

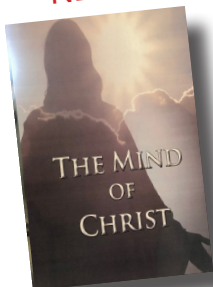
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The DAWN

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In Remembrance of Christ

*“He took bread,
and gave thanks,
and brake it, and
gave unto them,
saying, This is my
body which is given
for you: this do in
remembrance of
me. Likewise also
the cup after
supper, saying,
This cup is the new
testament in my
blood, which is
shed for you.”*
—Luke 22:19,20

THE DATE THIS YEAR FOR the Memorial Supper is Thursday evening, April 14th, after sundown. It is the proper date on which to memorialize the death of Jesus, our Redeemer, being the anniversary of the day on which he was condemned to death and crucified nearly twenty centuries ago.

The Memorial Supper celebrated each year by dedicated Christians throughout the earth is associated with the Passover of Israel, established by God as recorded in Exodus 12:1-14. The Memorial is not a continuation of Israel's Passover, nor is it the fulfillment of the Passover. Jesus, by his sacrificial death as the “Lamb of God,” fulfilled the Passover picture. (John 1:29) Our Memorial celebration now is in commemoration of the death of Jesus, the greater Passover Lamb. The Apostle says, “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

Let us therefore celebrate the festival.”—I Cor. 5:7,8,
English Standard Version

The original Passover, kept by the Jews on the night before their liberation from Egypt, was closely associated with that deliverance. We similarly see that the sacrifice of Jesus, the “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,” makes possible the deliverance of all mankind from the enslavement of sin and death. In Israel’s first Passover celebration, it was the firstborn of each family who were in special danger of death. Their safety depended upon the protection of the blood of the sacrificed Passover lamb. Being thus protected from death, and later delivered, they became, represented in the Levitical tribe, the servants of the whole house of Israel.—Exod. 11:4-7; 12:12,13; Num. 3:11-13

During the present Christian age, we find that there is also a “firstborn” class who are in special danger of death, and who come under the protection of the blood of Jesus, the greater Passover Lamb. The Apostle Paul refers to this group as the “church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven.” (Heb. 12:23) These, like the firstborn of Israel, are protected by the blood, and later delivered into the “glorious liberty of the children of God.” (Rom. 8:21) Together with Jesus, they will become the leaders of the people in the coming kingdom of God. Through its administration, all the families of the earth are finally to be delivered from sin and death, restored to the original perfection and life that was forfeited through the sin of our first parents.—Rom. 5:12,18,19; Luke 19:10; Acts 3:20-25

The condition upon which the firstborn class of this present age may thus be permitted to live and

reign with Christ and share with him in the future work of delivering mankind, is that they suffer and die with him. (Rom. 8:17; II Tim. 2:11,12) Jesus was led "to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Likewise, the church is said to be "killed all the day long," and "accounted as sheep for the slaughter." —Isa. 53:7; Rom. 8:36

WHAT WE KEEP IN REMEMBRANCE

From the foregoing summary of the thoughts associated with the Memorial Supper, we can see that first and foremost in our minds and hearts on this occasion should be the fact of the Heavenly Father's great love, as it was demonstrated in the gift of his only begotten Son. (John 3:16; II Cor. 9:15) Our appreciation of God's love should, indeed, be increased as we reflect upon what great cost was involved in the sending of his beloved Son to die on behalf of all mankind.

Our appreciation of Jesus should also be increased. While the Heavenly Father in his love sent his only Son, it is also true that our Lord gladly participated in this divine arrangement. The sentiments of his heart always were, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (Ps. 40:7,8; Heb. 10:5-7) Our thankfulness to God and his Son, Jesus, for the great gift of redemption will be in proportion as we comprehend the fullness of all that is implied in such a wonderful provision for suffering and dying humanity.

To realize fully what the death of Jesus means should make us very humble, as it impresses upon our minds the fact of our own imperfect, undone condition. It should help us to realize that we have nothing of our own of which we can boast, nor with which

we can commend ourselves to the Lord and expect his favor. (Eph. 2:8,9) It should help us to understand more fully the vital significance of those well-known words of the hymn, "On Christ, the Solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand."

As we are reminded of our own imperfections and the necessity of coming under the covering of Jesus' blood, we should become more and more sympathetic toward others, especially toward our fellow brethren. It is great folly to criticize others because of their weaknesses, when, in fact, we are afflicted by similar, and possibly even greater, imperfections than those individuals whom we may be prone to judge and belittle.

On the evening of the first Memorial Supper, instituted by the Master himself, there was one present, Judas, who had it in his heart to betray the Lord. It is appropriate, therefore, that as we approach the time of this year's Memorial celebration, each one of the consecrated should examine his own heart carefully, to make sure that he is not, by judging and condemning, betraying one of the Lord's brethren.—I Cor. 11:27,28

In the Israelites' Passover, they were commanded to have their houses free of all leaven, or yeast. As we memorialize the death of the Lamb of God, it is important that we have our hearts cleansed from the leaven of sin. May we indeed thus examine ourselves to be certain that our hearts are filled with love and sympathy toward all, and with readiness to lay down our lives for the brethren.—I Cor. 5:7,8; John 15:12,13

A TRUE EXPRESSION OF LOVE

In the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, the Apostle Paul enumerates a number of characteristics

of love, among which is his statement that love “seeketh not her own.” (vs. 5) We see this particular characteristic of the Master’s love on display at the time he instituted the original Memorial. It was the love that does not seek its own which impelled Jesus to make the supreme sacrifice on behalf of the church and the world. It was this love also that enabled him to address the betrayer, Judas, as “friend.” (Matt. 26:47-50) Jesus had done no wrong for which he should suffer. He was always righteous, just, and in harmony with his Father’s will. Yet he willingly surrendered to his accusers and permitted himself, not only to be betrayed, but also to be crucified. Here was the ultimate example of how divine love seeks not its own.

It is fitting, as we remember the death of our Redeemer and seek to understand better the motive which prompted this supreme sacrifice, that we examine our own heart for the purpose of making sure that it is filled with true love that “seeketh not” its own. Such an examination is made possible by noting our attitude toward those whom we feel may have wronged us in some way. Do we have the spirit of retaliation? Do we desire to pay back in kind? Do we feel that justice demands the wrongs of others must be publicly exposed and punished? On the other hand, is the love that fills our heart so wholly like that of the Master’s love that we are willing to forego the demands of strict justice and, by seeking not our own, to lay down our lives in the interests of all, even those who have trespassed against us?

The chief motivating power of sin is selfishness. Hence, as we endeavor to cleanse our hearts from the leaven of sin in order that we may participate in

the Memorial Supper acceptably, it is well that we take note of the extent to which our thoughts, words and deeds are prompted by self-interest, rather than by the desire to know and do the Father's will. Self-interest may manifest itself along various lines. For example, it might be a desire for comfort, pleasure, health, wealth, having our own way, or ambition. If we find such areas of weakness, there is no better time to rededicate ourselves to the doing of God's will than when we memorialize the death of Jesus, our Redeemer. In so doing, it should be in full realization of the fact that by putting away self-interest and carrying out God's will, we too, like Jesus, will be led in the ways of service and sacrifice on behalf of others.

THE BREAD AND THE CUP

Jesus and his disciples were gathered in the "upper room" to eat the Passover meal. Apparently, it was at the close of this that the Master took some of the unleavened bread, and some of the fruit of the vine that remained, and instituted the Memorial Supper. (Luke 22:7-15; Matt. 26:26-29) He took the bread and after blessing and breaking it, he gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you." (I Cor. 11:24) The Master meant that this bread symbolically represented his body, and in partaking of it the disciples were saying that they gladly appropriated to themselves the life that was made possible through the sacrifice of Jesus' humanity.

