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**SPAIN:** El Alba, Via S. Leonardo 21, Ottaviano 80044 Napoli, Italy

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

*The "Day" of the LORD is a period of time in which the LORD intervenes in the affairs of men to reestablish the sovereignty of his will throughout the earth.*

### THE "DAY OF THE LORD"

*"Of the times and the seasons, brethren,  
ye have no need that I write unto you.*

*For yourselves know perfectly that  
the Day of the LORD so cometh as a thief in the night.*

*For when they shall say, Peace and safety;  
then sudden destruction cometh upon them,  
as travail upon a woman with child;  
and they shall not escape.*

*But ye, brethren, are not in darkness,  
that that day should overtake you as a thief.*

*Ye are all the children of the light,  
and the children of the day:  
we are not of the night,  
nor of darkness.*

*—1 Thessalonians 5:1-5*

**W**HEN OUR FIRST parents disobeyed God's law, he drove them out of the garden home prepared for their enjoyment and life, and cast them off from his favor. As the human race increased in number, the growing selfishness of the people led them further and further from God; and as Paul explains, the Creator "gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts." (Rom. 1:21-32) Throughout the thousands of years of human experience God has interfered but little with the race, and then only when it was necessary in order that the preparatory features of his plan of salvation might go forward without interruption.

God has permitted evil to reign so that the human race might learn by actual experience the terrible results of disobedience to divine law. The LORD explains this, saying, "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself." But he continues, "Now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once." (Isa. 42:14) It is the period following the time when the LORD has 'refrained' himself that Paul designates in our text as the Day of the LORD—the day when the LORD takes action against a sinful world, the result of which, according to Paul, is 'sudden destruction' (I Thess. 5:3); and according to God's own statement through the Prophet Isaiah, a time when he will 'destroy and devour at once'.

Ordinarily we consider the works of the LORD as being those of goodwill and peace. If we think of him at all in connection with trouble, we are prone to ask, Why does God allow experiences of this kind? For this reason it might at first seem strange that the Day of the LORD should be one of destruction, and that the LORD himself should be a destroyer, yet this is the way the matter is presented to us in the Scriptures.

However, the reason for this is not difficult to discover. Divine intervention in human affairs is to put down rebellion against the Creator's will and to destroy all the works of selfishness. This will be completed through the thousand-year reign of Christ, and we are assured by the Apostle Paul that Christ must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet, with death as the last enemy to be destroyed.—I Cor. 15:25,26

## THE KINGDOM POWER

The 'Day' of the LORD is the period during which the long-promised kingdom of Christ will manifest itself among men and ultimately dominate in human affairs. For this reason the prophecies associate the Second Coming of Christ with this Day, for it is the time during which Jesus, as 'King of kings and Lord of lords' will be-

come the undisputed ruler of earth, his return and Second Presence among men being for this purpose.

As this 'Day' of the LORD is in reality many centuries long, the prophecies outlining the divine purposes appertaining to it vary widely in the events they portray, yet they are all harmonious when studied in their proper sequence and relationship to one another. As we have seen, the ultimate objective of the Day of the LORD is the destruction of death, which will, of course, mean the end of sickness and pain, and the wiping away of tears from off all faces. This goal of accomplishment will not be attained until near the close of the Day of the LORD; so it is not contradictory to this thought to find prophecies relating to the beginning of the Day of the LORD descriptive of worldwide destruction and death, that the "slain of the LORD" will in that day be from one end of earth to the other; and that "all the tribes of the earth shall mourn because of him."—Jer. 25:33; Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7

Another group of prophecies portray the Day of the LORD as a time of general enlightenment concerning God and his will for the people, as well as the joy and blessings which will result from the doing of his will. The "sun of righteousness" shall arise "with healing in his wings," declares Malachi. (Mal. 4:2) The "books" of divine revelation shall be opened, the Revelator assures us. (Rev. 20:12) "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea," the prophets Isaiah and Habakkuk write.—Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14

Yes, ultimately the Day of the LORD will be a bright day indeed—bright with the knowledge of God, and with blessings of joy and health and life. But not at the start, for concerning the beginning of that period we read that it is "a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains." (Joel 2:2) The early dawn of the Day of the LORD is a day of darkness and gloominess because it is a

day of trouble upon all nations, a time when, according to our text, "sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child."

While the Day of the LORD is a time when he is "King over all the earth," the prophet describes it as a period when "the light shall not be clear, nor dark." However, of that same day, the prophet explains that "at evening time it shall be light." (Zech. 14:6-8) Here we have the Day of the LORD described as one which becomes progressively light until its close, at which time it is fully light—the blessings of the kingdom having permeated to the remotest corners of the earth, enlightening the minds and hearts of all people and giving them an opportunity to enjoy the blessings of health and life provided for them through the redemptive work of Christ, and reaching them through his kingdom reign.

