for a moment of the memory of God that never fails; of the judgment that never errs, of the wisdom which has planned for an eternity without the possibility of failure, and of having the power to make all things work together for the accomplishment of his grand design. Truly, “The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.”—Ps. 145:8 ■

Reviving the Contrite

*“To this man will I
look, even to him
that is poor and of
a contrite spirit,
and trembleth at
my word.”
—Isaiah 66:2*

THE PROPHET ISAIAH RE- records the ultimate purpose our Heavenly Father has in which he seeks a bride for his beloved Son, and the prospect of their sharing with him in his future king-

dom. He makes clear the type of individual he is looking for during this present Gospel Age. They must first of all possess a disposition that is marked by having a ‘poor’ and ‘contrite spirit.’ God has been looking for those who could be molded and fashioned to his eternal will and purpose. They must also love and appreciate his Holy Word of Truth.

THE BRUISED

The word ‘contrite’ has been translated from the Old Testament Hebrew word which means ‘to bruise, crush or oppress.’ It thus fittingly points to the individual whose heart is repentant in respect to his own shortcomings and acknowledges the lofty standards of the Most High God. Those who are contrite realize their own littleness, unworthiness

and imperfection, and are emptied of self-confidence and self-esteem. These specially called ones of God are thus more readily submissive to the direction of the divine will in their lives instead of their own. A heart that is contrite also has a quiet and deep sense of sorrow for that which is not in harmony with the standards of Truth and righteousness. God's promise is that he will revive the poor and contrite in both their spirit and their hearts. To such he is ever near to assist them in their walk in newness of life.

THE HUMBLE MINDED

The word 'poor' in this scripture relates to those who are humble-minded, lowly in spirit, and afflicted. Again, the prophet wrote, "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isa. 57:15

The great God of the universe inhabits eternity and is the one from whom all life has come and from whom all blessings flow. Yet, his ever watchful eye is directed toward those whom he has called from a sin-sick world and invited to share with our Lord Jesus in his future kingdom of Truth and life for the benefit and blessing of his human creation. They are the poor and contrite ones of this world. They love our Heavenly Father and eagerly search his wonderful promises of life as they have been recorded in his precious Word—the Bible.

REFRESHING

The word 'revived' indicates the giving of new breath and life to the Lord's people. The Holy Spirit

of God is designed to restore, refresh, and satisfy the very life of the New Creature in Christ Jesus. It applies to those whose hearts are repentant, in total harmony and submissive to the divine will.

The prophet wrote, "Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Isa. 40:10,11) Our Heavenly Father's beloved Son—our Lord Jesus—is the 'arm' of God in carrying out his will and purpose. He is also the great 'shepherd' who will feed his Father's little flock with spiritual food and sustenance and guide them in the narrow way. During this present Gospel Age, he is calling his sheep together into one fold, and gently leading them in their Christian journey.

Isaiah also said that God would give strength to the faint of heart. "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isa. 40:28-31

The promise that God would revive his poor and contrite people was also addressed by the Psalmist David. He wrote, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me

not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.” (Ps. 51:10-12) Exercising the right spirit is to realize the influence that the mind has over our bodies. The renewing of our minds is to refresh the thought process as New Creatures in Christ Jesus.

David then said, “O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.” (vss. 15-19) The ‘sacrifices of righteousness’ are a broken and contrite heart, and one that is rich in holiness and fragrant in grace.

GOD’S GRANDEST BLESSING

When our Lord Jesus humbly presented himself to his Heavenly Father in total consecration to the doing of his will, he was baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist, and Matthew has recorded the event. (Matt. 3:13-17) After he had been lowered into the water, we read, “Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, 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.”—vss. 16,17

Having received the Holy Spirit from on high, and hearing his Father's wonderful words 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,' he was thus assured of his acceptance and the Father's loving care on his behalf. Afterward, he was in the wilderness where he fasted for forty days and nights and tempted by Satan the devil. "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."—Matt. 4:11

A GREAT LIGHT

From the scriptural account, we read, "Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."—vss. 12-17

During our Lord's earthly sojourn, he taught his faithful disciples by way of symbols and prophetic language. Early in his ministry, and after an exhaustive day of ministering to the multitudes, Jesus retired with his disciples to a place where he could be alone with them. In his first message to them, he spoke of the lowly and contrite ones who would respond to his teachings. Matthew recorded the event in his gospel, and it confirms the ultimate

plan and purpose of the Heavenly Father to revive the humble and contrite.

