

The Dawn

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Table of Contents

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

- The Bible Versus Tradition Series
—Part 6, The Holy Spirit 2

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

- The People Break the Covenant 14
Moses Intercedes for the People 16
Moses Counsels a New Generation 18
None Like Moses 20

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

- The Seed, Part 5—Treasures in Heaven 24
Lord, Increase Our Faith 46
The Urim and the Thummin 53
A Spectacle to Men and Angels 59
Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts 45

TALKING THINGS OVER

- Book Review: The Sign of the Last Day—When? 37

ENCOURAGING LETTERS 61

"FRANK AND ERNEST"

- Radio Schedule 34

THE BIBLE ANSWERS

- Television Schedule 36

OBITUARIES 63

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS 63

CONVENTIONS 64

Highlights of Dawn

The Bible Versus Tradition, Part 6

The Holy Spirit

THE Holy Spirit is referred to many times in the Bible. In the **King James Version** of the New Testament it is frequently translated "Holy Ghost," but this is an erroneous translation, designed by the translators to imply that the Spirit of God is a person, and thus to bolster the traditional trinitarian concept of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit being one in person, which is unscripturally called, "The Holy Trinity."

In the Old Testament, "Spirit" is translated from the Hebrew word *ruwach*, which Professor Strong defines as 'wind'. The same Hebrew word is many times translated 'breath'. In the New Testament, "Spirit" translates the Greek word *pneuma*, meaning, according to Professor Strong, 'breath or current of air'. Let us not conclude, however, that the Holy Spirit of God is merely wind, or a blast of air.

The ancient Hebrew and Greek languages did not contain specific words for everything, and this was particularly true in expressing thoughts pertaining to God and to his mighty works. However, many words with specific meanings, through use, took on accommodated meanings. Thus, *ruwach* in the Hebrew language, and *pneuma*, in the Greek language, because they described the invisible power of the wind, came to mean any invisible force or power, and were used to describe the invisible power of God.

The Spirit of God is, therefore, the power of God—that invisible power or energy by which the great Creator of the universe accomplishes all his purposes. In Genesis 1:2 we read, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." In this text the

Spirit of God is shown to be a creative power, or energy. The Spirit or power of God is manifested throughout all creation.

It was the Spirit of God which transformed this planet from an empty, shapeless mass into the beautiful earth which it is. In this work of transformation it was God's Spirit which set the bounds of the mighty oceans so that the Creator could say, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."—Job 38:11

It was the Spirit of God, directed in secret ways and by processes known only to the Creator, that brought forth life on the earth, and established laws by which life reproduces itself. Solomon wrote, "Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all."—Eccles. 11:5

God's Spirit is the power of inanimate as well as animate life. "Only God can make a tree," the poet, Joyce Kilmer, wrote. This highlights the fact that but for the Spirit of God there would be no trees, no flowers, no grass, no fruit, no vegetables. Scientists can put together all the elements found in a blade of grass, but they cannot make a blade of grass, nor can they make it live.

In his sermon on Mars' Hill, the Apostle Paul said that God is not "far from every one of us." (Acts 17:27) Certainly the Spirit of God is manifested all around us—in the beauty and fragrance of the flowers; in the loving provision of food; and in the gorgeous landscapes which enrapture us with their beauty resulting from the blending of the myriads of forms of inanimate life.

God's Spirit In Man

As marvelous as the various manifestations of God's Spirit are, which we see all around us every day of our lives, the Bible reveals that there is a more personal exercise of his power in the lives of his human creatures, especially those who serve him. Pharaoh said concerning Joseph, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?"—Gen. 41:38

Yes, the Spirit of God was in Joseph. In this instance, God used his power—first to impress the two dreams upon the mind of Pharaoh—and then to reveal to Joseph their prophetic meaning. But how could that be done? some may ask. The simple answer is that we do not know, just as we do not know how God makes a tree. Surely the mighty power that hangs the earth and all the heavenly bodies in the universe upon nothing, that gives life to every living thing, would have no difficulty impressing certain thoughts upon the mind of one of his creatures, and giving another the ability to interpret those thoughts.

Another and different manifestation of God's power is mentioned in connection with his dealings with Israel during the period of the Judges, in which the nation had no central government. The lack of organization made them easy prey to their enemies. When they became oppressed, and destruction threatened, the LORD intervened. He did this by raising up a leader, or a judge, whom he blessed in dispelling Israel's enemies. The record is that the LORD put his Spirit on these, meaning simply that he empowered them to accomplish his purposes. See Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; and 14:6

"By My Spirit"

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

In Matthew 12:23, Jesus indicated that his mighty miracles were accomplished by the Spirit of God. He shows that this will be true of all the blessings which will reach the people when the

kingdom of God is functioning in the earth. Thus again we are assured that the promises of God concerning the healing of the sick and the raising of the dead are sure to be fulfilled. His Spirit will allow no defeat of the divine purpose.

God's Spirit Everywhere

God's Holy Spirit, his power, is everywhere present, all the time. There is no situation in the entire universe over which God does not have full control, or could not instantly take control. David wrote:

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."—Ps. 139:6-10

Sheol is the Hebrew word in this text which is translated "hell." It signifies the state of death—the tomb—and David is expressing his confidence that even in death he would not be beyond the reach of divine power. It is David's poetic way of affirming his faith in the promises of God to restore the dead to life. It means that God's Spirit, his almighty power, will reach down into death and restore the dead to life. This was confirmed by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead by the power of the Heavenly Father. As David foretold, God did not leave Jesus' soul, his being, in hell, or *sheol*.—Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27,28,32; Eph. 1:19,20

How wonderful it is to realize that the Spirit of God which moved upon the face of the waters, and prepared the earth for life, will again manifest itself in restoring the dead to life, and in restoring paradise! Yes, God's Spirit will be exercised to provide blessings of health and life for all mankind. Then God's human creatures will join in the song of praise first sung by David, "O

LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.”—Ps. 104:24

The Spirit of Truth

Another manner by which the Holy Spirit, or power of God, is exercised is through its influence over the lives of those whom he calls into his service, particularly during this Gospel Age. We all recognize the power of thought. The life of each one of us is controlled by thoughts—either our own, or the thoughts of others which we allow to influence us.

Shortly before Jesus was crucified he promised the disciples that he would send them the Holy Spirit, which he referred to as “the Spirit of truth.” (John 14:16,17,26; 15:26) He explained that the Holy Spirit would proceed from the Father. This promise was fulfilled at Pentecost. At that time Peter said that Jesus, “having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”—Acts 2:33

The Holy Spirit, as testified by Peter, was shed forth. Here the translators did not translate *pneuma* by the word ‘ghost’. If they had, their folly would have been exposed, for it is manifest that a person could not be ‘shed forth’. But a power can, and it was divine power—the Holy Spirit of truth—which came upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost.

At Pentecost there were outward manifestations of divine power such as the mighty rushing wind, and the cloven tongues like as of fire which rested upon each of the disciples. However, its principal work was the enlightenment of the minds of the apostles, and the assurance this revelation gave to them that Jesus truly was the Messiah, and that his death and resurrection had been foretold by the Old Testament prophets.—Acts 2:22,23

When Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, he said it would be a ‘comforter’ to his disciples. And how true this proved to be! When the Master was taken from his disciples they were made sad of heart. They knew that the God of Israel had prom-

ised to send a Messiah through the line of David, and that this great king was to establish a kingdom, or government, which eventually would exert worldwide influence and control. They believed Jesus was this great king, and they believed that in associating themselves with him they would have a share in his kingdom. With Jesus' death, this hope was shattered.

It was the coming of the Holy Spirit, and its revealing influence upon their minds, that renewed their hopes. Thereby they were caused to realize that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and that his death was not a tragedy but a necessary part of the divine plan of salvation that was being accomplished through him. What a comfort this was to them!

The disciples now knew that in his resurrection Jesus had been exalted to a height of glory beyond the comprehension of their finite minds, and that if they became conformed to his character likeness they would, in God's due time, share the glory of his kingdom, and the glory of his exalted position on the throne of God. How wonderfully they were comforted by the Holy Spirit!

Things to Come

Jesus had said that when the Holy Spirit of truth came to the disciples it would show them things to come, and it did. Now they knew the messianic kingdom of promise was not due to be established until Christ's return. Shortly after Pentecost, Peter preached a sermon in which he referred to Christ's return. He explained that then there would be "times of restitution of all things," which, he declared, had been "spoken by the mouth of all his [God's] holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21

Through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, the apostles were able to realize the meaning of the Old Testament promises of God pertaining to the messianic kingdom, and the blessings it would assure the people—all the families of the earth. They now knew the promise that death would be swallowed up in victory

was to be fulfilled through Christ's kingdom, after he returned. They knew it would be then that the blind eyes would be opened, and the deaf ears unstopped. They knew the promise concerning the building of houses and the planting of vineyards, belonged to the time of the kingdom, the "times of restitution of all things."—Isa. 25:6-9; 35:5; 65:22

Heavenly Hopes

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost resulted in an appreciation of the heavenly hopes set before the footstep followers of Jesus by the promises of God, and what these hopes would accomplish in their lives. There are a number of expressions used in the Bible to describe the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and lives of Christians. One of these descriptive words is 'born'.

This is an expression which suggests the coming into existence of a new life, and this is one of the things accomplished by the power of God's promises, his thoughts—the Holy Spirit. To Nicodemus Jesus explained that this new life, when it comes fully to birth, will be vastly different than human life. To illustrate this difference, Jesus said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—John 3:8

The word used in the ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, and translated "born" in our English versions, at times is also correctly translated "begotten," and it is necessary to determine from the context which thought is intended by the writer. By observing this distinction, we learn that it is not correct to speak of conversion to Christ as being "born" of the Spirit.

When one comes to God in repentance of mind and heart, and through faith in Christ as his Redeemer surrenders himself in full consecration to do God's will, what occurs is properly described as a 'begetting' of the Spirit. This means, simply, that a

new life has begun. But this new life is merely an embryo. It needs to be nourished by the Word of God, and thus to develop, growing strong in the LORD and in the power of his might.

It is not until the resurrection that this new life comes to the birth. Not until then is one truly 'born' of the Spirit. It is in the resurrection that the new life, which begins at the time one dedicates his life to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, is 'born' of the Spirit, and is able to go and come as the wind. Thus we see that to note this difference in the use of the words 'begotten' and 'born' gives us a much more comprehensive understanding of what the power or Spirit of God, exercised through his written Word, accomplishes on behalf of the consecrated followers of the Master.