Earlier in his earthly ministry, Jesus stated, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." Then he added, "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that

eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” The disciples found it very difficult to comprehend the significance of these words and said among themselves, “This is an hard saying; who can hear it?”—John 6:54-56,60

When Jesus noted the difficulties the disciples experienced, he offered a word of explanation. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” (vs. 63) This was Jesus’ way of explaining that he did not mean the disciples were to eat his literal flesh and drink his literal blood, for this, he says, “profiteth nothing.” Rather, his explanation indicates that the way in which his followers eat his flesh and drink his blood is by obedience to his life-giving words. Obedience to the words of Jesus means the recognition of our own imperfections and the necessity of his redemptive work on our behalf. Furthermore, it implies a full dedication to do God’s will, which means that we will accept the invitation to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus.—Matt. 16:24

Obedience to the Master’s words, by which we appropriate to ourselves his broken body and shed blood, means that we, like him, will be willing to lay down our lives in service and sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1) This is the only condition upon which anyone can receive life during the present Gospel Age. Jesus made this plain when he said, “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”—Matt. 16:25

This was the Master’s way of expressing the thought later explained by the Apostle Paul when he said that we have the privilege of being baptized

into Jesus' death—"planted together in the likeness of his death." Being planted together in the likeness of his death, we have the hope of being "in the likeness of his resurrection." We die with him in order that we may live with him. We suffer with him in order that we may reign with him.—Rom. 6:3-5; II Tim. 2:11,12

Thus seen, it is clear that when we partake of the Memorial emblems of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine, it symbolizes that we are accepting God's gift on our behalf. In addition, we recognize the only proper response to this gift of redemption through Christ at the present time is the presenting of ourselves to God in consecration, taking up our cross, and following the Master in all aspects of our life—in thought, word and deed.

THE BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT

As we have already noted, on the morning following the death of the Passover lamb in Egypt, all Israel was delivered. This represents the deliverance of all mankind from sin and death, which follows the passing over of the "church of the firstborn" during the nighttime of this Gospel Age. It is important, therefore, that in remembering the death of Jesus, we keep in mind that the salvation and exaltation of the "firstborn" class is not the completion of the divine plan and purpose. We should remember that the death and resurrection of Jesus, as well as of the church, who come forth in the "first resurrection," are leading up to the deliverance of all mankind during God's kingdom. (I Cor. 15:20; Rev. 20:6) The Apostle Paul states, "We know that all the rest of creation has been groaning with the pains of

childbirth up to the present time, ... eagerly awaiting the revelation of God's children."—Rom. 8:22,19, *International Standard Version*

When instituting the Memorial of his impending death, Jesus reminded his disciples of the provision that was being made, not only for them, but also for the world. He said of the cup, which contained the fruit of the vine, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." (Luke 22:20, *Young's Literal Translation*) This is a reference to the promise of the New Covenant that will be made during the Messianic kingdom, by means of which the whole world is yet to become reconciled to God.—Jer. 31:31-34; Acts 15:14-17

It is appropriate that Jesus should refer to the cup as symbolizing the blood of the New Covenant. The fact that the making of a New Covenant is necessary and is to be accomplished by means of Jesus' shed blood, implies that those with whom it is to be made are presently alienated from God. At the time Jesus uttered these words, both the nation of Israel, as well as the entire world, were alienated from God because of sin. The same is still true today. The only means by which the penalty for sin can be set aside is through the redemptive work of Christ. His blood, therefore, guarantees the future institution of this New Covenant, by which Israel and people of all nations may be recovered and blessed.

Thus, we understand that Jesus' blood has a twofold benefit. First, it is the source of life for the church, and that which makes possible her acceptable sacrifice during the present Gospel Age. Second, it is also his blood which makes possible the blessings of everlasting life which will later be offered to the world of mankind in general. (I Pet. 1:18-20; I John

1:7; Col. 1:19,20) The Apostle John clearly explains the matter, stating that Jesus “is an atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”—I John 2:2, *Weymouth New Testament*

Blessed we will be if, when we partake of the Memorial Supper in 2022, we have in mind these unselfish viewpoints. It is a remembrance, first of all, of God’s gift of love on behalf of all mankind. It also reminds us of the great privilege we have of unselfishly sharing at the present time in service and sacrifice in the ministry of Christ, and in preparation for the work of the next age. Finally, we should keep in mind that through the sacrifice of Jesus and the church the blessings of restitution will finally be administered to a dying world. In brief, we memorialize this threefold manifestation of the great principle of divine love. It is this love that God himself demonstrated; love which Jesus further exemplified; and love which should be filling our hearts. This same divine love will ultimately manifest itself in the blessing of all the families of the earth.

All those who recognize their need of the redemptive work of Christ, and have made a full consecration of themselves to do the Father’s will, are invited to partake of the Memorial Supper. These, indeed, should participate, and thus renew their vows of consecration. Being reminded thereof, each should resolve afresh to be faithful, even unto death. Therefore, let us “run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”—Heb. 12:1,2 ■

The Proclamation of Cyrus

Key Verse: “Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel.”
—Ezra 1:3

Selected Scriptures:
Ezra 1:1-11; 2:64-70

ISRAEL’S SEVENTY YEARS of captivity began under Babylon’s King Nebuchadnezzar and continued after the fall of Babylon into the ascendancy of the Medo-Persian Empire. (Jer. 25:9-11; II Chron. 36:22,23) After the seventy years passed, “the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia,” to make a proclamation granting liberty to the Jewish captives.—Ezra 1:1-6

How did the Lord stir up the spirit of Cyrus to issue this declaration? The answer to this question is that the Prophet Daniel had, for a short period of time, been in close contact with King Cyrus and was used by God to direct the king in what he was to do. Daniel was a young man when the seventy years of captivity began and was drafted into the service of Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by King Belshazzar, who was in turn followed by “Darius the Median,” who set Daniel “over the whole realm” of the kingdom. (Dan. 5:30,31; 6:1-3) “Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian,” Darius’ successor.—Dan. 6:25-28

During the first year of Cyrus’ reign, he issued a

proclamation of liberty to the Hebrew captives, allowing them to return to Jerusalem and, as our Key Verse states, “build the house of the LORD God of Israel.” Daniel would have been an elderly man during the first year of Cyrus’ reign. (Dan. 1:21) At the end of the seventy years of Israel’s captivity, Daniel would have faithfully borne testimony to the new King Cyrus concerning the role God had designed in the outworking of the divine purpose for Israel’s return to their land.

Daniel was a student of Jehovah’s Word, including Jeremiah’s prophecy concerning the seventy years of Israel’s captivity. (Jer. 25:11,12; 29:10; Dan. 9:2) He would have also known about Isaiah’s prophecy, recorded nearly 150 years earlier, concerning God’s use of Cyrus as his “anointed”—that is, the one divinely appointed to proclaim liberty to the Hebrews. Daniel would have likewise been aware that as the Lord’s anointed, Cyrus would be a “shepherd,” symbolically speaking, one who would “perform all” that the Lord would direct. This, Daniel knew, would include every provision for the care and protection of the Hebrews in connection with their return to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple.—Isa. 44:28; 45:1-4

Daniel may have also pointed out to Cyrus the information revealed in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, where four successive world powers were depicted by gold, silver, brass, and iron in a great, human-like image. (Dan. 2:31-38) In this dream, the “head of gold” represented the Babylonian Empire. This empire was succeeded by the “breast and ... arms of silver,” representing the Medo-Persian empire, over which Cyrus ruled. Daniel would have explained that Cyrus’ authority to rule had been given by “the God of heaven,” which evidently stirred up the king’s spirit to act in the matter he did. How thankful we should be as we view the overruling providences of God with regard to his chosen people, Israel, and to those such as Cyrus, who was of the proper character to be used in a special way by Jehovah. ■

Israel's Temple Rebuilt

Key Verse: *“The elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.”*
—Ezra 6:14

Selected Scripture:
Ezra 6:1-15

the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD.”—Ezra 5:1; 6:14; Hag. 1:14

SOMETIME SUBSEQUENT

to the death of Persian King Cyrus, adversaries of the Jews sent a letter to King Artaxerxes, falsely accusing the Israelites of rebuilding the city. (Ezra 4:7-16) Actually, at this time the Israelites were rebuilding the Temple. However, the shrewd enemies of God's people led the king to believe that it was the city and its walls that were being built. Consequently, the king ordered all of the rebuilding to cease.—vss. 17-24

Years passed with no further work done to rebuild the Temple. Then God raised up two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, and through them “stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel,” governor of Judah, and “the spirit of Joshua,” the high priest, “and

Israel's enemies again endeavored to hinder the work, asking by whose authority they were resuming the rebuilding of the Temple. The Jewish leaders replied that it was by the authority of their God and also that a decree had been issued by King Cyrus.—Ezra 5:3-16

A letter was sent to Darius, now the king of Persia [a later king than “Darius the Median” of Daniel 5:31], asking that a search be made to discover whether such a decree had been issued. The records were searched, and Cyrus' decree was found. Darius then made a proclamation, “Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place.”—Ezra 6:1-7