WONDERFUL WORDS OF LIFE

We read, "Seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:1-3) These wonderful words of life concerned the disciples' everlasting welfare. They were thus prospective members of the future 'kingdom of heaven,' and Jesus emphasized the disposition that would help them make their calling and election sure and how they could obtain the great prize of their high calling. The 'poor in spirit' will readily submit themselves to the divine will and discipline of an all-wise and loving Heavenly Father.

Jesus used the word 'blessed' to point to the permanent comfort and joy that the consecrated Christian experiences when he has attained a character that is in harmony with our loving Heavenly Father. It is the 'blessed hope' of our high calling in Christ Jesus of which Paul spoke in his letter to Titus. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."—Titus 2:11-13

HE COMFORTS THE MOURNERS

Jesus then told his disciples, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." (Matt. 5:4) He was addressing those who are mourning

and are especially grieved in spirit. To 'comfort' suggests solace, and to be consoled or encouraged. It applies to those who possess a sympathetic nature and who are touched with pity for the sorrow and pain of others.

This distinguishing mark of character especially identifies our Lord Jesus. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."—Isa. 53:3-5

Jesus bore our grief and carried our sorrows. This endearing mark of character points to the attitude of heart and mind that he displayed at the tomb of Lazarus. He wept on that occasion because of his deep and sympathetic character. As we walk in newness of life in the narrow way let us also strive to be more like him. May we be comforted by the words of Paul, who wrote, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or

whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.”—II Cor. 1:3-6

PROMISES TO THE MEEK

Jesus brought to his disciples’ attention the importance of possessing a meek spirit. He said, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matt. 5:5) This characteristic points to a mildness of disposition and the spirit of Christian gentleness. It is not easily provoked or irritated, and forebears injury or annoyance. The Master is our best example and we do well to be encouraged by him, who said, “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.”—Matt. 11:29

A meek and gentle spirit is more easily taught, and will willingly submit to the will of God. “Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”—James 4:5-7

Jesus said that the meek would inherit the earth. This promise will take place after the present Gospel Age and the great time of trouble will have ended, and Christ’s kingdom is established. The psalmist wrote, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens (Continued on page 35)

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(Continued from page 31) shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”—Ps. 2:1-8

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Another of our Lord Jesus’ lessons is, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” (Matt. 5:6) This suggests a humble disposition that longs for Truth and righteousness, and to be taught of God. It is centered around a growing faith and desire to please our loving Heavenly Father. “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” (Ps. 42:1,2) They will surely ‘be filled’ as promised by the Master. “Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”—Heb. 5:14

OBTAINING MERCY

Another of the traits most desirable for the Lord’s people to attain is mercy. Being merciful is a Christlike principle, and Jesus said, “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.” (Matt. 5:7) This applies to those who recognize their own need of God’s mercy in their lives. God

will extend his mercy toward us in proportion to our willingness to be merciful and more generous to others. The heart that is more generous and loving is therefore living closer to God and his standards of righteousness.

HOPE FOR THE PURE

None of the Lord's people can ever hope to obtain absolute perfection of conduct, thought or word, but our loving Father looks on the intention of the heart. Those who have honest and pure hearts filled with the spirit of love and holiness are especially desirable to the Heavenly Father. Thus our Lord Jesus taught, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."—Matt. 5:8

The promise is that those who possess this mark of Christian character will see God. Thus do we read, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."—I John 3:1-3

CHILDREN OF GOD

Jesus was surely a man of peace, and at the beginning of his earthly ministry he taught his disciples, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." (Matt. 5:9) At the conclusion of his Father's work and as he was about to leave his followers, he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world

giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”—John 14:27

The peacemakers will be called the ‘children of God.’ They are called from a sin-sick world and led by the Holy Spirit of God for their perfecting in righteousness. “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:12-14) “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”—Heb. 12:14