It is only as we recognize the Day of the LORD as being a long period of time during which sin, selfishness, and death are destroyed, that we can find harmony in the prophecies relating to the Second Coming of Christ and its purpose. At the beginning of that Day, practically all mankind and the institutions of men are out of harmony with God. It is not God's plan to reform institutions and governments. Jesus illustrated this by his parable concerning the unwisdom of putting new wine in old wineskins. (Matt. 9:16,17) For this reason the kingdoms of this world are set aside to make room for earth's new ruler. The Revelator explains it saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our LORD, and of his Christ."—Rev. 11:15

The prophetic picture is seen to be that of a new ruler—the "King of kings," the "Prince of Peace"—taking over the rulership of the nations. And the Revelator declares that in connection with this enforced transfer of sovereignty the nations are angry, and that also it is the time when God's "wrath is come." (Rev. 11:18) It is important to note in this connection that God's wrath is associated with the angry condition of the nations, for

both these viewpoints are set forth in many of the prophecies pertaining to the destruction which comes upon a world order at the beginning of the Day of the LORD.

## A "DAY OF VENGEANCE"

The early morning hours of the Day of the LORD—the prophetic hours of darkness and gloominess—are depicted as a "day of vengeance" upon the nations. (Isa. 34:8; 13:4-13) "Wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." (Zeph. 3:8) In this colorful description of destruction upon a world order, the LORD makes it clear that he takes the responsibility for it, that he gathers the nations and pours upon them the devouring fires of trouble.

This is in keeping with the prophecy of Revelation 16:13-16. Here we are told of the thief-like return and presence of Christ in association with a gathering of the nations "to the battle of that great day of God Almighty," the gathering to be "into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon." The term Armageddon signifies 'height of Megiddo', which historically, was a 'mount of destruction', so the general intent of this prophecy is to show that the nations are gathered for destruction.

We have seen from the prophecy of Zephaniah that the LORD gathers the nations, but the prophecy of Revelation 16:13-16 speaks of three "unclean spirits like frogs," "spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." This does not contradict the thought that the LORD does the gathering of the nations, but merely explains that he overrules their selfish desires and efforts, to accomplish his purpose. As the prophet explains, in this way does God make the wrath of man to praise him.—Ps. 76:10

The nations are gathered unto the "battle of the great day of God Almighty," and "into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon." This particular 'place' was a famous battleground during that period when God was dealing with his ancient people, Israel; and the prophetic allusion to it in connection with the 'battle of the great day of God Almighty' is for the purpose of illustrating certain principles in connection with that final struggle of the nations.

Armageddon is not the only battlefield of history to which is attached a certain symbolic meaning. The mere mention of Waterloo, for example, conjures up in our minds the thought of defeat; Pearl Harbor, of a sneak attack. Armageddon, therefore, is a term strongly implying destruction. Besides, God took a definite hand in Israel's battles which were fought at Armageddon. The general picture is of a struggle in which God takes part to assure victory for the right, and the destruction of all that opposes right.

The Armageddon symbol of destruction is only one of the many employed in the Scriptures to illustrate the day of God's wrath upon the nations. In our theme text (I Thess. 5:1-3), Paul speaks of the 'sudden destruction' which comes upon the nations in this Day of the LORD, and says that it would come as 'travail upon a woman with child'. Travail is not a symbol of destruction. The apostle is merely using it to illustrate the manner in which the destruction of the Day of the LORD would come upon the nations; and the meaning of the illustration is clear; namely, that the trouble comes in spasms, with periods of easement between.

Israel participated in many battles in the place called Armageddon. In most of these God gave them the victory. But which one of these particular battles does the LORD allude to as being especially illustrative of the 'battle of the great day of God Almighty'? Inasmuch, as the term Armageddon indicates destruction, and the Scriptures explain that the destruction of the Day of the LORD would come in spasms, we think it is reasonable to believe

that the LORD would have us draw a lesson from *more than one* of those typical battles of Armageddon.

While God fought for Israel in many of those ancient battles, he did not always do it in the same way. One of those Armageddon struggles was on the occasion when Gideon and his three hundred men defeated the Midianites. In this case, through the strategy given to Gideon by the LORD, the Midianites were turned one against another, thus destroying themselves. On other occasions there were miraculous demonstrations of God's intervention.