King Darius also commanded that “young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven,” and also “wheat, salt, wine, and oil” be supplied “day by day without fail: that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.”—vss. 8-10

As a result of this favorable decree from Darius and the encouraging words of God's prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, the rebuilding of the Temple was completed in the sixth year of Darius' reign.—vss. 14,15

There was much rejoicing when the Temple was finally completed, and it was dedicated with a great deal of ceremony. Haggai, one of the prophets used by God to stir up the spirit of the people to resume and complete the rebuilding of the Temple, also prophesied concerning a still greater “house.” We read, “The desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD.”—Hag. 2:6,7

Paul quotes from the foregoing verses and applies them to the present time of great “shaking,” which is preparing the world for Messiah's kingdom. (Heb. 12:26-28) The “house” which Haggai said the Lord would fill with his glory is the symbolic temple of God, which is Christ and his church in glory—the spiritual phase of the kingdom. ■

The House of the Lord Dedicated

Key Verse: *“The children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy.”*
—Ezra 6:16

Selected Scripture:
Ezra 6:16-22

IT HAD BEEN NEARLY twenty years since Cyrus, King of Persia, issued the proclamation that the Jews return to their homeland and rebuild their Temple which had been destroyed by the Babylonian army. The rebuilding work was now done, and the Temple was finished. If not for God’s help in providing the leadership of Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel the head of the tribe of

Judah, as well as the encouragement of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the work most likely would not have been completed.—Ezra 6:14

Similarly, in any service that we may engage in for the Lord, we are not sufficient of ourselves to complete the task. We, as Israel did, must look to our spiritual leaders, Jesus and his apostles, for encouragement and strength to accomplish the work the Heavenly Father would have us do. “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.”—II Cor. 3:5

Likewise, in our day-to-day experiences in life, we must rely on God’s help through prayer and supplication to

him. “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb. 4:16) Paul realized this in his own life. When speaking of the weakness of his eyesight, he was reminded by the Lord, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”—II Cor. 12:7-9

Our Key Verse indicates that all the Jews who had returned from the captivity joined in the dedication of the rebuilt Temple. The event was one of great joy, thanksgiving and reflection upon what they had been able to accomplish with the Lord’s help. As divine providence would have it, the completion and dedication of the Temple coincided with the first month of the Jews’ religious year. Thus it is stated, “The children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. ... And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria [Persia] unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God.”—Ezra 6:19,22

The children of Israel dedicated the Temple with joy. As part of the ceremony, they offered “for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel,” indicating that all twelve tribes were represented among the returned captives.—vss. 16,17

God’s people of today, the followers of Christ, are also to rejoice in dedicating their lives to the Heavenly Father. The church is spoken of as God’s dwelling place, his temple. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?” (I Cor. 3:16) Being in this symbolic “temple” condition, we should continually feast upon the Lord, partaking of his truth, his example, his words and his character. Israel kept a seven-day feast—seven signifying completeness or perfection. Our feasting upon the Lord is every day, with our entire life represented as being the complete seven-day feast upon the “unleavened” bread of Truth.—I Cor. 5:8 ■

Remember the Lord Thy God

Key Verse: *“Beware
that thou forget
not the LORD
thy God, in not
keeping his
commandments,
and his judgments,
and his statutes,
which I command
thee this day.”*
—Deuteronomy 8:11

Selected Scripture:
Deuteronomy 8:1-11

work on the part of Moses. However, its delivery to the people of Israel was apparently reserved until shortly before his death, when the Israelites would soon pass over the Jordan River under the leadership of Joshua to take possession of the land of promise. One of the objectives of this book was to impress upon the Israelites the important lessons of their past and to inspire them toward reverence for God.

Through Moses, God had entered into a covenant with the children of Israel, in harmony with his promise made to Abraham their father. Four hundred and thirty years after his promises to Abraham, Jehovah called Israel out of their bondage in Egypt, and made them a

DEUTERONOMY IS ONE OF

the most important books of the Bible. From it David and other prophets of the Old Testament drew considerable inspiration, and our Lord Jesus and the apostles made reference to its words.

In the Book of Deuteronomy several public speeches given by Moses are recorded, that great prophet of God, leader of Israel, and the mediator of the Law Covenant. The writing of this book may have been a gradual

nation in the wilderness. (Exod. 12:40,41) God had proposed to them that if they would keep his laws and statutes, he would make them a great people, above all other nations of the earth. They entered this covenant with the Lord and declared that they would accept his divine arrangement, which would give them the opportunity in due time of carrying God's blessings to all mankind.—Exod. 19:3-8

As the Israelites prepared to cross over the river Jordan and enter the land which God had promised, Moses explained to them that it was not enough that they had accepted the conditions of the Law Covenant and had become the Lord's chosen people. God would "prove," or test, them. (Deut. 8:2) Moses reminded the people of all the lovingkindness of the Lord on their behalf and repeated to them the commandments and statutes of the Law by which they were to be governed. He also gave solemn warnings of the consequences of forgetting God and breaking their covenant.—vss. 3-20

In like manner, God is now proving the church, spiritual Israel. (I Cor. 3:13) He is testing all those who have made a covenant with him as to whether they are fully devoted to the doing of his will. Thus we ask ourselves: Is our life dedicated to self first, or to God first? Are our goals chiefly those of success in the present life, or the honor of God and the doing of his will? In these ways the Heavenly Father is testing us to determine who will be counted worthy to reign with Christ in his coming kingdom.—Heb. 12:6-11; Rev. 3:21; 20:6

God's dealings with us go beyond how he dealt with natural Israel. Our responsibility is much greater. The heavenly phase of the kingdom will only be for those who shall, in heart and character, become like the Master. They must love God with all their heart and with all their present capacity in thought, word and deed. They must be able to say to the Heavenly Father, as Jesus did: "Not my will, but thine, be done."—Luke 22:42 ■

Divine Gifts

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”
—James 1:17

THE APOSTLE JAMES

asserts that although we are all fallen by nature, the eternal goodness of God has profound implications for those who have become his children. We who have consecrated our lives through obedi-

ence to righteous principles as well as devotedness to his cause are especially blessed in being recipients of many gifts from our beneficent “Father of lights.”

As we walk in the way of sacrifice, thus emulating the pattern of Jesus during his earthly ministry, our hearts should respond with deepest gratitude in having been called “out of darkness into his marvellous light.” (I Pet. 2:9) By means of spirit begettal, we have been enabled to appreciate the exalted characteristics of God’s attributes of wisdom, justice, love and power. The grand invitation we have received as footstep followers of our Lord to participate in the process of reconciling mankind back to the Heavenly Father is a gift of immense magnitude that our lives should reflect daily. Jesus said, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set

on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”—Matt. 5:14-16

THE GIFT OF GOD’S PLAN

One of the best known Scriptures among all who profess allegiance to Christ is found in John’s Gospel account. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) God gave his precious, perfect, undefiled and obedient Son to be the ransom price for all mankind, who had been sentenced to death at the dawn of human history because of their forefather Adam’s disobedience and fall from divine favor back in Eden. (Matt. 20:28; I Tim. 2:5,6; Heb. 7:26,27) This gift provides us a glimpse into the inherent love of God by which he provided the means of redeeming the human family from its sinful condition without violating his justice, which is the foundation of his throne.—Ps. 89:14, *Revised Standard Version*

When Adam and Eve transgressed by partaking of the forbidden fruit and were thrust out of their earthly paradise, there was an obscure promise given that at some future time a seed, or offspring, would be provided to reconcile humanity to God. “The LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and

between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”—Gen. 3:14,15

Many centuries elapsed before there was a well-defined understanding as to what or who this seed would be, although there were allusions to its meaning when God told Abraham to offer Isaac in sacrifice on Mount Moriah. (Gen. 22:1-18) We have a clearer view of this Old Testament narrative by reading that through faith Abraham believed God would raise Isaac from death if he slew him. (Heb. 11:17-19) How blessed we are now to understand the full import of that promise of a coming seed. “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. ... And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—Gal.3:16,29