Baptism of the Spirit

The Bible also speaks of the 'baptism' of the Spirit. The word baptize means 'to bury', and to be baptized by the Spirit of God means to be so fully surrendered to the doing of God's will that one comes fully under its control. From God's standpoint, the whole church was baptized by the Spirit at Pentecost, and since that time it has remained only for the individual to yield his will to the influence of the divine will as it is expressed through Christ Jesus, to share in that baptism.

It is not indicated in the Bible that there is a fresh outpouring of the Spirit upon every individual who consecrates himself to do God's will. The Apostle Paul wrote, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." For the individual this baptism occurs when one comes into the body of Christ.—I Cor. 12:13

Filled with the Spirit

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Be ye filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5:18) How void of meaning this expression would be if the Holy Spirit were a person! But when we recognize that it is simply the power or influence of God, exercised in the Christian life

largely through his written Word, then we can understand how it is possible to have either more or less of the Spirit influencing our lives. To be filled with the Spirit calls for an emptying of self and self-will, and a diligent application of ourselves to the study of God's Word, and to putting into practice all its righteous precepts.

The Bible also speaks of being "sealed" by the Spirit, and of having the "witness" of the Spirit. These expressions indicate still other ways by which the grace of God through Christ and the written Word fills our hearts and minds, not only with an understanding of the divine will, but with the inspiration to follow faithfully in the footsteps of the Master even unto death that we might receive the promised "crown of life."—Rev. 2:10

Upon All Flesh

The Prophet Joel foretold the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and added, "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." (Joel 2:28) It would be difficult to think of an individual, or person, such as tradition claims the Holy Spirit to be, as being poured out. But this expression is quite understandable when we recognize that the Holy Spirit is God's power or influence—a power which he exercises to accomplish all his good and holy purposes.

God's Spirit will be poured out in various ways for the blessing of mankind throughout the thousand years of Christ's kingdom. He will cause the knowledge of his glory to fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea. (Isa. 11:9; 40:5) In Zephaniah 3:9 we are informed that the LORD will turn to the people a "pure language," or message, and that this will enable all to call upon him and serve him "with one consent."

In Micah 4:1-4 we are again assured that the "Word of the LORD" will be diffused throughout the earth during the time of Christ's kingdom, which in this prophecy is symbolized by a 'mountain', the "mountain of the house of the LORD." "The law

shall go forth of Zion," the prophecy states, "and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem." As a result of this, the nations will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks, and they will learn war no more.

Satan's spirit of selfishness and evil has led to war and a myriad of other manifestations of inhumanity, but God's Holy Spirit of love poured out upon the people by means of the Word of truth which will then be disseminated, will gradually change the hearts of the people. This is described in Jeremiah 31:31-34 as the 'writing' of God's law in the 'inward parts' of the people.

And when the work to be accomplished by this future outpouring of Holy Spirit is complete, "all the families of the earth" (Gen. 12:3) will know the LORD, and so completely that it will no longer be necessary for anyone to say to another, "Know the LORD" (Jer. 31:34), for all shall know him from the least even unto the greatest.

The Dead Awakened

How wonderfully the glory of God will be manifested throughout the earth as all who are asleep in death are, by the Holy Spirit or power of God restored to life. (Acts 24:15) Since the resurrection will be taking place in every part of the earth, the glory of the LORD will thus be seen by the people of every continent and isle of the sea. The miracle-working power of the Creator as seen in the resurrection, together with the diffusion of his Word—the 'pure language' spoken of in Zephaniah 3:9—will cause the whole world to rejoice in the God of their salvation. They will say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him!"—Isa. 25:6-9

Surely we can rejoice to realize that the glory of God will thus be revealed by the Holy Spirit, and through his Son, Christ Jesus, who—as the mighty Arm of Jehovah—will be glorified as he is seen by the "eyes of all nations; and all the ends of the earth . . . see the salvation of our God."—Isa. 52:10 □

"If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."—John 15:10

WE MAY daily and hourly keep ourselves in the LORD's love by obedience to and a growing love for the principles of righteousness. We are to rejoice in every experience in life—its difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, etc., no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the LORD shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which he has established and to which he requires our full and loyal heart submission.

**"FRANK
&
ERNEST"**

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interesting topics
discussed Sundays
on*

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- 21-God's Day of Preparation
- 28-Our Lord's Return

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On Sunday, August 21st, "Frank and Ernest" will discuss a topic of interest to many. Attractive circulars are available for announcing this program, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. They are free. Address your request to:

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Jesus, the Light of the World

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

—Isaiah 9:2,6

WE ARE still in the time when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. True, there is a measure of light in the world; true, also, that light emanated from our dear Redeemer, his words and his works, and still shines forth from all those who are truly his, and whose hearts are illuminated by his promises and his Spirit.

But this is not the light of the world scattering all of earth's darkness and causing all to appreciate the glory of God. That glorious day cannot come until the Lord shall first have found the members of his body, who, together with himself, are to constitute the Sun of Righteousness.

The glorious prospect is that soon the church will be complete. Soon the Sun of Righteousness will shine, and its rays will light the uttermost parts of the earth. Every child of Adam, sharer in his curse, shall ultimately be a sharer in Messiah's great work of blessing by being brought under the influence of that great Light which shall constitute the Millennial Age, a day of blessing and of glory and of knowledge of the LORD. This is the "true light, which ultimately lighteth every man that cometh into the world."—John 1:9

International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR AUGUST 7

The People Break the Covenant

KEY VERSE: *"The LORD said unto Moses, Go get thee down, for thy people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves."*—Exodus 32:7

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Exodus 32:1-10*

WHEN Moses was in Mount Horeb, or Sinai, for forty days receiving the Law from Jehovah, the Israelites rebelled. The LORD reported this to Moses, and said, "I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: now therefore let me alone, that my wrath wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation."—Exod. 32:7-10

Here Moses' true humility, and his great desire that the LORD's name be glorified, are manifested. We read that he "besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth?

Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people."—vss. 11,12

To this plea on behalf of the people who were almost continuously murmuring against him, Moses added, "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever."—vs. 13

The LORD did 'repent', but when Moses returned to the people he found the situation even worse than he supposed, and he became angry himself, and broke the tables of the Law. Seemingly, however, his wrath was expressed more against the sin than against the sinners. He did what he could to cleanse them. It was here that the tribe of Levi took a firm stand on the LORD's side.

The next day, Moses "returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." (vss. 31,32) Here the true character of Moses again reveals itself. Previously God had suggested the blotting out of the entire rebellious nation of Israel and building a new nation under Moses. But now Moses offers his own life to save the people who were continually murmuring against him. The LORD did not accept Moses' offer; nor did he at once destroy the Israelites, although he did punish them with plagues, and because of their continued rebellious attitude, all the males who were twenty years and over when they left Egypt died before the nation entered the Promised Land.

Whenever God demonstrated his favor upon Moses by miraculous signs, Israel would temporarily cease their murmuring against him, but at the slightest provocation they would begin again. Their complaints seemed generally to follow about the same pattern. They would ask Moses why he brought them out of the land of Egypt into the wilderness to die; or why he did not permit them to return to Egypt.

Doubtless, one of the severest tests upon Moses was the later rebellion of his own brother and sister against him—Aaron and Miriam. As a rule people expect a measure of understanding and sympathy from their own family, but Moses, on one occasion, was disappointed here also. We read that "Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married. . . . Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?"—Num. 12:1,2

It is in connection with this trial upon Moses that we are informed concerning his meekness, and consideration for those who opposed him. (Num. 12:2) Certainly Moses needed submission under such circumstances. The evidence is that he accepted the experience without resentment.

The LORD stood by Moses, declaring him to be a faithful servant. The LORD smote Miriam with leprosy, but Moses prayed that she be healed. In these accounts we are reminded of the unselfish attitude of Jesus, the antitypical Moses who actually did give his life for the whole sinful world of mankind that they might be saved and be healed.

Are we not all, as followers of the Master, admonished to pray for those who despitely use us?

Moses Intercedes for the People

KEY VERSE: *"The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty."*—Numbers 14:18

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Numbers 14:10-20

ISRAEL'S God—who is also our God—was revealed to be long-suffering and patient. In the light of the divine spirit of forgiveness which was manifested toward that stiff-necked people on so many occasions, it is surely true that the creeds of men have made God's love "too narrow by false limits of their own, and they magnify his vengeance with a zeal he will not own." God was willing to forgive Israel. He gave them a "second chance." Their repentance, of course, was essential. But where there is true repentance, God is quick to forgive and to extend his favor.

God's viewpoint on the matter of forgiveness is expressed by Jesus in his 'seventy times seven' rule (Matt. 18:22) laid down for the guidance of Christians. What Jesus taught on the subject of forgiveness must surely reflect God's own attitude in the matter. How strange, in view of this plainly taught Scriptural principle, that anyone who professes to be a Christian should

decry the teaching which gives an opportunity for repentance during the thousand years of Christ's kingdom.

However, divine forgiveness is not without limit, nor is it extended irrespective of the individual's request for it. Guilt which God does not forgive is that which is wholly willful. In order for sin to be willful it must be committed in full understanding of the issues involved, and with full ability to resist the temptation. It would seem, therefore, as though there have not been many among all the teeming millions of earth who have sinned beyond the reach of God's forgiveness. If God could forgive the Israelites who set up the golden calf, surely his tender mercy will yet be displayed to the millions who have sinned without possessing nearly as much light as they.

But God did not 'wink' at Israel's sin. He noticed it, and was displeased. He told Moses so, and Moses was displeased also. Moses

was so wrought up, in fact, that he destroyed the two tables of stone on which the Law was written. He very probably thought, Why give a law to a people who had so soon forgotten the God who delivered them from Egyptian bondage?

However, God thought otherwise, and he instructed Moses to take two other tables of stone and go up into the mount. There God communed with Israel's leader, and again the Commandments were inscribed as a permanent record upon that second set of stone tables. The account says that when Moses went up into the mountain of Sinai, bearing the tables of stone with him:

"The LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."—Exod. 34:5-7

God proclaimed his name to Moses by reminding him of the glorious attributes of his character.

The term 'name' is here used to denote personality, or character, as today we say that an individual has a good name, or a bad name. God's name was glorious, and what made it so was his mercy, his longsuffering, and the abundance of his goodness and truth, or righteousness. "The righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright."—Ps. 11:7

In II Corinthians 3:3, Paul refers to the tables of stone upon which the Law of God was written at Sinai, and then explains that now God is again writing his law on tables—not on tables of stone, but on "fleshy tables of the heart."

