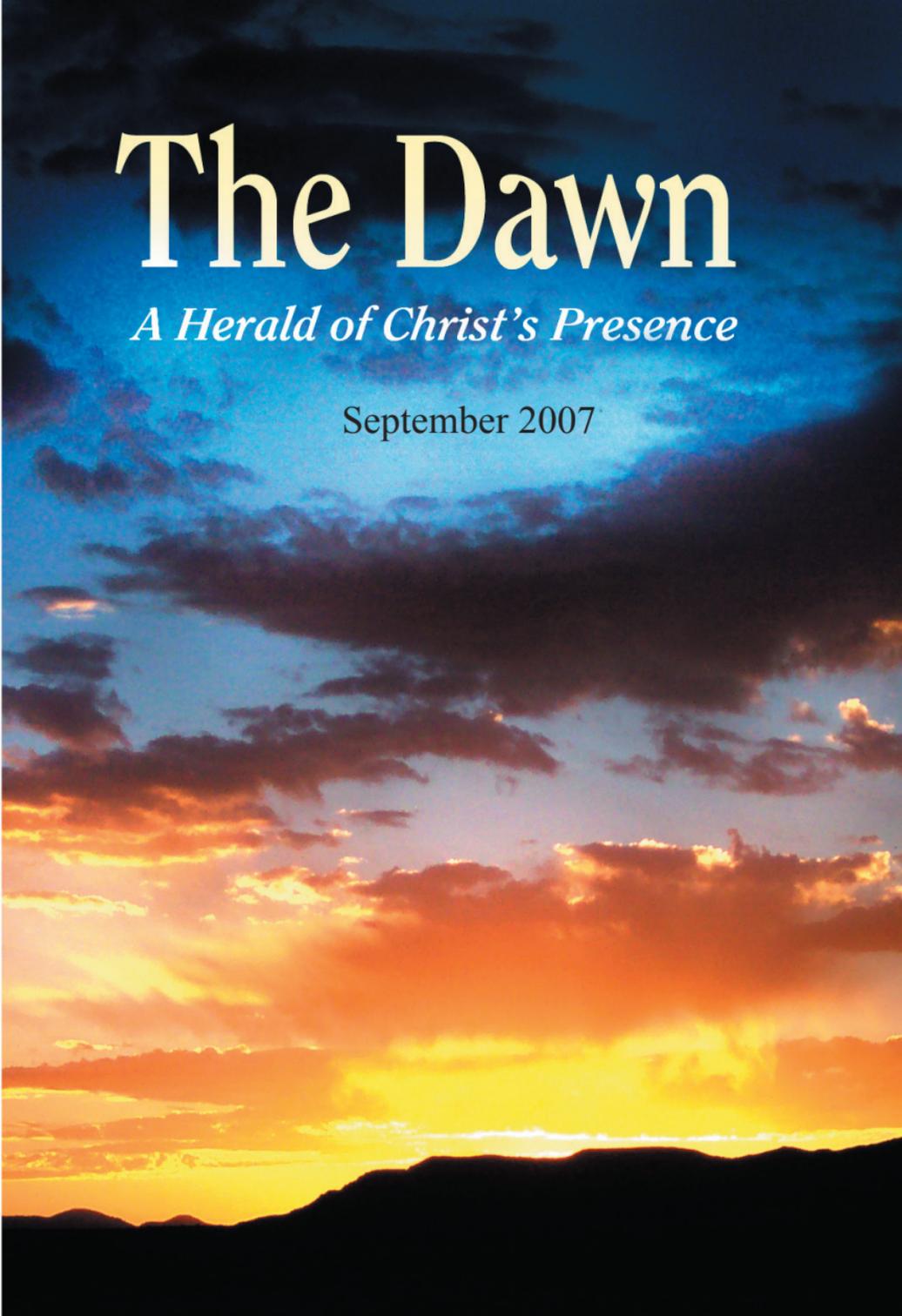


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Violence Will Cease: The Branch Will Sprout

*“Hear now, O
Joshua the high
priest, thou, and
thy fellows that sit
before thee: for
they are men
wondered at: for,
behold, I will
bring forth my
servant the
BRANCH.”*

—Zechariah 3:8

THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH, writing many centuries ago, spoke of the future time when our Lord Jesus will rule over the affairs of the human family in the glorious capacity of two offices, as both priest and king. The prophet again wrote, “Then say to him, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, Behold, a man

whose name is Branch [sprout, *Marginal Translation*], for He will branch out [sprout up, *MT*] from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD.”—Zech. 6:12, *New American Standard Bible*

This wonderful promise is yet in process of fulfillment as we further read, “Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.”—vs. 13, *NASB*

TWO OFFICES

Zechariah’s words were addressed to the literal high priest, Joshua, who was the son of Jehozadak. He served the people of Israel as their first high priest over the repatriated nation, following their return from Babylonian exile. (Hag. 2:2-4) Zerubabel was the first governor of the liberated Jews when they returned from Babylonian captivity. (vs. 21) He was also a descendant of King David, and an ancestor in the lineage of our Lord Jesus’ birth as a perfect man.

The Israelites did not realize that each of these two men—their high priest and king—served as important types that portrayed the combined offices of our glorified Lord Jesus in his role as king and high priest, during the administration of his future kingdom and rule over all the nations of the world.

This future time was also foreseen by the Prophet Isaiah, when he wrote, “In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.”—Isa. 4:2

SEPARATE FROM SINNERS

This wonderful scene will become a reality as a result of the earthly ministry that was accomplished by the Master at his First Advent nearly two thousand years ago. Jesus had not been born

of the old and decaying lineage of Adam, but by the wonderful wisdom and working power of our loving Heavenly Father. He had produced a new 'sprout' with fresh life and vitality, and he had come among fallen men to save them from their inherited penalty of sin and death.

The Apostle Paul spoke of this marvelous grace when he wrote, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost [evermore, *Marginal Translation*] that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25) Jesus had come to save the fallen race and was the only one who could accomplish this stupendous task. "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." (vs. 26) He had none of the defilements that are common to the rest of mankind, but was a new sprout of life.

THE ROD OF STRENGTH

Of this glorious time, we note the words of the psalmist David who proclaimed, "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."—Ps. 110:1-4

The Heavenly Father will have prepared at his right hand a throne for our dear Lord Jesus who is to reign in power and great glory. We look forward

to this long-held promise while the great work of the kingdom is in preparation for the future blessing of mankind.

The glorious future rule of ‘the Branch’ and his kingdom of righteousness is reflected in Israel’s typical roles of king and high priest. Our Lord Jesus will soon assume power and authority over the affairs of mankind under the administration of his glorious kingdom of righteousness and truth.

EARTH’S PRESENT RULERSHIP

Many people today are watching with much fear the chaotic scenes of misery and woe that are present in our world, and they continue to wait, largely in ignorance, for the time when our Lord Jesus will assume the ultimate power and purpose as arranged by our loving Heavenly Father.

The Middle Eastern nations are constantly in the news as the situation grows more desperate to find a way for peace and stability. In the meantime, conditions of everyday life continue to deteriorate and an ever violent scene escalates. This is particularly true in Iraq and Afghanistan.

WORLDWIDE TERROR REPORT

This situation is brought to our attention in a news item that was published by the *Los Angeles Daily News* (April 28, 2007) under the caption “Worldwide Terror Attacks Up.” The article was submitted by staff writers Warren P. Strobel and Johnathan S. Landay. They related to the State Department’s recent report on terrorism that indicated that there was a 30% increase, including more than 14,000 worldwide attacks, over previous years, mostly in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The staff writers wrote, “The annual report’s release comes amid a bitter feud between the White House and Congress over funding for United States troops in Iraq and a deadline favored by Democrats to begin a United States troop withdrawal. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and her top aides, earlier this week, had considered postponing or downplaying the release of this year’s edition of the terrorism report, officials in several agencies and on Capital Hill said. Ultimately, they decided to issue the report on or near the congressionally mandated deadline of Monday, the officials said. ‘We’re proceeding in normal fashion with the final review of this and expect it to be released early next week,’ State Department deputy spokesman Tom Casey said.