THE HOLY SPIRIT

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” (Rom. 8:16) The Holy Spirit is the invisible power and righteous influence of God which enables his people to conduct themselves in a manner that is pleasing in his sight. If we have made a full consecration which is acceptable in God’s sight, we will have the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38; 10:45) Having this divine gift, though we still are imperfect in the flesh, we will be able to identify that a transformation is occurring in our lives. This impels us towards doing those things that reflect spiritual mindedness as opposed to focusing upon earthly aims, hopes and ambitions. If for example, we are seeking first the “kingdom of God, and his righteousness,” that will be one of

the evidences that we have received the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 6:33) In fact, the Scriptures indicate that the natural man, that is, one who has not received the Spirit of God, does not appreciate such matters and considers them foolishness.—I Cor. 2:14

We are living during a time of great trouble that is recognized by mankind throughout the world. Society is engulfed with insurmountable problems, and there is a widespread belief that things will never get better because the forces of evil are so overwhelming. Hopelessness is the order of the day in the minds of many. All of God's children desire to tell others of the Bible's promises of future peace and blessings to come, but comparatively few are able to internalize such a prospect. Why is this the case? "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13) Only those who have submitted their lives fully to the will of our loving Heavenly Father and have been enlightened by his Holy Spirit can, by studying and submitting to the precepts contained in his inspired Word, have the assurance that the promises contained in the Bible will come to pass and that a righteous government and peace for all will be established in the earth.—Matt. 6:10; II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-5

PEACE

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27) The promised gift of peace which the Master left as a legacy for the spirit begotten

should inspire all consecrated believers to faithful obedience and zealous activity in his service. This is especially the case as we consider the hope of being united in glory with Christ and being associated in the grand work of reconciling mankind back to God. It is one thing to be no longer under Adamic condemnation. It is quite another, however, to order our lives in accordance with the privileges we have in Christ. That prospect should free us from the anxious cares and sense of turmoil experienced by humanity at large.

How can we maintain this promised peace in a world filled with trouble and adversity? How can we claim the promise, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee?" (Isa. 26:3) One of the most important steps in this regard is to improve our prayer life. This will assist us in accepting all of our experiences, whether painful to the flesh or not, as being under divine supervision. What comforting assurances we receive when we demonstrate fervency in prayer and cast all our burdens on the Lord. When the Master was going through his Gethsemane experience, and throughout his entire ministry, his close communion with God undoubtedly enabled him to faithfully endure all "contradiction of sinners." (Heb. 12:2,3) Our Head is no less solicitous of the interests of his Bride. He will succor and sustain us if we do our part by keeping close to him through daily prayer and meditation.—Eph. 5:23; Rev. 21:2,9

GOD'S GOODNESS

"This is good and acceptable before God, our Savior, who desires all men to be saved, and to come

to an accurate knowledge of the truth. For God is one, and there is one Mediator of God and men, that man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom in behalf of all,—the testimony in its own seasons.”
—I Tim. 2:3-6, *The Emphatic Diaglott*

In verse 3, we note the identification of God, our Heavenly Father and author of the atonement, as “our Savior.” Many false ideas crept into Christianity after the apostles died which have obscured the true nature of the Creator. The Bible informs us regarding his attributes of wisdom, justice, love and power. Because these qualities work in complete harmony with each other, we have positive assurance that he indeed is our Savior even though Jesus Christ, his honored, faithful and well-beloved Son, has been the instrumentality through whom God’s plan is to be accomplished.

One of the false teachings held by some Christians is that God is vengeful and full of wrath, bent on slaying or torturing much of the human family. Furthermore, this view asserts it is only through the intervention of Jesus, who mercifully placated God’s anger by taking the sinner’s place in death, that mankind may be saved from such a fate. What a terrible view to hold concerning our loving Heavenly Father, who is merciful beyond what sinful man deserves. (Ps. 103:8) We also note it is God’s desire for “all men to be saved, and to come to an accurate knowledge of the truth.” Having satisfied ourselves as to the greatness of the Creator’s character, we see that anything God desires must come to pass, for he says, “my word ... shall not return unto me void.”—Isa. 55:11

The ultimate purpose for the bestowal of God’s gifts is to effect salvation for all. We might inquire:

What are all men saved from and what will they gain as a result? Paul explains, "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. 5:18,19

PAUL'S TESTIMONY

"You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—Eph. 2:1-7

While several of the foregoing verses may appear to be self-explanatory, some elaboration on certain portions may be helpful towards enhancing our spiritual growth and understanding. Verses 4 and 5 allude to God's desire for a divine family who would have special fellowship with him throughout eternity under the auspices of his beloved and obedient

Son. In order for consecrated believers to qualify for such a position, we must be transformed as New Creatures into the character of Christ.—Rom. 12:2; II Cor. 5:16,17

An important part of this transformation is that we no longer look at our brethren from a fleshly standpoint. Rather, we are to recognize and accept them as spiritually minded and those who are striving mightily to overcome human weaknesses. Furthermore, our present status as sojourners in the flesh credits us as being under priests, symbolically speaking, with our spiritual minds dwelling, as it were, in the “holy” of the tabernacle. Here, we feed at the table of shewbread, guided by the illumination of the golden candlestick, and our prayers are offered with much sweet incense at the golden incense altar. (Exod. 35:13-15; Heb. 9:2,6, *Diaglott*; Rev. 8:3,4) Thus, we are to “seek those things which are above” because we are considered dead to sin through our justification by faith.—Col. 3:1-3; Rom. 5:1

IMPORTANCE OF GRACE

Grace is sometimes defined as unmerited favor. God’s justice did not obligate him to do anything on Adam’s behalf once he sinned nor, hence, upon his posterity, all mankind. Nevertheless, this is what Paul wrote: “Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, ... hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.” (II Thess. 2:16) Surely, God’s grace was manifested in the sending of his Son, Jesus Christ, to die as a ransom for Adam. Paul in another place says, “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”—Eph. 2:8

We may ask: Is faith the gift of God mentioned in the above verse? There are two types of faith. The Scriptures declare that the fool says in his heart, "There is no God." (Ps. 14:1) Some do not have faith in the existence of a Creator. Others though, believe there is a God, and in reading the Bible, they come upon this passage: "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is."—Heb. 11:6

Not everyone who appreciates the foregoing text has received the Holy Spirit. Yet, observing the orderliness of nature, they accept that there must be a God. Thus, they have a measure of natural faith, although in their lives they are not consistent in striving to do all they can to please the Heavenly Father. There is also, however, a deeper spiritual faith that only the consecrated possess. "That we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith." (II Thess. 3:2) "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17) These texts pertain to spiritual faith which is increased by embracing the precious promises of the Scriptures and continually feeding upon them.

Returning to the question of what constitutes the "gift of God" in Ephesians 2:8, the following translation supports the intended thought, we believe, that the gift referred to in this verse is salvation. "For it is by grace [God's remarkable compassion and favor drawing you to Christ] that you have been saved [actually delivered from judgment and given eternal life] through faith. And this [salvation] is not of yourselves [not through your own effort] but it is the [undeserved, gracious] gift of God."—*Amplified Bible*

TWO ASPECTS OF ONE SALVATION

A heavenly or “so great salvation” is emphasized in much of the New Testament. (Heb. 2:3) However, the totality of the Scriptures shows that there are two aspects of the one salvation which comes from God through Christ Jesus. Here are six considerations pertaining to the matter.

1. Those who would be disciples of Christ have been invited to follow a course of righteous living and self-sacrifice. “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”—Matt. 16:24,25

2. As the Captain of all true believers, Jesus led the way to this heavenly salvation for his church by setting an example of self-denial and enduring trials even unto death. (Heb. 2:9,10) The path of discipleship is a difficult one because it requires following in the Master’s footsteps and involves service, sacrifice, suffering and persecution. A high reward is promised to all who persevere faithfully in doing God’s will despite any opposition received. “If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”—Rom. 8:17,18

3. Most of the promises relating to humanity’s future involve an earthly salvation. Mankind was made to live on the earth. “For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed

the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.” “The heavens are the LORD’S heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man.”—Isa. 45:18; Ps. 115:16, *English Standard Version*

4. It will be during the thousand-year reign of Christ and his church that the world’s judgment day will be in operation. (Rev. 20:6; Acts 17:31) During this period Satan will be bound. It will be a favorable time for mankind as the New Covenant will be in effect and everyone will come to know God and his righteous laws. The condemnation which fell upon Adam originally and passed to all his posterity will be lifted because of Christ’s sacrifice.—Jer. 31:29-34

5. Presently, there are many evils that afflict humanity which God has promised to eradicate in the kingdom in order to permit mankind to turn to the Lord for blessings. The Prophet Isaiah, among others, speaks of how every imaginable illness, woe and condition of despair will be removed and replaced by rejoicing in God’s kingdom.—Isa. 2:2-4; 11:9; 25:6-9; 33:24; 35:1-10

6. God’s ultimate purpose for humanity is to have them worship him in spirit and in truth. Tests are now being applied upon true Christians who will receive a heavenly life if they prove faithful in their path of self-sacrifice and obedience to God’s will. At the end of the kingdom, when Satan is released for a “little season” after being bound for a thousand years, all members of the human family will likewise be tested. The vast majority, we believe, will prove obedient and loyal to God and will receive eternal

salvation here on Earth. Satan, willful evil doers, and death itself, the “last enemy,” shall be destroyed.—Rev. 20:7-9; Acts 3:20-23; I Cor. 15:24-28

HUMAN INSTRUMENTS

“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. ... And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:8,11-13) In the foregoing passage we are informed that after Christ’s resurrection and ascension, not only did he gain a great victory by purchasing the human race that was captive to sin and death, but he also “gave gifts” unto men, the main purpose of which was for the “perfecting” of the church for its ministry of reconciliation. These gifts were in the form of human agencies whose role was to edify the church throughout this Gospel Age.

