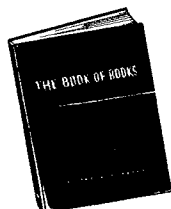


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VOLUME XXXVIII

NUMBER 11

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

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



British Address: 70, Station Road, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex, England.

Australian Address: Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew E 4, Victoria.

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

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

Danish Address: Daggy Forlaget, Hyldebaervej 13, Copenhagen F, Denmark.

German Address: Tagesanbruch Bibelstudien-Vereinigung, 78 Freiburg i Br., Sachsenstrasse 12, Germany.

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

New Zealand Address: P.O. Box 1358. C. P. O. Auckland.

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Highlights of **Dawn**

Our Lord's Return

IN THIS day of chaos and threatened destruction by the misuse of nuclear fission and by environmental pollution the hearts of the people are filled with fear as they look ahead to what may happen to themselves and to the human race if no solutions for the world's troubles can be found. Students of the Bible who have faith in its promises and prophecies believe that the only solution to the problems which have been brought about by human sin and selfishness is the return of Christ and the setting up of his long-promised kingdom of righteousness and peace.

Views concerning this great event in the plan of God are widely variant. Some claim that Jesus returned at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting disciples, and that since then, as each sinner is converted, it constitutes a further coming of Christ, and that when all are converted he will have fully come. We are told that this is the way Jesus fulfils his promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world [age]."—Matt. 28:20

On the other hand, many claim that Jesus will return to earth as a man, and that he will be recognized by the print of the nails in his hands and in his feet, and by the spear wound in his side which he received at the time of his crucifixion. This latter view depends to a considerable extent upon a literal interpretation of certain prophecies,

such as that of Revelation 1:7, where we read, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him."

We believe that the truth of the matter, supported by the entire testimony of the Scriptures, lies between these two extreme and opposing views. The first view erroneously renounces the necessity of a personal coming of Christ, yet approximates the truth concerning the nature of Jesus, in that it considers him to be so far above humans in nature that he can be said to be present with them without their being able to see him.

The second view holds to the clearly established scriptural fact of a personal return of the Master, but circumscribes the grandeur and possibilities of that momentous event by the unscriptural claim that he returns to earth as a sort of glorified man, and not the powerful, invisible divine being which he became when the Heavenly Father raised him from the dead, and gave him a name which is above every name.

The Scriptures teach that when Jesus was raised from the dead he was no longer a human, but a powerful divine being, the "image of the invisible God." (Col. 1:15; II Cor. 5:16; I Pet. 3:18) This means that by nature Jesus is now invisible to the human eye, even as God is invisible. It is this divine Christ who returns to earth, hence the fact of his return will need to be recognized otherwise than by seeing him with the natural eye.

True, Jesus did appear as a man to his disciples on several occasions following his resurrection; but this does not mean that he was, by nature, still a human. The circumstances of his few brief appearances prove to the contrary. For example, he always appeared in a different body, which would not have been the case had the human body in which he appeared been his real body.

Only once did Jesus appear in a body similar to the one which was crucified, and that was because Thomas made

it plain that he would not believe the Master had been raised from the dead unless he could see his wounds. Jesus satisfied his lack of faith; although only this once did the disciples see any wounds, and this appearance is described by the Apostle John as ones of the "signs" by which Jesus proved to them that he had been raised from the dead. (John 20:29-31) On the other occasions of Jesus' appearances to his disciples after his resurrection they did not recognize him by his personal appearance, but by the things which he said and did.

Jesus' appearances to his disciples after his resurrection were of the same nature as those of angels in more ancient times. For example, three angels appeared to Abraham. They talked and ate with him, but they were not humans—although for a time Abraham thought that they were.—Gen. 18:1, 2; Heb. 13:2

Jesus was present with his disciples for forty days between the time of his resurrection and his ascension; but during only a very small portion of this time were the disciples able to see him, and then only when he miraculously appeared to them. It is this Jesus, who is able to be invisibly present among humans, who was to return to earth for the purpose of establishing his kingdom of righteousness by means of which the redeemed race of mankind is to have the problems of human selfishness solved, and be restored to happiness and life upon the earth.

Jesus' Flesh a Ransom

Jesus was made flesh in order that he might give his humanity as a corresponding price—a ransom for Adam and his race. The Master said, "My flesh . . . I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:51) Had Jesus been raised from the dead as a human it would have meant that the ransom was taken back, and that the world of mankind would not have been redeemed.

But the Scriptures show that while Jesus was put to death in the flesh he was made alive in the spirit, or as a spirit being. (I Cor. 15:44-47; I Pet. 3:18) Jesus had previously explained to Nicodemus that one who is born of the Spirit can come and go as the wind; that is, be invisible to the human eye, and having great power. He proved this to be true in his own case, for after his resurrection his disciples could not tell from whence he came or whither he went when appearing to them.—John 3:8

That Jesus still has the power to appear to humans as he did to his disciples following his resurrection from the dead we do not dispute. However, the Scriptures do not say that his return to earth will be revealed to the world in this manner. His appearances to his disciples following his resurrection were evidently intended to establish in the minds of the disciples the fact that he had been raised from the dead; but this fact having been established we have no reason to expect their repetition.

In Romans 1:20 we read concerning God that “the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” Here is a key which will help us to understand the significance of the prophecies pertaining to the return of Christ. He is now invisible to human eyes, even as the Heavenly Father is invisible, hence at his return he can be recognized only by the visible things which transpire and which can be identified through the prophecies of the Bible as the “signs” which were to mark his second visit to earth.

Let us state the matter in another way: We believe in the existence of God, not because we have ever seen him, but because we see his works. With our limited abilities we survey the vast universe and we say there must be a powerful, all-wise Creator back of this. Similarly, in the

divine Word we find set forth an impressive array of events which were to take place in the world following the return of the divine Christ; hence, if we can see that many of these events are already taking place, the logical conclusion is that that which the Bible describes as Christ's second visit to earth must already be a reality.

God of This World Invisible

The Scriptures teach that there is a personal devil, yet no human has ever seen him; but we have all seen the result of his nefarious influence. The Apostle Paul informs us that Satan is the "god of this world," the one who now works in the hearts of "the children of disobedience." (II Cor. 4:4) Paul also explains that Satan is a spirit who is the "prince of the power of the air." (Eph. 2:2) Jesus spoke of Satan as the "prince of this world." (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) If we believe the Bible we must realize that this powerful being has, throughout the centuries, been exercising control over the affairs of men.

The Devil is the invisible ruler of "this present evil world." Peter declares that he goes about as a "roaring lion" seeking whom he may devour. (I Pet. 5:8) This clearly indicates that Satan's field of operation is right here on earth; yet even those who realize this most fully have never heard him literally "roar."

With the return of Jesus, and as a result of his presence, a new world, or social order, is ultimately to be instituted, and in this new social order Jesus will be the King, supplanting the rulership of Satan. In vision John saw an angel come down from God out of heaven and lay hold upon Satan, and bind him with a mighty chain. Following this, Christ and his church are seen to reign for a thousand years. As Satan, who is bound, is invisible, certainly the agencies which bind him must likewise be invisible.
—Rev. 20:1-4, 6

Satan's power and influence in this, the present evil world, are no less potent because of his invisibility. On the contrary, it has given him certain advantage in that, unseen, he has been a powerful force for evil. Thus he has been able to make his influence felt in the council chambers of the rulers and princes of earth, and to a considerable extent direct their affairs. Jesus' rulership will also be an invisible one, exercised through human agencies. He will rule the people with a rod of iron; but he will rule them in righteousness, and not in unrighteousness as Satan has done. Even as the evil results of Satan's rulership are now easily discerned, so Jesus' reign will be recognized by all mankind through the righteous results that will be accomplished.

Truth Concealed by a Mistranslation

Important truths pertaining to the manner of our Lord's return have been long hidden by a mistranslation. As we all know, the Bible was not written originally in the English language, hence we who use the English language must depend upon translation from the original Hebrew of the Old Testament, and the Greek of the New Testament. While in most instances in our English Bibles very little of the richness of meaning has been lost through mistranslation, there are exceptions in which profound truths of the divine plan have been long hidden by unwitting mistranslations.

One of these exceptions is in the case of the Greek word **parousia** which is used by Jesus and the apostles to describe the Master's second visit to earth. In our King James Version of the Bible this word is almost universally translated "coming." The result of this has been that many students of prophecy have attempted to interpret the prophetic signs pertaining to our Lord's return as denoting that his coming was near. However, the true meaning of this Greek word is "presence," and it follows that the ful-

filled signs of the Master's **parousia**, or presence, indicate that he is already here.

When, for example, the disciples inquired of Jesus, "What shall be the sign of thy coming [**parousia**; presence]?" they were not asking how they might know in advance when he would come, but how they would know of his presence when he had come. In other words, they wanted to know what visible things they were to look for as tokens that the invisible Christ had returned and that his kingdom would ultimately be established.

Archeological discoveries reveal that the Greek word **parousia** was used in ancient times to describe the visits of kings and emperors to various cities and provinces of their realms. One such discovery shows that taxes to pay the expenses of such a visit were raised by the issuing of a special "parousia coin." How appropriate, then, that this word should be used in connection with the visit to earth of the King of kings and Lord of lords! (Ps. 8:4) But, as in the case of the earthly rulers whose visits are thus described, so with Jesus, **parousia** does not mean merely the moment of coming, but covers the entire duration of the visit.

The first presence of Jesus, when he was here on earth as a man, lasted in all but thirty-three and one-half years. He remained forty days longer as a divine being, invisible to the world, and then he returned to the heavenly courts. There are many prophecies in the Old Testament concerning Jesus' first presence. Some tell of his birth; some of one or another part of his life and ministry. Some tell of his death as man's Redeemer. The fulfilment of these prophecies did not, as a rule, run concurrently.