“A half-dozen United States officials with knowledge of the report’s contents, or the debate surrounding it, agreed to discuss those topics on the condition they not be identified because of the extreme political sensitivities surrounding the war and the report. Based on data compiled by the United States intelligence community’s National Counterterrorism Center, the report says there were 14,338 terrorist attacks last year, up 29% from 11,111 attacks in 2005. 45% of the attacks were in Iraq. Worldwide, there were about 5,800 terrorist attacks that resulted in at least one fatality, also from 2005. The figures for Iraq and elsewhere are limited to attacks on noncombatants and don’t include strikes against United States troops.

“Even after this year’s report was largely completed and approved, Rice and her aides this week called for a further round of review, in part to avoid

repeating embarrassing missteps of recent years in the report's release, officials said. The review process is being led by Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte, formerly the nation's intelligence czar. The United States intelligence community is said to be preparing a separate, classified report on terrorist 'safe havens' worldwide, and officials have debated whether Iraq meets that definition.

IRAQ: THE CENTRAL FRONT

“President Bush and his aides routinely call Iraq the ‘central front’ in Bush’s war on terrorism and likely will say that the preponderance of attacks there and in Afghanistan prove their point. But critics say the United States invasion and occupation of Iraq have worsened the terrorist threat. The contention by Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney that Al-Qaida terrorists were in Iraq and allied with the late Iraqi President Saddam Hussein before the invasion has been disproved on numerous fronts.”

THE VOICE OF TERROR

It is well known that Khalid Shaikh Mohammed was either the mastermind of, or directly involved in, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City in September, 2001. He has also played a direct role in other Al-Qaida terrorist conspiracies in various places. He was hunted down and captured in Pakistan four years ago and subjected to harsh interrogation. He has recently admitted his role before a military tribunal at the American base at Guantanamo, Cuba. He is reported to have said, ‘I was responsible for the 9/11 operation from A to Z.’

As the sixth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks draws near without a similar or even worse attack on United States soil, many Americans have grown complacent concerning the possibility of new and greater threats to our society. The scale of horror on that day makes it difficult to continue viewing the catastrophe as the work of a few determined terrorists. K. S. Mohammed reminds us that the future holds dangers from others who share his faith-based hatred against the United States and other Western nations. His rationalization for his actions are appalling. He has compared the mass murder of innocent people at the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon Building in Washington, D. C. to the War of Independence conducted by George Washington against England. Furthermore, bogus apologies have been offered on behalf of terrorist activities worldwide.

By whatever name it may be labeled, whether militant Islam, Islamic fascism or a clash of civilizations, they have declared war on the United States and other Western nations. This is not a figment of President George Bush's imagination, and neither is it a byproduct of the Iraq war. Americans may disagree as to how to deal with the present situation, but the existence of a very cruel confrontation is undeniable. So is the willingness of its adherents to kill and die for their cause. Although the passage of nearly six years since the devastation of 9/11 may be fading away to memory, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed's confession to the crime has brought the dangerous possibility of other more deadly terrorist attacks against America and its people on their own soil.

VIOLENCE ON TV

Studies have been conducted in recent years in an attempt to demonstrate a link between violent images shown on television and an increasing aggression in children. The message seems clear that the more violence children watch on television, the more aggressive they become, especially at school. During the past several years during which violence has been increasing, television executives have objected to the suggestion that there was a link, but it is now admitted by many that the correlation is undeniable.

The psychologist Leonard Eron, who died in May, 2007 at the age of 87 years, conducted a landmark research project during recent years to help establish a link between images shown on television and the rising tide of aggressive behavior in children. His research started a trend that has led to a substantial influence in public interest, but has not had a dramatic effect as yet on government policy. Nearly every major public policy organization that is interested in children's health has opposed exposing children to media violence.

During the early years of Eron's research, the field of mental health was little understood and parents were apprehensive to participate in the study. When it was learned that it only involved simple questions involving the habits of television viewing in young people, parents began to relax. Extensive interviews were conducted involving school age children, and it was found that young boys who showed no evidence of aggressive behavior and watched violent acts on television, were more likely to become aggressive by the time they graduated from high school.

These and other findings of the study were submitted to the Surgeon General who in turn brought them before the Congressional Committee of the United States. This was the start of a long-lasting debate over the matter. Eron continued to observe his subjects as they became adults, and found that some who had developed aggressive traits as younger children had police records for felony assaults, drunk driving and speeding. He also said that aggressive children were more likely to have grown up to work in blue collar jobs, to be unemployed or to have spent time in jail. He pointed out that kids learn a certain behavior pattern that usually sticks with them. Eron's research contradicted the previously held belief that aggressive children grew up to be 'successful go-getters.'

LEARNING RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Prophet Isaiah looked forward in time to the establishment of a new world order under the administration of Christ's future kingdom. Concerning that time he wrote, "In the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isa. 26:8,9

We are blessed by the wonderful promises of God which is 'the desire of our soul' and portrays the ultimate hope for the faithful body of Christ. They will share with Jesus in the great work of raising up the world of mankind in the kingdom. Each called

one has been inspired as reflected in the prophet's words, 'with my soul have I desired thee in the night.' This call has been offered to the footstep followers of our Lord Jesus during the present Gospel Age. It has been a nighttime of sin and death, and the faithful continue to 'seek thee early' as the new millennial morning draws near. The glorified Christ will administer justice—'when thy judgments are in the earth'—and all will be given ample opportunity to walk in the ways of holiness because 'the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.'

IT SHALL COME TO PASS

Our loving Heavenly Father, through the writings of his servant Isaiah, has given us a preview of his ultimate purpose and glory concerning the world of mankind. All peoples and nations of mankind will be taught the ways of Truth and righteousness. In beautiful symbolism, the prophet has thus written, "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."—Isa. 2:2-4

In this wonderful passage of scripture, we are given a glimpse of the time when the last member of the faithful body of Christ will have passed beyond the veil of death into the glorious house of God. The Apostle Paul was speaking of this time when he wrote, "Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. 3:6) Christ's kingdom will be established in the top of the mountains, and will operate as the chief ruling power over all other earthly kingdoms. "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." (Matt. 5:14) The 'house of the God of Jacob' represents the church or the temple of the LORD that will be established over the people of earth.

TWO PHASES OF THE KINGDOM

We also see the two phases of Christ's kingdom as shown in 'Zion'—the spiritual phase of the glorified church—with our Lord as the Head, and the 144,000 faithful members of his body. (Rev. 14:3) The church will administer the law of God, and they will then be in control over the affairs of men for the correction and lifting up of the sin-cursed world of mankind.

'Jerusalem' represents the earthly phase of the kingdom which will be under control of the faithful worthies of old. (Isa. 1:26) The psalmist identifies this group when he wrote, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." (Ps. 45:16) Paul puts in perspective these faithful servants of God who lived before the First Advent of our Lord Jesus. These will be the earthly representatives of the kingdom.

“These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” (Heb. 11:39,40) They will be the earthly ‘princes’ through whom the laws of the kingdom will be taught to the world of mankind.

NO MORE WAR

During the time of Christ’s future kingdom all unrighteousness will be destroyed, and many people will be rebuked. At that time, the nations will learn to beat their weapons of war into ‘plowshares’ to be used for useful and more meaningful purposes. Nothing will hurt nor destroy during the kingdom rule and all unrest will be taken away. The peoples and nations of earth will no more raise their swords against their neighbor and war will cease forever.

NO MORE VIOLENCE

With violence and corruption manifest everywhere in our present world, we yearn for the promised better day of tomorrow when our blessed Lord Jesus and the faithful members of his spiritual bride class will share in blessing all the families of the earth. The prophet pointed forward to that time when he wrote, “Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.”—Isa. 60:18 ■

*“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace,
good will toward men.”—Luke 2:14*

God Created the Heaven and the Earth

Key Verse: *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”*
—*Genesis 1:1,2*

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 1:1-25

THE SETTING OF THIS LESSON takes place during the first day of the creative week—not at the beginning of our universe, but of our planet Earth. Since the word ‘Genesis’ signifies creation, beginning the act of producing or originating, the Bible points out God as the great first cause of all things.