As Moses was the Mediator of the Old Covenant, Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant. As Moses was provided with tables upon which the Law of the Covenant was written, so Jesus, too, will have 'tables' upon which the law of the New Covenant will be written—fleshy tables of the heart.

As Moses went up into the mountain to commune with God while the Law was being written, so Jesus entered into the divine presence following his resurrection, and by faith the church is seated with him in the heavenlies. Through a ministration of the Spirit of truth, God's name is being proclaimed, and his glory reflected.

Moses Counsels a New Generation

KEY VERSE: "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD, and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."—Deuteronomy 6:4,5

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 6:10-19

OUR text sums up the meaning of God's Law as given to Israel. This summary was quoted by Jesus when he was asked to state the greatest of the Commandments given through Moses to Israel.

What Jesus designates the "first and great commandment," epitomizes the intent of the first four of the Ten Commandments, for these outline man's duty toward God—what he expects in the way of homage and reverence.

If we love God with all our hearts and souls and minds we will have no disposition to worship other gods; nor will we knowingly take the name of our God in vain. Any Israelite who was wholehearted in his love for God would take delight in observing the Sabbath of rest, and keep that day holy unto the LORD, for he would see in this commandment that which would help him to know his God better, and to put his trust in him more fully.

Keeping the Sabbath by the Israelites was primarily a resting from their own labors by which they provided for themselves the necessities of life. To rest from these one day in seven called for an exercise of faith in God's ability to care for them. Hence, it was a reminder of his faithfulness in providing for their needs. With the Christian this rest is on a higher plane, for with us the hope of everlasting life is involved. This divine provision for life is available only through Christ, so we rest by faith in his finished work. Thus we rest from our own works, as God did from his.

The first and great commandment, which calls for supreme love for God, applies to his people in every age, for no other attitude of heart and mind could be pleasing to him. As the Creator and great provider of the needs of all his creatures, he could not expect less. To the Israelites this full heart obedi-

ence was expressed in their loyalty to the Law Covenant.

To the followers of the Master in this age, it means the laying down of our lives sacrificially, following in his footsteps. We cannot love God supremely without loving his will and endeavoring to be obedient thereto. His will for us is that we should present our bodies a living sacrifice, with the realization that this is our reasonable service.—Rom. 12:1

In the context of our key verse, Moses explained to the Israelites how they were to answer any who might ask them the meaning of the laws and statutes which the LORD had enjoined upon them. They were to say that it was for their "good always, that he [God] might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness."

From this we see that fundamentally the purpose of the Law given to Israel was the same as in the case of Adam—in fact, it is always the same. The keeping of God's laws is always for the good of those who keep them, and in order that they might live. God benefits only in the sense that it brings joy to him when his creatures, through obedience, place themselves in a position to receive his blessings.

When all the willing and obedient of the fallen race are restored to

perfection, then there will be a full liberty of the sons of God. All will then know the divine requirements, and be so enthusiastically in harmony with them that obedience will be their constant delight. But until that time comes, definitely specified laws are necessary to regulate the lives of those with whom God is dealing. This is true even of the church, God's new creation of this age. There are laws governing the footstep followers of the Master which cannot be ignored or flouted without serious spiritual loss and perhaps catastrophe.

In Galatians 5:13, the apostle says, "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." From this we learn that even our liberty in Christ is relative; it is not a license to do as our fallen flesh might like to do.

Obedience to law is necessary among any people in order to enjoy peace and happiness. Complete freedom to do as one pleases is a workable formula only with those who are so whole-heartedly in harmony with God's will that they desire to do only those things which please him. With such the will of God becomes the law by which they are governed, and in which they delight. (Ps. 19:7-14) This is the high thought of our text.

None Like Moses

KEY VERSE: *"There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."*—Deuteronomy 34:10

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 34:1-12

IN THE Bible, Moses is second in prominence to Jesus Christ. His name appears in the Word of God a total of 810 times, 730 of which are in the Old Testament, and 80 in the New Testament. His name appears more than 100 times in the Old Testament subsequent to his death. Throughout the more than three thousand years since he lived, reverential esteem has been held for him by the Jewish people as their great deliverer and lawgiver.

We see in Moses not only a great prophet, but also a type of the Messiah, the Christ. The Apostle Peter, in a prophecy of the work of Christ subsequent to his second advent said, "Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." (Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:15,18) In Hebrews 3:5,6, Moses is referred to as being "faithful in all God's house as a servant" and Christ is presented as a "son over God's house, whose house are we."

In Numbers 12:3, Moses is described as being "very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." The thought is that Moses was self-effacing, willing to endure injustices in the common interest of his people, and for the glory of God. In his difficult position as leader of God's people he needed this quality, for he was continually being accused by those for whom he was laying down his life. Near the end of his life, the agitation of the people caused Moses to disobey God in the fetching of water from the rock.—Num. 20:1-13

Here was a brief flash-back to the Moses of Egypt, who, at the age of forty, undertook to alleviate the sufferings of his people without taking Jehovah into consideration, or seeking to honor his name. His forty years as a shepherd, tending his father-in-law's flocks, accomplished much for Moses—so much, in fact that now for nearly forty years he had endured the murmurings of his people and his family

without retaliating.

Over and over again Moses had pleaded with God to forgive the Israelites, and, for the glory of his own great name, to keep them alive and bring them into the land of Canaan as he had promised. But now, the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back had been heaped upon him, and the burden was a little too great, revealing that the old Moses still lived, even though for forty years suppressed. No member of the sin-cursed and dying race can actually extirpate his inherited imperfection; at best he can merely keep it suppressed.

The punishment of not being permitted to enter Canaan was severe for Moses, but his humility, together with a wonderful attitude of resignation to the LORD's will, was manifested in his announcement to the Israelites that he would not accompany them across Jordan into the Promised Land. "The LORD hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan. The LORD thy God, he will go over before thee, and he will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them: and Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as the LORD hath said."—Deut. 31:2,3

Then he went on to encourage Joshua in this great undertaking, and how eloquently he did this! "Be

strong and of a good courage," Moses said to Israel's new leader, echoing the words of the LORD, "for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swear unto them: and I will be with thee." (Deut. 31:23) Moses' last words of encouragement to the Israelites, whom he loved despite their murmurings, were:

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. . . . Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help."—Deut. 33:27,29

Moses realized at the end of his life that he was only beginning to learn of the LORD's greatness. Each test of his loyalty and humility had helped him to understand his God a little better; but, with him, as with all who reverence the great Creator, and who desire to know and do his will, eternity will not be long enough to learn all there is to know of his glorious attributes.

"O LORD God, thou hast begun to show thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?"—words of Moses, a truly great prophet.

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Seed, Part 5

Treasures in Heaven

LIFE, under conditions of peace and happiness, is a priceless possession. Only those who are so acutely distressed as to be rendered to some extent mentally unbalanced destroy themselves. To the normal mind, life is considered well worthwhile, even though accompanied by more or less disappointment and sorrow. In Matthew 19:16-21 we are told of a young man in Jesus' day who was wealthy, and who had a great desire to continue living. He went to the Master to inquire if there was anything he could do that would assure him of eternal life.

First of all, Jesus referred this young man to the Law of God which had been given to Israel at the hand of Moses. The promise had been made "that the man which doeth those things shall live by them." (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:12) Our first parents were condemned to death because they disobeyed God's law, and death had reigned over all from Adam to Moses because, although not necessarily willful sinners, they were born imperfect and shared in the condemnation which fell upon our first parents.—Gal. 2:21,22; Rom. 5:12-15

But, with the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai, God extended an opportunity to the people of Israel to gain life by obedience to his Law. So when the young, rich man inquired of Jesus what he could do to secure eternal life, Jesus simply referred him to the Law of God, epitomized in the Ten Commandments.

In reply to Jesus, the young man declared that he had been obedient to the Law. "All these have I kept from my youth up." Then he inquired further, "What lack I yet?" This was apparently a noble young Israelite, for we read in Mark 10:21 that "Jesus . . .

loved him." He had doubtless lived up to the requirements of God's Law to the best of his ability, yet realized that the seeds of death were working in him. Even though young, he could recognize that just like everyone else he was already losing some of his youthful vigor, and that if this continued, he eventually would become old and die.

Hence the question, "What lack I yet?" Jesus replied, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." Mark's account states, "Take up the cross, and follow me." (Mark 10:21) Analyzing this reply, it simply means that Jesus asked this young man to die with him, sacrificially, symbolized by the invitation to take up his cross. In return for this, Jesus promised the young man that he would have treasure in heaven.

A New Hope

Jesus knew that because he would voluntarily die as the world's Redeemer, the opportunity to secure everlasting life on earth as humans eventually would be available to all mankind. Even those asleep in death would be awakened and have this opportunity offered to them. But the time in the divine plan had not yet arrived for this. As the seed of promise through which this wonderful blessing would eventually be made available to all the nations of the earth (Gen. 22:18), Jesus was to have associates who would share in dispensing the blessings.

Jesus also knew that the condition upon which these could qualify to be associate blessers with him was that they suffer and die with him, as symbolized by the cross. In the divine plan for the recovery of mankind from sin and death, this was the only way of life then open. Jesus described this way as "narrow," and the "gate" or entrance into it, as "strait," or difficult. Indeed, it was too difficult for the young man, for "he went away sorrowful."—Matt. 19:22

This young man had asked Jesus what he could do to live, and what Jesus told him was that he could follow him into death. But with this invitation to die with Jesus there was offered the great compensation of "treasure in heaven." This was something new to the young man, for up to this time God had not offered heavenly treasures to the people of Israel. That Jesus should now do so indicated that the plan of God was moving forward into a new phase, and the work of a new age was beginning.

In a vague way, Christians have always believed they would share a heavenly home with Jesus, but few have realized that the hope of a heavenly reward was not held out to anyone until Jesus came. Moses and the prophets did not offer such a hope to the people of Israel. Paul wrote that Jesus brought "life and immortality to light through the Gospel."—II Tim. 1:10

Just as a heavenly hope was not offered to the ancients, neither was immortality. Jesus brought both "life and immortality to light through the Gospel." God's ancient people were assured of an awakening from the dead. But they did not understand clearly the fullness of perfect human life that would be vouchsafed to them through Christ, the coming Redeemer. As for immortality, no hint had been given to them concerning it. This remained for Jesus to do.