The prophecies and promises of Christ's second visit to earth likewise cover a great variety of events, culminating in the destruction of death and Satan. The fulfilment of some of these prophecies runs concurrently, but in other

instances there is a sequence of events. This calls for carefulness in our study of the prophecies relating to Christ's second visit lest we fall into the mistake of expecting them all to be fulfilled at a given moment of time, or within a relatively short period of time.

Manner of His Presence

Jesus said to his disciples, "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning [Greek, **astrape**, bright shining] cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming [**parousia**, presence] of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24:26, 27) By these words Jesus is conveying to our minds that his coming and presence were not to be like that of a human. He was to return as a great divine being, the express image of his Father's invisible person. You won't find me, Jesus is saying, hidden away in some secret chamber, as you might find a man or a woman. Rather, you will discern my presence even as you discern the existence of God himself; and that is by the great things which you ascribe to him.

And so it is. We behold the sunshine and the rain, watering the earth and warming it that it may bring forth and provide for those upon it. So Jesus explained that we would know of his second presence because it will be like the lightning, or bright shining, which similar to the sun, cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west. The blessings to be dispensed to humankind after being brought forth from their graves during the time of Christ's presence are represented as coming to the people because the "Sun of righteousness" shall arise, bringing healing and life to the peoples of earth.—Mal. 4:2

An Increase of Knowledge

As we have noted, Jesus explained that his second presence would be like a bright shining. (Matt. 24:26, 27) Here,

unmistakably, is the idea of enlightenment, symbolizing increasing knowledge. The Prophet Daniel, describing conditions which were to obtain in the "time of the end," declares among other things that "knowledge shall be increased." (Dan. 12:4) The "time of the end" here referred to is the period in which the rule of sin, selfishness, and death is to be brought to an end as a result of Christ's return and second presence. The world is even now experiencing this foretold increase of knowledge, but because fallen man does not have the wisdom to use it properly chaos results, even threatening the destruction of the race.

Due to man's unwisdom and selfishness, his great strides in knowledge have already led to what the Prophet Daniel described as a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1) In speaking of this same time Jesus said there would be tribulation on the earth so great that unless it was shortened no flesh would survive. We face this very situation today. The misuse of nuclear fission, as well as the pollution of our environment, could well cause the destruction of all living things on the earth. Indeed, only divine intervention through the establishment of the long-promised kingdom of Christ will prevent this.

Through the agencies of Christ's kingdom, when established, the increase of knowledge will be a great boon to humanity, especially in the fact that then it will include an understanding of God and of his love in providing redemption from sin and death through the sacrificial work of Jesus. The long reign of sin and death under Satan, the prince of this world, is described in the Bible as a nightmare of darkness. The Prophet Isaiah wrote, "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." And in contrast we read concerning the time when Christ's kingdom will be governing in the affairs of men, "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—Isa. 60:2, 3; Luke 2:32

In John 1:9 it is said that Jesus is that "true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The prophecies clearly show that the complete fulfilment of this promise will be during the second presence of Christ; that ultimately the "earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9) Not until the end of the reign of Christ and his church will this prophecy be completely fulfilled.

"He Cometh in Clouds"

In Revelation 1:7 we are informed that Jesus returns in clouds, and that every eye shall see him. As Christ is a divine being, the express image of God himself, humans can see him only through the incidents and events which accompany his return. The time will yet come—and that time is not far off, we believe—when these events will be of such a pronounced character that all will readily recognize their true significance.

In Joel 2:1, 2 there is further reference to the "clouds" which become so distressingly ominous in the period of Christ's presence prior to the full establishment of his kingdom. Here we are informed that this period is not to be a time of peace, but rather the reverse. It is to be a "day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations."

It will be noted from this that the "clouds" here mentioned by the prophet really consist in this case of "a great people and a strong," the like of which has never before been known. This is evidently a reference to the uprising of the discontented of mankind in such tremendous numbers as to cause civilization to crumble and fall under the impact of the revolutionary struggle they precipitate.

These clouds of trouble are even now forming. Already the people of earth are filled with fear because of them, although as yet they do not "see" the Master's presence as being associated with the forces which are gradually destroying "this present evil world." Jesus said that there would be great mourning because of his presence, that there would be upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity. (Luke 21:25, 26; Matt. 24:30) How perplexed the peoples of earth are today! No permanent solutions can be found for the many baffling problems which combine to fill the world with chaos and the hearts of the people with fear.

God's Hand Over Israel

But how, some may ask, will the people in general be made to recognize that these world-wide troubles are the death throes of the present social order, and are caused largely by the presence of the King of the new world? The Scriptures indicate that one of the ways in which this will be brought about will be through divine intervention on behalf of the Jewish people in Israel.

The experiences of the Jews throughout these days of trouble constitute additional evidence of Christ's second presence. It is the time, according to the Scriptures, when their land was to be restored to them. What has occurred along this line since 1914 is miraculous, and without doubt has been in preparation for the blessings which will be theirs in the messianic kingdom. This regathering of Israel was prophetically due at the very time when the nations as a whole were being gathered unto the final destructive battle of Armageddon. Joel 3:1, 2 reads, "For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land."

This prophecy indicates that while the Jewish people would be restored to their land, it would be amidst a time of trouble for them as well as for the nations in general; and other prophecies indicate that additional trouble is in store for them—which is not difficult to foresee, in view of the circumstances which have existed for several years, and which still exist.

It is not wise to go into detail concerning events which have not yet transpired, but the Scriptures do make it plain that near the end of the death-struggle of the nations, with virtual annihilation threatening them through the misuse of modern military implements of war and nuclear fission, that there will be an attack against the Israelites in their Promised Land, and that then the Lord will intervene on their behalf, rescue them from their enemies, and through their resurrected prophets and other worthies of ancient time establish his kingdom as a literal governing power over the whole earth.

Ezekiel 38:14-23 presents some of the details of this final trouble. The etymology of the names given to Israel's enemies in this prophecy indicates that they are used prophetically to identify armies, particularly of Europe and the Middle East. The prophecy shows that these forces eventually will attack the Jewish people. Agreeing with the prophecy of Joel already quoted, Ezekiel explains that the "clouds" are the anti-God forces which finally will threaten the destruction of the restored Israelites.—Ezek. 38:16

It will be a time of "shaking," the prophet explains. But the promise is that the Lord will deliver his ancient people, and that through this deliverance the "eyes" of the nations will discern the presence and power of the new King of earth who, as the agent and right hand of Jehovah, will be directing the issue. (Ps. 110:5) Thus will all eyes discern

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Kealahou	KKON	790	11:30 a.m.	Baker	KFLN	960	8:00 a.m.
IDAHO				Great Falls	KKGF	1310	9:15 a.m.
Boise	KATN	950	10:05 a.m.	Miles City	KATL	1340	9:15 a.m.
Coeur d'Alene	KVNI	1240	9:15 a.m.	NEBRASKA			
Lewiston	KRLC	1350	9:35 a.m.	Grand Island	KRGI	1430	10:05 a.m.
Payette	KYET	1450	9:05 p.m.	NEW JERSEY			
Sandpoint	KSPT	1400	10:15 a.m.	Newark	WJRZ	970	8:15 a.m.
ILLINOIS				NEW MEXICO			
Chicago	WJJD	1160	10:00 a.m.	Silver city	KSIL	1340	10:05 a.m.
La Salle	WLPO	1220	9:45 a.m.	NEW YORK			
Rockford	WRRR	1330	8:30 a.m.	Buffalo-Niagara Falls	WHLD	1270	12:00 noon
West Frankfort	WFRX	1300	9:15 a.m.	Kingston	WBAB	1550	9:45 a.m.
INDIANA				Mineola (Sat.)	WTHE	1520	9:00 a.m.
Indianapolis	WIBC	1070	8:00 a.m.	New York	WJRZ	970	8:15 a.m.
Muncie	WLBC	1340	8:45 a.m.				

Radio Broadcast Schedule

NORTH CAROLINA

Elizabeth City WGAI 560 12:05 p.m.
Leaksville WLOE 1490 12:05 p.m.

OHIO

Cincinnati WNOP 740 9:10 a.m.
Cleveland WHK 1420 8:45 a.m.
Columbus WBNS 1460 10:15 a.m.
Piqua WPTW 1570 11:30 a.m.
Zanesville WHIZ 1240 6:40 a.m.

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City WNAD 640 8:10 a.m.

OREGON

Lebanon KGAL 920 9:00 a.m.
Portland KLIQ 1290 9:30 a.m.
The Dalles KODL 1440 9:15 a.m.

PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown WHOL 1600 10:45 a.m.
Connellsville WCVI 1340 12:05 p.m.
Pittsburgh WARO 540 12:00 noon
Pottstown WPAZ 1370 12:45 p.m.

PUERTO RICO

Aguadilla (Fri) WGRF 8:00 p.m.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Yankton KYNT 1450 9:15 a.m.

TENNESSEE

Clinton WYSH 1380 12:45 p.m.

TEXAS

Lubbock KDAV 580 9:45 a.m.
Pampa KPDM 1340 12:00 p.m.
Pleasanton KBOP 1380 7:15 a.m.
San Antonio KMAC 630 12:00 noon
Shamrock KBYP 1580 10:15 a.m.
Sherman KRRV 9:10 11:45 a.m.
Wichita Falls KWFT 620 10:15 a.m.
Woodville KVLL 1220 8:45 a.m.

UTAH

Logan KBLW 1390 10:06 a.m.
Ogden KVOG 1490 10:35 a.m.
Salt Lake City KSOP 1370 9:30 a.m.

VIRGINIA

Richmond WLEE 1480 10:05 a.m.