TESTING NECESSARY

When Jesus was finishing his lesson he added, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”—Matt. 5:10-12

Jesus was reviled that he might demonstrate his loyalty to God and the principles of Truth and righteousness. We should consider it a privilege to share in his sufferings. “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are

ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.”—I Pet. 4:12-14

STRONG IN THE LORD

When writing to the brethren at Ephesus, the Apostle Paul encouraged them to greater faithfulness. He said, “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.—Eph. 6:5-10

NOT MANY WISE OR NOBLE

The ultimate plan of reconciliation for the sick human family appears foolish to the minds of men. He said, “The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.”—I Cor. 1:25,26

During this present Gospel Age, God is seeking those who are insignificant from the world’s standpoint—the meek and humble who can learn from him and have their minds transformed to the pattern of his beloved Son. James said, “Hearken, my beloved

brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"—James 2:5

THE WEAK CONFOUND THE WISE

In his letter to the church at Corinth, Paul further proclaimed, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—I Cor. 1:27-31

The power of Truth confounds the worldly-wise in the hands of God's weakest people. He thus hinders the pride and vainglory of men. "We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised." (chap. 4:10) God's consecrated children who are striving to make their calling and election sure are counted as fools for Christ's sake.

Those who are contrite and of humble disposition, will share with our Lord Jesus in blessing all the families of the earth in Christ's future kingdom. "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."—Rom. 12:3 ■

The Heavens Were Opened

“Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, 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.”
—Matthew 3:16,17

WHEN JESUS WAS THIRTY years of age, he symbolized his total commitment to God by presenting himself to John to be baptized at Jordan. He received the Holy Spirit of God, symbolized by the dove, without measure, and the heavens of spiritual understanding pertaining to the divine program were opened to him. He also heard the voice of his loving Heavenly Father proclaim, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’

This was the central feature in God’s plan for mankind’s recovery from the death penalty because of sin. Jesus had been prepared for the atonement work that he had come to earth to accomplish. John was a witness to the unfolding events that took place at that time, and we, too, are blessed by

our Lord's ministry. "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."—Heb.12:2

NO MAN CAN SEE GOD

Visions of various kinds were given for a very special purpose, and there are several occurrences recorded in the Bible. It is a supernatural occurrence that is presented to a person's mind. If it was received during waking hours the impression was made on the conscious mind and could be recalled later. If it happened during the night time it was perhaps impressed on the subconscious mind while the recipient slept.

We are not to suppose that any human being has ever seen God because this is not possible. John has written, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John 1:18

Thus does the 'Son' declare the Heavenly Father. This was explained by Jesus when Philip asked him to show him the Father. "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, Shew us the Father? (John 14: 9) This was also addressed by the Apostle Paul when he made clear, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—I Tim. 3:16

THE DIVINE PURPOSE

Jesus was distinct from all others by way of his Heavenly Father's acceptance of his commitment to him. The Scriptures also record other instances in which God gave special instructions, insight, or understanding to a particular servant whom he had selected to participate in some part of the divine program. We are not always given the details as to how this was done, or whether it was by way of a vision or a dream of some kind. However, to a greater or lesser extent many of God's servants were taken into his confidence and used to further his ultimate plan and design for the reconciliation of the world. When the divine purpose is understood it reveals the true character of our loving and eternal Heavenly Father.

GOD RESPECTED ABEL

For example, in the early days of human creation, Abel was granted sufficient knowledge of the wonderful character of God to faithfully present to him a more valuable and significant offering than did his brother Cain. The account reads, "In process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."—Gen. 4:3-5

ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD

Enoch was another servant who understood enough of God's character and plan to enable him to walk with God. (Gen. 5:24) Furthermore, he was

used to prophesy the wonderful news that the Lord would eventually come with myriads of his saints to execute judgments in the earth.—Jude 14,15

NOAH A MAN OF FAITH

Noah also walked with God (Gen. 6:9) and, was given detailed instructions concerning the flood that was to overtake the world in his day. (vss. 13-22) Many centuries later, the Apostle Paul wrote, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” (Heb. 11:7) Noah faithfully carried out his part in God’s arrangements, and willingly cooperated with the divine plan and purpose. The scriptural record which he provided gives us valuable information pertaining to the closing features of that ancient world or age.