Immortality is life, but life is not necessarily immortality. Immortality is indestructibility. It is a quality of the divine nature, and was possessed originally only by the great Creator of the universe. Jesus was exalted to the divine nature and was given immortality at the time of his resurrection, and immortality is promised as a reward to those who follow faithfully in the footsteps of Jesus.—Rom. 2:7

Immortality is one of the treasures of divine beings in heaven, and those who attain it will share a heavenly home with Jesus. To his disciples Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: . . . I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto

myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”—John 14:2,3

Concerning the heavenly reward for the followers of Jesus the Apostle Peter wrote, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again 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, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”—I Pet. 1:3-5

The Apostle Paul wrote, “Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” (Heb. 3:1) The priests of ancient Israel were God’s servants through whom he extended his blessings to the people. And Paul is telling us that if we have partaken of the heavenly calling we are to consider ourselves members of a priesthood under Christ—not an earthly priesthood, but a heavenly priesthood, over which the exalted Jesus is the Head.

Part of the function of Israel’s earthly and typical priesthood was the offering of sacrifice, and now those who have received the heavenly calling are also invited to offer sacrifice. Israel’s priesthood offered animals in sacrifice. But the prospective heavenly priesthood are admonished to offer themselves. The Apostle Paul wrote, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, . . . that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”—Rom. 12:1

Unto Death

This sacrifice of the human body is unto death. For it is only through faithfulness in laying down the human life, that one proves worthy to inherit those treasures in heaven which Jesus mentioned to the rich, young ruler. Jesus showed the way in this respect by giving his own flesh, his humanity, for the life of the world. (John 6:51) Now those who would be his disciples are invited to take up their cross and follow him into death.—Matt. 16:24

Jesus promised, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) Immortality is the 'crown' of life, and can be obtained only through faithfulness in laying down the human life—the mortal life—in sacrifice; and it will be obtained in the resurrection. Describing the resurrection of those who are partakers of the heavenly calling, Paul said that "this mortal" will "put on immortality."—I Cor. 15:54

Christ's Resurrection

To attain immortality and to be with Jesus in the place prepared by him is likened by the Apostle Paul to a valuable 'prize', and in order to win this prize Paul said that he was willing to give up every earthly advantage he possessed, even life itself. Paul wrote: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:8-14

The Christian hope of being exalted with Jesus in the resurrection, and of sharing his heavenly glory is further confirmed by the Apostle Paul in Colossians 3:2-4, which reads: "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is

our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

Not on the Earth

Paul’s admonition to set our affections on things above, and not on things of the earth, is quite in contrast with the incentives God held out to Adam in the Garden of Eden. We are informed that in Eden God planted every tree that was pleasant to the eye and good for food. It was a beauty spot which was offered to Adam forever, on conditions of obedience to divine law. Trees of life were provided in that garden, which would have assured our first parents of continued health and life.

These earthly blessings were theirs to enjoy, and God wanted them to set their affections upon them. When they sinned and were sentenced to death it meant the loss of this earthly paradise. But through the redeeming work of Christ, human life, with its earthly blessings, eventually will be restored to Adam and his race.

However, this is not the ‘prize’ being sought after by the followers of Christ during the present age in the divine plan. To these Paul wrote, “Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.” To this he added, “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” The true followers of Jesus are looked upon by God as dead to the things of the earth because they are voluntarily following in the sacrificial footsteps of Jesus, “being planted together in the likeness of his death.”—Rom. 6:3-8

The purpose of suffering and dying with Jesus is explained by Paul in a letter to Timothy. We quote: “It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.” (II Tim. 2:11,12) All the faithful of Jesus’ followers will reign with him as the seed, to bless all the families of the earth!

Another Treasure

The privilege of reigning with Jesus as the spiritual seed of Abraham will be one of the treasures in heaven promised by Jesus. Jesus' immediate disciples were very much concerned over this prospect. Two of them made bold to request that they might have a specially favored position in his kingdom, one on his right hand and the other on his left hand. (Matt. 20:20-23; Mark 10:35-40) Jesus explained that he did not have the authority to assign special privileges to those who would be in the kingdom with him, but if they wanted to be in the kingdom with him at all they would need to drink of his cup, and be baptized with his baptism.

Jesus' 'cup' was one of suffering, and his 'baptism' was one of death, and all who will reign with him when his kingdom is established will, first of all, have to suffer and die with him. Not many in the more than nineteen centuries since Jesus suffered and died have been willing to pass this test. There have been countless millions of professed followers of Jesus, but only a "little flock" to whom it is the Father's "good pleasure" to give the kingdom. Only the few have been willing to walk in the footsteps of Jesus—footsteps which lead to suffering and death.—Luke 12:32

In one of the beautiful symbolism of the Bible we see the resurrected Jesus exalted to Mount Zion, which pictures the spiritual rulership of the kingdom. And there are with Jesus, here shown as the Lamb which had been slain, "an hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." It is explained that these are the ones who "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," meaning that they die sacrificially, even as he died.—Rev. 14:1-5

The significance of being on symbolic Mount Zion is revealed by the LORD in Psalm 2:6-9: "Yet have I set my king [Jesus] upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen [Gentiles]

for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Jesus will share this highly exalted position of authority and rulership with his faithful followers. He promised: "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father."—Rev. 2:26,27

"Even as I received of my Father," said Jesus to those who would be overcomers. Jesus had already been exalted to power and great glory. Paul wrote concerning Jesus: "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:9-11

In another promise to the overcomers, the highly exalted Jesus said, "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) From these promises it becomes clear that to be a follower of Jesus implies much more than attaining salvation, that to the faithful it will lead to association with him in the glory of his kingdom through which all nations will be blessed.

"Calling" and "Election"

The Apostle Peter admonished Christians to make their "calling and election sure." (II Pet. 1:10) He also wrote that there are "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." (II Pet. 1:4) Peter further admonished that to our faith in these promises we should add "virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godli-

ness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity [love].”

Peter indicated that by doing these things we will gain for ourselves an abundant entrance into “the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (II Pet. 1:5-11) It is through the agencies of this kingdom that all the families of the earth will be blessed, in keeping with the promise God made to Abraham concerning his seed. One aspect of the promise was that “the seed” would “possess the gate of his enemies.” (Gen. 22:16-18) This denotes rulership, control, such as we would expect of a king.

And so it is that Jesus and his faithful disciples will establish a kingdom through which they will rule the world, and it will be this righteous rulership that will extend the promised blessings of peace and health and life to the people. When Jesus was raised from the dead a glorious divine being, he announced that “all power” had been given unto him “in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. 28:18) And God’s promise to his faithful disciples is that they, too, will be raised from the dead to be “kings and priests,” and to reign with Christ a thousand years.—Rev. 1:6; 20:6

The resurrected Jesus, having been exalted to the divine nature, was invisible to human eyes except as he miraculously manifested himself, which he did to his disciples on a few occasions. Jesus, in the resurrection, had experienced a spiritual ‘birth’ and, as he explained to Nicodemus, was now able to go and come as the wind, invisibly, and with great power.—John 3:8

When this same change of nature, from human to divine, is experienced by Jesus’ faithful overcomers, they also will possess the ability to exercise power, yet be invisible to human eyes. Thus, together with Jesus as their Head, they will be the invisible rulers of mankind during the prophetic thousand-year kingdom. Just as the powerful and wicked spirit being, Satan, has ruled the world in unrighteousness, so the spiritual seed of Abraham will reign in righteousness.

Then Satan will be bound, and, at the end of the thousand years, destroyed. (Rev. 20:1-3) All wicked institutions and governments, through which Satan has used his influence to degrade the human race, will also be destroyed. Or, as the Scriptures state it, "As the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to pieces." All unrighteousness will be destroyed. Paul wrote that Christ must reign until all enemies are subdued, and that the "last enemy" to be destroyed will be death. This is why the Bible assures us that ultimately there shall be "no more death."—I Cor. 15:25,26; Rev. 21:4

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U.S. BROADCASTS—Spanish

FLORIDA
Miami WRHC 8:30 a.m.

CANADIAN BROADCASTS

ALBERTA
Banff CFHC-1340 11:45 a.m.
Canmore CFHC-1450 11:45 a.m.
Lethbridge CJOC-1220 7:15 a.m.
Wetasquin CJOI-1440 7:45 a.m.

BRITISH COLUMBIA
Castlegar CKQR-760 8:45 a.m.
Duncan CKAY-1500 9:00 a.m.
Duncan CKAY-1500 7:30 p.m.
Grand Forks CKGF-1340 9:00 a.m.
Langley CJUP-800 AM 9:30 a.m.

LABRADOR
Churchill Falls CFLC-FM 97.9 7:15 a.m.

MANITOBA
Winnipeg CKJS-810 9:00 a.m.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
Yellowknife CJCD-1240 9:00 a.m.

ONTARIO
Hamilton CKOC-1150 7:00 a.m.
Leamington CHYR-710 5:00 p.m.
St. Thomas CHLO-1570 10:45 a.m.

QUEBEC
Montreal CFMB-1410 5:15 p.m.

SASKATCHEWAN
Rosetown CJYM 1330 10:00 a.m.
Weyburn-Estevan CFSL-1190 8:45 a.m.

YUKON
Whitehorse CKRW-810 9:30 a.m.

OVERSEAS BROADCASTS

BRITISH ISLES
Dublin Christian Broadcasting 9:00 p.m.
Radio Caroline-Tues. KHZ 962 8:45 p.m.

BRITISH WEST INDIES
Grand Cayman Radio Cayman 9:30 a.m.

CEYLON
Columbo-Sat. Radio Sri Lanka 7:15 p.m.

FRANCE (French)
Lyon-Sat. Radio Clé 6:30 a.m.

HONG KONG
Radio Villa Verde-Fri. 6:00 p.m.

ITALY (Italian)
Europa Radio Milano 83.3-FM 11:30 a.m.
Euro Tele Radio Calabria-Fri.
MHZ 102 5:30 p.m.
Radio Corleone Centrale
FM-88-500 FM-92 11:00 a.m.

MEXICO (Spanish)
Cullacán Ranchera XEQC 8:30 a.m.

NEW ZEALAND
Dunedin 4XD 11:15 a.m.
Whakatane IXX 6:45 a.m.

NIGERIA
Radio Africa-Wed. 8:00 p.m.

PANAMA
Panama City HOQ 1250 10:30 a.m.

PERU
Lima-Sat. Radio Unión 880 AM 2:00 p.m.