For example, the apostles served as divinely appointed ambassadors during the first century, and as God’s mouthpieces, their teachings and writings were unerring. Jesus told these specially chosen ones, “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (Matt.18:18) Accordingly, as we obey the principles found in the New Testament, we can be assured that we are conducting ourselves in a manner that *(Continued on page 36)*

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(Continued from page 31) would be pleasing to our Heavenly Father. In order to strengthen us in our desire to be obedient to divine precepts, Christ also gave some to be prophets. In this context, those referred to by Paul as “prophets” [Greek: inspired speakers] would be consecrated, spirit begotten public expounders who faithfully proclaim to others the wonderful plan of salvation that will bless the human family during God’s kingdom.

God has provided other human agencies such as “evangelists; ... pastors and teachers,” whose eyes of spiritual understanding have been opened, and whose lives reflect devotedness to righteous principles, soundness in doctrinal understanding and faithfulness in serving the cause of Christ. These are additional gifts that have been provided to develop spiritual maturity among God’s people.

We are living at a time in Earth’s history when life is chaotic for mankind in general, with no apparent solution for the woes that engulf individuals throughout the globe. To most people, the concept that a loving, powerful and compassionate God is in control of everything and has a wonderful plan that will bring blessings, peace and a righteous environment for all may seem incredulous.

However, consecrated spirit begotten followers of Christ have faith’s conviction that God’s plans for mankind as outlined in the Scriptures will surely come to pass as promised. How thankful we are to have received so many gifts from our beneficent Heavenly Father which have provided us the wherewithal to tell all who have a hearing ear the good news of the coming kingdom that will restore all that was lost in Eden.—Luke 19:10; Acts 3:20,21 ■

Our Refuge in the Time of Trouble

*“Come, my people,
enter thou into thy
chambers, and
shut thy doors
about thee: hide
thyself as it were
for a little
moment, until the
indignation be
overpast.”*

—Isaiah 26:20

THE HARVEST PERIOD AT the close of the Gospel Age during which we are now living is especially marked out in the Scriptures as being a momentous one for the Lord’s consecrated people. It is a time of great trial, of severe testing, but it is also characterized by rich blessings which God

showers upon his own. It is a time when God’s people are fed with abundant “meat in due season,” the purpose of which, Peter later wrote, is to be “established in the truth which is present with you.”—Luke 12:37,42; II Pet. 1:12, *New American Standard Bible*

This period is also the time when the “present evil world” is brought to an end, in preparation for the establishment of a new world order, a “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (Gal. 1:4; II Pet. 3:7,10,13) Because this is a tumultuous time, God’s people are surrounded by trouble,

and subjected to the trials and hardships incidental to the breaking down of the systems of this present world. Our text relates particularly to this aspect of the Christian's experience, being in the form of an exhortation concerning our proper course in view of what we see coming upon the world. The advice is that we should seek a place of spiritual refuge and safety to which we can retreat to prevent the intrusion of anything which would be harmful to us as New Creatures.

It is a matter of great importance for all of us to know where we can find a "chamber," a hiding place from the time of trouble which is upon the whole world. Therefore, we pose this question. Does the Lord mean that we should seek some literal retreat, a relatively unknown place away from cities and towns or other possible trouble centers, in the belief that we may thus be able to escape the distress which is upon the world?

Some in the past have misinterpreted this and other Scriptures to mean that the Lord's people should seek a literal place of seclusion. These have found, however, that from the human standpoint they fared no better than those who did not hide themselves in such a literal manner. With the nature of the time of trouble such as it is, reason tells us that one place is relatively as safe as another. Furthermore, if God wishes to protect his people from harm he is able to do it in any place and under any circumstance. "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save," we are told. (Isa. 59:1) Thus, evidently, our opening text does not refer to literal "chambers" of safety.

IN THE WORLD BUT NOT OF IT

Jesus said concerning his disciples, “they are not of the world.” (John 17:14) Surely he wanted them to be separate from the world in the sense that they would no longer partake of its spirit nor join in its selfish schemes and carnal pleasures. However, he did not want them to become reclusive. He commissioned them, in fact, to mingle among the people, and to go into all the world and preach the glorious message of the “gospel of the kingdom” for a witness.—Matt. 24:14

No one has ever lived a life more separate from the world in the true sense in which we are admonished than Jesus. Yet, he mingled with the world. The religious leaders of his day condemned him for this. They could not understand how Jesus could be holy and at the same time have fellowship with “publicans and sinners.” (Matt. 9:10-13) There have always been those who, not understanding what constitutes true holiness, have supposed it necessary to withdraw from society altogether in order to live near to God. Indeed, this conception of holiness became the basis of the monastic life prominent for many centuries among numerous religions.

The Adversary would like to induce all the Lord’s people to withdraw themselves from an active life of being an example and giving witness to the Truth. Strange though it may seem, there is something about suggestions of this kind which may appear to be appealing to the flesh. Quite pleasing might be the idea of belonging to an exclusive group, and of feeling no responsibility for anyone outside of that small circle. It offers an excuse to measurably take our sacrifice off the altar, or furnishes us a measure

of protection against the slights of the world. Thus, such a temptation may present a pleasant arrangement to think about. However, is it what God wants us to do?

Entering into our chambers does not mean that we should become solitary. This is made clear by various Scriptures which have to do with the time of trouble and the church's relationship to it. One of these is found in the words of Isaiah 35:4, which reads, "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you." When Jesus foretold of the time of "great tribulation," he explained that one of the effects of it would be to cause men's hearts to fail them for fear. (Matt. 24:21; Luke 21:25,26) Through the prophet the Lord is asking us to comfort those who are fearful, and who have a hearing ear, that while a period of great tribulation and trouble is indeed upon the world, its object is to prepare the way for the new dispensation of the Messianic kingdom. God's "vengeance" is for the purpose of ridding the world of its sinful elements and institutions, so that the people might then be saved and given the opportunity for life. What a wonderful privilege is ours of comforting those who mourn with a blessed message of this kind!

GOD, OUR REFUGE

The Scriptures tell us the true sense in which we are shielded from the present storms. It is in the refuge of the Lord and the Truth, and is beautifully stated by the psalmist: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore

will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.”—Ps. 46:1-3

The removal of the symbolic earth, the mountains carried into the midst of the sea, and the roaring of the troubled waters, are all manifestations of conditions accompanying the great time of trouble. The affirmation of the psalmist is that because God is our refuge we will not fear these things. Rather, these circumstances will more fully indicate to us that which constitutes the only true “chamber” of safety for the Christian during this time of distress upon the earth. Such is the protection which God affords to his people who are fully devoted to the doing of his will.

God has promised to care for us, but we must lay claim to his promises by making them our own and by bringing our every thought, word and deed into line with the conditions upon which they are given. In this regard, it is important to remember that God is dealing with us as New Creatures in Christ. (II Cor. 5:17) Thus, our flesh is being sacrificed in divine service. God has not promised physical protection except insofar as it relates to the growth of the New Creature.

If there is a divine purpose to be wrought in us, or by us, which necessitates the safety of our earthly interests, those interests will be protected. This is not for the sake of our flesh, but for the sake of the development of the New Creature. Hence, the only kind of “chambers” into which we can enter spiritually are those whose walls are constructed of God’s

promises, and whose doors are those of faith which shut out the disturbing elements of a chaotic world during this day of trouble.