But whether it was by causing confusion among Israel's enemies or by other means, God took part in those struggles and assured victory for his people when it was his will. So it is in each spasm of the great "time of trouble" by which this "present evil world" is destroyed. (Dan. 12:1; Gal. 1:4) All of them are manifestations of God's wrath against the nations, although his strategy in bringing about their destruction varies as the spasms become more severe and the periods of easement between them, shorter.

In the opening convulsion of trouble, God turns the forces of evil against one another, as he did in the case of the Midianites. This is clearly shown in Isaiah 42:13, which reads, "The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war; he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies." Note the expression, 'He shall stir up jealousy'. It is in this way that the LORD prevails against his enemies, so far as this prophecy is concerned.

But evidently this is not true of all the phases of destructive trouble incident to this Day of the LORD. In Ezekiel 38:22,23 is described what apparently is the final spasm of the trouble, a struggle that seemingly is concentrated against the fleshly house of Israel in connection with their reestablishment in their homeland of Israel. And here we read a description of what might well turn out to be a miraculous demonstration of divine power

against the enemies of Israel, a demonstration the meaning of which is so obvious that the eyes of many nations will be opened to recognize the glory of the LORD.

The first military spasm of trouble came upon the nations in 1914. There was a worldwide economic 'seizure' in 1929, followed by another worldwide military convulsion in 1939. The present period of partial easement from worldwide conflict continues, although with wild-fires continuing to break out all over the globe. But nothing that has occurred thus far has caused the nations to realize that God is in any way interfering in their affairs. To date, in fact, the general tendency has been for the trouble to drive the masses of the people farther away from God. They do not yet discern the meaning of what is occurring in the earth. The Day of the LORD has indeed come as a thief in the night.

But in I Thessalonians 5:4 the apostle explains that the Day of the LORD and its destruction would **not** come upon the true followers of Christ as a "thief in the night." This is because we have the "sure word of prophecy" to guide us in understanding the prophetic significance of what is taking place. (II Pet. 1:19) That which is thief-like and unknown to the world, is discerned by the 'watchers'. They see in the 'crumbling thrones of earth' a sure token that the Day of the LORD has come, and that soon the life-giving blessings of his kingdom will become available to the sin-cursed and dying race.

### "IN THE WHICH"

The Apostle Peter writes concerning the Day of the LORD in language very similar to that employed by Paul in our text. ( I Thess. 5:1-3) He also says that it was to come as a "thief in the night," and then adds, "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." (II Pet. 3:10) It is well to note in reading this prophecy that the apostle places the destruction of the 'heavens'

and 'earth' and the melting of the 'elements' within the Day of the LORD, not previous thereto.

To appreciate the weight of the apostle's argument it is essential to refer back to the verses in which he prophesies that in the "last days" some would raise the question, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation." (II Pet. 3:4) The words 'coming' and 'promise' are not the best translations of the original Greek words used by apostle in this prophecy. The correct words are 'presence' and 'evidence', or 'assurance'.

No one questions the fact the Scriptures promise the Second Coming of the Lord. Jesus himself said, "If I go . . . I will come again." (John 14:3) But inasmuch as his return was to be as a 'thief in the night', unknown to all except his faithful 'watchers', Peter, by prophetic vision, foresaw that, even after Jesus returned and the Day of the LORD had actually dawned, some would doubt the truth of his being present, and would ask for the proof—the assurance he had come, in view of the fact that since the fathers fell asleep all things continued as they have been since the time of Creation.

This language of the apostle is found to be pregnant with meaning when examined critically. Note the expression, 'Since the fathers fell asleep'. The 'fathers' of Israel were the ones to whom God had spoken through his prophets and to whom the many promises of the Messiah and his kingdom had been made. It was Peter himself who explained that what God had promised by the mouth of his holy prophets was "times of restitution of all things." And he also explained that the fulfillment of these promises would follow the Second Coming of Christ. —Acts 3:19-21

It seems clear then, as Peter explains it, that the difficulty some have in discerning the true meaning of present world events is that they have concluded that the Day of the LORD has not come because there is no

evidence of restitution blessings. How could this be the Day of the LORD, the day of his presence, when there is so much trouble in the world? Where is there any evidence that the LORD is interested in the people? It is this very question that is being asked by some today, even by some who claim to be students of the prophecies.