The account of the days of Creation show that the earth was already in existence. It does not tell of the creation of the materials that make up the earth, but it describes the bringing of order out of the matter. A distinction is also made between the creation of the heaven and the earth, and the subsequent regulation and ordering of things.

There was no light in the earth prior to the time when Divine energy moved on the surface of the waters. Since there was no sun, the days were apparently marked by a dull light, which was eventually enough to distinguish day from night. “God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” (vs. 5) The wording of the order of

evening and morning, compares with the Hebrew solar days.

The question may be asked, how was so much accomplished in one day? The scripture says, “Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” (II Pet. 3:8) We understand from this verse that a creative day was not a twenty-four-hour day, and that God counts time much differently than we do. There were six creative days, after which the Lord rested from his work on the seventh day.

During the second day, after creating the atmosphere, God caused the “dry land” to appear. (Gen. 1:7-9) Vegetation began on the third day, although it did not reach perfection of growth until after the light of the sun penetrated the atmosphere. Next, during the fourth day, came the appearance of the sun and the moon. “Let there be lights” (vs. 14), “The greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.” (vs. 16) The implication is that the sun, moon, and stars were created long before, but had never shined their light upon the earth because of the veil around it.

On the fifth day, “God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth, . . . and God saw that it was good.” (vss. 20,21) He next created the “living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.” (vs. 24) During this sixth day, he created the ‘living creature,’ (*Nephesh*, Hebrew for a breathing creature, a sentient being, *Strong’s Bible Concordance*, #5315) It implies a self-conscious life, as distinguished from plants.

It is important to note that our account leaves out entirely the other worlds/planets in our universe. It discusses only the things pertaining to this world, and relates to the ordering of it for human habitation. ■

God Created Humankind

Key Verse: *“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air; and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”*
—**Genesis 1:26**

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 1:26-2:3
Man was created as an earthly image of God. This is expressly declared, and the declaration is confirmed by Christ Jesus, “Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female?” (Matt. 19:4, Mark 10:6) This also shows us that there is a vast difference between mankind and every other living creature that was created. Man possesses a moral

AFTER THE EARTH WAS prepared, God next continued his Creation. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.” (Gen. 1:27) The verse does not say, “the earth or waters brought forth man,” as those who falsely believe in an evolution theory would purpose. “The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” (chap. 2:7) What God formed out of the earth was only a form, man was not yet alive. It would take the life power of God to give it vitality. Man then became “a living soul”—a sentient being capable of sensation, perception, and thought.

consciousness as a free moral agent, the ability to reason, and the ability to make intuitive decisions. These reasoning faculties allowed man to have a sense of justice, to know the difference between right and wrong. Adam was physically, mentally, and morally perfect, satisfactory to God, and created in his image. (Gen. 1:31) He was superior to all other creatures. Then, “God . . . made he a woman.” (chap. 2:22) The object of the creation of Eve was to be a suitable help for man, and for the purpose of the propagation of the race. God blessed them with everlasting life at their command, if they continued in harmony with him.

Like God, man also had a dominion, and it was over “every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” (chap. 1:28) He was given “every herb bearing seed, . . . and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.” (vs. 29) The Garden of Eden was brought to full perfection; the rest of the earth was in the condition that God intended it to be.

The man and woman in Eden were responsible to replenish the earth with a new order—mankind; to subdue the earth for human use; to have dominion over the animal creation; to eat herbs and fruits; to till and keep the garden; and to abstain from eating of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” (chap. 2:17) Mankind was created in innocence, placed in a perfect environment, subjected to a simple test, and warned of the consequences of disobedience. The woman would fall through lack of knowledge, and the man, deliberately. (I Tim. 2:14) It was God’s intention to restore his sinning creatures, but the dispensation of innocence ended in judgment and expulsion from Eden.

We are told that God finished his creative work, and “he rested on the seventh day from all his work.” (Gen. 2:1,2) The physical earth is a good storehouse of blessings, a good place for the exercise of man’s powers, for his discipline and development and for his everlasting home and dominion.—Mic. 4:4-8 ■

Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac

Key Verse: *“Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”*
—Genesis 18:14

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 15:1-6,
18:1-5, 21:1-8

13:16; John 8:37), and in a spiritual posterity, “Look now toward heaven, . . . so shall thy seed be” (Gen. 15:5), referring to a heavenly seed. God appeared to Abram, and changed his name to Abraham, “A father of many nations have I made thee.” (chap. 17:5) Abraham would also come to represent all people who love righteousness and truth.

At this time Sarai, Abraham’s wife, was barren. (chap. 16:1) God told Abraham that she would now be called by a new name, “Sarah.” (chap. 17:15) Her name which signifies ‘princess,’ was fitting because, as the account continues, “she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.” (vs. 16) She was to have a son,

ABRAM WAS TOLD THAT

God was with him, “Fear not, . . . I am thy shield.” (Gen. 15:1) What a wonderful pledge that everything would work out in his life for good because he had faith in God. “When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?” (Job 34:29) It also confirms that a seed was promised who would be fulfilled in a twofold way: in a natural posterity, or to an earthly people, “as the dust of the earth” (Gen.

and Abraham laughed because Sarah was ninety years of age. However, God told him, “Thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant.” (vs. 19) This was also fitting for the name Isaac means ‘laughter,’ and represents the “good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.”—Luke 2:10

Abraham pictures God, Sarah pictures the Abrahamic Covenant, and Isaac signifies Christ Jesus. The name Isaac also symbolizes our joys in the Lord in the present time. “We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.” (Gal. 4:28) The fact that Sarah was barren corresponds to the barrenness of the Abrahamic Covenant for 2000 years. It would begin to have its real fulfillment when the angel of the Lord proclaimed the birth of the Messiah—the long-promised seed of Abraham. (Luke 2:11) As a Savior, he would be the life-giver to the world, having redeemed all from the curse of sin and death.—Isa. 9:6

Abraham had been living in Canaan for a long time, when, at noon, three men who were strangers one day appeared to him. He was quick to show his hospitality, and his wife Sarah joined them. The three men, Abraham afterwards learned, were angels, and one of them was a special messenger of God. (Gen. 18:1-10) “I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment.” (vs. 19) This incident in Abraham’s life concerning Sodom would further show us the loving character of his heart that went out in sympathy to the people of the town, to any who may have been righteous. It also shows us that our Father’s promise of a judgment day for mankind will include the fact that, by Divine arrangement, Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man. (Heb. 2:9) He “gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”—I Tim. 2:6, Acts 17:31 ■

Abraham, Hagar, and Ishmael

Key Verse: *“Also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.”*
—*Genesis 21:13*

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 21:9-21

AS WE HAVE STUDIED DURING our previous lesson, “Abram’s wife bare him no children.” (Gen. 16:1) For this reason, Sarai offered her Egyptian handmaiden Hagar to Abram, and she conceived. This angered Sarai, and she dealt so harshly with Hagar that she fled into the wilderness out of fear. (vss. 4-7) An angel of the LORD spoke to Hagar, and after telling her to return to her mistress assured her with these words, “I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.” (vs. 10) He would also tell her that she would bear a son, “and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.” (vs. 11) Hagar appropriately means ‘flight,’ or ‘cast out.’ The name Ishmael means, ‘God shall hear.’

Hagar returned to the house of her mistress, and gave birth to her son Ishmael. After their return, Isaac would then be born at the appointed time that God had told him that Sarah would bare him a son. After the birth of Isaac, Abraham “made a great feast.” (Gen. 21:8) Sarah, seeing Hagar and Ishmael, “which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said

unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son.” (vss. 9,10) He did as his wife asked, but “the thing was very grievous in Abraham’s sight.” (vs. 11) Hagar again departed into the wilderness, this time taking her son Ishmael with her. She continued for awhile until she ran out of water, and put Ishmael under a bush believing that they both would soon die. Once again an angel of the LORD called to her, and told her, “Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.” (vss. 17,18) God showed her a well of water, and she gave water to her son, and he survived. “God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.” (vs. 20) He would grow to manhood, marry, and continue to dwell in the land of Egypt, in the wilderness of Paran.