STREAMS MAKE GLAD

After reminding us that God is our refuge, the psalmist uses additional symbolisms to indicate the manner in which the Lord cares for his people during this troublesome time. He writes: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." (Ps. 46:4) The symbolic "streams" here mentioned can be likened to the comparatively small brooks and rivulets that have their origin in the hills and mountains, and which, flowing down the slopes into the valley below, converge to form a river.

We note that it is these "streams," rather than the river itself, which are said to "make glad the city of God." The river is evidently essentially the same as that portrayed in Revelation 22:1,2, where it is shown as flowing from underneath the throne of God and of the Lamb. It is the river of life, pictorial of the glorious provision of life which God has made through Christ and the plan of salvation centered in him.

The "streams" which feed this river would therefore picture the preparatory phases of the plan of salvation, those arrangements of God which lead up to and finally make possible the river of life and its blessings for all mankind. God's promises and his providences manifest in a very marked manner the outworking of his plan. Central to this is God's gift of his beloved Son to die for the world, whose blood ratifies the divine promises, making them operative

on behalf of those whom he has called and is preparing for the future glorious work of the kingdom.

The consecrated footstep followers of Jesus are being prepared for their future work by the influence of the promises of God in their lives, and by his overruling providences in connection with their fulfillment. Obedience to the conditions upon which the promises have been made has also entered into the development of the followers of the Master. When we think of all the promises of God and the conditions attached to them, and also the very effective manner in which he overrules the experiences of his people as he deals with them, it would seem proper to define the entire arrangement as one of the fundamental elements of the divine plan.

This is in harmony with our experiences and observations during the present Harvest period. What has God done for us in order that our hearts and minds might be protected from the evil with which we are surrounded? He has given us of his truth. He has made us acquainted with his plan of salvation. Through these he has given us a vision of his glory. He has provided us with the armor of the Gospel. It is all of these that are well symbolized by the “streams” of the river which now make glad the city of God.

“ENTER THOU INTO THY CHAMBERS”

Our opening text invites us to “enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee.” In another place the psalmist speaks of our habitation of refuge and safety as the “secret place of the most High.” (Ps. 91:1) It is, then, a matter of vital importance to know how to enter into this chamber and thus to

be certain that divine protection is overshadowing us. How may we enter God's secret place?

Briefly stated, it is through the door of full consecration to do God's will. That commitment is, of course, based upon our faith in the blood of Christ and upon the divine promises that through him we will be counted as acceptable in God's sight. The expression, full consecration, should be very significant to us. Only as we are wholly dedicated to God can we be assured of a standing in the "secret place," and of abiding "under the shadow of the Almighty."

It is well to examine our consecration from time to time to make sure that it continues to mean a full surrender of our own preferences—our own wills—to do the will of God. This is the only kind of devotion that opens the door for us to enter into God's secret place of protection. Our flesh can be very deceptive; Satan is so subtle; and the world may seem quite alluring. Therefore, we need continually to be on the watch lest some outside influence enter our heart and turn us aside from our determination to know and do only God's will. Hence, the emblematic words of our text, "shut thy doors about thee."

SELF EXAMINATION

Have we made a full consecration to God? Are we endeavoring day by day to pay our vows unto the most High? (Ps. 116:14) Do all our thoughts and words and doings seek to bring glory to God? Are we certain that nothing is being held back, not even the sweetest earthly tie? Are we fully resolved that we will continue to do God's will no matter what the cost may be? Are we wholly committed to saying what he wants us to say; to going where he wants

us to go; to doing what he wants us to do; and to being what he wants us to be?

If this be the attitude of our hearts and minds, and if our knowledge of God's plans and purposes are becoming more precious to us as the days go by, then we may know that we have found the way into the secret chambers of God's love and protection. It is necessary, though, that we continue to "dwell" in this attitude of full consecration, else earthborn clouds will arise to hide us from beholding the face of God beaming upon us with the smile of his favor.

It is not those who merely enter, but those who "dwell" in the secret place who are able to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Undoubtedly, one of the severest tests of Christian discipleship is that of endurance. How many there may have been who sooner or later lost their "first love" for God's secret place. (Rev. 2:4) Faith is an important element in gaining the victory over the tendency to become "weary in well doing." (Gal. 6:9) An enduring faith in God, in his promises, in his ways, and in his providences, is a key requirement in the carrying out of our consecration vows. Even in the natural affairs of the world, how many are unsuccessful in their endeavors simply because they lack the endurance necessary to bring their plans and efforts to completion.

If every effort we make to serve the Lord should be at once followed by positive, visible results, there would be little need of patient endurance. Continually favorable results would serve as an incentive to keep on sacrificing. However, God in his wisdom has not arranged such an easy course for the Christian. He wants us to put our trust in him, and to

manifest that trust by continued, constant obedience to his will regardless of the sacrifice involved and the apparent lack at times of visible evidence that he is blessing our efforts. Indeed, he wants us to be “faithful unto death” and to wait for the reward until he gives us the “crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

LET US NOT BE MOVED

Speaking prophetically of the church, the bride of Christ, the psalmist says, “God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved.” (Ps. 46:5; Rev. 21:2,9) As we have already noted, the psalmist tells of the removal of the symbolic earth and of the mountains being carried into the midst of the sea, but his consecrated people “shall not be moved.” It is during the great time of trouble that everything out of harmony with God will be removed. However, if our consecration be wholehearted and sincere, and God blesses us with his grace and strength to serve him acceptably, we will not be moved from the secret chamber of his divine care.—Heb. 12:25-28

“God will ever help her,” the psalmist continues, “at the dawning of her morning.” (*Isaac Leeser Translation*) In addition to protecting from all that would harm us as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, the Heavenly Father has confirmed his help in still another way. He has promised to deliver his church in the “first resurrection” and exalt her to live and reign with Christ. (Rev. 20:4,6) With that prospect in mind, we can surely “lift up” our heads, knowing that our “deliverance is drawing near.”—Luke 21:28, *Weymouth New Testament*

Never before in the history of the world have people been so conscious of their need for protection

and security; and never before have they so feared the lack of these things. In all the turmoil, confusion and suffering incident to the present day of trouble, however, the consecrated people of God have peace and joy. They are not assured protection from physical harm. Indeed, perhaps the best spiritual blessings may come as a result of physical suffering or material loss.

A story is told of a contest between two artists. A prize was offered to the one who could paint the best conception of peace. One painted a beautiful picture of a quiet lake, snuggled away in a protected valley surrounded by hills. There was not the slightest breeze to raise a ripple on the glassy smoothness of the lake's surface. The leaves on the trees by the side of the lake did not stir, and not a blade of grass moved. This was the first artist's conception of peace.

The other artist chose as a background in his portrayal of peace a madly rushing waterfall. It tumbled down over a high ledge of rock, and the water was whipped into a cloud of foam and mist as it dashed upon the boulders beneath. Growing beside the falls, the artist showed a slender tree with one of its slim, swaying branches extending out over the torrent just at the point where the water commenced its headlong dive to the rocks below. On that slender branch sat a bird, singing with all the joyful power it possessed. When the judges saw this picture, they at once exclaimed, "That is peace!"

It is just such a peace that belongs to us. As long as we abide in the secret chambers of God's protecting care, no harm can come to us as New Creatures. Like the little bird, we will continue to sing praises to our God in whose place of safety we have taken refuge. ■

The Leaven of Corruption

*“The kingdom of
heaven is like unto
leaven, which a
woman took, and
hid in three
measures of meal,
till the whole was
leavened.”*

—*Matthew 13:33*

THE BIBLE’S FIRST REFER-
ences to leaven are in connection with Jehovah’s instructions concerning the original Passover supper, which was eaten by the Israelites the evening before they were delivered from their bondage in Egypt. The bread used at

the Passover meal was to be unleavened—that is, made without yeast. (Exod. 12:3-11) At this time God also gave instructions concerning a seven-day feast which would immediately follow the keeping of the Passover supper: “Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.”—vs. 15

The use of leaven was prohibited by the Lord in connection with all the sacrifices which the Israelites offered to him. We gather from this that he considers leaven as an illustration of sin in all its various

corrupting aspects. This thought is borne out in the New Testament.