PHILIPPINES
Manila-Sat. DZAM 1026 KHz 7:15 p.m.

SOUTH AFRICA
Joubert Park-Thurs. SWAZI Music
Radio 1400 & shortwave 49 & 60 9:00 p.m.

SPAIN (Spanish)
Radio Gerona-Mon. 9:45 p.m.

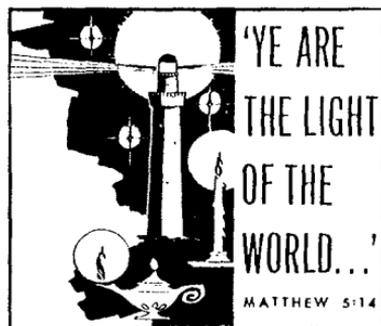
TONGA
Nuku' Alofa-Mon. 10:15 a.m.

URUGUAY (Spanish)
Montevideo Radio El Espectador 810 9:15 a.m.

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

SHORTWAVE BROADCASTS

(Beamed to Africa, Europe, U.S.)
Eastern U.S. (Sat.) WRNO 15.20 12:45 p.m.



The Bible Answers

Regular Television Broadcasts

WE REGRET that we are unable to furnish the day and time of many of the broadcasts for the following stations. Where they are known, they have been noted:

CONNECTICUT Waterbury WCAT Channel 13 9:00 p.m.	MISSISSIPPI Jackson WAPT
FLORIDA Miami WKID Jacksonville Channel 17	MISSOURI Springfield KOLR
GEORGIA Atlanta WATL	NEW MEXICO Roswell KSWs
ILLINOIS Champaign- Springfield WBHW	NORTH CAROLINA Hickory WHKY
IOWA Cedar Rapids KTS-13 Mt. Vernon-WMVL Cable 7:00 a.m. Lisbon (every weekday)	OHIO Dayton WHIO
MICHIGAN Ann Arbor-Sun .WIHT-31 12:00 noon	TEXAS Lubbock KCBD
	WEST VIRGINIA Logan-Mon. Channel 12

Satellite Cable Broadcasts

EVERY Sunday morning, over four hundred cable stations air **The Bible Answers** TV programs in forty-three states and Puerto Rico, at 9:00 a.m. EST; 8:00 a.m. CST; 7:00 a.m. MST; and 6:00 a.m. PST.

If you subscribe to cable TV, consult the listing in your local newspaper or guide, for the station in your area which shows these fine educational programs. In some cases, stations tape the programs and show them at a different time than that mentioned above. You may have to check the complete listings to locate **The Bible Answers** programs in your city. We are sure you and your family will find these programs inspiring and faith-strengthening—well worth watching. If you own a satellite dish, these programs can be seen on SATCOM F-3, TRANSPONDER-6, at the times listed above.

The following article was submitted to The Dawn as a review of a recently published book. The contributing writer is concerned that the conclusions reached by the authors of the book are detrimental to a correct understanding of the prophecies. To this we agree and heartily endorse the arguments set forth in rebuttal.

Book Review:

The Sign of the Last Day—When?

Carl Oloff Jonsson

Wolfgang Herbst

Atlanta: **Commentary Press**, 1987. (272pp.)

Book Summary

THIS work represents a sharp criticism of the belief that certain events of the 20th century, such as famine, pestilences, earthquakes, war, and crime, are unique to our day and constitute a Biblical sign of the end time. The authors single out other religious writers of our day as expressing this unwarranted conclusion in varying degrees.

The theme of the book is that we are not now living in the “last days” of Biblical prophecy when Christ is due to return to carry out Divine judgment. In fact, the authors believe that none of the teachings of Scripture or the sayings of Jesus were ever meant to be taken as a prophetic forecast of such end time events. While not denying the doctrine of the return of Christ, they are convinced that no Biblical signs disclosing the nearness of that event were given and that there is no possible way that anyone can know beforehand when that day would come.

The focus of the book is upon Jesus' Mount Olivet prophecy recorded in Matthew 24, where Jesus replied to a series of questions by his disciples concerning the coming destruction of the Temple, the sign of his coming and the end of the age. In particular, the authors concentrate on the famine, earthquakes, pestilences, wars, and lawlessness that were mentioned by Jesus. They provide extensive documentation, with separate chapters covering each of these areas, to demonstrate that such conditions have always existed throughout the history of mankind. The authors also contend that the extensive troubles of today, as reported by the media, are overly exaggerated and are not actually occurring in greater proportion than in the past.

In their analysis of Matthew 24, the authors make a clear separation between Jesus' introductory remarks and his later instructions. The wars and rumors of wars, the famines, pestilences and earthquakes of verses six to eight were not to be taken as visible signs of the end time; to the contrary, these were to be accepted as periodic disasters occurring all down through the age, and his followers were not to be led astray concerning their significance. In fact, these woes were to be regarded as only the beginning of the troubles that were to develop ("beginning of sorrows"—Greek *odin*, 'birth pangs or any travail or anguish') and become characteristic of mankind's experiences throughout all ages.

Only later in Matthew, Chapter 24, are Jesus' words understood to bear directly on the disciples' questions. Verse fourteen, dealing with the proclamation of the kingdom message, is also thought to apply all down through the age and may not yet be completely fulfilled. Verses fifteen to twenty-two are applied strictly to the destruction of literal Jerusalem and its Temple and no credibility is given to the possibility of additional fulfillments of this prophecy at the end of the age. Then in verses twenty-nine and thirty are seen Jesus' direct answer as to the sign of his *parousia*—"the sign of the son of man in heaven." This is taken to

mean that his coming will be accompanied by literal cosmic upheavals of terrifying proportions, that all mankind will recognize clearly are of Divine origin and entirely separate from common human experience or occasional convulsions of nature.

It is at this climactic moment that the hope of the church will finally be realized, when all faithful Christians will be gathered together with Christ for all eternity. But according to this understanding of Scripture, not until the very occurrence of these foreboding cosmic upheavals, which will precipitate a wave of fear and panic of unprecedented proportions across the earth, will it be possible for anyone to know that Christ's coming was actually taking place. With the arrival of the King, a new age will begin, to be blessed by him with "life, peace, happiness and freedom forever." The highest goal of every Christian should be to be considered worthy of attaining to that condition of life which will be inaugurated at the return of Christ.

Commentary and Analysis

In sharp contrast to the theme of this book, knowledgeable students of the Bible are convinced that we are indeed living in the "end times." In fact they believe that much of the chronology and prophecy of the Divine Word is devoted to providing a clear picture of the events of our day. It is one thing to devote hundreds of pages of a scholarly work to cautioning against using the opening verses of our Lord's prophecy as valid signs of the last days; but quite another—and an error of the most serious magnitude—to deny that the Bible sets forth any evidence to enlighten the believer as to his position on the stream of time. The whole point of the time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, for example, was to show in a clear and connected manner how truth would be restored after its perversion by the Antichrist system and the historical periods in which this would occur. This leads directly to the "time of the end" and correlation with the completion of six thousand years of human history, setting the stage for Christ's *pa-*

rouisia and the establishment of his long-promised kingdom.

The very importance of this subject has caused the Divine Author of the Bible to provide an abundance of testimony as to the character of the "last days" that would precede these grand events. Only by a knowledge of such Scriptural teaching is it possible for the enlightened believer to be "vigilant," "watching," and awake instead of drifting with those of the world who are "overcharged with cares," "blind," "or asleep," to use just a few of the descriptive Biblical terms employed. The Apostle Paul warned that those who were in darkness respecting the day of the Lord and the times and seasons would be taken by surprise and overwhelmed because they failed to take heed, and were not watching for the clear evidences that had been prophetically set forth.—I Thess. 5:1-7

It is interesting to note that the authors, while going to great lengths to counter belief that Matt. 24:6-8 applies to a composite sign of the end, acknowledge that Pastor Russell, the founder of the modern Bible Student movement, clearly taught otherwise. They quote his works from Volume 4 of the *Studies in the Scriptures*, page 566: "Thus briefly did our Lord summarize secular history and teach the disciples not to expect very soon his second coming and glorious kingdom. And how aptly: surely the world's history is just this, an account of wars, intrigues, famines and pestilences—little else."

The authors, however, do not seem to appreciate the fact that it is possible for one to make this distinction which Pastor Russell and other Bible commentators have suggested—that wars, famines, earthquakes, and pestilences are merely regular characteristics of man's history, past and present—without detracting from a strong conviction that there are indeed valid Biblical "signs of the end." It will be instructive to mention here some of the more evident signs of our Lord's *parousia*, and of the near establishment of his kingdom which have been ignored or neglected by the authors of this work:

(1.) Daniel's prophecy of the "increase of knowledge" and "running to and fro" in the time of the end. (Dan. 12:4) This has been fulfilled in a remarkable way within just the last century. We are currently experiencing a veritable knowledge explosion, benefiting from a host of modern inventions—including radio, T.V., telephone, recorders, x-ray, and computers—and enjoying rapid travel—auto, train, ship, and jet plane—most of which would have seemed preposterous to any generation but our own.

(2.) "Distress of nations" and "time of trouble such as never was," with "men's hearts failing them for fear." (Dan. 12:1; Luke 21:25,26) The scale of the perplexing social, political and economic problems gripping the present generation is recognized by many distinguished commentators on the world scene. Who can suggest workable solutions to nuclear war, atomic waste disposal, pollution of air and water, the "Aids" epidemic, the plight of underdeveloped nations, and similar crises of the gravest consequence?

(3.) Rebirth of Israel as an independent nation. Jesus' symbolic reference to the sprouting of the fig tree in his great prophecy (Matt. 24:32,33) correlates with almost innumerable Old Testament prophecies predicting the return of the Jews to their homeland and their reestablishment as a nation. (Amos 9:14,15; Jer. 32:37, etc.) All this was due to occur during the great time of trouble in the last days when the Gentile nations were engaged in a great global struggle. (Joel 3:1,2,9-11) Only in our day have we witnessed this unique combination of circumstances—the returning Jews and the international struggle between the super-powers. Jesus' pointed reference to this event is most compelling and irrefutable: "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."—Luke 21:31

(4.) End-of-the-age witness. The authors treatment of Jesus' words in Matthew 24:14 misses the forcefulness of his prediction that the "Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all

the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." It is apparent that no such witness was possible throughout the Dark Ages when the true church was persecuted and forced to flee into the wilderness condition. Even subsequent to the Reformation, when many Bible truths were rediscovered, a comprehensive global witness awaited the formation of world Bible Societies that could cheaply and effectively distribute the Word of God in the common languages of the people.