Peter's answer to this objection is most revealing. He says that they are willingly ignorant of a very important factor in this matter, and then uses an illustration of it; namely, the ending of the world of Noah's day by the coming of the Flood. In using this illustration the apostle is following the same line of argument employed by the Master when the disciples asked him what would be the sign of his presence and of the end of the age. Jesus explained, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man."—II Pet. 3:5,6; Luke 17:26

This illustration shows that the opening years of the Day of the LORD were not to be peaceful, but calamitous. The 'day' of Noah embraced the years before the Flood "while the ark was a preparing," and also the remaining years of his life after the Flood. (I Pet. 3:20) He lived through a transition period from one world to another; the old world, the "world that then was," being brought to a full end by the Flood.—II Pet. 3:6

After employing this illustration of the Day of the LORD, Peter continues, "But the heavens and earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." (II Pet. 3:7) In other words, just as the world before the Flood came to an end in the days of Noah and as a result of the Flood, so the present world, according to the Word of God, comes to an end in the Day of the LORD, and as result of a great time of trouble symbolized by 'fire'.

It is the climax of this argument that the apostle presents in the 10th verse where he writes, "But 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." In the 13th verse the apostle adds, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Peter explains that what some insist upon seeing before they will believe that we are in the Day of the LORD, will surely come, but not until after the destruction of the present evil world, as illustrated by the Flood which destroyed the 'world that then was'.

So the apostle confirms, even as other prophecies reveal, that the sequence of events in the Day of the LORD is, first, spasms of destructive trouble destroying a world order, followed by the establishment of a new world—the world to come "wherein dwelleth righteousness." (II Pet. 3:13) Yes, the early morning hours of the Day of the LORD are dark. The storm clouds of war, revolution, and economic upheaval are ominous, and finally burst with devastating fury upon the selfish institutions of men, leveling them in preparation for the inauguration of God's new world.

## MELTING ELEMENTS

The 'heavens' and the 'earth' which are destroyed are, of course, symbolic. The literal earth "abideth forever." God has "established it"; he "created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited." (Eccles. 1:4; Isa. 45:18) As symbols, the 'heavens' and 'earth' represent the spiritual and material aspects of the now crumbling order of things. It is a very apt illustration because, just as the literal heavens exercise a certain controlling influence over life on the physical earth, so the civil institutions of men have been more or less dependent upon the religious viewpoints of the people as an influence to keep the masses in check.

But in the cataclysmic spasms of trouble which break upon the world in this Day of the LORD, these various elements of society—religious and civil—disintegrate; or as Peter puts it, they 'melt'. The Greek word used by the

apostle and translated "elements," is the same as that employed by the Apostle Paul when he admonished the Early Church not to be entangled with the weak and beggarly 'elements' of this world. (Gal. 4:3,9) Paul's reference is clearly to the elements of society as they existed at that time—Judaism, paganism, etc.—and not to rocks and mountains of the literal earth.

Among the many signs which Jesus gave of the time of his presence and the Day of the LORD, was his statement that the "powers of the heaven shall be shaken." (Luke 21:26) This indicates that the time would come in the disintegrating processes of the present evil world when ecclesiastical controls would be broken, accelerating a general breaking down, or melting, of all the 'elements' of society. If we are now living in the Day of the LORD there should be some evidence that the symbolic 'heavens' are passing away, and that all the various 'elements' of civilization are melting. It is apparent, we think, that such is the case.

A moment's reflection upon what has occurred since 1914 bears out this conclusion. Think of Russia, and the many other parts of Europe, which prior to 1914 were virtually ruled by the church through the civil powers. Anti-religious forces gradually spread over all the lands; and with that spread the people were temporarily held in restraint by dictatorships of one form or another. Now even these dictatorships have been overthrown, and, in many cases, some form of democracy is being embraced. But everywhere chaos is developing; in many countries, nothing but military force can keep it in check; and we wonder daily what will happen next.

Even in Great Britain, and according to an admission of an official committee appointed by the Church of England, the masses of the people have lost practically all respect for religious standards by which they were once controlled. In the place of these standards there has developed a sort of moral anarchy in which everyone decides what is right and wrong upon the basis of what

suits his own convenience and taste. This condition is not limited to Great Britain, but is true, in varying degrees, in the United States and the world over.

Look at the present world order from whatever standpoint we will, and we find the same chaotic condition, the same lack of cohesion among the various elements, political, national, and religious. The pledged word no longer stands. Governments, politicians, labor parties, and capitalists, all make promises, but break them when it suits their purposes to do so. Yes, what was once called civilization is indeed breaking down under the impact of one after another of the spasms of destructive trouble which are coming suddenly upon the world during this Day of the LORD.

But as Christians who accept the sure word of prophecy, we can take the position mentioned by the psalmist when he said, "Therefore will not we fear, though the [symbolic] earth be removed." (Ps. 46:2) That destruction of this Day of the LORD which has already been wrought, and the further devastation threatened, have brought distress and fear to the people. They want "peace and safety," and continue to plan for it, but the destruction continues, and will continue until, in the final paroxysm of destruction, in which the Jews will be particularly involved, the eyes of the contending forces will be opened to behold the glory of the LORD and to recognize that he has taken control of earth's affairs.