Jesus said to his disciples, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How it is that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."—Matt. 16:6-12

CORRUPTING DOCTRINE

From the foregoing passage it is evident that Jesus used leaven as a symbol of the erroneous and corrupting teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Scriptures do not indicate in detail a great deal concerning these false doctrines. However, we do know that the Sadducees, for example, taught that there is no resurrection of the dead. (Matt. 22:23) This erroneous teaching alone corrupts and destroys a fundamentally critical doctrine of Christ.

Jesus said, "You scribes and Pharisees, play-actors! You scour sea and land to make a single convert, and then you make him twice as ripe for destruction as you are yourselves." (Matt. 23:15, *J. B. Phillips New*

Testament) How this emphasizes the corrupting influence of false teachings! Surely it makes clear to us the importance of being sure that the doctrine which we believe and teach is fully in harmony with the Word of God.

The scribes and Pharisees without doubt held to some of the truths set forth by the Mosaic Law and Israel's prophets, but they had gone beyond these inspired sources of truth, and had accepted and allowed themselves to be influenced by the teachings of human tradition. It was these teachings, unauthorized by God to be added to the law he had given to Israel through Moses, which had so corrupted what they believed that their service to the Lord was not acceptable to him.

IN PRACTICE ALSO

Not only had the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees leavened or corrupted the teachings of God's words by their traditions, but they had also, symbolically speaking, permitted leaven to enter into their hearts and to influence their practices with respect to their service for God. Although technically they still sat in "Moses' seat," Jesus advised his followers not to follow their example of conduct.

The Master said, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of

their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.”—Matt. 23:2-7

Later in this chapter Jesus continues his reproof of the corrupt practices of these religious leaders of Israel. “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widow’s houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation [Greek: judgment].”—vss. 13,14

We have quoted sufficient to establish the point that in character as well as in doctrine the Jews’ religious leaders of Jesus’ day were corrupted by symbolic leaven. In Mark 8:15 Jesus speaks of “the leaven of Herod.” Herod was not a teacher in Israel, but a ruler representing Rome. His “leaven” was in the fact that he tried to please Rome, and at the same time curry favor with the influential among the Israelites. This was a double-minded condition of hypocrisy, and Jesus spoke of it as leaven which had entered and was influencing Herod.

We do not need to conclude that all of Israel’s religious leaders had been corrupted by symbolic leaven. There was Nicodemus, for example, a Pharisee who went to the Lord in sincerity to learn more of the truth concerning this man whom his associates so greatly opposed. (John 3:1-11) There was also Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Jewish council, who became a believer in Jesus as the Messiah.—Luke 23:50,51; John 19:38

Certainly among others not leaders in Israel, there were those who served the Lord with sincerity of heart and purpose. Jesus identifies one of these. When speaking of Nathanael, he said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" (John 1:47) Here was a man pure of heart. He was straightforward, having no guile, and not corrupted by the "leaven" which was so prevalent around him.

PAUL'S TESTIMONY

In the church at Corinth there was an individual who was not deporting himself in harmony with the principles of righteousness. Paul instructed the brethren "to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." To this the apostle added: "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" —I Cor. 5:5,6

Here the unfaithful brother in the church is likened to leaven, who, if allowed to remain in the assembly, could lead to the corruption of the entire congregation. A similar use of leaven as an illustration of a corrupting influence is found in Galatians chapter 5. In verses 1-8 Paul refers to one or more who had come in among the brethren with teachings contrary to the truth, specifically, that all believers in Christ must be circumcised. Some apparently had been influenced by this false teaching, and had ceased for a time to "obey the truth." Paul emphasizes that this erroneous doctrine they had accepted did not come from the Lord, and then adds again the words, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."—vs. 9

Turning again to I Corinthians 5, we find Paul elaborating further: “Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”—vss. 7,8, *English Standard Version*

We note the expression, “leaven of malice and evil.” This is a true explanation of what is represented in the Scriptures by leaven. Nothing good, noble or praiseworthy is ever symbolized by leaven; but as we have seen, it represents false doctrine, hypocrisy and other corrupting qualities. In these verses Paul is giving, in particular, an admonition that the brethren might be properly prepared in their hearts for the Memorial season. However, it is a lesson which all the consecrated should take to heart and apply every day of the year.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

In the parable quoted in our opening Scripture, Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman put in three measures of meal until it was all leavened. This furnishes another interesting study regarding the symbolism of leaven. To understand this lesson, however, it is essential to know what Jesus meant in this parable by the words, “kingdom of heaven.”

This expression is sometimes used in the New Testament with respect to the preparatory aspects of that kingdom, rather than to the kingdom established in power and great glory, which is yet future. Paul wrote that the Heavenly Father has “delivered

us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of God's dear Son." (Col. 1:13) *Thayer's Greek Definitions* defines the word rendered "translated" in this verse as denoting a "change of situation." This properly identifies the individual change and transformation of character and work among God's consecrated people in preparation for the kingdom. That work of preparation has proceeded throughout the Gospel Age, and it will continue until the harvest work is completed at the end of the age.

In another parable Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat." (Matt. 13:24,25) Jesus explained later that the good seed are "the children of the kingdom," and the tares are "the children of the wicked one." (vs. 38) Here the kingdom class, described as "the kingdom of heaven," is shown to have had evil introduced into its midst. The parable shows, in other words, that in the development of those who will live and reign with Christ in his kingdom, they become subjected to efforts by Satan, God's "enemy" and the "wicked one," to divert them from their goal of joint heirship with Christ.

THREE MEASURES OF MEAL

In the short parable concerning leaven being put into three measures of meal until the whole was leavened, we are presented with another lesson concerning the development of the kingdom. Here again, as throughout the Scriptures, leaven is used as a symbol of a corrupting influence. In this case the corruption takes place in the spiritual food, the teachings, which are originally supplied by the Lord for the

nourishment of his people as New Creatures in Christ Jesus.

Jesus said, quoting Moses, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.” (Luke 4:4) The words of God recorded in the Bible set forth his plan of salvation for both the church and the world. They also include an expression of his will for the guidance of his people, especially those of the present age who are following in the footsteps of Jesus, and who have been made partakers of the heavenly calling. This is their food, their “meal,” which was given first to the apostles by Jesus, and through them to the entire company of consecrated believers. It is by this food that they are to be spiritually nourished, and thus made ready for their glorification with Jesus in his kingdom of power and glory, through which all mankind will be blessed.

However, it was not long after the apostles fell asleep in death that error, or leaven, began to be injected into this pure food which the Lord had furnished. It was almost imperceptible to start with, but this leavening continued, growing to such an extent that nearly all of the pure spiritual food provided by the Lord became corrupted. The great deceiver, the “enemy,” Satan, was responsible for this, though he used human instruments, as well as civil and religious systems, to complete the corrupting work.

DOCTRINE CORRUPTED

In the parable Jesus speaks of three measures of meal being corrupted, well signifying three fundamental teachings of Jesus and the apostles in which leaven was later “hid” until each key doctrine became greatly contaminated. One of these might well

represent the teachings of the Bible with respect to the condition of the dead and the penalty for sin. God told Adam plainly that if he partook of the forbidden fruit he would die. (Gen. 2:17) The Apostle Paul wrote with clarity, "The wages of sin is death."—Rom. 6:23

This simple truth, however, was corrupted by the "leaven" put into the "meal." The erroneous theory of the immortality of the soul developed, which claims that when a man dies his soul remains alive, and that actually there is no such thing as death. Out of this error came various "no death" teachings, including the claim of eternal torment as "the wages of sin," instead of death. If, according to this corrupting theory, no one really dies, then there can be no resurrection of the dead. Thus, the teaching of the resurrection also became corrupted.

Even more fundamental is the manner in which this particular false theory has corrupted the doctrine of the ransom as set forth in the Word of God. According to the Scriptures, Jesus died for the sins of the people, being a substitute in death for father Adam, and through him for the entire race. (Rom. 5:12,18,19; I Tim. 2:5,6; I John 2:2) However, if there is no death, then Jesus did not die, and this beautiful doctrine of redemption is corrupted and destroyed.

How glad we are to know, however, that Satan's words to Eve, "ye shall not surely die," was a blatant lie, and as Jesus said of him, "he is a liar, and the father of it." (Gen. 3:4; John 8:44) Concerning a correct understanding of the death condition, the Scriptures are clear: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing." "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave,

whither thou goest.” (Ezek. 18:4; Eccles. 9:5,10) How thankful we are, too, that the Scriptures also provide the hope of a resurrection from the dead. “The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth.” “There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.” (John 5:28,29; Acts 24:15) These are the pure, unleavened truths found in the Bible.