During this time, God assured Abraham that Isaac was the promised seed, but he would not forget Ishmael. God would bless him also ‘because he is thy seed.’ We can see how God would fulfill his vow when we look at what is included in his promise. The seed of the bondwoman represents the nation of Israel, and Hagar refers to the Law Covenant. The Apostle Paul explains, “Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.” (Gal. 4:22,23) He continues, “These are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage. . . . But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” (vss. 24,26) It also points out again that Ishmael, although brought forth first, should not be a joint-heir with Isaac, the son of promise. Sarah is the mother of the promised seed, Isaac, which represents Jesus the head, and the church his body. ■

Isaac and Rebekah

Key Verse: *“I bowed down my head, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master’s brother’s daughter unto his son.”*
—*Genesis 24:48*

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 24

WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY DIS- cussed the circumstances pertaining to the promise given to Abraham and Sarah concerning the birth of a son. (Gen. 17:17) The life of Isaac during his growth to manhood was mostly uneventful until, when as a young man, his father was instructed by God to “Take now thy son, . . . and offer him . . . for a burnt offering.” (chap. 22:2) It was a final test upon Abraham’s faith, and would end with God providing a ram to take Isaac’s place. (vss. 3-13)

His submission as a young man to his father shows how much he was devoted to doing his father’s will. Today’s lesson will bring to our attention his meek, patient, and peaceable disposition, and his abiding faith in God and in the promise made to his father Abraham.

The other experience that illustrates his attitude of faith involves the matter of his marriage. Isaac manifested a wonderful degree of patience and trust in Divine providence and guidance, which he had seen firsthand in the affairs of his father.

Isaac was a man of forty years of age when Abraham, apparently without consulting him, sent a servant to select a wife for him. (chap. 24:4-15) The servant

traveled to Mesopotamia, and stopped near the city of Nahor. As he brought his camels to a well of water, a young woman came out to draw water. This woman was Rebekah, and, after she had drawn water, “gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.” (vss. 16-20) The events that took place were an answer to the servant’s prayer, and he offered her a golden earring and two gold bracelets. (vss. 12-14,22) Rebekah ran and told her family what had taken place at the well. Her brother Laban came to the well and invited the servant to their home. His animals were fed, but before Abraham’s servant would eat he would relate to them the reason for his journey. He told them about Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac. He would also tell them about how he met Rebekah, and inquired if she could return with him to his master to become Isaac’s wife. Her parents responded, “Go, and let her be thy master’s son’s wife, as the LORD hath spoken.” (vs. 51) After she returned with the servant, he related to Isaac everything that had taken place. Isaac, “took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her.”—vs. 67

Isaac pictures Christ Jesus, and his submission to his father Abraham shows the Lord’s submission to the Heavenly Father. The servant sent by Abraham to select a bride for Isaac represents the work of the Holy Spirit in calling the church. Rebekah pictures the bride of Christ, who are chosen by God to be joint-heirs in the great promises respecting the world and its blessing. (Rev. 22:17) The beauty of this picture is seen when we recognize the Spirit of the word of Truth, sent forth by God which gathers a people—a little flock—who shall be the Lamb’s bride and will help to fulfill the promises made by God.—Acts 15:14; II Cor. 11:2 ■

I Have Many Things to Say Unto You

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.”

—*John 16:12*

AS JESUS’ EARTHLY MINISTRY was coming to a close, he was very much aware of the anguish and uncertainty that existed in the minds of his

disciples. He promised them that they would soon receive the Holy Spirit, and he used the word “truth” to describe the special gift that would come from our loving Heavenly Father. Jesus further explained, “When he may come, the Spirit of Truth, he will lead you into all Truth; for he will not speak from himself; he will speak whatever he may hear; and declare to you the coming things.”—John 16:13, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*

Many seekers of truth have been confused by the word ‘he’ as it has been used in this scripture that suggests the possibility that the Holy Spirit is an individual. This is not the case, and if the word

‘it’ had been used Jesus’ words would have been more easily understood. Concerning the word ‘he’ we note the following explanation [HE: *Vine’s Dictionary of New Testament Words*]. We read, “This pronoun is generally part of the translation of a verb. Frequently it translates the article before nouns, adjectives, numerals, adverbs, prepositional phrases and the participial form of verbs.” Thus we see that it describes the Holy Spirit of Truth that emanates from God.

PENTECOST

We know that our Lord Jesus was telling his followers that it was his Heavenly Father who would send his Holy Spirit of Truth to enlighten and guide his people. They continued to wait in an attitude of prayer and fasting that was necessary to prepare them for receiving the Spirit. The promise was made manifest fifty days later on the Day of Pentecost even as Jesus had foretold.

Luke has recorded the miraculous scene in fulfillment of the marvelous manifestation of God’s power. “When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost [Holy Spirit, #4151, *Strong’s Bible Concordance*], and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”—Acts 2:1-4

The ‘rushing mighty wind’ shows the powerful and invisible Spirit of God. The ‘cloven tongues’ that

appeared like fire illustrated the light of Truth. This light emanated from a central point and was dispersed to each of the disciples who were gathered together at that time and place. This illumination of the Holy Spirit shows that each one present was received into the body of Christ as sons of God. It also represented the Holy Spirit that would be given to each one of the body of Christ throughout this Gospel Age. The Spirit of Truth that was poured out on the Day of Pentecost began a whole new era of the church class that would be called out of the world during the present age. "He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for he gives not the Spirit by measure."—John 3:34, *WED*

THE THINGS SPOKEN

The things that were spoken of by John (16:13) would be the truths that God would give to the disciples of Jesus. Our Heavenly Father spoke by way of opening the minds of Jesus' followers to an enlightened depth of understanding and appreciation of the Hebrew Scriptures which were until that time largely unknown, and a mystery to them. Having now received the wonderful Spirit of Truth from God, Jesus' disciples began to realize that the recorded prophecies and visions that God had caused to be written by his people in times of old had been shrouded in mystery for ages and generations but were now about to be understood.

PETER SPEAKS TO THE JEWS

The Apostle Peter began to look closer at the prophecies with a deeper appreciation of meaning, and when he rose to speak to the devout Jews who were gathered together he turned to one of the

prophecies of Joel. The enlightenment of this prophecy was for the very purpose of giving vision, hope, and a message of prophetic truth for the Lord's people who were responding to the High Calling in Christ Jesus during the new Gospel Age that was then just beginning. Peter proclaimed, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days [afterward, Joel 2:28], saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy."—Acts 2:16-18

After many centuries of obscurity, this particular portion of God's Holy Word was being unveiled; the descendants of which the prophet had spoken, were the sons and daughters of ancient Israel who were represented in the apostles and other Jewish disciples. They were on hand that very day prophesying and giving public witness to the calling of a new dispensation, the High Calling into Christ. The 'young men' [select men, #970, *Strong's*] were those who were present and had been especially selected by God to interpret the visions and prophecies of old and to reveal their hidden meanings. Joel's prophecy also pointed to the 'old men' [elders, #2205, *Strong's*] who were chosen to 'dream dreams' and to give understanding to the things that had been written in the past. They had once been received from God and written as if in dreams or visions, but now given for instruction to those who were being called as special servants and handmaids of God. This call would ultimately be extended to those

who would be called “out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”—Rev. 5:9

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

Other precious truths from the written Word of God also began to take on new dimensions of meaning. Peter continued, “David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [grave, #7585, *Strong’s*], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.” (Acts 2:25-28) In his discourse, the apostle was quoting the words of the psalmist David (Ps. 16:8-11), and explained that they did not pertain to David himself, but concerned the marvelous and prophetic statement pointing to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

Peter, having considered more closely the written Word of God (Ps. 132:11), explained that David was dead and buried. (Acts 2:29) “Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.” (vs. 30) Peter, then speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of Truth said, “David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself [Ps. 110:1], The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool.” (Acts 2:34,35) The apostle thus applied this verse of scripture to show that Jesus’ kingdom

would not be established at that particular time, but sometime in the future. It would be a heavenly or spiritual government which was a precious truth that had not previously been understood.