But an even more important requisite of a world witness is the correct understanding of the message of the Gospel—the good news of God's coming kingdom of blessing and peace for the world. Only in recent times related to our Lord's *parousia* has it been possible to throw off many of the misconceptions of Bible teaching that have been carried over from the dark past, when true Bible study was largely restricted. This brings us finally to the present time, with the advantages of modern Bible study helps and the availability of powerful tools to disseminate the Gospel message—the printed page, radio, and television. Through these modern media, it can now truly be said that the Gospel has been preached "into all the world for a witness, and then shall the end come."

(5.) Exploding world population. The authors attempt to minimize the significance of the "population bomb" as a factor supporting end time beliefs. They draw a lot of attention to the fact that the reason it took so many millennia to amass the present earth's population of five billion was because of the telling effect of past wars, famines, and pestilences that combined to effectively check the growth rate. But all of this is quite irrelevant to the present dilemma, that the world has entered the "snowball" phase of the curve of population growth. Whereas it has taken many thousands of years to amass a population of one billion by about 1850, it had doubled by the 1930's and then doubled again to four billion in 1975. And now it is due to double again in just thirty-five years.

The authors suggest in only the most vague terms how the snowballing world growth might be slowed down: possible famine, possible major earthquakes in dense urban areas, and possible nuclear war are mentioned. But such speculation seems more like an exercise in wishful thinking than the reasoned reflection upon present realities of population growth and its near term consequences.

The facts are that at present rates, within one hundred years the world would be hopelessly overcrowded to the extreme and life such as has been known on this planet would be impossible. But God's promise that he "created [the earth] not in vain, he formed it to be [comfortably] inhabited" (Ps. 45:18) stands firm and assures us that he will indeed intervene in the affairs of men by establishing his kingdom. His earlier command to "multiply and fill the earth" (Gen. 1:28) carries the implication that when sufficient humans have been born, God will removed the procreative power vested in man. Overcrowding upon earth would be a blight upon God's plan for man's happiness and will not be permitted. And thus it may be seen how the "population bomb" is indeed a powerful sign that we are living in the end time, very close to the promised kingdom.

Overall the statistical material presented in the main chapters of the book is quite interesting, though sometimes slanted to favor the authors' point of view. This at times takes the form of quoting only from selected sources instead of providing a rounded out perspective. Particularly in respect to the significance of the year 1914 and the modern era that follows can this prejudice be seen. It is contended that there is little that is unique about this period and that even World War I was not radically more extensive or important than other conflicts that preceded it—such as the Seven Year's War, the American Revolution or the Napoleonic Wars. Yet the views of respected historians who teach otherwise and identify 1914 as a marked turning point in the capitulation of an old world order are simply ignored.

The facts are that World War I embroiled no less that fifteen nations in the conflict—all the great powers of the world—as well as affecting all the remaining nations of earth in some way. It was fought on a gigantic scale hitherto unknown, with all the vast financial, industrial and military resources at the disposal of modern states. It was peculiarly destructive to life, property and national power, leaving unprecedented financial debts in the billions of dollars and thirty million dead and wounded. It effectively reconstructed the map of Europe, brought to an end the theory of the “divine right of kings,” saw the virtual collapse of the old ruling houses, and through the Balfour Declaration, set the stage for the reestablishment of Israel as a nation, an event of unparalleled prophetic significance. In their attempt to minimize these well known historical facts, the authors of this work merely highlighted their own distorted and prejudicial view.

In fairness to the presentation, it should be stated that, in contrast with the foregoing, the chapter on “Earthquakes and Historical Facts” was quite well done. This section was exceptionally well documented and sets forth very convincing data from reliable sources to demonstrate that major earthquakes have not increased in frequency during our 20th century.

In summary, it is necessary to say that, whereas this book provides an abundance of interesting statistical data regarding wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences, and lawlessness, its conclusion respecting the day in which we are living is very erroneous. Instead of encouraging active Bible study and spiritual watchfulness in recognizing the fulfillment of multiple and unique signs of the end, the danger is that it actually promotes slothfulness and a dullness of spiritual perception. This lack of discernment of Biblical prophecies of our day and recognition of the true significance of global events leaves this source book grossly deficient as a guide for the Christian truth seeker. Those who follow its reasoning are in danger of being lulled into a state of spiritual drowsiness which will deprive them of the stimulation

to zeal and activity in the LORD's service which the true understanding would otherwise impart.

The Apostle Paul unhesitatingly taught that the believer would not be in darkness respecting the day of the Lord but would be fully instructed concerning such times and seasons. (I Thess. 5:1-8) Jesus likewise taught the necessity for preparedness and watchfulness to discern the early stages of the *parousia*, both in his Olivet prophecy (Matt. 24:42,44) and in the parable of the ten virgins. (Matt. 25:1-13) As spiritual "watchers of the morning," it is the privilege of the Lord's consecrated followers of today to rejoice at the signs of the times that are now in full evidence and to encourage one another respecting their import: "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



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

August 4—"The servant of the LORD must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."—II Timothy 2:24,25 (Z. '00-14 Hymn 198)

August 11—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Revelation 2:10 (Z. '04-63 Hymn 196)

August 18—"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—I Thessalonians 5:21 (Z. '03-26 Hymn 296)

August 25—"We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is."—I John 3:2 (Z. '03-151 Hymn 53)

Christian Life and Doctrine

Lord, Increase Our Faith

*"The apostles said unto the Lord,
Increase our faith."*

—*Luke 17:5*

FAITH is an essential quality in all who want to draw near to God. The Apostle Paul stated, "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Heb. 11:6

This chapter in Hebrews lists examples of Old Testament individuals who were pleasing to God because of their faith. We call these people Ancient Worthies, for they lived in pre-Christian times and were worthy of God's favor since they exhibited great faithfulness to God under exceptionally trying circumstances. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises." (vs. 13) These promises were undoubtedly those which God had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that through their lineage all the families of the earth would be blessed.—Gen. 22:18; 26:4; 28:14

The promise to Abraham concerned the earth, as did the repetition of it to his son and grandson. Israel, as a nation, likewise was promised earthly prosperity if they served God acceptably. "Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store." (Deut. 28:5) But there were other promises that were not understood during Old Testament times. These concerned a heavenly salvation. Peter spoke about them, and then added, "of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you." (I Pet. 1:10) Even angels did not understand this: "It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the

things that have now been told you by those who have preached the Gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.”—vs. 12, **New International Version**

Clearly the hope of the Ancient Worthies and the hope of the church are different. *They* hoped for an earthly reward, *we* look forward to a heavenly one. But faith is one quality common to the hopes of both groups.

What Is Faith?

The Apostle Paul gave this definition: “Faith is a confident assurance of that for which we hope, a conviction of the reality of things which we do not see.” (Heb. 11:1, **Weymouth**) No one can have faith without having something to base it upon. Faith is more than a “confident assurance” of our hopes. It is a conviction that the things for which we hope actually exist, even though we cannot see them. The working of faith in our lives is very personal.

Faith is a state of mind respecting God and his promises to us. Paul tells us concerning the only way in which we may acquire this needed quality: “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.” (Rom. 10:17) Before we can have faith, we must have a measure of knowledge, as we cannot have faith in something we know nothing about. The only authentic source of knowledge concerning our hope of salvation is found in the Bible—the Word of God; therefore, it is the source of our faith. Just as knowledge is the foundation for faith, faith is the foundation for our glorious hope. One cannot have hope without faith, nor faith without knowledge.

Every true Christian has undoubtedly felt the need at times for an increase of faith, and approached God in prayer with the request, “Increase my faith.” And so, faith comes as a gift from God to those who make use of his provisions to obtain and increase it. These provisions include the feeding upon his Word

and promises, that we may know what his arrangements for us are, how to submit ourselves to them, and that we abide by the terms and conditions of our covenant of sacrifice.

Overcoming Doubts

It is not enough of us to say, "Yes, I believe in God and his promises. I believe he is calling out a people of faith for his name, and that he is selecting the church, the Bride of Christ." This belief is personally of no benefit if one feels he is so weak and unimportant that he could never attain such a high position. Such an attitude is not pleasing to God. It shows a lack of full assurance of faith in his power to accomplish that which he has begun in us, and of the peace of God which passeth all understanding which he has promised us.

Creating doubts about our relationship to God is a much used tool of Satan as a temptation. We must remember that we "are called in one hope of [our] calling." (Eph. 4:4) When God called us to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, he knew just how weak, how imperfect, how unimportant we were. "God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8) "Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior." (Col. 1:21, NIV) But as the apostle goes on to explain, because of Christ's sacrifice, we are presented "holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight: *if* ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye have heard."—vss. 22,23

If we do not personally acknowledge the full truth of this statement, let us pray, "Increase our faith." Because of Jesus' sacrifice, "let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."—Heb. 4:16, NIV

Jesus told us over and over again how ready God is to hear and to answer our prayers. "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek,

and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"—Matt. 7:7-11

One of the gifts God is pleased to give is a full assurance of faith. But such faith does not come instantaneously. It is a matter of growth, like that of a tender plant developing to maturity through a variety of experiences. We must not be discouraged because we realize we have weaknesses. It would be a matter of concern if we thought we did not have weaknesses, failings, or shortcomings. Our faith grows as we strive to overcome our weaknesses and lay hold upon the many promises of God.

Some of our experiences may be particularly severe, but each is especially designed by God to provide a needed lesson. With the passage of time, we are able to look back on our experiences and see how we have grown from them. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are [properly] exercised thereby."—Heb. 11:11

Eating the Right Food

In addition to prayer, there are other things we can do to increase our faith. We can study and meditate upon the spiritual things of God. We can study the promises and doctrines, develop character, and cultivate the fruits and graces of the Spirit. The question is not just how much time we spend in study, but how much of what we study we put into practice. Paul said there would be some who were "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (II Tim. 3:7) These are those who do not make the truth their own. Eating food is of no value unless

the body assimilates it and extracts nutriment from it.