Another of the “measures” of meal might well be the teachings of the Bible with respect to God’s Messianic kingdom arrangement for the blessing and recovery of all the families of the earth. According to the Scriptures this kingdom in power and great glory was to be set up following the second advent of Jesus who, together with those who had faithfully suffered and died with him, would be the ruling “Christ” class.—Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Luke 19:10; Acts 3:20-25; Rev. 20:6; 21:1-5

This simple truth also became corrupted with leaven. Instead of waiting for this development in God’s “due time,” Satan caused the establishment of a counterfeit system which claimed to be the kingdom of Christ, and that there was no future kingdom beyond this. This cast a shadow over the promises of God with respect to the blessing of “all the families of the earth” through the agencies of the kingdom. Furthermore, if the church was reigning with Christ in this life, the promises of future glory with him in the kingdom were made meaningless. Here again, the Scriptures are clear. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” (Rev. 2:10) Similarly, Paul realized that he must suffer and die before his hope of reigning with Christ could be realized.—II Tim. 2:11,12; 4:6-8

MAN'S ETERNAL HOME

The third measure of meal corrupted by leaven might well be the teaching of the Bible with respect to God's provision for the earth to be man's eternal home. When the erroneous teaching developed, as previously considered, that people only "seem" to die, but actually possess an immortal soul, it led to a further corruption of spiritual food. Leaven was introduced which claimed that one day the earth would be literally destroyed, and man would no longer enjoy it as his home.

The truth is, however, as set forth in the Bible, that "the earth abideth for ever," and not only this, but that God created the earth "not in vain," but he "formed it to be inhabited." (Eccles. 1:4; Isa. 45:18) Without this appreciation, the hope of the restoration of man to live on the earth forever is completely corrupted. The purpose of our Lord's return is also made void, and millions of professed followers of Jesus are left in confusion so far as their understanding of the plan of redemption is concerned.

Over the span of many centuries, a majority of professed Christians have been led away in a large measure from the real teachings of the Bible. We rejoice that in this end of the Gospel Age the Lord has furnished his faithful people with "meat in due season," replenishing the "unleavened" food which was originally provided by Jesus and the apostles. Soon, this "feast of fat things" will be made available to all people, and they will finally understand the glorious plan of God.—Matt. 24:45; Luke 12:42; Isa. 25:6-9 ■

General Convention Bulletin

July 16-21, 2022—Johnstown, Pennsylvania

THE 2022 GENERAL CONVENTION will be held this summer in one of two ways depending on the pandemic. We hope to hold an in-person convention and return to the facilities of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, on the dates noted above. If it is determined that an in-person convention is not advisable, a live online convention will be held during the same week.

In the event of an in-person convention, air conditioned rooms with private bathrooms in the Living-Learning Center (LLC), family-style air conditioned apartments with private bathrooms (APTS), and housing with two rooms sharing one bathroom (not air conditioned) in other facilities will be available on campus. A child may sleep on the floor at no charge if both beds are occupied.

All room and meal costs for children 12 years old or younger will be paid by the convention. In addition, 100% of the room and meal cost of those from ages 13 through 17 will be refunded if the young person attends at least 75% of the studies for his or her age group. This subsidy does not cover meals paid at the door.

In addition to a discourse on the convention theme text, Hebrews 10:21,22, there will be a discussion on the topic “Since you look for these things,” based on II Peter 3:13-15. A devotional discourse entitled

“Bless the Lord, O My Soul” (Ps. 103) is planned; and a dialogue session will consider the subject “Be Not Conformed.”—Rom. 12:2

A complete pricing table and registration form is provided for your convenience immediately following this announcement. We encourage you to register early. Advance payment is not required. If advance payment is made, it will be refunded in full if the convention is unable to be held in-person. We encourage you to start planning now to attend this year’s General Convention. ■

	Ages	18 & up	***13-17
Breakfast		\$8.00	\$7.00
Lunch		10.00	9.00
Dinner		14.00	13.00
Total, three meals		\$32.00	\$29.00
Lodging (per night)			
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)		\$42.00	\$37.00
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)		\$37.00	\$35.00
**single occ (LLC)		\$76.00	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)		\$42.00	n/a
PKG: 7 nights, 18 meals			
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)		\$410*	\$375*
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)		\$275*	\$240*
**single occ (LLC)		\$616*	\$581*
single occ (non-LLC)		\$319*	\$284*

*If no breakfasts, deduct—\$40

**Air conditioned

***100% of these costs will be refunded if the young person attends 75% of the studies for his/her age group.

NOTE: A Convention Fee of \$10.00 per person, regardless of age, length of stay, or lodging and meal arrangements, will be added to your invoice to help offset convention expenses unrelated to lodging and meals.

General Convention Registration

330 Jasmine Road—Casselberry, FL 32707
E-mail: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com (407) 670-4189

	Brkfst	Lunch	Dinner	Bed
Friday, July 15, 2022				
Saturday, 16th				
Sunday, 17th				
Monday, 18th				
Tuesday, 19th				
Wednesday, 20th				
Thursday, 21st				

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

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

Names and ecclesia name (age if under 18)

Address:

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

O. B. Elbert

Online Broadcast of Convention
Orlando, FL March 5-7

M. Ensley

Online Broadcast of Convention
Orlando, FL March 5-7

A. Fernets

Online Broadcast of Convention
Orlando, FL March 5-7

M. Kerry

Online Broadcast of Convention
Orlando, FL March 5-7

B. Sweeney

Online Broadcast of Convention
Orlando, FL March 5-7

OBITUARIES

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

**Brother Bob Chaulk, Newfoundland, Canada—
November 19. Age, 85**

**Sister Ruth Cline, Saint Louis, MO—December 17.
Age, 89**

Brother Nesaraj, Trichy, India—January 24. Age, 63

Sister Hazel Moore, Largo, FL—January 27. Age, 105

**Brother Charles Thornton, Detroit, MI—January
31. Age, 88**

**Sister Isabelle Delegeorge, Northville, MI—February
7. Age, 99**

**Sister Irena Kniaziew, Myslowicy, Poland—February
9. Age, 89**

**Sister Joanna Wawrzacz, Chorzow, Poland—February
10. Age, 89**

**Sister Antonina Jachimczak, Poznan, Poland—
February 16. Age, 95**

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

MARCH 3—"Whatsoever things are just, ... think on these things."—Philippians 4:8 (Z. '03-9 Hymn 65)

MARCH 10—"Exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."—Hebrews 3:13 (Z. '03-54 Hymn 200)

MARCH 17—"Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath."—Matthew 25:28,29 (Z. '01-59 Hymn 309)

MARCH 24—"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."—Hebrews 13:5 (Z. '03-41 Hymn 242)

MARCH 31—"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."—I Timothy 6:12 (Z. '03-91 Hymn 272)

2022 MEMORIAL SUPPER DATE

The proper time for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after sunset on Thursday, April 14, 2022.

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CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, PO Box 521167, Longwood, FL 32752-1167

FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 5-7—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact L. McClellan. Phone: (727) 260-2632 or Email: larrydmcclellan@gmail.com

HIGHLAND PARK CONVENTION, April 2—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact S. Koterba. Phone: (917) 554-2348 or Email: sandykoterba@gmail.com

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 2,3—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact P. Nemesh. Email: nemeshfp@aol.com

ALBUQUERQUE CONVENTION, April 15-17—Sheraton Albuquerque Airport Hotel. 2910 Yale Boulevard SE. Albuquerque, NM. Contact S. Thomassen. Phone: (505) 268-8170 or Email: srbt@juno.com

AGWA MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 16—Contact V. Ekeh. Email: abiblestudecc@yahoo.com

METRO DETROIT CONVENTION, May 7,8—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact B. Johnson. Email: beckystevej@aol.com

HARTFORD CONVENTION, May 15—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact J. Slivinsky. Email: djslivinsky@sbcglobal.net

DELAWARE VALLEY CONVENTION, June 5—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact R. Griehs. Email: rgriehs@gmail.com

ABA/IGBERE CONVENTION, June 12—Contact P. Ekeh. Email: peterudochieke@gmail.com

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To us the Scriptures clearly teach . . .

THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD

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

THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING AND POLISHING

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

THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

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

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

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

THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 55