THE FUTURE KINGDOM

This realization further confirmed what the Master had said many times during his earthly ministry. On one occasion, Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” (John 18:36) Based on this new and spiritual application, Peter, as spokesman for the apostles, appealed to those who heard him proclaim these newly unveiled truths. He encouraged them to join with him and the Lord’s people, and accept the call to be joint-heirs with Jesus in his heavenly kingdom. The preparation for this future time was to be accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit of Truth and enlightenment that had been received from the Heavenly Father as a special gift for a special purpose.

The question was then asked, “What shall we do?” (Acts 2:37) “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [Holy Spirit, #4151, *Strong’s*].”—vs. 38

This new understanding and appreciation of God’s ultimate purpose that was to be accomplished by the pouring out of his Holy Spirit of Truth, was concluded in Peter’s powerful words which were spoken that day, when he said, “The promise is

unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”—vs. 39

THE MYSTERY

The receiving of truth by way of God’s Holy Spirit was expressed by Paul in his letter to the Corinthian brethren. He wrote, “We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” (I Cor. 2:7,8) The Scriptures which hold the secret and hidden wisdom of God were written in ages past for the edification of the saints who would be called during the present Gospel Age.

No one, including the nation of Israel in whose care the oracles of God had been entrusted (Rom. 3:1,2), understood the ultimate purpose of God that had been written by their prophets many centuries earlier. Supporting this wonderful hope with scripture, Paul quoted from the Prophet Isaiah. “Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.” (Isa. 64:4) This brief observation, which was made approximately 700 years before Jesus’ earthly ministry, ends the prophet’s statement concerning the matter. Paul, who was writing to those for whose glorification the Scriptures were ordained, also added, “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”—I Cor. 2:10

The ‘deep things’ [mysteries] of God are in reality the basic truths of the Bible which reveal to us the various features of his plan that are necessary for our justification and sanctification. This was spoken of by James, who wrote, “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.” (James 1:18) They are called deep or mysterious things because others who have not been enlightened by the Holy Spirit of God do not see them. Paul explains that this special understanding comes through the influence of the Holy Spirit. “What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost [Holy Spirit, # 4151, *Strong’s*] teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”—I Cor. 2:11-13

Through this enlightening process that our loving Heavenly Father brings about in various and individual ways to those whom he has called, the Scriptures are no longer shrouded in mystery and misunderstanding. They now reveal the ‘things that are freely given to us of God’ so that we might conform our lives to his eternal will and purpose.

BASIC TRUTHS

In his letter to the brethren at Ephesus, the Apostle Paul has systematically outlined three basic truths that have been *(Continued on page 35)*

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(Continued from page 31) disclosed to us through God's Word. These form a foundation of knowledge necessary to intelligently yield ourselves to the counsel of his will, and to be sealed thereto with the Holy Spirit of promise. Paul writes, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children [sonship] by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."—Eph. 1:3-6

The apostle expresses the first of these important truths that are so inseparably linked, to the work of the Holy Spirit and the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. He emphasizes that before this present world came into being God foresaw the evil environment of our day and determined to use it as a testing ground for the selection and preparation of his spiritual family. The accomplishment of this wonderful act of grace by the 'good pleasure of his will' required that the called ones would be thoroughly tested and perfected in faithfulness and holiness, being without blame before him in love.

This unique and important feature of God's plan has been concealed from the worldly wise. It is not clearly discerned except by those who, by God's grace are given understanding to "rightly divide the word of truth." (II Tim. 2:15) It was God's purpose that the High Calling be accomplished through

the call and selection from among mankind those who would be willing to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. They would heed his invitation to take up their cross and follow him. In order to do this, they too must be made aware of their calling, and like Jesus they must find in the “volume of the book” (Ps. 40:7) all the scriptures that reveal the hope of their calling, and what is the “riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints” (Eph. 1:18), and what they must do to qualify for such a great reward.

As the great hope of which the Apostle Paul speaks unfolds in his letter to the Ephesians, he points out that a knowledge and appreciation of this truth of the High Calling is essential to the children of God in order to have the Holy Spirit effectively work in their lives toward the achievement of this great and precious promise of God.

A SECOND BASIC TRUTH

Paul points out that a second essential truth necessary for our understanding is redemption through the ransom sacrifice of Jesus. He writes, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.” (Eph. 1:7,8) The ministry of sacrifice by Jesus as a perfect man provided the means that had been arranged by God through which the High Calling is made possible to us.

We have redemption from the fallen condition of inherited sin through faith in Jesus’ precious blood and having received forgiveness of sins we accept the invitation of our Lord—“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his

cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.” (Luke 9:23,24) If we share with him in his suffering, we shall also be partakers of his glory.

No other basic doctrine of Truth has been so carefully and convincingly verified and established in the Word of God as that of our redemption through the ransom sacrifice of Jesus. The well-documented life of Jesus, his dedicated fulfillment of the sacrificial types and prophecies of the Old Testament, and the interpretations by the apostles in their writings, has laid for us a proven foundation of knowledge. This understanding reveals the path of attainment to the High Calling, a knowledge which, if added to with patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity, will make us neither “barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” through which, in giving diligence, we can make our “calling and election sure.”—II Pet. 1:5-8,10

This truth becomes a powerful agency by which the Holy Spirit works out the will of God in the justification and sanctification of all who are called with a knowledge of the Truth. “Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.”—Eph. 1:9

A THIRD BASIC TRUTH

A third feature of truth that has been brought to our attention by the Apostle Paul applies to the object of our calling, and the future work of the church under the administration of Christ’s kingdom.

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”—Eph. 1:10,11

We observe how closely the Scriptures relate to the preparatory experiences of the church toward their ultimate purpose, and for the world’s salvation. This point was expressed by Paul, “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament [covenant]; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”—II Cor. 3:3-6

The New Covenant, to be mediated by the Head and body of Christ, will be the means through which all things in earth will be gathered together and ultimately brought back into harmony with God. Christ and his church, possessing a heart appreciation of God’s law will be able to convey its precepts to the resurrected people of earth in such a way that they too will be caught up in its spirit of righteousness. The world of mankind will learn to love its principles and desire to live by them.

The Law, which was written in the ages of the past and on tables of stone, was never able to bring

life to the people. By coming to love God and his law of righteousness, all things which are in heaven and which are on earth will be gathered together in Christ Jesus. As the Apostle Paul proclaimed, 'In whom also we have obtained an inheritance.'

FOUNDATION TRUTHS

The foundation truths of the Gospel are thus spoken by Paul. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest [pledge] of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." (vss. 13,14) Paul says that this Gospel forms the basis upon which we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, not by hearing only, but by believing. Believing implies understanding and is the foundation for our faith.

In the apostles' day, seals were used to validate contracts or covenants. Our covenant of sacrifice with God, based on our faith in the High Calling, our acceptance of redemption through Jesus, and our desire to suffer with him is validated by God with his seal. This official seal of God is his Holy Spirit of Truth, and as we see its influence working in our lives to help guide us toward the fulfillment of our covenant, it becomes to us an earnest, or pledge, from God. This assures us that if faithful unto death, we shall enter upon our heritage.