And still, assimilating food is not enough. We must eat the proper food. That means eating the pure, unadulterated food of God's Word, and avoiding food contaminated with the traditions and theories of men. We need a balanced diet which will enable us to grow into mature Christians. We should avoid specializing in only certain truths or certain doctrines that we think suit our taste, especially if this means excluding other essential doctrines. "All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof [Greek: 'conviction'], for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect [Greek: 'complete'] thoroughly furnished unto all good works." —II Tim. 3:16,17

Even good food is not enough to develop us as Christians. We also need exercise if we are to be strong and healthy, and so we should be active in telling others about the wonderful truths of the Bible. The Scriptures call this 'harvest work'. Referring to the harvest, Jesus said, "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."—John 4:36

Growing and developing as a Christian might be likened to learning a foreign language. We could learn the rules of grammar, how to conjugate verbs, and memorize vocabulary. But if we never try to put all of this information into practice by actually conversing with others who know the language, it would all be meaningless. Without exercise, we lose what we are trying to master. In the same way, if we want the LORD to increase our faith, we must exercise our faith. The more we put our faith into practice, the stronger it will become. As James said, "Faith without works is dead." (James 2:17) In other words, if faith is not put into operation it is a dead faith, amounting to absolutely nothing.

We read in Hebrews, "Solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil." (Heb. 5:14, NIV) The phrase 'constant use' emphasizes our need for exercise. If we do not continuously exercise our

mind—our spiritual faculties—we will not grow strong as new creatures in Christ.

Walking is one form of exercise suggested by Paul: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him and, stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." (Col. 2:6,7) A person who walks makes progress, assuming the walk is in the right direction. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."—I John 1:6,7

Relationships with Our Brethren

When we ask God to increase our faith, we should remember that fellowship with our brethren is another means used by God to answer that prayer. Love and fellowship with our brethren indicates we are walking in the light, and are making progress in the right direction. "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."—I John 3:14

Because we love the brethren, we want to have fellowship with them at every opportunity. We will not voluntarily isolate ourselves from them, for that would demonstrate that we have lost a measure of the Spirit of truth—that our faith has grown weak. Christians are like glowing coals of fire. Grouped together they retain the blaze of zeal, fervency of spirit, and the warmth of Christian fellowship and love that each imparts to the other. But if the coals are separated, the glow is soon gone and all warmth disappears. This is why the apostle counsels, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, . . . not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another."—Heb. 10:23,25

No Christian is self-sufficient. We need the assistance of other members of the body of Christ. Consider the words of Paul:

“As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. Now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.” (I Cor. 12:12,18) If God has placed each member where they are in the body, it is not possible for us to say we do not need their fellowship—rather, each one is indispensable to us for our development. God “gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” (Eph. 4:11,12, NIV) Each member of the body is needed—whether weak or strong; for each are both weak and strong along some particular line, and therefore we reinforce each other in our strong points, and bolster each other up in our weak points!

As we progress along the narrow way, our faith will undergo many tests. Satan will try to discourage us; he will seek to emphasize our every weakness, and will point out our own unworthiness. He will try to ridicule the idea that with all our imperfections we could ever hope to receive the high honor to which we have been called. Truly ours is a fight of faith. Our faith will be assailed from every quarter, but this should reassure us that God is dealing with us as sons. “Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons.”—Heb. 12:7,8, NIV

If we feel our faith is being tried by our experiences, we should remember the words of this scripture. God is developing us according to his purposes so that we may become mature and able to perform our function in the wonderful body now being prepared.

*In the furnace God may prove thee, thence to bring thee forth more bright,
But will never cease to love thee; thou art precious in his sight.
God is with thee—God, thine everlasting light!*



Christian Life and Doctrine

The Urim and the Thummim

“Thou shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron’s heart when he goeth in before the LORD; and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.”

—Exodus 28:30

DOWN through the ages, God has used a variety of means to communicate with his people. At the beginning of mankind’s experience, his contact with man was often through dreams. Later he used the “Urim and the Thummim” as part of the Tabernacle arrangement, while the Jews were in the wilderness after they left Egypt. Still later, after they entered the Promised Land, prophets brought God’s Word to the people. Then God spoke directly to mankind through his Son. In the latter age, the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures have revealed his will to us.

What Was the Urim and Thummim?

Very little is known about the Urim and the Thummim. Both ancient and modern Biblical experts disagree among themselves about what they really were. Although the Old Testament gives many details about the fabrication of the Tabernacle, its furniture, the garments of the priests, and details of the ritual sacrifices, it is silent about the Urim and the Thummim. We know only that it was the method used by the high priest to discern God’s will.

Both words are simply the Anglicized form of two Hebrew words. Urim is the plural of *Ur*, a word meaning ‘light’ or ‘fire’. Thummim is the plural of *Thumm*, a word meaning ‘perfection’

or 'completeness'. Experts disagree on whether the plural means there were more than one of each or if it is a form of emphasis. The Hebrew word *Elohim*, for example, is the plural of *Eloh*, but when used with the definite article means God (singular).

The Thummim is never mentioned in the Bible without reference also to the Urim, though in a few instances the Urim is mentioned without the Thummim. Clearly they were distinguishable from each other. They were placed in the pocket formed by the sides and bottom of the high priest's breastplate—really a breastcloth made of gold, scarlet, purple, and fine linen. In some way, not described in scripture, God gave his answer to a question by these 'lights' and 'perfections'.

One theory suggests that they were small, identical objects, perhaps smooth pebbles or stones brought down from Sinai by Moses after he communed with God. It may be significant that in no place is Moses commanded to *make* them. The suggestion is that when the high priest wanted to consult God to determine his will, he would go into the Tabernacle, pose the question, and then reach into the Breastplate of Judgment and, without knowing what it would be, withdraw one of the stones. Some characteristic of the stone, color perhaps, would indicate a 'yes' or a 'no'.

This sounds very much like drawing lots, and that is what it was, though in this case it was a very serious and formal procedure. The drawing of lots was a common way to reach decisions in Israel. This was true, for example, with the division of the Promised Land among the tribes. "The land shall be divided by lot . . . according to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few." (Num. 26:55.56) "These are the names of the men which shall divide the land unto you: Eleazer the priest and Joshua, the son of Nun."—Num. 34:17

Eleazer bore the Urim and Thummim within his breastplate and would communicate God's choice to Joshua the leader of the people. Because the Urim and Thummim were used only for questions of the greatest import, the people knew the decision

was the LORD's and they accepted it. Joshua 18:11 is one account of land division: "The lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin *came up* according to their families." The verb 'came up' would be appropriate for a lot that was withdrawn upward as if out of a pocket.

The dividing of the land and the placement of the tribes was important. God did not locate Judah, for example, on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea where they would have been exposed to the influence of the idolatrous coastal traders. He put Judah in the hill country. David was thus reared in the high sheep country free from corrupting influences that could have assailed him were Judah located in some other place.

Our Urim and Thummim

Most of us are eager to plan our future. We think we know what we will be when we become adults, or how we will make life's major decisions. We usually try to take steps to see that our dreams become a reality. Too late we see that we did not really know what was right for us. To make decisions without consulting God would be like a high priest who considered the Urim and Thummim as nothing but useless weights around his neck.

How different it is when we let God decide. To this the Scriptures concur: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." (Ps.16:6) "The lot is cast into the lap [Hebrew:the *bosom*], but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD." (Prov.16:33) These are wonderful promises—nothing comes to the LORD's people by chance. God directs our experiences if we reconcile ourselves to his will.

But leaving life's choices to God is a matter of faith. After the Prophet Samuel died, the Philistines gathered themselves to battle against Israel. King Saul was afraid. He had lost his faith. "When Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets." (I Sam. 28:6) If it was simply a matter of drawing out stones, why could Saul not

obtain some kind of answer? Saul had already, at this juncture in time, slain the priests, making the consultation of the Urim and Thummin impossible. Even the Ark of the Covenant had been removed from the Tabernacle. All this was caused by Saul's complete lack of faith. So desperate was Saul that he consulted a woman who had a "familiar spirit," something that was directly contrary to the LORD's instruction. He died the very next day.

God's overruling providences work for us only when we exercise faith in him. David had faith, and we read of times when he asked for the counsel of the LORD. This he did by going to the high priest who inquired by the Urim and Thummim. In I Samuel 23:9-12, for example, David consulted God through the agency of Abiathar, the priest and the ephod—the breastplate hung over the ephod. When David received God's answer, he changed his plans accordingly.

Eventually the Urim and Thummim were lost. God's will was then communicated through the prophets he reared up. The Prophet Samuel was one of the greatest. "Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." (Acts 3:24) Samuel represents the start of the transition from the casting of lots to direct communication through a prophet.

Type and Antitype

The Tabernacle arrangement God gave to Israel contains many instructive lessons for God's people today. The furniture, the rituals, and the sacrifices illustrate far more important lessons than the literal elements themselves. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [Greek: a 'die' or 'model'—the margin of some Bibles says 'types']."—I Cor. 10:11

Because Christ is so frequently pictured in the Tabernacle, it is appropriate to look for him here. And indeed we do find him. "[He] was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Urim means light. (John 1:9) Being made per-

fect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Thummim means perfections. (Heb. 5:9) Speaking prophetically of Christ, Isaiah said, "He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head." (Isa. 59:17) The one who wore the breastplate was the one who possessed the Urim and Thummim.

The Scriptures tell us that Christ shares what he has with his faithful followers, the church. Hence it is not surprising to read a similar thought from the pen of the Apostle Paul: "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." (I Thess. 5:8) If we, like Christ our Lord and Master, have on the breastplate, we have a mechanism to commune with God. But this communion comes not by the casting of lots, but through the direct testimony of his Son. "When in former times God spoke to our forefathers, he spoke in fragmentary and varied fashion through the prophets. But in this the final age he has spoken to us in the Son whom he has made heir to the whole universe, and through whom he creates all orders of existence."—Heb. 1:1,2, **New English Bible**

Like the ancient Israelites, we need God's guidance. When we come to a major decision in our lives we want to know the LORD's will for us. Would that we could pull a stone out of a pocket to determine whether we should do something or not. Yet we do have daily guidance for all of life's decisions because we have God's Word. And we have the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit operating in our lives today, just as it operated when decisions were made by Urim and Thummim.