WASHINGTON

Bellingham KPUG 1170 9:30 a.m.
Centralia-Chehalis

CELIA 1470 10:35 a.m.
Olympia KGY 1240 10:35 a.m.
Quincy KPOR 1370 10:35 a.m.
Seattle KAYO 1150 10:30 a.m.
Spokane KUDY 1280 9:30 a.m.
Tacoma KMO 1360 9:45 a.m.
Yakima KUTI 980 7:15 a.m.

WISCONSIN

Fond du Lac KFIZ 1450 11:05 a.m.
Milwaukee WEMP 1250 8:45 a.m.
Milwaukee WYLO 540 7:45 a.m.
Neillsville WCCN 1370 9:15 a.m.

WYOMING

Cheyenne KVWO 1370 10:05 a.m.
Sheridan KWYO 1410 12:00 noon

CANADA

Calgary, Alta. CKXL 1140 10:30 a.m.
Corner Brook, Nfld.

CFCB 570 10:30 a.m.
Dauphin, Man. CKDM 730 10:30 a.m.
Oshawa, Ont. CKLB 1350 9:45 a.m.
Portage La Prairie, Man.

CFRY 920 11:15 a.m.
Prince Albert CKBI 900 10:30 a.m.
St. Thomas, Ont.

CHLO 1570 10:45 a.m.

VIRGIN ISLANDS

St. Croix WSTX 970 9:00 a.m.

MALDIVES ISLANDS

Radio Maldives 4740 9:00 p.m. Tue

AUSTRALIA

Geelong 3GL, 222m. 10:00 a.m.

CYPRUS

Nicosia (Mon.) 602 kc. 10:00 p.m.

EUROPE - AFRICA - SO. AMERICA

Shortwave (Fri.) 3:15 p.m. (E.D.T.)
15.440 MHZ; 17.845 MHZ

PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA

Lourenco Marques (Thurs.) 10:15 p.m.

RADIO TOPICS FOR NOVEMBER

1—"The Coming World

Government"

8—"The Great Deception"

15—"When a Man Dies"

22—"Paradise Restored"

29—"Joys of the Judgment Day"

Bible Study

LESSON FOR NOVEMBER 1

Living in Christian Fellowship

MEMORY VERSE: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God."—Ephesians 2:19

GALATIANS 6:1-10

THE sweetness of true Christian fellowship is one of the rich blessings enjoyed by the footstep followers of Jesus, those who are being crucified together with him. Christian fellowship is more than a friendship, although this is one of its elements: a friendship that is deeper and more genuine than anything the world can offer.

The Greek word in the New Testament which is translated fellowship means "partnership." This partnership is first of all between the Father and the Son, and all his true followers are included in it. It is a partnership in the outworking of the divine plan, so much so that the Apostle Paul speaks of our being "workers together with him." (II Cor. 6:1) We are called to be partners in the great messianic kingdom arrangements—"heirs of God, and

joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him."—Rom. 8:17

Our partnership, or fellowship, with Christ includes the privilege of suffering and dying with him. Paul wrote that he was willing to suffer the loss of all things that he might know Christ, "and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." (Phil. 3:10) It is true as Paul also wrote, that it is given to us not only to believe on Christ, "but also to suffer for his sake."—Phil. 1:29

Our lesson assignment reminds us of some of the details involved in true Christian fellowship. We are to be sympathetic and helpful toward our weaker brethren. When overtaken in a fault we are to do what we can to restore them, "in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, less thou also be tempted."

We are to bear one another's burdens. (vs. 2) Verse 5 reads, "Every man shall bear his own burden." There is no contradiction here, for two different words are used in the Greek text. The Greek word translated "burdens" in verse 2 denotes a burdensome load, a load so great that one might well be crushed by it. Through encouragement in whatever way we can render it, we are to help our brethren bear these burdens, these trials.

In verse 5 the Greek word translated "burden" means, figuratively, a task of service. Every brother in our fellowship in the body of Christ has certain tasks or services to render. Each one is to bear these "burdens," and should not attempt to shift them to others in the body. Nor would anyone in our blessed partnership be rendering proper service to another by attempting to relieve him of his responsibilities in the body of Christ.

One of the secrets of sweet fellowship among ourselves and with the Lord is for each one to make a proper appraisal of himself: "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."

Then Paul presents a lesson on sowing and reaping. If, after **having** dedicated our lives to the Lord we sow to the flesh; that is, follow our carnal inclination, we shall reap "corruption." But if we sow to the Spirit, as directed by the Word of God, we shall reap "life everlasting." But "let us not be weary in well-doing." Paul continues, "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

This is followed immediately by the admonition to do good unto all as we have opportunity, and especially to the household of faith. Thus Paul is indicating that a true sowing to the spirit is leading a life of sacrifice on behalf of others, especially in laying down our lives for the brethren.

Our memory verse is another gem. Many suppose, erroneously, that the expression that we "are no more strangers and foreigners" is a reference to our status in the world, before we became Christians. But this is not quite the thought. Paul is addressing Gentile Christians, who through the centuries had been strangers to the promises of God to the Jews. But now they were acceptable to God through Christ.

QUESTIONS

What is Christian fellowship?

Who are the "strangers" referred to in our memory verse?

Growing Through Worship

MEMORY VERSE: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Revelation 4:11

ISAIAH 6:1-8

THE more we appreciate the greatness and the glory of God the more we should endeavor to be like him in character, exhibiting in our contacts with others his graciousness, his mercy, and his love. We see and know God through his Word of truth, and through his plan of redemption revealed therein. Every precious promise of God should give us a glimpse of his glory, and increase in us the desire to serve and please him.

The Prophet Isaiah was favored with a spectacular vision which revealed the glory of the Lord to him. He wrote, "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." All true visions of the Lord show him in this same wonderful manner—"high and lifted up." The great Creator of the universe is always "high and lifted up," and any true vision of him is sure to reveal him in this manner.

The seraphim in the vision given to Isaiah added to the

sense of God's glory when they cried one to another, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." In Isaiah's day the whole earth was not filled with God's glory except in a limited way by the things created. It was, however, forecast by the promises of God pertaining to the accomplished work of the messianic kingdom. So we do have the assurances of those promises that the time will come when all will know the Lord; when the knowledge of him will fill the earth, and his glory will be recognized.—Jer. 31:34; Isa. 11:9; 40:5

The vision of God's glory had the same effect upon Isaiah as it should have upon all who see a measure of his glory, through his Word or otherwise. He said, "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." The sharp contrast between the character and glory

of God, and ourselves as members of a sinful and dying race, should, when humbly considered, make us realize that we are indeed "undone" and must trust in the mercy of the Lord; that our lips are unclean and not suitable for use in the service of the Lord unless cleansed by provisions of his making.

In the case of Isaiah, one of the seraphim in the vision flew to him and placed a live coal from the altar upon his lips, and said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." With us of the Gospel Age, the cleansing of our lips, and of our whole beings, is accomplished through the blood of Christ, and by the washing by the water of the Word. Only those who are thus cleansed are made worthy of participating in any service which the Lord may assign to his people.

Most visions which the Lord gives to his people have as their objective their calling in to his service; and so it was with the vision given to Isaiah. In the vision he heard the voice of the Lord asking, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

Isaiah grasped the meaning of the vision, and was quick to respond, "Here am I; send me." We are now living in the end

of the Gospel Age. The Lord is present, conducting the harvest work. There is reaping work to be done, and the Lord has given his people the vision of "present truth." Through this vision they, like Isaiah, see the Lord "high and lifted up." They recognize that through the glorious vision of truth the Lord is calling them into his service, and like Isaiah, their reply is, "Here am I; send me."

In the vision of "present truth" we see the glory of the Lord; that glory which is made up of his wisdom, justice, love, and power. We see how these attributes have been working through the ages, furthering the divine plan of love whereby the sinful and dying race will eventually be restored to that which was lost. Through the divine plan we, like Isaiah, see the time when the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord, and we recognize, as our memory verse declares, that our great and loving God is worthy "to receive glory and honor and power."

QUESTIONS

What important fact concerning the Lord did Isaiah note in his vision?

What effect should visions of the Lord have upon his people?

What should be our response to the vision of truth through which we now see the Lord?

Growth Through Giving

MEMORY VERSE: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—II Corinthians 9:7

ROMANS 12:1-8

TRUE and sincere giving is an expression of divine love, the greatest example of which we have in our Heavenly Father himself, who so loved the world "that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Jesus, in turn, gladly gave himself in death, laying down his life in sacrifice that mankind might be redeemed from sin and death.

And in this we have, basically, the true example of Christian giving. Christian giving may be reflected to a limited extent in the material resources we devote to the Lord's service, but in the full sense it is the giving of ourselves in sacrifice, as Jesus did. This is what Paul means in our lesson: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Having given our all to the

Lord to be used by him in sacrificial service, we are to see to it that this gift really changes our lives. Paul continues, "And be not conformed to this world." The giving of oneself wholly to the Lord, to be used in sacrificial service, is not the way of the world. The way of the world is generally selfish. In the world one's concern is chiefly for himself and his own interests, but this must not be so with the Christian.

The dedicated Christian should, as Paul points out, seek to be "transformed by the renewing of" the mind, or outlook in life. What we are interested in now is to discover, or "prove," "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." We do this through the study of His Word, that we may become servants who need not to be ashamed, because we have rightly divided the Word of truth, and have courageously applied to ourselves those instructions of the Lord which direct us in the way of sacrifice.

One of the great temptations coming to those who are conformed to this world is to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. In the world, people are encouraged to make a high appraisal of themselves and their abilities. They are often willing to spend untold sums of money to impress upon others how well-suited they are for a certain office in government, or for some other reason.

But this is not the way of the Christian. We are not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, "but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." We are to recognize the talents and assets we have to give to the Lord, and then be diligent in their use.