The spirit of this marvelous truth is expressed by Paul. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”—Eph. 1:17-23 ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

SEPTEMBER 6—“There shall no evil befall thee.”—Psalm 91:10 (Z. ’03-331 Hymn 293)

SEPTEMBER 13—“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”—Psalm 133:1 (Z. ’03-363 Hymn 143)

SEPTEMBER 20—“Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place,...to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones.”—Isaiah 57:15 (Z. ’03-383 Hymn 120)

SEPTEMBER 27—“Thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy God.”—Matthew 4:7 (Z. ’04-9 Hymn 238)

Precious Memories

*“I will remember
the works of the
LORD.”* **A GOOD MEMORY IS A**
prized possession. It can be
defined as the process of re-

—Psalm 77:11 calling to mind facts previously learned, or past experiences. It involves retaining or reviving in the mind our past thoughts, images and ideas. It may further be looked at as remembrance, recollection, or reminiscence. In the educational setting, and in matters of life in general, we have been shown that repetition of information, study, practice, rehearsal of important facts and concepts, leads to learning. Truly the saying applies, “practice makes perfect.” Our Heavenly Father created man with the ability to remember, and so when Adam was created he had the perfect capacity to remember fully the words of the Father.

To forget, or to be forgetful, is part of the Adamic curse. That is why we must constantly go back to the Lord’s storehouse for more instruction, and to hear more of the Word of God that we would not only hear his instruction but also be receptive to his Word, and teachings. Since we realize the condition

that we are in, we strive to apply the verse, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (II Tim. 2:15) Here we have implied how much we need to do, and how careful we need to be that we are making progress along the lines that would be pleasing to God. We are being urged to ‘study’ to know what God would approve—study the doctrine, study our course of conduct, study our hearts, and study ourselves—that we may know our strengths and weaknesses. We are to then apply what we have learned, being not only a student, but also a doer of his will.

REMEMBERING OUR VOWS

“What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.” (Ps. 116:12-14) These words should be familiar to us all, because they show how we should begin each day with the inquiry as to what are the possibilities of our service or sacrifice. We are really reaffirming our heart’s desire to be, to do, to suffer in fellowship with our Lord. We should desire, by his grace, to make each day the best so far of our Christian lives; each day that of our largest endeavors and largest successes in self-sacrifice. We must make progress in overcoming the world, and the spirit of the world. We are to strive to put down the weaknesses and desires of the flesh, resist the Adversary, and to do all that we can to glorify our Lord and in blessing his people.

Do we daily have the words from Psalm 116 committed to our hearts and minds so that they may become part of our character? May I approach you Father, through your son Christ Jesus my Lord, that I will daily remember at the throne of grace those of like precious faith? “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. . . . And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”—Col. 3:13,15

REMEMBERING OUR FATHER’S GRACE

How precious are our memories? They are so important that we have been told to vow to remember to do the will of God daily in our lives. We owe our all to the Father through his Son as we are told, “To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”—I Cor. 8:6

Remember the words that we are given from the Father, “Ye are not your own, For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (chap. 6:19, 20) Our understanding of this verse shows us that our time, talent, influence, money, and all that we would consider precious, or in any degree valuable, properly belongs to the Lord, even life itself. “Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward

man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”—II Cor. 4:14-18

As we advance as Christians, we should recall life’s experiences, its joys and sorrows. We become stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might by communion with Jesus in spirit. Paul was energized by the message of God’s Word, which spoke to him peace, and a relationship to God through Christ. We have the same favors of God, the same promises of God, the same inspiring hopes that Jesus and the apostles had. Paul’s inward man had the assurance of the Lord that the glories of the future would be proportionate to the trials faithfully endured. Those in the school of Christ can appreciate that the trials that are upon them, are manifestations of Divine favor. The things of this world, and its temptations, are not for those who strive to walk in the Lord’s footsteps.

So thanks be to God our Father that by his grace he has preserved us, kept us from falling each day so far, and that we continue to serve him with our whole heart, so that we may “resist stedfast in the faith.” (I Pet. 5:9) We do trust then that the body of Christ—the spiritual house of Israel—cannot be shaken, because it is firmly founded upon the rock, Christ Jesus. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” (I Pet. 2:5) For those who are walking in

Christ's footsteps, the church class was bought with the precious blood of Christ.

As the church will be the temple of God in his future kingdom, perfect on the heavenly plane, so each member, begotten of the Holy Spirit as a New Creature, should realize that God is dwelling with them and that he has promised, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God." (Rev. 3:12) If we have the Holy Spirit ruling in our mortal bodies, how then can we have other than the peace of God ruling there also.

CONSIDER HIM

Since we are imperfect beings, we need the strength and comfort that comes to us from keeping our minds focused on our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Heb. 12:3) We are being told to study, comprehend, and appreciate his course, his example and teaching. The thought again is to take note of, have in mind, reflect upon, and remember. We are to consider the meekness, patience, and sufferings of Christ which he endured unjustly, and take courage from the life of the beloved Master. In our trials and difficulties, remember what hard experiences in suffering that the Lord endured. We should then be glad that our Lord has invited us to walk in his footsteps, to endure the same experiences, to drink whatever the Father shall pour out for us from his cup. When trying experiences came to him he realized that they were under the supervision of the Father. He told us concerning our experiences, "Be of good

cheer; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33) It is then our desire to faithfully endure to the end as he did.

GOD’S PROMISES

One of the most important things that we can do is to daily lay hold upon the wonderful promises of God. (II Pet. 1:4; I Cor. 15:49; I John 3:1-3) What comes into your mind when God’s promises are recalled? Perhaps they include the words that show that one day, “they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” (Isa. 35:10) It should also include, “Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.” (Heb. 8:11) “The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing.” (Isa. 35:5,6) This scripture points to the joys of physical and spiritual imperfections being removed. Perhaps it is “Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.” (Matt. 13:16) He is speaking of a special group of people, who have given their all to the Lord, “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”—Col. 1:27,28

We are being told that we need to take heed that our heart is entirely being emptied of self-will. This takes daily practice, remembering to put the Lord first in our lives. “That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” (Col. 4:12) We are

being reminded that if we do these things, leading a life pleasing to God, and progressing properly along the narrow way, we will be raised up, going on to glory, honor, and immortality. It is based on a life centered around the thought to, “Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and . . . love thy neighbour as thyself.” (Matt. 22:37,39) Also, “that ye love one another, as I have loved you.” (John 15:12; II John 5) “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.” (Heb. 12:2) “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing [remembering] that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.”—Rom. 5:1-5

Let us focus on verse 4—patience, experience, hope—and especially on experience. First of all, that in the exercise of patience the lessons have made us stronger, and have increased our faith, zeal and gratitude. To recall our experiences concerning God’s love, wisdom, grace, and comfort will further strengthen our confidence in him. The person who would relate an experience of what the Lord has done for them, must at the same time look at what they have done for the Lord.

We should understand that our Christian experience is not sitting down, and letting the Spirit of God work in our hearts, and do nothing. Ardent songs, prayers, and Christian fellowship are not

the only things that are inspiring. Experience is gained by putting off the old man; it is growth in grace, building our character, and striving to keep unspotted from the world. This implies an active service.

Divine love has been shown to us by his grace, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (vs. 8) We remember his teachings, and strive to apply them, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." (Rom. 2:13) We are still in the flesh, but our new mind, through the Holy Spirit grows stronger, firmer, and deeply rooted in faith, for we have put on Christ. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 2:5

To have come into this condition of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ is a wonderful blessing. It means that we have been reconciled to God, and that we are in harmony with him, who loved us first, and called us with this holy calling. Our peace or harmony with God began with our faith, and led to this condition of grace wherein we stand as sons of God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, and rejoicing in the hope of kingdom glory, honor and immortality.

FAITH LEADS TO PEACE

Our path to justification began with the first elements of our faith, when we first saw the Lord, although imperfectly. But then we were privileged to know more of him, and to grow in appreciation of having our feet set upon solid ground. "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that

cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Heb. 11:6) Faith is a real substance, a mental substance, which stimulates and clarifies the mind. This faith leads to the thought of having “peace [rest] with God.” (Rom. 5:1) From the time that we first approached God, recognized that we were sinners, and gave our hearts to him, we began to have a measure of peace. This peace will continue with us as long as we strive to move in the right direction. That direction involves growing in knowledge and obedience, that we enter into this “peace of God, which passeth all understanding.”—Phil. 4:7

We can have this peace, which grows with each onward step of obedience, and continues until we enter into the complete rest and peace with God that lies beyond the veil. Have we let the peace of God enter into our hearts, and into our new minds, into our memory, and are we striving to keep it dwelling there? This can be done through the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. It must be so, for to do any less would not be pleasing to God.