From then on, the kingdom forces of righteousness will become more and more apparent in the affairs of men. One of the first great miracles of that day will be the resurrection of the ancient prophets and other worthy ones of past ages. These will become "princes in all the earth," representing the divine Christ. (Ps. 45:16) Finally, all nations will say, "Let us go up to the mountain [kingdom, government] of the LORD, . . . and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."—Micah 4:1-4

Before the entire thousand years of the Day of the LORD are over, the "new heavens and a new earth"—the

heavenly and material phases of Christ's kingdom—will have put down all unrighteousness, and destroyed all the works of sin and selfishness. Sickness and death will be no more, and the dead will be awakened and given a full opportunity for life. In view of this, what a blessed thing it is to know that the present world disintegration is evidence that already the Day of the LORD has dawned, and that the conquering Christ has already begun the work of destroying the enemies of God and of righteousness—the kingdoms of this world being the first to go down before his onward march. ■

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# INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

## LESSON FOR OCTOBER 2

### ISRAEL'S TRAGIC PATTERN OF LIFE

**KEY TEXT:** *"The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger."—Judges 2:11,12*

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Judges 2:11-19*

**P**RIOR TO THE First Advent of Jesus, Israel was the only nation which enjoyed the distinction and the blessing of having Jehovah as its God. To that nation the LORD said, "You only have I known of all the families [or nations] of the earth." (Amos 3:2) The Israelites were also the only people whom God had chosen for his "own inheritance."—Ps. 33:12

However, this honored position of Israel as the specially chosen people of God was tentative, and in order for it to be made permanent it was essential that the nation prove its fidelity to God and to his laws. On this point the LORD said to the nation: "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed,

ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."—Exod. 19:5,6

The nation was blessed indeed to enjoy this favored relationship to God. Paul calls attention to this by asking, "What advantage then hath the Jew?" His reply is, "Much every way: chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles of God." (Rom. 3:1,2) All of God's covenant promises were made to and on behalf of Israel. But the riches of their heritage were wasted through disobedience—so completely, indeed, that Jesus said to the nation, "Your house is left unto

From the Exodus to the death of Joshua, the nation of Israel was held in restraint by a consistently righteous leadership; a leadership upon which God manifested his favor and in support of which he used his power. However, with the passing of Joshua, the entire generation of which he was a part also soon died, "and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel."—Judges 2:10

Even under the iniquitous conditions which developed, the LORD did not entirely forsake Israel. When they departed from him he allowed them to fall into difficulties for their punishment; and then, in his own due time, he raised up judges to deliver them. This era in their national experience lasted for 450 years, and is known as the period of the judges.—Acts 13:20

The 'judges' whom the LORD raised up, really became their deliverers. (See verse 18.) Undoubtedly this is typical of the world's future Judgment Day. Jesus—and together with him, his church—will be the judges then raised up by the LORD, and through their judgeship all who return to God and obey his laws will be delivered from their enemies, even the greatest of all enemies, death.

In Judges 21:25 it is stated: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." One needs but to read the Book of Judges to discover the low standard of righteousness which 'every man' considered to be 'right'. It reveals clearly the degradation into which the human race, even at that time, had fallen—the low plane of morality to which fallen human minds will revert if, en masse, the people are allowed to find their own preferred level. True, individual encroachments upon each other in the sense of theft and murder may not have been as prevalent then among the Israelites as it would be today in a large city left unpoliced; nevertheless, the general course of the nation was downward deeper and deeper into sin.

This illustrates the necessity of the iron rule which will be imposed upon the people during the Millennium, and the disciplines which will be associated therewith. The LORD has allowed the people to experience the awful results of sin, and when, during the kingdom, they learn the benefits of righteousness, they will be well equipped to choose between right and wrong. ■

## LESSON FOR OCTOBER 9

# DELIVERANCE BY GOD'S HAND

**KEY VERSE:** "It was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian."—Judges 7:15

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Judges 7:2-7, 19-21*

**A**S WAS HABITUALLY true with the Israelites—as indeed it is with the whole fallen human race—they "did evil in the sight of the LORD." (Judges 6:1) In the case brought to our attention in this lesson, "the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years." Then they cried unto the LORD, and he raised up Gideon to deliver them.

The unique method of securing his army is well known. In a remarkably short time it numbered thirty-two thousand. While this was a very small army by comparison with the hosts of Midian and their allies, the LORD said it was too large. So twenty-two thousand—those who manifested a measure of fear—were sent home. This left ten thousand, which the LORD explained were still too many.