ABRAHAM’S SEED

God communicated with Abraham in a very special way, and from the scriptural record we read, “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.”—Heb. 11:8-11

Abraham received news that through his seed the whole sin-sick human family was to be blessed in God's due time and arrangement. "By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."—Gen. 22:16-18

MOSES WAS CALLED

God revealed his will to Moses in a burning bush. "The angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I."—Exod. 3:2-4

Moses learned that God was going to deliver his people Israel from bondage. "The LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the

Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.”—vss. 7-9

God then told Moses what he wanted him to do. “Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharoah, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, “Who am I, that I should go unto Pharoah, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?” (vss. 10,11) He felt incompetent to do what was asked of him, but God reassured him, “He said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.”—vs. 12

ISAIAH’S VISION

The Prophet Isaiah received a wonderful vision from God, and he recorded it for our blessing. He wrote, “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a

people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”—Isa. 6:1-5

‘HIGH AND LIFTED UP’

In Isaiah’s account, he acknowledges that it truly was a vision from God, for he said, ‘I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.’ In varying degrees God has given visions to those whom he wishes to take into his confidence and special service. In Isaiah’s case, he saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up. Those to whom God has truly revealed himself have seen him in a similar manner. They have been made to realize that he is God who they delight to worship and serve.

As the vision unfolded, he heard the voice of God and explained, “Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.”—vss. 6-8

THE TEMPLE OF GOD

Not only did Isaiah see God high and lifted up and that his train filled the temple, but he realized from what he saw, that the LORD’s presence and influence permeated and hallowed everything within the temple. Thus from henceforth, God’s influence would dominate his every thought, word and deed. There was to be no place for anything else in his life. If we are to be temples of the living God the same must be true of us. “Know ye not

that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”—I Cor. 3:16

An indication from the seraphim would surely reassure Isaiah of the implications of what he was seeing and hearing, and they proclaimed, ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.’ The prophet knew that he had seen a vision because the whole earth at that time was far from being filled with the glory of the LORD.

However, this assertion assured him that the time was yet coming when this would be true. By responding to God’s call for service, he would thus be joining in a cause that was destined to bring this to fulfillment in God’s due time. ‘And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.’ He realized that he was utterly unworthy of the opportunity that was being offered to him. ‘Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.’

WEAKNESS OF THE FLESH

We note two thoughts that Isaiah expressed in these scriptures. He knew this heavenly vision meant that he was being called into the divine service. He also considered the glorious character of God, and was struck with the sense of his own sins and lack of ability to enter upon such a sacred and exalted ministry. Being a man of unclean lips, he could not adequately and acceptably show forth the praises and glory of the one whom the seraphim were proclaiming as ‘holy, holy, holy.’

Isaiah soon discovered that the LORD knew all about his unclean condition according to the flesh, and in spite of this he was calling him to service. He realized that the LORD did not intend to use his lips while they were unclean, but had made provision whereby they could be cleansed. What wondrous grace is here manifest. It reveals God's ability to use those who are imperfect by making a provision whereby they can serve him in spite of the handicap of Adamic sin.

THE PROPHET'S RESPONSE

When Isaiah responded in the affirmative to God's invitation, he received his instructions. "He said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate."—Isa. 6:9-11

From the human standpoint this was not a very bright prospect for the prophet as he entered upon the divine service. The LORD was warning him that in going forth in service he must not expect that the people would rally to the cause. He must expect rather, that his entire ministry may seem to end in failure. However, the LORD wanted Isaiah to know that he was to continue in the service even though no results were visible. He asked the prophet to go and speak for him whether or not those who heard

appreciated it. He wanted him to sound forth the LORD's praises because he had seen his glory, and could not refrain from proclaiming what he had seen. Isaiah caught the meaning of what was implied in the vision and was faithful to it.