Paul explains that all the Lord's people are not the same. He mentions some of the talents to be noted among the brethren in the Early Church: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, [public speaking] let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that

teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence, he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."—vs. 5-8

Today there are many other ways of carrying out the terms of our covenant of sacrifice, but the principle is the same. We are to lay down our lives "giving," with simplicity, with diligence, and with cheerfulness. Just because we cannot "give" in the same manner as another brother, or to the same extent, does not relieve us of the responsibility of doing all we can in the service of the Lord.

Our memory verse is to the point. In the first instance it was an admonition to the brethren at Corinth to participate in helping their unfortunate brethren in Judea; but the admonition is good for us also. Our hearts should determine the extent of our giving, and we are not to give "grudgingly." Let us always remember that "God loveth a cheerful giver."

QUESTIONS

What is the greatest example of "giving" the Bible presents to us?

How does Paul describe the giving "of our all"?

What kind of "giver" does God love?

Training for Service

MEMORY VERSE: "And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men."—Mark 1:17

MARK 1:16-20

EPHESIANS 4:11-16

IN MOST of the larger denominational churches of today it is considered necessary for one to spend several years in a theological college in order to be properly trained as a minister of the Gospel. However, there is no evidence in the Scriptures that any such training is necessary. In any case, the Scriptures do not authorize a separation of the church into clergy and laity groups. From God's standpoint, every dedicated follower of the Master is anointed, or authorized, by the Holy Spirit to be a minister, or servant.

When Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be his followers, he said that he would make them "fishers of men." He used this description of those who would be his witnesses because they were in the fishing business when he called them. But the same description applies well to all the Master's followers, for they, like the apostles, are to seek to interest others in the Gospel,

and hold before them the opportunity of becoming followers of Jesus.

While Jesus did not set up theological colleges for the training of his disciples, he did impart to them a knowledge of his Father's Word and plan to the point their minds were able to grasp his teachings before receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. In prayer to his Father, Jesus said concerning his apostles, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me."—John 17:8

But Jesus realized that his disciples were not yet prepared to receive and understand the fulness of his message, and he said to them, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, [it] the Spirit of truth, is come, he [it] will guide you into all truth." (John 16: 12, 13) This promise by Jesus was fulfilled at Pentecost. It was there that the Holy Spirit came upon those waiting in the "upper room" in Jerusalem, giving them an enlightenment of mind; and the Holy Spirit has

continued with Jesus' faithful followers ever since.

At Pentecost Peter explained that Jesus had been raised from the dead and exalted to a position at the right hand of God, "and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:32, 33) Paul understood the significance of this great event, and in the second portion of our lesson, after mentioning Jesus' resurrection and exaltation, adds:

"He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Here we have the apostle outlining God's program for training his servants throughout the present age. It began with Jesus, who passed on the truth of his Father to his disciples to the extent that it could be done before they received the Holy Spirit. And then, raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God, Jesus "shed forth" the Holy Spirit upon his waiting disciples, and

under the direction of that Spirit of revelation and discernment there were set in the church the various servants whom Paul identifies.

Our Lord Jesus, the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New Testament are the inspired servants of God in this wonderful arrangement. Their word is inspired to the dedicated follower of the Master. The servants are helpers, interpreters, we might say, who help the church as a whole to understand more fully what has been imparted by the inspired servants. But we should never lose sight of the fact that in this wonderful arrangement the final word of authority is vested in Jesus and in the prophets and apostles.

While in a congregation of the consecrated some may be appointed to serve as teachers, or evangelists, or pastors (elders), it is important to keep in mind that every consecrated child of God has a responsibility, through the use of the Scriptures, to build up his brethren in the faith, and to witness the Gospel of Christ to the world.

QUESTIONS

Outline God's training program for his servants of the present age.

Who are the inspired servants of God?

Growing Through Struggle

MEMORY VERSE: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

—James 1:12

MATTHEW 5:10, 11

EPHESIANS 6:10-18

ONE of the truths which Paul imparted to the disciples of his day was "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) The reference here is to the rulership phase of the kingdom. Those who qualify for this high position in the kingdom will indeed be called upon to suffer, and because the result of thus suffering for righteousness' sake is so glorious, Jesus could say, "Blessed are ye" when such experiences come upon you.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. 8:16, 17) Peter explained that through the holy prophets the Spirit testified of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. (I Pet. 1:10, 11) The proph-

ecies of suffering and resultant glory have a fulfilment in Jesus' faithful followers as well as they did in Jesus himself.

Those who, in the next age, are blessed as subjects of the messianic kingdom will not need to suffer rebuke and persecution. Isaiah 25:6-8 presents some of the joyful flourishes of Christ's kingdom. In this prophecy the kingdom is likened unto a "mountain," and we are told that in this mountain the Lord will make "a feast of fat things" to all people. We are also told that he will "swallow up death in victory" and "wipe away tears from off all faces," "and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it."

Satan is the chief persecutor of the people of God. The Lord foretold that his "seed," his cohorts, would "bruise" the "heel" of the "seed of the woman." (Gen. 3:15) The "seed" of the woman is the Christ class, and Satan's emissaries have ever

sought to deceive and discourage them. We have a reference to this in the second portion of our lesson: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Because of this persistent onslaught against us we will need, as Paul explains, to "take . . . the whole armor of God" that we may be able to stand in this evil day when Satan is permitted to rebuke the Lord's people in the many ways of which he is capable. This "armor" of God in a general way represents different applications of the Gospel which the Lord has given to us as a protection against "the wiles of the Devil."

Paul speaks of the "helmet of salvation." He also speaks of the "breastplate of righteousness." In I Thessalonians 5:8 we read, "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

In our lesson Paul also speaks of the girdle of truth, and of having our feet "shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace." He speaks of "the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." He ad-

monishes us to make good use of "the sword of the Spirit," explaining that this represents "the word of God."

Paul is simply drawing lessons from the ancient Roman armor to help us understand that if we are to be victorious against Satan's deceptive and discouraging attacks we will need the provision which the Lord has made, which is the truth. Paul wrote to the church at Rome, saying that he was not ashamed of "the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation."—Rom. 1:16

In our memory verse James adds a beatitude to those given by Jesus: "Blessed is the man who endureth temptation." No blessing will accrue to any of the Lord's people simply because they are tempted, or tested. The blessing comes through enduring, and we will be able to endure only if we know the truth, and the reason our loving Heavenly Father permits these trials to come to us—that it is for the testing of our worthiness to live and reign with Christ. That will indeed be "the crown of life."

QUESTIONS

Why do Christians suffer?

What is represented by the Christian's armor as outlined by Paul?

Will our trials result in blessing if we fail to endure them?

Vineyard Echoes

General Convention Now History

(Continued from Last Issue)

Do All Things Continue the Same?

"There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

It is almost one hundred years since 1874, which date, we believe, marks the beginning of our Lord's second presence, the purpose of which is the ultimate establishment of Christ's kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Do all things remain the same, the speaker asked, as they were one hundred years ago? The obvious answer is, virtually nothing remains the same. Perhaps we have been expecting too much too soon, as a result of his presence. Very rarely has God acted hastily in relation to important events in his plan. God spoke to his prophets of the coming of Christ long centuries before he appeared on the scene. It might be said to be a principle with God to initiate his plans with small beginnings to be followed by larger results.

We believe that Jesus is now present as Chief Reaper and as the General of Jehovah to bring about the destruction of the old order, and that in due time he will destroy Satan, and take his place in glory as King of earth to bless all the families of the earth.

Panel Discussion—The Gospel

It was agreed by the brethren on the panel that the Gospel is good news, or glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. (Luke 2:10) It is embraced in the promise to Abraham that "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 22:18

In one sense it began with the preaching of Christ and the selection of the church, the seed of blessing, during this Gospel Age. In another sense it is the Gospel of the kingdom, that period of time when the blessings promised by the Gospel message will flow to the world of mankind.

This Gospel message has been distorted by the leaven of false doctrines, such as the doctrine of immortality, hell-fire, and the trinity. (Matt. 13:33) It has also been distorted by the elimination of the earthly phase of the kingdom; that is, by the failure to understand the concept of two salvations: that Jesus Christ is "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—I John 2:2

The purpose of the Gospel message during this Gospel Age is the finding and calling out from the world of those who shall make up the full number of those who shall be the seed of blessing for the world in the next age. (Acts 15:14) These, Peter tells us, are "begotten . . . unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (I Pet. 1:3,4) Until these are all called out, tested, and proved faithful, and the seed of blessing thus completed, the blessings promised to the world cannot begin. This calling out is still going on.

How do we preach the Gospel? We do so by whatever means the Lord has provided, by whatever means are in harmony with the Scriptures. In this day when the labor-

ers are few the Lord has provided those special tools, the radio and TV, for preaching the Gospel, which are used along with the usual channels available through the newspapers, magazines, tracts, and booklets. The Lord's people everywhere thus have the grand privilege of co-operating in the telling forth of the good news, the glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.

Companions of Them So Used

When we think about the ministry of the Apostle Paul, such names as Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, and Luke come quickly to our minds, for these were his traveling companions on his missionary journeys. But there were others who greatly assisted Paul in his ministry of whom we do not hear very much. They wrote and delivered his letters, ministered to his personal needs, shared his trials, his dangers, and finally his confinement.

Among these faithful, loyal brethren were Aristarchus, whom Paul described as "my fellow laborer;" Tychicus, of whom Paul wrote that he was "a beloved brother, and faithful minister in the Lord;" Epaphras, who won Paul's love as "a servant of Christ, . . . always laboring fervently . . . in prayers," and who was very zealous; and Epaphroditus, fondly described by Paul as "my brother, and companion in labor, and fellow soldier, . . . and he that ministered to my wants." How invaluable to Paul was the fellowship and comfort of these companions in the Lord's service. And how greatly he loved them for it!