OUR LOVE

And what can we say about love? When we hear the word love, what immediately comes into our mind? One word can be heard that can trigger in us a series of thoughts or memories associated with that word. When we think of love, does a scripture come into our mind? Several scriptures mention love, “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 is love.” (I John 4:8,16); “Love is the fulfilling

of the law.” (Rom. 13:10) “Perfect love casteth out fear.”—I John 4:18

Our narrow way experience, and its resulting precious memories, can be likened to a tree. There is a beginning—a root, then a stem sprouts—it develops and grows. Later, branches are added, and it grows to maturity. We realize that, in the case of the consecrated footstep followers of our Lord, it must continue to be watered with the Truth, until, through the development of all of the graces of the Holy Spirit it reaches the mark of perfect love, and brings forth fruit.

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height.” (Eph. 3:17,18) Love is the spirit of all who are truly members of the body of Christ. Love is a chief matter to be studied, appreciated, and practiced in our lives. Proper growth in knowledge, though, should keep pace with our growth in love. When knowledge serves its proper purpose, it brings us to the appreciation of the love that is of God.

The above verses speak of the importance of our understanding ‘the breadth, and length, and depth, and height’ of God’s plan, and his love, and to have a full comprehension of it as we have been privileged to receive by his grace. It is through his Holy Word that we see the promises that are granted now to “them that believe,” the “little flock.” (Gal. 3:22; Luke 12:32) When proven faithful they shall have made their calling and election sure, and be esteemed worthy to share the throne and glory of the great overcomer, Jesus. This leads to the blessings

of all of the families of the earth through God's perfect law of love.—Gen 28:14

We must remember that all things started out with our Heavenly Father's love, and then included our Lord's love. "Oh God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: . . . Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. . . . When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches." (Ps. 63:1-6) Our heart's desire is to show forth this same character and to demonstrate a love of the Truth, for "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." (Luke 4:4) We also desire to have brotherly love which leads us to perfect love.—Rom. 12:10

GIVING OUR ALL

Consider the words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) It implies that our giving must be willing and voluntary. Paul was glad to know that the Father was working with him, as he expressed, "I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation." (II Cor. 7:4) Our loving Heavenly Father desires that we are giving constantly for the good of others, as he gives to us from his storehouse of grace and truth. "God loveth a cheerful giver." (II Cor. 9:7) An example of this is found in "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." (I Thess. 1:3,4) Again, the words, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a

man lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13) Our Lord spoke these words after he gave the commandment that we love ‘one another as I have loved you.’

The laying down of our Lord’s life was accomplished day by day, moment by moment, in healing the sick, in teaching and instructing his disciples. He said, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” (John 15:14) If we submit our wills completely to his will, he reckons us as ‘friends.’ We go on to grow and develop by following Jesus. It means that we walk in his paths, and strive to do as nearly as we are able what he would have us do each day, taking our lessons from what he did and the instructions he left—“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” (Luke 9:23) “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” (John 6:63) He also asked the Father, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”—chap. 17:17

The Apostle John tells us, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (I John 1:3-7) It appears that he wants us to commit these

things to our precious memories because of the great importance of these words.

Paul says, "I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, . . . Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." (Phil. 4:3,4) The church is the one whose names are written on heavenly scrolls, because they secured Divine favor, and have their names written in God's book of remembrance, his book of life. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—I John 3:2

OUR LORD'S MEMORY

What about the memory of the Lord? Our Lord's statement "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58), serves to identify the man Christ Jesus with his previous condition as the Logos (#3056, *Strong's Bible Concordance*: Greek, the Word, the name of Jesus) before he was "made flesh, and dwelt among us." (John 1:14) So it signifies and positively identifies Jesus, the Son of God in the flesh, with the Logos, the firstborn of all Creation. Originally, he was on the spirit plane. Later, he lived and he died on the earthly plane. At his resurrection, he was made alive on the spirit plane, and then exalted far above angels, principalities, and powers. (Eph. 1:21) He is the same today although he has been received to the spirit plane. He says, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." (Rev. 1:18) It was his knowledge of the heavenly things, his intimate and long acquaintance with the Father, which enabled him as a perfect man to overcome

the world, and present an acceptable sacrifice for our sins.

The memory of things past is still with our Lord. He has experienced existence in three different natures. The first was as a high order of spirit being as the first creation of God, the Logos (John 1:1); secondly, was as a human being (Heb. 5:9); and thirdly, was as the glorified Lord having the Divine nature. (Eph. 1:20,21) The life principle and identity of the Logos was transferred to a lower nature, the human, the man Jesus. As a man, his recollection of prehuman experiences was preserved. He could appreciate his former glory. Our Lord's memory was active at the age of twelve, when he was found questioning the teachings of the Jewish elders in the Temple. (Luke 2:46) This implies that, although he had remembrance of certain things, he was not born with the knowledge of all of his previous experiences. When, at the age of thirty, he consecrated himself to the Father, symbolized by his baptism in the river Jordan, he received this knowledge through the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord, in his prehuman condition as a spirit being, was not called Jesus. This name was given at his birth as a human being. He became Jesus Christ at his baptism. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." (Isa. 53:11) He realized the full importance of this at his consecration, and finished doing so at his crucifixion.

What comfort to our minds, and memories, "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30) Jesus and the Father are in harmony, although not one in person, because Jesus always did the will of his Father. It

also shows that the unchangeableness on God's part is a guarantee that the blessings to be bestowed under his arrangements will be everlasting, unending blessings. God's attributes: his wisdom, justice, mercy, love, and power are the same today as they were in the beginning of Creation. Our Lord has promised to remember us, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28) This assurance is given to those who are called to the one hope, and one calling.

Memory appears to be a means of identification of our personality, of our character. Not many wise or noble are called according to the flesh. (I Cor. 1:26) "I thank thee, O Father, . . . because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt. 11:25) Continuing from Matthew, chapter 11, "Ye shall find rest unto your souls." (vs. 29) These verses speak of those of a contrite heart who desire to be teachable, taught of God, and to learn his ways of truth. The Lord is seeking only the meek, the humble-minded, those who are willing to learn of him and to have their minds transformed and conformed to the pattern most pleasing to the Lord.

NONE RIGHTEOUS

None measure up to the glorious image of God, as first it was represented in father Adam. The Apostle Paul tells us, "There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10) All come short of God's standard, and need Divine mercy. We do also realize that those whom the Lord is calling are covered under his "robe of righteousness." In this manner, he covers our unwilling imperfections.—Isa. 61:10

We are told, "The memory of the just is blessed: . . . The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life" (Prov. 10:7,11), and "He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction." (vs. 17) Those who are just, keep in memory God's instructions, and use them to serve him and the cause of truth and righteousness. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath." (II Cor. 8:12) The Lord hath promised, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." (Isa. 26:3) The word 'stayed' has many definitions, but the one that appears most fitting is to remain through or during. It implies the ability to overcome or endure, that our minds are again being kept full of the precious promises of God. A mind full of his Word then causes us to ask if we are doing all that we can to have it stay there until this present life with its joys, trials, and experiences is over.

In the meantime, we can daily see how much our Father loves us. He gives us help with our remembering, as he did long ago when he gave us the rainbow covenant in Genesis 9:15, and the covenant that he made with Abraham, "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 12:3

God gave us the lesson of the Passover of the children of Israel. (Exod. 12:8) The term Passover signifies to pass by or to spare from affliction, showing us that faith in the precious blood is the only ground of acceptance with God. We are then told as a basis for remembering the sacrifice of our Saviour concerning the Lord's Supper when he said, "This do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19) He wants us to remember the giving of his life, and at what great cost the redemption of the world from sin

and death was obtained. Our Lord also wants his followers to remember their own vow of consecration that should be renewed each day, and their share in putting their own sacrifice on the altar and keeping it there daily.