Finally, Gideon's army was reduced to the small number of three hundred. These he armed, not with swords or

other weapons of destruction, but with a torch, an earthen pitcher, and a ram's horn trumpet. This was by the LORD's instruction. Knowing that Gideon's faith and courage could well be shaken in having to lead such a small group of unarmed men against the great armed might of their enemy, described as laying along the battle line "like grasshoppers for multitude" (Judges 7:12), he gave Gideon assurance that he would be with him and give him the victory. "Behold, there was a man [one of Gideon's band] that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host."—vss. 13, 14

With this assurance, Gideon deployed his three hundred men in three companies, taking personal supervision of one of the groups. He instructed that the men in the other groups were to watch his company, and do as they did. First, Gideon and the hundred men with him, broke their earthen vessels which were concealing the lighted torches, and then they blew on their trumpets, shouting, "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon." Then, almost immediately, the other two companies did the same. This was done in the darkness of night, and it served to frighten and confuse the hosts of the Midianites. In their confusion, they started fighting one another, and so were defeated.

It is said that the only ones in an ancient army to carry torches were the captains, or leaders. Gideon's strategy, therefore, would give the impression to the enemy that an army was attacking them which was so large that it required three hundred officers, for they could see the lights flickering, and hear the trumpets blowing from all over the surrounding hills. No wonder they were frightened!

There is a beautiful lesson in this for the Christian. We are to let our light shine by 'breaking' or sacrificing our

'earthen vessels'. And we are to be zealous in doing this. In our association with the brethren we are to be humble, "in honor preferring one another." (Rom. 12:10) Nevertheless, in zeal and loving devotion to the LORD and to his cause of showing forth his praises, we should each one feel a sense of responsibility, and thus be ensamples, worthy to be imitated by all those who likewise are called to break their earthen vessels, to let the light shine out.

Gideon, by nature, was a self-effacing man. He said to the LORD, "My family is poor . . . and I am the least in my father's house. And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." (Judges 6:15,16) In keeping with the thought of this lesson, the LORD was with Gideon by teaching him his ways. It was because he followed the LORD's ways that the enemies of Israel were defeated.

The Israelites who had fought with Gideon did not recognize this as clearly as he did. Seeing his success in battle, they assumed it was because of his own shrewdness, and wished to make him their leader. But Gideon knew that it was really the LORD who had defeated the Midianites, and refused the honor! ■

## LESSON FOR OCTOBER 16

# ISRAEL DEMANDS A KING

**KEY VERSE:** "All the elders of Israel . . . came to Samuel . . . and said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."—I Samuel 8:4,5

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** I Samuel 8:4-9,19; 12:19-25

**B**EFORE ISRAEL CROSSED over Jordan into the Promised Land, Moses prophesied that one day they would ask for a king to rule over them, although this was not God's arrangement for them. (Deut. 17:14,15; 28:36) However, when the time came that they did ask for a king, the LORD granted their request, and at the same time warned of some of the consequences. God took a hand in the selection of their first king, as well as later ones. Samuel felt badly that the people asked for a king, since he had been ruling well as a judge. But the LORD said to him, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."—I Sam. 8:7

However, the LORD did not permit the full implication of the Israelites' request for a king to be realized, for he still maintained his control over the nation, exercising it through their kings instead of their judges. It is in keeping with this that

Israel's kings were said to sit upon the throne of the LORD. (I Chron. 29:23) It was to establish this thought in the minds of the Israelites that the LORD chose Saul, their first king, and instructed Samuel, his recognized representative, to anoint him. This same procedure was later followed in the case of David.

Under this arrangement, Israel was, in reality, the kingdom of the LORD, and typical of the great Messianic kingdom which is to rule for a thousand years and subdue all the enemies of God and of righteousness, the "last enemy" to be destroyed being death. (I Cor. 15:26) While the nation of Israel rejected God's arrangement of government through judges, and clamored for a king, he overruled it in a manner to teach a typical lesson.

Saul, was "a choice young man." To begin with, he was humble and usable. (I Sam. 9:21) He was a tall and stalwart man, one who would an-

peal to the Israelites as having strength and ability. He had a talent to rally the Israelites to battle against their enemies, but he lacked the spiritual strength to follow the leadings and instructions of the LORD.

Saul was on a mission for his father, endeavoring to locate his lost asses, when he came in contact with Samuel and learned that he had been chosen by God to be king of Israel. It has been observed in this connection that in most instances God chooses for his service those who are busy, and those who demonstrate a sense of responsibility in connection with the common tasks which may fall to their lot to perform. It is certainly true that unless one is faithful in little things, he will not be faithful in the use of larger opportunities of service.