Yes, the Lord used Paul wondrously in his service. But all of us are not Pauls. Most of us find our service to the Lord in humbler ways. But like Aristarchus and the others, each of us can encourage, support, comfort, and pray for all those of our brethren who, like Paul, are laying down their lives in the service of the Lord, the truth, and the brethren.

A Special Promise to Christ

"Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: 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; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."—Isa. 42:5-7

The Jewish nation was looking for a powerful king, to bring glory and release from the Roman yoke to Israel. Instead, they found a lowly carpenter, who himself was followed by the lowly and the humble. Although he had come to lay down his life for the world, he was to be despised and rejected of men—even by his brethren of the nation of Israel. He was to hang upon the cross. Though his disciples loved and were devoted to him, they were not able fully to sympathize, comfort, and communicate with him, for they were imperfect men; and they were not yet begotten of the Holy Spirit.

And so it was that the Heavenly Father, foreknowing the anguish and trials that would confront our Lord during his ministry and final hours here on earth, had moved the prophet to record these words of comfort and assurance which should strengthen and encourage him in his ultimate need; to tell him that he would be watching over him, that he would hold his hand and keep him.

Near the close of his ministry he went up into the mountain and prayed. In these precious moments alone with his Father he would be comforted by him. So also was he strengthened by the Father's promise through the prophet. And how sorely he needed that comfort!

(Continued on page 34)

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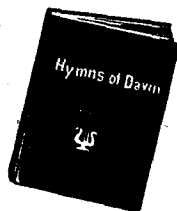
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The footstep follower of Jesus has similar experiences. He too is in a sense despised and rejected by the world. But he, too, is encouraged and assured that the Lord has called him in righteousness; that the Heavenly Father is lovingly watching over him, and that in all his trials he will hold his little child by the hand.

Unity

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Ps. 133:1

The unity under consideration is a scriptural unity of the Lord's people under their Lord and Head, Christ Jesus; and such unity is, indeed, both good and pleasant. Such a unity has a great potential for good.

Our Lord prayed for unity in the church. He prayed that the unity of the body should be as the unity that he enjoyed with his Father—a unity wherein he could say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea thy law is within my heart."—Ps. 40:8

The Apostle Paul also urged the brethren to strive to attain that unity. He wrote to the Ephesians, "I . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Paul in this beautiful passage enumerates some of the essential ingredients of unity—humility, forbearance in love, longsuffering. If these sentiments prevailed among the brethren, then there would truly be a unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Paul realized that there could be no unity in the church without peace; and there can be no peace without unity.

He continues: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." (Eph. 4:1-4)

How can there be peace in a body, the various members of which are not working in harmony one with another when they are straining in different directions?

Selfishness, intolerance and pride, the results of human imperfections and personality differences, all tend to destroy the unity of the body and the Spirit. Conjectural conclusions, debatable interpretations, hypothetical viewpoints—on these there can be no eye-to-eye agreement. But there can be eye-to-eye agreement respecting the fundamental doctrines of the divine plan of the ages; and on these the Bible is the only infallible source of information concerning God's plans and purposes. On these scripturally proven fundamental doctrines there may be built up by those in whose hearts the love of God is operating a true and enduring and joyous unity of the body of Christ—a good and a pleasant unity.

Drawn by the Word

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—John 6:44

The great work of this Gospel Age is the calling out from the world by the Heavenly Father those who will be of the spiritual seed of Abraham. Those who are called of God must be in a proper heart condition, and have a desire to know him.

This desire to know God may come about by any one of various circumstances—a great trial, illness or death in the family, discouragement, the finding of a tract, or interest aroused by a radio or TV program; or a chance conversation with a neighbor or fellow worker.

However it comes about, some form of preaching of the Gospel is involved. Notice the apostle's words: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preach-

er? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" —Rom. 10:13-15

It is not our task to judge who may be worthy of being called. By worldly standards, those whom God calls may be considered quite unsuitable. (I Cor. 1:26-29) Our task, and privilege, is simply to tell out the message as best our feeble abilities permit, and at every opportunity, leaving the results to our Heavenly Father. May we be faithful to our calling.

Begotten by the Word

The Apostle James says of God that "of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (Jas. 1:18) It is by the power of the Holy Spirit as it operates through his Word that we are begotten.

Before we arrive at the point of spirit-begetting some time may elapse. We must come to know something of the Heavenly Father's plans and purposes, his love for fallen mankind as manifested in the gift of his only begotten Son as man's Redeemer. At first we know so little about these things; but gradually we learn through his Word. And when our hearts are moved by what we learn, we offer ourselves, having faith in the shed blood of Jesus, in full consecration to the Heavenly Father. His acceptance of our consecration is evidenced in our begetting with the Holy Spirit.

We are now the sons of God! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." (I John 3:1) All this is accomplished by the power of his Word.

Witness of the Spirit by the Word

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."—Rom. 8:16

It should be a matter of much concern to each of us whether or not we are truly the sons of God. The apostle tells us that God has provided a way whereby we might have that assurance. He says it is through the witness of the Spirit. His Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirit that we are his children by sharing with us a knowledge of his plans; by opening opportunities to join with him in promoting those plans; by correcting us when we go astray—even as a loving fleshly father deals with his children.

We are to be conformed to the image of his Son. Do we see progress along this line? Are we growing in the graces of the Spirit? Are we bearing fruit to the Father's pleasure? Are we still in the vine? If so, this is a further witness of the Spirit that we are God's children.

Are we overcoming the world and its distractions, as did Jesus? Do the things of the world occupy our minds less and less; are we setting our affections more and more on things above? If so, again it is a witness of the Spirit. May we thus daily be assured that we are indeed the children of God!

Sealed by the Spirit

"Grace be to you . . . from . . . the Lord Jesus Christ, . . . in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."—Eph. 1:2, 13

The seal of the Spirit is the mark of God on his children, attesting that they are truly his sons. The apostle says that we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; that is to say, God puts his seal to the fact that all his promises to us will be realized, if we are faithful. This seal of the Holy Spirit is received into the heart; it is seen by others only as it is revealed in the growth of the fruits and graces of the Spirit.

The apostle urges us not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption.

(Eph. 4:30) He is here suggesting that we are sealed, or marked, as God's own; let us therefore do nothing contrary to the new mind, let us not grieve the Spirit. Rather, let us strive to be faithful until the day of our deliverance, that we may receive the realization of the promise.

"Consider Him"

"Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Heb. 12:3) The Hebrew brethren had run well for a time, but apparently had grown weary in well-doing, and the apostle here reminds them of their former faith and diligence. (Heb. 10:35-36) He reminds them, too, for their emulation, of the faithful endurance of the Ancient Worthies (Heb. 11:1-40), and then invites them to consider the example of our Lord.

This one who was so rich, for our sakes became poor. He left the glory he had with the Father, and was made in the likeness of men. He was reviled, smitten, despised, and rejected of men; and finally this gentle, loving soul was illegally arrested and put to death by crucifixion.

As we thus consider the Master's sufferings, may our own trials be as light afflictions, and not to be compared with the eternal weight of glory that shall be ours if faithful. "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."—Heb. 3:14

This I Must Do

The Prophet Jeremiah was put into stocks because he bore the unpopular message of the Lord to the Israelites. But though it brought suffering and reproach, the prophet continued to preach, for he could not do otherwise. He tells us that "His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."—Jer. 20:9

The early disciples had that same spirit. When Peter and John were forbidden by the Sanhedrin to preach Jesus, they answered, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19, 20) Paul also found the Lord's Word as a burning fire in his bones, and said: "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!"—I Cor. 9:16

How wonderful that we should be invited thus to serve the Lord; but if we come short of our privilege, the Lord will surely find someone else to accomplish his good pleasure. May we catch the spirit of the Lord's servants of old. May we say with our Master, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."—John 9:4

The Church

Truly, the Heavenly Father's ways are higher than our ways, and his thoughts than ours. (Isa. 55:9) In order that we might know something of his ways and his thoughts, he speaks to us through his Word. And in his Word he reveals to us that he has a plan for the salvation of mankind, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.

The church is to be the agent of blessing. Those individuals who are gathered out of the world during this age to be members of that church have no head of their own—their Head is Jesus. In these the Heavenly Father will have supreme pleasure and joy: "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation." (Ps. 132:13, 14) Any who would hope to be a part of this arrangement must be pleasing to God in this life. In his Word he reveals his will for us. And much depends on whether we are seeking to do God's will in the proper spirit.

The Call of the Church

The object of the call of the church is to develop and prepare the bride of Christ for her marriage with the

Lamb. She makes herself ready by being transformed into the character-likeness of her Lord. This calls for the development of faith, love, and patient endurance under the trying experiences that come to those who follow the Lord.

The development of The Christ, to be made up of the Lord Jesus and his bride, has been God's plan from the beginning for blessing mankind with everlasting life. (I Pet. 1:18-20; Eph. 1:4; Gal. 3:16, 29) Redeemed and restored to perfection, man is again to become lord of earth. "But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." —Heb. 2:8, 9

Yes, God's great plan is going grandly on. When the bride class is complete, having made their calling and election sure, the marriage of the Lamb will take place. Satan will then be bound, and those who have part in the first resurrection shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4, 6) Then all mankind will have an opportunity to strive for restitution under the righteous rule of the kingdom to that which was lost in father Adam.

Sanctified by the Word

Sanctification is a dedication, or setting apart, by the Lord for a holy purpose. To bring our lives into conformity with that holy purpose of God we must know his will which he reveals to us through his Word. Our setting apart by God to do his will is based upon our faith in the merit of Christ's sacrifice. "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." —Heb. 10:10

In one sense, sanctification occurs at that moment when the Lord accepts the consecration to him of our all as a living sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1) He then sets us apart to do

his will. In another sense it is the work of a lifetime. It is through God's Word that we are sanctified. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth." (John 17:17) By yielding ourselves day by day and year by year to the direction of the Holy Spirit as shown to us in his Word, God will work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Thus we shall prove ourselves worthy of being a part of the seed of blessing.