APOSTLE PAUL'S VISION

Paul was especially called as a minister of God, and in a vision he heard him say, "Rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee."—Acts 26:16

The significance of this miraculous event was that the apostle was being invited by God to spend the remaining days of his life in his service, and to witness for the resurrected Lord Jesus. This was a major change in Paul's life because he had been in direct opposition to the purpose of God as it was then being worked out in the hearts and lives of his people. He had previously persecuted Jesus' followers, and even had some of them put to death. But, he was made to realize that in persecuting the followers of Christ, he was also persecuting Christ himself. As an ardent Jew he was enthusiastic about the Messianic purpose, but now it was revealed to him that he was opposing that very purpose.

A NEW RELATIONSHIP

The far-reaching implications of this wonderful invitation to Paul involved a new and deep relationship with God and a life of total devotion to the Truth. He knew the vision would have more than just a passing effect in his life. It meant more than

merely refraining from further persecutions of the Lord's people and purpose. Not only was he wrong in persecuting these Christians, but God was also calling him to espouse his great plan and ultimate purpose concerning the sin-sick human family. He would be called upon to suffer and die for the Truth and his newfound relationship with our Lord Jesus.

When Paul spoke to King Agrippa he provided some of the important details of his remarkable conversion. He explained, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."—Acts 26:9-15

A STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

Before experiencing this vision, Paul had been a zealous and devoted student of the Hebrew

Scriptures, and had a deep faith in the ancient fathers. He was surely familiar with the many incidents of the past in which God had favored some of his ancient prophets with special visions which also changed the entire course of their lives. He had no doubt studied the prophecies of Isaiah.

Being thus acquainted with the manner in which God authorizes his special servants to lay down their lives for him, the apostle knew instantly when he was struck down on the Damascus road that God had put his hand upon him, and was calling him to a special service. It was in response to this conviction that he lifted up his heart and voice to the Lord. “He trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”—Acts 9:6

THE APOSTLE’S RESPONSE

Paul’s vision came to him under different circumstances from those in which the Lord revealed himself to Isaiah. Nevertheless, the importance of the vision was the same. Paul received a glimpse of the divine character that had not previously been apparent.

The vision that the apostle received on the road to Damascus began a ministry that made possible for him to receive a manifestation of his loving Heavenly Father in a most remarkable way. He wrote, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to

him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”—Rom. 11:33-36

As we trace the experiences of the great apostle, we cannot help but be impressed with the truthfulness of his words spoken to the heathen king. From the time that he received the vision until his sacrificial work was completed at Rome, Paul’s every talent was devoted to the work of glorifying God. This work led to suffering and privation. He experienced imprisonment, stripes, hunger, weariness, persecution, and finally death. However, he never wavered in his determination to be obedient to the heavenly vision and to the marvelous outworking of his invitation to serve his Heavenly Father.

VISIONS AND REVELATIONS

In whatever manner God chose to reveal his eternal purpose throughout the ages, it was always harmonious and revealed his glorious plan. It was centered in Christ Jesus, “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”—II Tim. 1:9,10

The Apostle Paul proclaimed, “It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot

tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”—II Cor. 12:1-4

Let us never doubt the wonderful vision we have been given of the marvelous and infinite wisdom, love, justice, and power of our loving Heavenly Father. We are favored with a deeper insight of the glorious character of God that continues to speak to us through his Word of Truth, “that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”—I Pet. 2:9 ■

*I love to tell the story of gracious, heavenly love;
How Jesus left his glory, that wondrous love to
prove.*

*I love to tell the story, because I know it's true;
It satisfies my longings, as nothing else would
do.*

*I love to tell the story! 'Tis pleasant to repeat
What seems, each time I tell it, more wonder
fully sweet*

*I love to tell the story, for some have never heard
The message of salvation from God's own holy
Word.*

*I love to tell the story! 'Twill be my theme in glory,
To tell the old, old story, of gracious, heavenly
love.*

—*Hymns of Dawn*

The House of the Lord

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”
—*Psalm 23:6*

THIS PSALM ILLUSTRATES

our Heavenly Father’s loving care for his faithful people who have responded to the heavenly calling during this present Gospel Age. To us there is the privilege of daily dwelling in the house of the Lord. We also have the glorious hope and prospect of being with him in the Father’s house which Jesus went away to prepare.