In the LORD's providence, Samuel did more than merely anoint Saul to be king. In addition to this he introduced the new king to the people, and, as it were, put in a good word for him. "See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?" Then the people accepted the LORD's choice, and shouted, "God save the king."—I Sam. 10:24

Besides, "Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom. and wrote it in a book.

and laid it up before the LORD." (vs. 25) Here was another evidence that the LORD had not forsaken his people, even though they had rejected him. The LORD knew the terrible state of chaos and suffering they would be in if he allowed them to make up their own kingdom laws and regulations, so he took care of this for them. This displayed a wonderful attitude on God's part, both of patience and of mercy.

Saul and the new kingdom had enemies right from the start. "The children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents." (vs. 27) How much better off would be all the LORD's people if they could learn to "hold their peace" when ignored or opposed by those who ought to manifest a brotherly spirit of fellowship and cooperation!

The first great test of Saul's leadership as king and warrior soon came, for the Ammonites gathered in battle array against the nation, and the hearts of the people fainted. Many hid themselves for fear. But when Saul learned of the situation he took drastic action, and very quickly assembled an army and dispersed the enemy. Following Saul's victory, there was a reaffirmation of the new kingdom arrangements. ■

## LESSON FOR OCTOBER 23

# SAUL'S OPPORTUNITY AS KING

**KEY VERSE:** "Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his [Saul's] head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?"—1 Samuel 10:1

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** 1 Samuel 9:15-17; 10:1,20-24

**S**AUL DID NOT at once exercise his authority as king over Israel. But, when Nahash, the Ammonite, "came up, and encamped against Jabesh-gilead" and threatened to "thrust out" the "right eyes" of the Israelites, the "Spirit of God came upon Saul, . . . and his anger was kindled greatly," and, taking command of an army which he quickly raised, he defeated the Ammonites.—1 Sam. 11:1,2,6

Perhaps one reason Saul had not asserted himself prior to this is that "the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him." (1 Sam. 10:27) But now that he had delivered the Israelites from the oppressive hands of the Ammonites, "the people said unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death."—vs. 12

Saul did not agree to this. He said, "There shall not a man be put to death this day: for

today the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel." (vs. 13) "Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal; and they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly."—vss. 14,15

The rejoicing of the people under the rulership of Saul was not destined to continue long. After he had reigned two years he chose three thousand men, two thousand of whom he kept under his own direct command, and one thousand were delegated to the command of Jonathan, his favorite son. Jonathan, young and ambitious, "smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it."—1 Sam. 13:1-3

Saul realized that this would stir up the animosity of all the Philistines against the Is-

elites, so he began to muster an army of defense. The men were summoned to Gilgal, and, seemingly, Saul had arranged with the aged Samuel to meet them there to offer sacrifice on behalf of Israel, to assure that the LORD would be with them in the coming battle against the Philistines.

But Samuel did not arrive within the time agreed upon, so Saul offered up the sacrifice himself. This was exceeding his jurisdiction as king, and was contrary to the arrangements of the LORD, and Samuel said to him, "Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart."  
—I Sam. 13:13,14

It is noteworthy that from Saul's first transgression against the commandment of the LORD, he was rejected. In this respect: no mercy, no second opportunity was given to him. Later, when Saul again disobeyed the LORD, his rejection was confirmed.

It was on the occasion Samuel reminded Saul of the time he was anointed king over Israel, "when thou wast little in thine own sight." (I Sam.

15:17) Saul's exaltation had, as the expression is often used today, "gone to his head." He now imagined that he was wiser than the aged Prophet Samuel, who had given him the directives of the LORD.

Throughout the ages, many who have started out humbly in the service of the LORD, have similarly been affected by a measure of prominence with which they may have been favored by the LORD. Such proudness of heart manifests itself in various ways, and not infrequently by a tendency to be over-critical of others, and the assuming of superior judgment in matters pertaining to the service of the LORD and his people.

Saul thought that his way of serving the LORD was better than Samuel's. It seemed obvious to him that the LORD would be pleased to have sacrifices offered to him. But he was mistaken. Samuel said to him, "Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king."  
—I Sam. 15:22,23 ■

## LESSON FOR OCTOBER 30

# KING SAUL DISOBEYS GOD

**KEY VERSE:** *"Thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee."*—I Samuel 13:14

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** I Samuel 13:5-14

**I**N THE BIBLE there are many examples of the fact that those once pure in heart, and humble, can become corrupt and proud. The most outstanding of these is Lucifer, who, although created perfect, became ambitious and rebelled against God and his laws of righteousness. Much the same tragedy befell King Saul. When chosen by God for high office, he was humble and obedient to God. Samuel refers to this as the time when Saul was 'little' in his own sight.