Sharing the Word

Communicating, or sharing the Word, is the major purpose of a convention of the Lord's people. We give blessings by sharing the Word with brethren from near and far. The apostle urges us to "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." —Heb. 13:15, 16

At a convention there are many ways in which we can communicate, or share, with each other. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." (Mal. 3:16) In our testimony meetings and in our fellowship we share in the experiences, joys, and sorrows of our brethren. And this sharing does not make us poorer, but richer.

We are also to send out the Gospel to the world. Because the laborers are few, God has provided special means to broadcast the message of the kingdom, namely, through the radio and TV. To broadcast means to scatter, as seeds, over a wide area. The seed is the Word of the kingdom. Through the co-operation and sacrifice of the Lord's people, it still continues to go out even as in Jesus' day, as illustrated by the Parable of the Sower. With such sacrifices God is well pleased!

Obedying the Word

The brother based his thoughts on Peter's statement, "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 Pet. 1:22) We attain to that condition of purity of heart which is pleasing to the Lord only by full obedience to the truth as it is revealed to us through the Holy Spirit. We maintain that purity only by our complete submission to the instructions of God's Word. This demands a complete separation from the world and the flesh—renouncing the will of the flesh, and bringing it into subjection to the will of God.

If those who are in the school of Christ are obedient to the lessons of God's Word, they will endeavor constantly to remove every semblance of poison that may enter their hearts. Pride, envy, anger, selfishness, bitterness—these are all poisons to the new creature. If these persist in our hearts, it is because we are not heeding and obeying the lessons of God's Word of truth whereby we are to be purified. We are to put on Christ and all his glorious qualities, for he is our Pattern. And then we will truly "love each other from the heart intensely." (Diag.) "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."—John 13:17

Unto Salvation

The announcement by the angels of the birth of the Savior heralded the salvation that would in due time be unto all people. (Luke 2:10, 11) This same good news, or Gospel, the apostle tells us, was "preached before . . . unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."—Gal. 3:8

The blessings thus promised were to come through Abraham's seed, "which is Christ," Paul says. (Gal. 3:16) Those who are baptized into Christ will also be of Abraham's spiritual seed. (Gal. 3:27, 29), and thus share in blessing the world. But these must follow closely in the sacrificial steps of their Master. Like him, they must take

up their cross and follow him, even unto death. (Matt. 16:25; Mark 10:21) By giving up the transient treasures of earth, such will have lasting treasures in heaven.

Those who are truly baptized into Christ have so completely submerged their wills into his will that they are described by the Revelator as having been "beheaded for the witness of Jesus." This beautifully pictures full surrender to the will of God. Those who are faithful unto death will have part in the first resurrection, and will live and reign with Christ a thousand years for the blessing of all mankind. (Rev. 20:4-6) The Gospel message thus holds out good things for the church and also for the whole world of mankind during the kingdom reign of Christ and his bride.

Baptismal Talk

The time when one symbolizes his consecration is a moment that will be precious to him for all eternity; it is a public testimony in the presence of his brethren that he has heard the invitation of the Heavenly Father to follow in the sacrificial steps of the Lord Jesus, and that he has responded by offering himself in complete consecration to do the Father's will.

Having made a full consecration at the age of thirty, Jesus similarly presented himself to John to be baptized, picturing his complete surrender of his perfect life in obedience to the Father. Christ's water immersion was but a symbol of his real baptism, which was the daily laying down of his life as an offering for sin, in accordance with the Heavenly Father's plan.

During this Gospel Age the Lord is choosing one here and one there to present their bodies a living sacrifice, to be baptized into Christ, into his sacrificial death. Jesus said that none could come unto him, except the Heavenly Father should draw him. When he calls us, the Father asks for all that we have. He says: "My son, give me thine

heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." (Prov. 23:26) When we give the Lord our heart, he opens the eyes of our understanding to see the truth, that we may serve him with our whole being.

To these the Father gives the robe of Christ's righteousness, that we may have a standing before him, and that we may be able to render acceptable service. They are begotten of the Holy Spirit and are new creatures in Christ Jesus. These have given up hope of restitution, and henceforth look for a heavenly reward. "For as we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."—Rom. 6:3-5

The depth of our consecration will be demonstrated by the service we render to the Lord. He has given each of us certain talents of time, strength, or material things. Let us use them in his service. The great Creator of the universe is our Father. The Redeemer of the world of mankind is our Elder Brother. All the children of the Lord are our brethren. All the promises of God are ours if we make them our own.

We are now in the service of the King. Henceforth we will find great joy in the fellowship of those of like precious faith. We will desire to study the Word of God. We will find joy and pleasure in witnessing to others. The door to this wonderful high calling is still open. There is still time to serve the Lord. But the time, brethren, is short!

What Makes the Word of God Void?

The speaker quoted the words of the Lord to the scribes and Pharisees, who were putting the traditions of the elders above the commandments of God: "Ye [make] the Word of God of none effect through your tradition." (Mark 7:12, 13) He suggested that there are a number of ways in which man attempts to make void the Word of God:

1. By rejecting the Bible, and by perverting and ridiculing its statements.
2. By speaking irreverently of God's Word and its truths.
- 3: By neglecting it.
4. By forbidding the reading and study of the Bible.
5. By persecuting those who preach the truths of the Bible, which are contrary to orthodox understanding.
6. By substituting the traditions and creeds of men for the truths of God's Word.
7. By ignoring those teachings of the Scriptures which conflict with preconceived ideas and opinions relative to free grace, election, second death, and other doctrines.

All such efforts to render God's Word void will fail, where the Word is adhered to. Let us be sure that the teachings of God's Word are directing our Christian lives, and not any contrary traditions of men.

A Lesson in Zeal

In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul compares the heavenly priesthood with the Aaronic, and shows the superiority of our priesthood over the Aaronic order. Both were ordained of God.

Following the rebellion led by Korah, Aaron's headship was clearly authenticated by the Lord in that it was his rod alone of the twelve that budded. Paul, speaking under inspiration, tells us that Jesus also glorified not himself, but was "made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec," indicating that Jesus' appointment was of the Father.—Heb. 6:20

Jesus in the flesh could not be of an earthly priesthood, because Israel's priests were only from the tribe of Levi. He was resurrected so that he could be established as the High Priest of the Melchisedec order. Likewise with the followers of Jesus. These are not of an earthly priesthood.

But they, like Jesus, must be faithful unto death, and be resurrected in order to become a part of the Melchisedec order.

Paul calls the Hebrew brethren babes, only fit for the milk of the Word. "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age." (Heb. 5:13, 14) Strong meat involves the laying down of one's life in sacrifice. Jesus said to his disciples: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." (John 4:34) Paul warns of the danger of going into darkness if laxity in doing the will of God is persisted in. He reminds them of Abraham's faithfulness, and urges the brethren to be likewise pleasing to God.

Intercession for Saints

As followers of Jesus there will be many obstacles to make our walk in the narrow way a difficult one. These will come from four sources: the world, the flesh, the Devil, and the brethren. But our intercessor is Christ, acting on behalf of God who, as Paul says, is "for us." And since God is for us, who can successfully be against us?

We know the Adversary is at present doing everything he can to defeat us, going about not only as a roaring lion, but also as the accuser of the brethren. Let us have the faith that through the power of God we will be kept from falling before the wiles of the Devil, and let us ever maintain the Christian spirit, lest we be found, along with Satan, to be accusers of the brethren.

Man Created

We read in Genesis that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." (Gen. 1:1-2) God spent six creative days in preparing the earth for man's habitation. In the sixth day he also created man himself in his own image and likeness. He formed him of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nos-

trils the breath of life; and man became a living being.—
Gen. 1:27; 2:7

The Lord also made for man a lovely garden home eastward in Eden. He supplied him with everything that he would need to sustain life. He gave him dominion over every living thing on the earth. He blessed him, and told him to be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth.

In return, God required perfect obedience. Had man rendered this obedience, he could have lived forever in the love and care and fellowship of his Heavenly Father.—Gen. 1:28; 2:17

Man Condemned

Man disobeyed God's instructions not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and was condemned. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17) Man was then driven from his home in Eden wherein he could have lived forever. And thus the whole race has gone down into death. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. 5:12

The sentence was not torment—it was death. "Thou shalt return to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3:19) We read in Ecclesiastes that "the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything."—Eccles. 9:5

Through this experience, man is learning the evil consequences of disobeying God's commandments; and not only man, but the lesson thus provided will profit all God's intelligent creatures throughout the universe for all eternity.

Man Redeemed

"I will ransom them from the power of the grace; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues;

O grave, I will be thy destruction." (Hos. 13:14) This suggests that man is asleep in the grave, and that a ransom would be provided to redeem him. The first indication that God would provide the ransom is given in Genesis: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." (Gen. 3:21) It was necessary it would seem that that which should supply a suitable covering would involve the shedding of blood, the giving of life.

To redeem Adam and his race required the sacrifice of a perfect human life, and among the human race there was none perfect, "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) "None . . . can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Ps. 49:7) The required sacrifice was provided by the Heavenly Father in the person of his only begotten Son. It was "the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

Man Restored

The theme of man's restitution is found on almost every page of the Bible. It is spoken by all God's holy prophets. (Acts 3:19-21) It is the culmination of the divine plan of the ages. And the whole world of mankind is waiting for it.—Rom. 8:22, 23

It will surely be accomplished, because it is not man's plan; it is God's plan, which he purposed in himself." (Eph. 1:9, 10) It will be brought about under the kingdom reign of Christ and the church, during which reign all the willing and obedient will be restored to the perfection which father Adam enjoyed in the Garden of Eden before the fall. And the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.—I Cor. 15:22-26

What a glorious, happy world that will be! "And He [God] will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21:3, 4

God's Wondrous Creations

The 19th Psalm beautifully and impressively describes the greatness and majesty of God. As we look into the heavens and consider their vastness and complexity and the unvarying order which there prevails under the control of laws established by God, we are awed at the wisdom and power of him who brought it into existence.