PLACES OF RESIDENCE

Near the close of Jesus’ earthly ministry, he explained to his disciples, “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And 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.”—John 14:2-4

The word ‘mansions’ in this scripture is a translation of a Greek word which means ‘residence.’ It

is used only twice in the New Testament, and both times by Jesus. Again, he said, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”—vs. 23

Here the same word has been translated ‘abode.’ This verse (John 14:2) could also have been translated, ‘In my Father’s house are many places of residence.’ In both of these verses of scripture, Jesus is emphasizing that both he and his Father will make a place to stay in the hearts of those who love him and are obedient to his words of Truth. Both the Father and the Son dwell together with those who love them. Their dwelling place becomes ours and where we live in our innermost hearts and minds they will also live.

HIGH EXALTATION

The ‘Father’s house’ may be understood to mean the entire vast universe which he has created, and in this house are many places of residence, or abode. As members of the human family, the only one of these abodes that is suitable for us to live in is the earthly home. However, God did not confine himself to the creation of human beings and to provide a home for them. The Scriptures indicate that there are other orders of beings, and that these are adapted to live under circumstances that are very different from those existing on the earth. In this connection, the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus and explained to them the blessed hope of their High Calling in Christ Jesus. “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the

riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.”—Eph. 1:18,19

The apostle desired that the brethren would have the ability to see and appreciate their High Calling with the eye of faith, and understand spiritual things that are not visible to the human eye. Their eyes were to be opened to receive the wonderful promises of God’s Word and the beauties of his glorious character. They were told about the very high place Jesus had received for his obedience and faithfulness to the divine will. “Which he wrought in Christ, when he [God] raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.—vss. 20-23

Paul also brought this wonderful truth to the attention of the Colossian brethren in his letter to them. (Col. 1:12-18) The Heavenly Father had exalted our Lord Jesus to the very highest throne in the universe and had given him the highest form of life—the divine nature and immortality.

PREPARING A PLACE

While there are many planes of life in the Heavenly Father’s house as enumerated by the Apostle Paul, there was none that had yet been made suitable for the bride of Christ. Jesus therefore said to

his disciples, “I go to prepare a place for you. And 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.” (John 14:2,3) This indicates that the future dwelling place, or residence, for the Lord’s bride did not exist prior to Jesus’ first advent.

Jesus and his heavenly bride, otherwise known as ‘The Christ,’ were to be a new and heavenly creation. There is a special appeal in Jesus’ wonderful words of promise to those who have been called during this present Gospel Age. Although there were already many places of residence in God’s vast mansions of the universe, none of them had been made ready for Jesus’ bride. It is not possible for us to grasp with any degree of certainty the various dimensions of spiritual life in Paul’s reference to principalities, powers, might, dominion, and every name that is named. Neither do we know the special conditions that will identify the unique place which Jesus has gone to prepare for us. Whatever sets it apart from all other realms of existence, we long to be with our blessed Lord Jesus, to dwell where he dwells and to share his heavenly home.

TO BE LIKE HIM

Considering the great height of glory to which the faithful members of ‘The Christ’ will attain, the Apostle John wrote, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”—I John 3:1-3

As a disciple of Jesus who walked with him while he was in the flesh, John was quick to grasp the implications of what Jesus said on these particular matters. He had recorded Jesus’ wonderful promise to prepare a special home where his faithful followers would dwell together in glory. John also recorded the Master’s prayer, in which he said to his Heavenly Father, “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. 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.”—John 17:21-24

There was no doubt in John’s mind that this prayer would be answered in God’s due time and manner. Jesus had asked that the Heavenly Father bestow the same love upon his followers that he had displayed toward him, and John realized what great love this truly was. These blessed followers of our Lord were to be made like him and dwell together with him in heavenly glory.

LIGHT AND SALVATION

The psalmist spoke of the power of faith. “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I

fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.”—Ps. 27:1-4

David declared that he would ‘dwell in the house of the LORD’ all the days of his life. This suggests that his determination to do so would have much to do with his attaining this desired position in the divine arrangements. This mark of character has been true of the Lord’s people during this present Gospel Age. Their desire to be in harmony with God and to be a part of his household has identified their degree of faith. It is a necessary prerequisite to their attaining such a high position of favor. Our present association with the Lord through his Word and the promise of our living with him in his future glorious kingdom is what his wonderful promises were pointing to.