The high priest prayed and meditated before he sought God's guidance. We also prepare ourselves through prayer, meditation, and study to receive God's guidance. In full assurance of faith we cast our burdens on the one who will guide us into a knowledge of his will for us. The Urim and Thummim brought wisdom to the priest. Wisdom is ours also if we seek God in the

proper way. Paul prayed that the saints and faithful brethren in Christ "might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, . . . increasing in the knowledge of God."—Col. 1:2,9,10

Faith is critically important in our relationship with God. When Saul lost his faith, he lost the guidance of God, having destroyed the priests who used the Urim for God's guidance. So if we lose our faith, the providences of the LORD will cease to work in our lives as well. We do well to echo the request of the apostles, "Lord, increase our faith."—Luke 17:5

Levi was a special tribe in Israel. The priests came from this tribe and no Levite had an inheritance in the land. The LORD said that he was their inheritance. (Deut. 18:1,2) Levi pictures God's antitypical priests and helpers, those who are "on the LORD's side." (Exod. 32:26) When Moses was about to die, he gave a special blessing to each tribe. This was his blessing upon Levi: "Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one . . . for they have observed thy word and kept thy covenant." (Deut. 33:8,9) Truly this blessing has continued to be with those who seek to know God's will in their lives.

May we continue to preach what we know to be God's will, for Jesus said that the Gospel message, the good news, would be preached in all the world for a witness. (Matt. 24:14) When the work of this age has been completed, then "the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17) At that time all the world will truly realize what God's will has been, and will be for them.

Zion stands with hills surrounded

Zion kept by power divine.

All her foes shall be confounded.

Though the world in arms combine.

Happy Zion! What a favored lot is thine!

Happy Zion! What a favored lot is thine!—Hymns of Dawn, #333

A Spectacle to Men and Angels

“When Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit, and having said thus, he gave up the ghost”—Luke 23:46

THE word ‘ghost’ in this verse of scripture is a translation of the Greek word *ekphero*, which means to expire or stop breathing. In simple terms it means that Jesus died, since this is what happens when one ceases to breathe. Realizing he had reached the moment of death, Jesus made a statement which was in harmony with the fact. He said to his Heavenly Father, “Into thy hands I commend my spirit.” His ‘spirit’ was the power of life which now was rapidly ebbing away.

Jesus commended his life to God because his Heavenly Father had promised to resurrect him from the grave (the condition of death) if he faithfully carried out his mission on earth. Prior to his crucifixion, he was given the assurance that he had indeed been faithful. Being thus assured of a resurrection, Jesus used his last ounce of strength to proclaim his victory over death. God confirmed and amplified those dying words, by causing the veil of the Temple to be ‘rent in the midst’, signifying that by his son’s death as a ransom, a way had been opened for those estranged to come back into his presence.

The circumstances of the entire scene were so impressive that even a Roman centurion was caused to cry out in awe, “Certainly this was a righteous man, and all of the people that came together at that sight, beholding the things that were done, smote their breasts.”—vss.47,48

The question is often asked, “If Jesus was really dead until the time of his resurrection, how was it possible for him to preach

to the spirits in prison during the interim?" The Apostle Peter tells us who these spirits are. We quote, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive [quicken]ed] by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometimes were disobedient when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water."—I Pet. 3:18-20

Thus we see that the spirits to whom Jesus preached were those who were disobedient before the Flood. In his second epistle, Peter identifies these same spirits as angels who sinned, and who because of their sins, were restrained, or imprisoned. (II Pet. 2:4) The Apostle Jude also identifies them as the angels who, in the days of Noah, sinned and consequently fell from divine favor. (Jude 6,7) In reality then, these spirits in prison are the fallen angels, and not human beings at all.

The key to understanding how Jesus preached to the fallen angels is in the fact that, as the text shows, it was not *after* his death that he did the preaching, but *by* his death and *by* his resurrection. That is the way it is stated in the passage. In other words, what Peter says is, that Jesus' faithfulness in dying for the world, and God's reward of raising him from the dead, was like a sermon to the fallen angels, a great object lesson projected to them, by which was revealed the fact that obedience to the Creator and his laws is the only true way to life and happiness. In harmony with the well-known saying that actions speak louder than words, certainly this was a very powerful sermon to the fallen angels.

Christ, by his actions, preached an object lesson to *both* men and angels; he died the Just for the unjust; he was put to death flesh. His flesh he gave for the life of the world. (John 6:51) But he was quickened; he was resurrected from the dead. He became the first to break the bands of death. He proved that obedience to God is indeed the basis of eternal life.

Encouraging Letters

Vary Appreciative

Dear Brethren: I appreciate all the good articles in your magazine. The article, "The Language Spoken by Adam," was most interesting. Others provided lots of good study. All are so good and I look forward to them. Thanks be to God! May he bless you richly in all your endeavors to serve him. Christian love and prayers. P.S. I am ninety-six years young!—*FL*

"Cup Runneth Over"

Dawn: To the dear loving servants of the Most High God, Jehovah, I do send my Christian love. I recently met with the brothers at the Ramada Inn, and my cup runneth over at the love they displayed, these disciples of our dear Savior. Seeing was not enough, but the feeling of the Holy Spirit was the greatest blessing I have ever received. I do humbly thank you for this great blessing. Works like this speak

louder than mere words.

I have just read in the May 1986 Dawn of Brother Wylam's discourse on the letter that Paul sent to the Philippian congregation. I do thank our dear Heavenly Father that he has given his Word to those who appreciate these great heavenly blessings, and that they share these with the less fortunate—still in darkness. Now seeing the great light of the world, coming through your publications, may our dear loving God shower you with his love and many blessings. Your loving brother in the Faith.—*NY*

A New Outlook

Love to you all. As you may know, I have just recently started reading your books, and with the very first one I found a new outlook on the Word of God. It seems almost impossible to take a break from reading, and get on with my daily routine! I have been a Christian for the last sixty years, and

have always wanted to shout it loud and clear. However, this just doesn't seem to happen. I seem to freeze up when I get an opportunity to witness to a non-believer. Talking to another Christian is a little easier, but even then I feel shy. I am asking for assistance and guidance in forming a Bible study group. I'm not too sure what may happen, but I feel a very strong need to try. I feel very close to our LORD, but even so I just can't seem to "shout it out!" In the name of our dear Lord Jesus, I ask for assistance. Thank you.—CA

Sharing the Message

Dear Brethren: Greetings in the name of our Lord! I received the latest issue of **The Dawn** and could not put it down. I have a friend who has recently lost a daughter and I believe she can be greatly helped by the magazine. I have tried to explain to her for years that you cannot 'join' Christ's church. Please send her a copy of this issue. In the one hope.—TX

Pleased with Truths

Gentlemen: I have received the copies of the booklets which I ordered. They are all very well written and give excellent interpretations of Bible truth according to the Scriptures, and not the false doctrines of men and Satan. I am very pleased with them and request you send a copy of each of the ten-cent and five-cent booklets, and **The Dawn** magazine to the person listed. Yours in faith.—Canada

Direction and Light

I am one of your listeners here in our country. Your program gives me light and full strength to know the truth about our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I am deeply interested in having your "Return" book. Your answers are my inspiration, my direction, and my light. I trust your program very much, it gave me a bright direction of my life. God bless you all, your activities and your program. I pray for you. Your listener and brother in Christ.—
Philippines

Speakers' Appointments

These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn or by classes associated with the pilgrim services. Their visits are furnished free upon request whenever possible. Write to: Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, NJ 07073

R. GORECKI		G.M. JEUCK	
London, Ont.	August 14	Denver, CO	August 12-14
D. HOLLIDAY		Sacramento, CA	16,17
New York, NY	July 31	Chico, CA	18
Allentown, PA	August 1	Upper Lake, CA	19
Pittsburgh, PA	3	Arcata, CA	20,21
Columbus, OH	5	Boise, ID	27,28
Detroit, MI	7	Spokane, WA	30
Gary, IN	8	Portland, OR	31
LaSalle, IL	9	Seattle, WA	Sept. 3-5
Indianapolis, IN	10	G.PASSIOS	
West Newton, PA	12	New London, CT	August 21
New York, NY	14		

ARE YOU MOVING?

It will save the Dawn considerable expense in postage if you will notify us three weeks in advance of your move.



Thank you!

Obituaries

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

Sister Edith Winter, New York, NY—May 28. Age, 93.

Brother Steve Dossopoulis, New York, NY—May 31. Age, 63.

Sister Nellie Bazilius, Los Angeles, CA—June 1. Age, 75.

Brother Gordon Judson, New Bedford, MA—June 5. Age, 88.

Conventions

These conventions are listed at the request of the individual classes who are sponsoring the gatherings

DENVER, CO, August 12-14—Viscount Hotel, 200 W. 48th Avenue, Denver. Contact: Mrs. Marcia Kuehmicel, 10201 Riverdale Rd., #53, Thornton, CO 80229. Cutoff date for special room rates, **July 20th**.

Phone: (303) 450-0582

CINCINNATI, OH, August 14—The Harp's Home, 2609 Merrittview Lane 45231

Phone: (513) 825-4112

JACKSON, MI, September 3,4,5—Holiday Inn, 2000 Holiday Inn Dr., off U.S., 127. Contact: Mrs. Ray Lumley, 2531 Ashton Rd., Jackson 49203

Phone: (517) 782-7252

NEW YORK, NY, September 2,3,4—Ramada Inn, Route 3, Clifton, NJ. Contact: Mrs. Ann-Truth Lange, 76 Longview Ave., White Plains, NY 10605

Phone: (914) 948-5428

PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, September 17,18—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA. Contact: Carl S.

Boughton, 126 Slater Dr., Pittsburgh 15236

KALISPELL & HAVRE, MT, September 23-26. Contact: Mrs. Joy Thompson, P.O. Box 716, Columbia Falls, MT 59912

Phone: (406) 892-2574

BUFFALO, NY, September 24,25—Unity Temple, 1940 Niagara St., Buffalo. Contact: Eugene Buczkowski, 85 Rogers Drive, Cheektowaga, NY 14225

Phone: (716) 634-2163

RICHMOND, VA, October 14-16—Roslyn Conference Center, 8727 River Road. Contact: Miss Katharine R. Warren, 2805 Stone-wall Ave. 23225

CINCINNATI, OH, October 22,23—Ramada Inn-Sharonville, 11029 Dowlin Dr. (off I-75) Contact: Mrs. Edith M. Harp, 2609 Merrittview Lane, 45231, for room reservations, which **must be received by October 1** to get special rate.

NEW HAVEN, CT, October 23 (New date)—Italian-American Club, West Haven, CT

ENGLISH RECORDED LECTURE SERVICE

We wish to remind our British readers that a Recorded Lecture Service, operated under the auspices of the English Dawn, is continuing to be available. They provide, on loan, recorded lectures on audio cassettes. Also, The Dawn magazine is read onto tape each month for those who have difficulty seeing. Service is for British Isles only. Direct your request to:

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