This great Being has also purposed a New Creation—a little flock that will be composed of those who follow in the steps of Jesus, laying down their lives in sacrifice, and who will live and reign with him for the blessing of humankind. These will share the glory of the heavenly Father and of Jesus. Like the great Creator of the universe, they will be given the divine nature. They will see Jesus as he is. They will serve their God for all eternity.

To gain this high place and honor, they must be tested and proved. They must live a life of sacrifice; they must produce evidence of love for the Heavenly Father and for his Word. They must be submissive to his will in all ways. They must be made in the image of God's dear Son.

Those who share with Jesus in his sufferings on this side of the veil will share in his glory by and by. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Rom. 6:5) And they will share with Jesus in the reconciliation of the world of mankind.

Convention Blessings

One of the great joys of this convention has been the privilege of fellowship with others of like precious faith. It is our privilege to encourage and comfort them in the

narrow way; for they like us have also been called and chosen; and they like us have their trials.

Jesus had this love for the brethren, and he desired earnestly to comfort them. "Set your troubled hearts at rest. Trust in God always; trust also in me." (John 14:1, NEB) And he promised he would send them another Comforter, a guide, the Holy Spirit, to lead them into all truth. And thus we learn of the Heavenly Father's love for us, and that we may dwell in the love that never fails, and are watched over by the eye that never sleeps. For we are God's inheritance.

There are several inheritances mentioned in the Scriptures. Jesus is to inherit the rulership of the whole world. Jehovah said to him, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Ps. 2:7-8) The saints are to be his joint-heirs, and will share in that inheritance. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. 3:21; 20:4, 6

The obedient of the world of mankind at the close of the times of restitution will inherit everlasting life. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. 25:34

And God himself will receive an inheritance—the new creation. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." (Mal. 3:17; I Pet. 2:9, 10) These shall be the temple of the living God. "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!"—Rom. 11:33

My Goal Is Christ

A goal is like the end of a race toward which every ef-

fort must be bent. This is a fitting description of the goal of the Christian. We are longing to finish our race in the narrow way, and to see him as he is. This goal will be attained only by patient endurance.

A sculptor working with marble must have a definite picture in his mind of the thing he desires to shape. Then he must labor patiently for many hours until the vision in his mind becomes a reality. So with the church of God. Our desire is to make ourselves into the image of our perfect Lord. We have been given the material to do the job; but we must labor carefully, patiently, all the days of our life, striving for the attainment of our goal.

It is necessary that we have a proper heart attitude. The new mind must be in complete control, always opposing every thought which is contrary to truth and righteousness. Between the new mind and the old there can be no compromise. We cannot serve both God and mammon. And although the old mind will never be completely dead while we are in the flesh, yet full control over it must be our constant endeavor.

Our acceptance of the call into fellowship with God and his dear Son brings great responsibilities. We must be diligent in the study of God's Word; we should walk with God, and not run ahead nor lag behind him; we will be tested, but not beyond our endurance; in this walk we have the blessed company of all our co-laborers in Christ Jesus.

Let us not be weary in well-doing; let us remember that if we be dead with him we shall live with him; and let us be mindful of the words of the Apostle James, when he said, "Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only." (James 1:22) May this be our constant endeavor until we reach that blessed goal—to be with Christ, to see him as he is, to live and reign with him in his kingdom for blessing all the families of the earth! □

The British Section

The Furtherance

Of the Gospel

ALL Christians will doubtless agree that during the past nineteen centuries and more since Pentecost God has been taking out of the Gentiles a "people for his name." (Acts 15:14) These are his church, a company who are to be saved with a heavenly salvation, and, in the resurrection, to "ever be with the Lord." (I Thess. 4:17) It will be further agreed by most Christians that none will be of this heavenly company, "the church of the firstborn," who never heard of the only name "under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12), or of the terms and conditions of this high calling—that only those who suffer with him shall be glorified together with him. (Rom. 8:17) Hence, Paul says, "It pleased God by the fool-

ishness of preaching to save them that believe." (I Cor. 1:21) Again, he says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."—Rom. 10:17

All this being true, it seems at first sight strange that the spread of the Gospel message through the centuries should have met with so many handicaps. The heralds of the glad tidings have had many discouragements. Even the Gospel message has been perverted and the church organization sadly corrupted. It has even been taught that all who fail to become members of the church, the body of Christ, would be eternally lost, and that the present life is the only opportunity to hear and believe the message of salvation.

Those who have begun to see something of "the truth as it is in Jesus," know that "salvation belongeth unto our God"; that the successful carrying out of the plan of salvation is his responsibility and that of his well-beloved Son:

that the gathering of the church to be followed by the blessing of the world under Messiah's kingdom will be accomplished by divine power; that "the government shall be upon his shoulder."—Isa. 9:6

Realizing this, we are the better prepared to see that in this age the way to life has been, as the Master declared it would be, a "narrow way," with a "straight gate" as an entrance to that way. In other words, it is a way to life difficult to walk, and difficult to find and enter; the conditions being adapted to the preparation and testing of a special class for "glory and honour and immortality."—Rom. 2:7

This, it will be realized, is in full accord with the words of the apostle: "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel." (Phil. 1:12) So wrote Paul to his beloved converts at Philippi—who had kept in touch with him all through the years from the day he came to them with the Word of life. What "things" were these? For many years, it would seem, Paul had much liberty to travel from place to place preaching the Lord's

message. These efforts were frequently richly blessed by companies being found ready for the message, and whom, on this account the Lord accepted and brought into relationship with himself, justifying and bringing them into his family by the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

True, the apostle experienced much opposition to his work; much sacrifice and suffering and hardship had to be experienced; but the way the Lord blessed his labours more than offset the trials of the way. Note how he expresses himself to the Thessalonians: "For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God."—I Thess. 3:9

But how different his circumstances were at the time of his writing the Philippian letter! A prisoner in Rome; daily waiting to be called for trial before the emperor; always chained to a soldier, with continual restrictions of liberty of the commonest and most necessary character. One blessing the Lord still granted him, however, was that his friends could visit him (Acts 28:30), and in addition, some

of his guards, who were changed every few hours, manifested an interest and received the Gospel, so that there even came to be "saints in Caesar's household."—Phil. 1:13; 4:22

With the eye of faith Paul could see beyond these outwardly unfavorable circumstances, and could say, "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel." The church in Rome, too, was encouraged by Paul's faithfulness to greater zeal in the Lord's service. Thus Paul's apparently disadvantageous experience had been overruled for his good, and for the furtherance of the Lord's work.—Phil. 1:13, 14

Another seemingly unfavourable incident made to work for the furtherance of the Gospel was the expulsion of the Jews from Rome by the Emperor Cladius; an edict which forced Aquila and Priscilla to leave their home, and probably a prosperous little business of tentmaking. This was doubtless a very trying and, from their standpoint, unfavourable experience, but one which worked out unto the furtherance of

the Gospel. Divine providence was operating on behalf of Aquila and Priscilla and overruling an apparent calamity, led them to Ephesus. Here they were contacted by the Apostle Paul (Acts 18:1-3), and ere long a consecrated brother and sister were added to the Lord's family, to whose subsequent benevolent service he gives very high praise.—Rom. 16:3

As we view the records of the apparent adversities, hindrances, discouragements of the Lord's service throughout the Gospel Age, can we not also see that these experiences have been made by our Lord and Head to work out unto the furtherance of the Gospel? not always, of course, showing visible good results, but surely bringing forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in the Lord's servants who have been rightly exercised by these apparently unfavourable experiences. The apostle elsewhere expresses the matter, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place."—II Cor. 2:14

Again, the Lord's Word, through the prophet, contains the same comforting assurance: "The word that goeth forth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. 55:11) Even in our own personal difficulties or discouragements in connection with the Lord's work, can we not look back and see how often these things have been for the furtherance of the Gospel?

Our Master, in launching his followers upon the great work of the age, gave them a cause for confidence, than which nothing could be more encouraging. He said, "All

power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." (Matt. 28:19) As we carry the glad tidings, how encouraging to realize that the One guiding and directing the work has all power in heaven and in earth! No wonder all things can be made to work out unto the furtherance of the Gospel.

Let us, therefore, never be discouraged or cast down at the enemy's apparent success. Let us by faith claim the apostle's inspired assurance, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us, the fragrance of the knowledge of him, in every place.—II Cor. 2:14; See Diaglott □

BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

J. HUMPHREY

Dewsbury

(Sat.) Nov. 7

Letchford

8

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Talking Things Over

Thanksgiving, 1970

"O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord."—Psalm 117:1, 2

SINCE the Pilgrim Fathers came to America to escape persecution in the Old World and to be free to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences, it has been customary in this country to devote a day near the close of harvest time for the giving of thanks to the Lord for his manifold blessings. Thanksgiving to God surely is appropriate, and there is much for which all people, especially in America, could properly give thanks. However, every day should be one of thanksgiving for the Lord's people, but those who do not know what our text refers to as "the truth of the Lord" will not find much for which to be thankful.

For the unenlightened world, the year 1970 has thus far been a specially difficult one. War, revolution, rioting, and a general breakdown of law and order are baffling the wisest of the world's rulers and statesmen. Right here in America the people come face to face with many of these distressing situations with resultant suffering, and in many other countries the conditions are even worse. For the most part the people of the world do not know God, so the matter of giving thanks to him is one that never enters their minds. Many of those who have a linger-

ing faith in a higher power may be more disposed to be-
rate him than to give him thanks.