OUR COMMISSION

Let us bring this study to a close with a couple of scriptures that further point to the goal that each of us has, and the focus of our thoughts today. “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour.” (II Pet. 3:1,2) He was referring to their work of encouraging, and being used fully in the Lord’s service. This was reflected in the words, “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”—Phil. 4:8

We should stir up each other’s minds toward growth and development in good works. We are assisted in this endeavor by the provisions the Lord has made which give us the capacity to remember. Thus, we should be determined to do those things of spiritual importance, honest things that would edify the body members, and give praise and glory to God. “We should remember the poor” (Gal. 2:10), that this time of sorrow for the world will soon turn to unspeakable joy, and remember those going

through difficult trials and experiences. We should always make a point to pray for one another, and take advantage of opportunities we have for study, fellowship, and communion.

Strive always to develop your precious memories of God's love, of his blessings, of those who we have the privilege of walking with now as members of the body of Christ. Remember the wonderful promises of God, and that he is a faithful Father who through his Son has vowed, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Heb. 13:5) Keep the loving memories of those who have walked this narrow way before, and are no longer with us, near to your heart.

Let us continue to put God first in our lives, giving thanks for his providential care and overruling of all of our interests for our highest welfare. ■

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Faye Rush, Tucson, AZ—May 20. Age, 84

Sister Flora Burke, Budrim, Queensland, Australia—
May 24. Age, 99

Sister Veronica Wallace, Lara, Victoria, Australia—July
15. Age, 79

Sister Penny Taylor, Boise, ID—July 21. Age, 80

Jim Blackman, Salem, OR—July 23.

A Symbolic Rock

IN DEUTERONOMY 32:4, Jehovah is referred to as a “Rock.” In I Corinthians 10:4, we read concerning the rock from which Moses secured water in the wilderness, “that Rock was Christ.” Does this not prove that Jehovah and Christ are the same person?

A rock is used in both these references in a symbolic manner. The texts do not mean that Jehovah was actually a rock, or that Jesus was a literal rock. In II Samuel 22:2, David is quoted as saying of God, “The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer.” Each of these expressions is used to depict the great strength of the LORD, and his saving ability. They do not in the remotest sense imply that the word ‘rock’ is applied exclusively to the Creator.

The rock in the wilderness from which water was obtained for the Israelites is referred to by Paul as a “spiritual rock,” the reason being that it was by the unseen, miracle-working power of God that water gushed forth from it. Paul’s explanation, ‘that Rock was Christ,’ simply means that it was symbolic of Christ, and the life-giving waters he came to provide.

Paul also refers to the manna which fell in the wilderness as “spiritual meat,” and for the same

reason. (I Cor. 10:3) It was not provided in a natural way, but by an unseen and unexplained miracle.

Jesus himself drew a lesson from this. We read, "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." And then Jesus added, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."—John 6:31-35 ■

"I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his Word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning."—Psalm 130:5,6

In every experience of sorrow and distress, . . . let the child of God remember that he "knows, and loves, and cares," and that his ministering angel is ever near us, and that no trial will be permitted to be too severe. The dear Master is standing by the crucible, and the furnace heat will never be permitted to grow so intense that the precious gold of our characters shall be destroyed, or even injured. Ah no! If by his grace the experiences may not work for our good they shall be turned aside. He loves us too well to permit any needless sorrow, any needless suffering.

—Songs in the Night, September 25

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

QUESTION: If the earth is not to be destroyed, please explain II Peter 3:10.

ANSWER: II Peter 3:10 reads, “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”

In verses five and six we read, “By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.” The words ‘heaven,’ ‘earth,’ and ‘world,’ are used in connection with the destruction wrought by the Flood. Certainly neither the literal heavens nor the literal earth were then destroyed. But the world, or social order symbolized by these, was destroyed.

Likewise, it is a symbolic ‘heavens’ and ‘earth’ that is destroyed. In the place of the social order symbolized by these, will be established the Kingdom of Christ symbolized as a “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (vs. 13) God has established the literal earth that it may be man’s everlasting home.—Isa. 45:18; Eccles. 1:4; Matt. 5:5 ■

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SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

M. Balko

Clay City, IN September 28-30

S. Jones

Clay City, IN September 28-30

The speakers listed below, in cooperation with the Dawn, are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:

A. Allers

Seattle, WA September 1-3

P. Mali

New York, NY September 1-3

J. Black

Seattle, WA September 1-3

J. Moore

Seattle, WA September 1-3

M. Brann

Seattle, WA September 1-3

J. Mottie

Clay City, IN September 28-30

B. Clark

Clay City, IN September 28-30

D. Rice

Seattle, WA September 1-3

M. Ensley

Seattle, WA September 1-3

R. Sconyers

St. Petersburg, FL September 2

J. Freer

Seattle, WA September 1-3

D. Stein

New York, NY September 1-3

L. Griehs

Seattle, WA September 1-3

B. Sweeney

Seattle, WA September 1-3

S. Jeuck

New York, NY September 1-3

G. Tabac

New York, NY September 1-3

E. Kalinski

Janesville, WI September 30

T. Thomassen

Seattle, WA September 1-3

B. Keith

Clay City, IN September 28-30

C. Willis

Clay City, IN September 28-30



CONVENTIONS

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

JACKSON LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 1,2—Fa-Ho-Lo Camp and Conference Center, 3000 Mt. Hope Road, Unit 1, Grass Lake, MI 49240. Contact R. Lumley. Phone: (517) 782-7252

NEW YORK LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 1,2—Doubletree Hotel Mahwah, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NJ 07430. Phone: (201) 529-5880. Contact D. Szybinski, 250 West 102 Street, 1A, New York, NY 10025. Phone: (212) 998-2095

SEATTLE LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 1,2,3—Seabeck Christian Conference Center, Seabeck, WA. Contact L. Flinn, PO Box 67, Pacific, WA 98047-0067. Phone: (253) 939-9838

COLUMBUS, INDIANA CONVENTION, September 15,16—Dan Ledwinda Farm, 10004 E. 550 North, Columbus, IN 47203. Contact D. Ledwinka. Phone: (812) 546-5276

CLAY CITY CONVENTION, September 28,29,30—McCormicks Creek State Park, Clay City, IN 46240. Contact S. Clark, 7861 Clearwater Highway, Indianapolis, IN 46240.

DETROIT CONVENTION, September 30—Best Western Southfield Inn, 26111 Telegraph, Southfield, MI. Contact F. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, September 30—Auditorium, 406 Irving Drive, Burbank, CA 91504. Contact R. Bieniak. Phone: (949) 457-0894

PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, October 6,7—Sewicky Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA. Contact G. Balko, Jr., 1300 High Street, West Newton, PA 15089. Phone: (724) 872-6418

GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 13,14—Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact J. Houlmont, 6825 Clubhouse Drive West, Canadian Lakes, MI 49346. Phone: (231) 972-4259

DETROIT/METRO DETROIT JOINT GATHERING, October 21—Pleasant Ridge Community Center, 4 Ridge Road, Pleasant Ridge, MI. Contact F. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 27,28—Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Drive (Corner of Hwy. 17-92), Sanford, FL. Contact J. Kuenzli, 330 Jasmine Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 831-2098

PHOENIX CONVENTION, December 29,30,31—La Quinta Inn, 2510 W. Greenway Road, Phoenix, AZ 85203. Contact J. Porcolab, PO Box 5432, Sun City West, AZ 85376. Phone: (602) 363-2612

SOUTHWEST WINTER CONVENTION, February 23-25—Sunnyslope High School, 35 West Dunlap Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85021. Contact A. Mengos. Phone: (480) 390-3767

FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 8,9,10—Hilton Orlando Altamonte Springs, 350 S. North Lake Blvd., Altamonte Springs, FL 32701. Contact S. Jeuck, 471 Kentia Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 834-7592

COLUMBUS PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, March 22,23—Location TBA. Contact T. Alexander, 3278 Foxcroft Drive, Lewis Center, OH 43035. Phone: (614) 519-8282

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To us the Scriptures clearly teach:

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

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

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

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

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

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