A NEW CREATION

All of God’s creation who willingly remain obedient to him are said to be dwelling in the ‘house of the LORD.’ Under the administration of Christ’s future kingdom all of the restored human family living on earth will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Their mansion will be a perfected earthly paradise.

However, the new dwelling place that is prepared for the New Creation will be different from any of the other mansions that already exist, and the Christ will be exalted to this heavenly home. We put our consecrated lives in God's hands that we may be faithful to our calling. We are thus comforted by the psalmist, who wrote, "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."—Ps. 23:1-6

RESTING IN FAITH

During this present Gospel Age the Lord's people enjoy a rest of faith in the development of the Christ. It is a peace of heart and mind which transcends all our trials and difficulties, and it is based upon our assurance of the Heavenly Father's love and guidance. We may have confidence in him. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."—Phil. 4:19

The Christ dwelling with her Lord will occupy the grandest of all the mansions as his blessed bride. The apostle explains that even now those who believe do enter into rest. He encourages, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of

entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.” (Heb. 4:1) In addition to our present rest of faith, we have the grand assurance of an abiding place which Jesus promised to prepare for his bride. “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”—vss. 9-11

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”—Ps. 23:6 ■

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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 Fannie Sonnier, Jennings, LA—June 23.

Age, 72

Sister Stefania Jachimiak, Buffalo, NY—July 4.

Age, 92

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

M. J. Balko

Seattle, WA September 4-6
Clay City, IN 24-26

R. Goodman

Seattle, WA September 4-6

L. Griehs

Seattle, WA September 4-6

S. Jeuck

Jackson, MI September 4,5

E. Kalinski

Los Angeles, CA September 26

T. Krupa

New York, NY September 4,5

B. Montague

Seattle, WA September 4-6

H. Montague

Seattle, WA September 4-6

P. Mora

Seattle, WA September 4-6

A. Oystryk

Seattle, WA September 4-6

D. Rice

Jackson, MI September 4,5

T. Ruggirello

New York, NY September 4,5
Columbus, IN 18,19

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CONVENTIONS

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

JACKSON LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 4,5—Fa-Ho-Lo Camp and Conference Center, 3000 Mt. Hope Road, Unit 1, Grass Lake, MI 49240. Contact R. Lumley. Phone: (517) 782-7252

NEW YORK LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 4,5—Doubletree Hotel, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NY 07430. Phone: (201) 529-5880. Contact G. Pasios. Phone: (201) 939-3196

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

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

CLAY CITY CONVENTION, September 24-26—Canyon Inn, McCormick's Creek State Park, 451 McCormick Creek Park Road, Spencer, IN 47460. Cut-off date for reservations is August 27. Contact S. Clark, 7861 Clearwater Parkway, Indianapolis, IN 46240. Phone: (317) 578-2634

LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, September 26—Auditorium, 406 Irving Drive, Burbank, CA 91504. Contact R. Wojcik, 12807 Elkwood Street, N. Hollywood, CA 91605. Phone: (818) 982-7253

PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, October 2,3—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15012. Contact J. Krasonic, Sr., 1106 State Route 136, Belle Vernon, PA 15012. Phone: (724) 872-6215

GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 9,10—Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact T. Malinowski, 5609 Buttrick Avenue SE, Alto, MI 49302. Phone: (616) 868-0313

SAN LUIS OBISPO CONVENTION, October 16,17—Masonic Temple, 859 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA. Contact M. Allard. Phone: (805) 773-2962

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 30,31—Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Drive (Corner of Hwy. 17-92), Sanford, FL. Contact J. Kuenzli, 330 Jasmine Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 831-2098

NEW HAVEN CONVENTION, November 7—Westwoods Italian-American Club, 85 Chase Lane, West Haven, CT. Contact A. Suraci, 171 Johnson Road, Hamden, CT 06518. Phone: (203) 248-3793



*Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.*

*Blest are the sons of peace,
Whose hearts and hopes are one,
Whose kind designs to serve and please
Through all their actions run.*

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To us the Scriptures clearly teach:

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

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

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

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

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

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