Our text opens with the statement, "O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise him all ye people." This passage will have its complete fulfilment in the Millennial Age, after the nations have been humbled in the great "time of trouble," and have been enlightened concerning God. We know that such a time is coming, for many prophecies give us this assurance. We quote from the 66th Psalm: "Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands: sing forth the honor of his name: make his praise glorious. Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee. All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name."—vss. 1-4

The Lord's people, enlightened with present truth, always rejoice to praise their God, and to give thanks unto him; and one of the greatest causes for thankfulness they have is their knowledge of God's glorious plan for the enlightenment and blessing of all nations through the agencies of the messianic kingdom. It is this understanding of the divine plan that makes this year one of special thanksgiving, for what the world sees only as distressing circumstances and forebodings of doom for themselves and for the nations, we see as evidences that the long-promised kingdom of deliverance from sin and death is drawing near—much nearer, indeed, than when we first believed.

Enduring Mercy

The world which knows not God does not realize that he is good, and that his mercy endureth forever. How different it is with those who, understanding the truth of God's plan, know that he is truly good, and that despite outward appearances of distress to the contrary, "his

merciful kindness" is great toward us even now, and will be abundantly manifested toward all nations in due time.

Our thankfulness should not be merely on account of what he is doing for us at the present time, but also because of our knowledge of what he will do later for all nations in fulfilment of his promises to bless them through the seed of Abraham. We can be thankful because we know that the people of all nations will yet be thankful, and will say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord: we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25:9

The very conditions in the world today which make it difficult for many to feel especially thankful, furnish Christians who know the plan of God with additional reasons for giving thanks. Jesus, in referring to the time in which we are living, said to his followers. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh." (Luke 21:28) We do not lift up our heads with thanksgiving because the world is suffering, but because we know that as a result of the establishment of Christ's kingdom universal peace and joy are to be realized by all mankind. It is a selfish thanksgiving, indeed, that rejoices only in the possession of more and greater blessings than others enjoy.

Every Day

Yes, a day of special thanksgiving is appropriate, but to the Christian every day should be characterized by the spirit of thanksgiving. And what is true thanksgiving? Is it merely a lip service of praise to God, voiced perhaps in song, or in oral testimony before the Lord's people? These are undoubtedly proper ways of giving thanks, but true appreciation for the Lord's goodness does not end with these pleasant aspects of the Christian life. David men-

tions a further method of giving thanks which we think is well to remember. He says, "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord...now in the presence of all his people."—Ps. 116:17, 18

Earlier in this same psalm a similar thought is expressed, but a little more in detail: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Ps. 116:12-15) The thought here is clear; namely, that paying our vows unto the Lord as an expression of our thankfulness to him for all his benefits results in our death—"the death of his saints."

This is just another way of saying that it is our privilege to lay down our lives following in the footsteps of Jesus, who laid down his life for us. Paul describes this as being "planted together in the likeness of his death." The Master's death was sacrificial; that is, he died for others, for all mankind; and we are given the opportunity of showing our appreciation for this by similarly laying down our lives for others. And, in doing this, we are given the assurance that our sacrifice is holy and acceptable to God, and our reasonable service.—Rom. 12:1; 6:3-5

More Than Lip Service

So it is that paying our vows of consecration and devotion to the Lord becomes truly a "sacrifice of thanksgiving"—a day-by-day expression of our gratitude to God for all his loving-kindness to us. It is not merely a lip service of praise, but a life-song of gratitude, which finds expression in a daily laying down and giving up of temporal advantages, physical comforts, material wealth, and earthly joys, that others may know of the abiding mercy and love of our God.

This is the thought expressed in Hebrews 13:15, 16, which reads, "By him [Jesus] therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." "To do good and to communicate—this is the true expression of thanksgiving. For after all, we give thanks for what the Lord has done for us; and how could we more fittingly express our appreciation than by giving to others!

Paul says that as we have opportunity we should "do good unto all men," and "especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10) While we should not overlook the needs of the brethren along material lines, yet the greatest good we can do them is along spiritual lines, communicating to them the precious truths of God's Word, that they may be enlightened and comforted thereby. Thus the sacrifice of our lips is not only a song of praise to God, but a melody of cheer and hope to others.

Not All Have Been Reached

When we consider the "household of faith" whom we should specially serve, let us not conclude that we are now in touch with all such in our community. Perhaps some whom the Lord will have in his household are yet to be reached by the truth. Or perhaps some who were reached years ago are now isolated from their brethren and discouraged, hence especially in need of our help. It will cost time and effort and means to reach these with the message that helps us so much in these dark days. But the greater the effort, the richer the blessing will be in our own hearts, and the more we will have for which to continue giving thanks.

Yes, brethren, the causes for thanksgiving increase in proportion to our efforts to imitate the spirit manifested by God in doing things for us. Truly "there is that scatter-

eth, and yet increaseth," and conversely it will be found that to withhold "more than is meet . . . tendeth to poverty." (Prov. 11:24) The spiritually rich are those who sacrifice much to enrich others; and how poor indeed are those who think chiefly of self, and whose characters are blighted with a spiritual pride in the erroneous thought that God cares only for them and their immediate friends.

The followers of the Master are now in training for the future blessing of all nations, which blessings will be showered upon the people as an expression of God's love for them. To be prepared for such work it is necessary to partake of the same spirit of love that prompted the divine Author of salvation to make such a loving plan. Certainly we cannot be selfish now and loving then. We must prove now that the Lord's way of love is the right way, and this we do by serving an apprenticeship in the blessed art of doing for others, and in turn experience the joy that comes to those who unselfishly lay down their lives that their fellows may be blessed.

Your brethren of The Dawn are especially thankful for the privilege they have enjoyed of co-operating with so many of their brethren in the field in an effort to communicate the life-giving message of the truth to others. May this spirit of thanksgiving abound yet more and more in all of us.

The future of the world is dark and foreboding, but we look ahead with confidence, knowing that God will fulfil all his good promises to us, and in the kingdom to "all families of the earth." This means, then, that our future is as bright as the promises of God, and they are very bright indeed. Let us rejoice more and more in this favored position we occupy, and show our appreciation by daily offering up our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to him who has given us so many causes for thanksgiving. □

(Our Lord's Return—continued from page 13)

the presence of Jesus in "clouds" (Rev. 1:7) and become convinced of his majesty and glory through the new kingdom arrangements which will then be put into operation.

This same series of events will lead to the opening of the eyes of the Israelites. We read, "So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen [nations] shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel." (Ezek. 39:7) What a change this will bring about in the outlook of the Israelites! The defense of Israel by divine power will be merely the first manifestation of the operation of the new world powers. From then on the kingdom agencies will rapidly calm the storm of human passions which by that time will have brought the people of the whole earth to a state of desperation and despair.



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Conventions

MILWAUKEE, WIS., Oct. 31, Nov. 1—Aurora Lodge, 734 N. 26th St. Mrs. Violet Pazucha, 4454 S. 14th St.

PRINCE ALBERT, SASK., Oct. 31, Nov. 1—Parkland Hall. Mrs. Janet Jinjoe, 428 E. 13th St.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Nov. 1—2601 Fillmore St., N. E. Mrs. C. R. Newham, 678 40th Ave., N. E.

PORTLAND, OREG., Nov. 7, 8—Norse Hall, 111 N. E. Eleventh, Corner Couch St. Mrs. Jerry Leslie, 3440 S. E. Francis St.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, Nov. 8—N. W. Gardens, Independence Hall, N. W. Blvd. & N. Star Rd. Mrs. Lois Smith, 4294 Ellery Drive.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., Nov. 8—YWCA Bldg., 42-48 Howe St. Mrs. Richard Suraci, 171 Johnson Rd., Hamden, Conn.

PONTIAC, MICH., Nov. 8—YWCA, 269 W. Huron St. Mrs. Ora C. Lockwood, 110 South Blvd. W., Rochester, Mich.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Nov. 15—Brotherhood of Railway Clerks Bldg., Court and Vine Sts. Mrs. Edith M. Harp, 3908 S. Madison Ave.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Nov. 15—IOGT Hall, 2922 Cedar Ave. Mrs. Edna Durand, 4016 16th Ave. S.

CHICAGO, ILL., Nov. 22—Masonic Temple, 5352 W. Chicago Ave. Mr. Leonard Jezuit, 10742 S. Talman Ave.

BUFFALO, N. Y., Nov. 29—Unity Temple Lodge, 1940 Niagara St. Mr. Stanley Koszka, 670 Union Rd., West Seneca, N. Y.

DETROIT, MICH., Nov. 29—Northwest Branch YWCA, 25940 Grand River. Mr. Charles Chupa, 5666 Belmont St., Dearborn Heights, Mich.



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

NOVEMBER 5—"Having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."—Hebrews 10:21, 22 (Z. '00-170 Hymn 293)

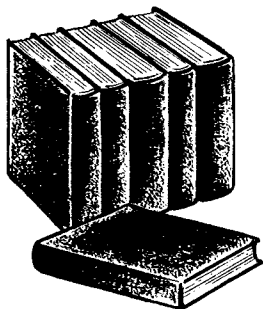
NOVEMBER 12—"Be not faithless, but believing."—John 20:

27 (Z. '04-89 Hymn App. O)

NOVEMBER 19—"Let us watch and be sober."—1 Thess. 5:6 (Z. '02-239 Hymn 20)

NOVEMBER 26—"And the Lord said unto Moses, What is that in thine hand?"—Exodus 4:2 (Z. '01-348 Hymn 306)

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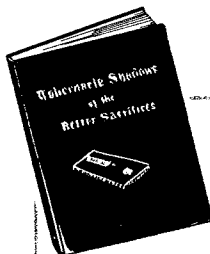
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That the church is "the temple of the living God"—peculiarly "his workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this temple, through which,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

That meantime the chiseling, shaping, and polishing of 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; Isaiah 35