But Saul did not remain 'little'. His early successes in battle and the praises of his people made him become arrogant. He forgot that it was only because the LORD blessed his efforts that he was successful. There have been servants of the LORD in all ages who, failing to realize that in their own strength and wisdom they could accomplish nothing, have failed to remain humble. This is a tragedy whenever it

occurs, for it means that one who was once sweet, becomes bitter of heart, and proud.

One of the evidences of pride is the tendency to substitute one's own arrangements for those which have been clearly outlined by the LORD. Saul did this, manifesting the change which was taking place in his heart. No longer was the will of God the law of his life as it had been when he was little in his own sight. He was given specific instruction concerning Israel's enemies, the Amalekites. He was to destroy them all, including their flocks and herds. But he failed to carry out instructions. Instead, he explained, the 'people' took "the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD." (I Sam. 15:21) The people would not have been able to do this contrary to Saul's wishes. Samuel knew this well and held the

king fully responsible for failure to carry out the will of God.

Obedience to the will of God must always be our first consideration. However, in the case of the LORD's people during the Gospel Age, it is not a matter of deciding between obedience and sacrifice, for obedience demands sacrifice, as it did also in the Jewish Age. It is important to keep this fact clearly before us, for the mind of the flesh, prompted by the Adversary, the Devil, might turn us aside from the way of sacrifice by a misuse of this text. It is God's will that we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and these were steps of sacrifice. We are to be planted together in the likeness of his sacrificial death. We cannot be obedient to the will of God without presenting our bodies "a living sacrifice."—Rom. 12:1,2

One of the evidences of pride is to be jealous of the success of others. Jealousy of another blinds one to the principles of right and wrong in dealing with him. In a very astonishing manner, David had slain the Philistine giant, Goliath. This struck fear into the hearts of the Philistine army, which fled before the attacking Israelites. Naturally, David was given the credit for this signal victory over Israel's enemies.

Returning from the rout and slaughter of the Philistines

David was hailed by the women as a great hero, and acclaimed to be even a greater warrior than Saul. "Saul hath slain his thousands," they sang, "and David his ten thousands." This came to the ears of Saul, and while previously he gave evidence of appreciating what this "stripling" youth had accomplished, now became embittered toward him—"very wrath."—Sam. 17:57; 18:6-9

"Saul eyed David from that day and forward." First it was pride; then disobedience; and now to these was added the sin of jealousy. Saul was yielding more and more to sin, and thus drifting further and further away from God. He had already lost God's favor, and David had been anointed by Samuel to take his place; but the LORD allowed him to continue his reign, perhaps to test David, and in order that the people might have an opportunity to discern for themselves the great changes which had taken place in the king's heart.

Saul finally committed suicide after losing his son, Jonathan, in their final battle. His life of wasted opportunity was, no doubt, recorded in the Scriptures as a lesson depicting the sad results of disobedience to the LORD. ■

# CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

## THE SEED SERIES, PART 7

### GENTILES INVITED

**T**ODAY THE RELIGIOUS world is quite accustomed to conferences and conventions. Representative groups meet to discuss their problems, make their plans, and promote mutual encouragement. The first recorded conference of Christ's disciples was held in Jerusalem sometime after Pentecost. The apostles were the chief spokesmen at this assembly, and James seems to have been the chairman. These devoted followers of Jesus were confronted with the problem of what to do with respect to Gentile converts to Christianity in various places who were associating themselves with Jewish believers.

It is only as we acquaint ourselves with the background of this situation that we are able to understand why the acceptance of the Gospel of Christ by Gentiles should create a problem. From the time God made the promise to Abraham that his 'seed' would become a channel of blessing to all the families of the earth, his natural descendants claimed the exclusive right to be the inheritors of that promise, and by God's authority. Long centuries after that promise was made to Abraham, God said to his descendants, the nation of Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth."—Amos 3:2

The Jewish people had their exclusive position of favor with God further confirmed by Jesus, for when he sent out his disciples into the ministry he said to them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5,6) After Jesus was raised from the dead he commissioned his disciples to go into all the world

and preach the Gospel, but they did not easily grasp this broader concept of the divine plan. It required time, and study, and a conference to clarify this new concept.—Matt. 28:19,20; Acts 1:7,8

## CONDITIONAL

While the promise made to Abraham envisioned the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth, the privilege of being part of the 'seed' through which the promised blessings would reach all mankind was made conditional upon obedience to the LORD, and faithfulness in the doing of his will. Through Moses, Israel's lawgiver, the LORD said, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."—Exod. 19:5,6

The final test upon Israel as a holy nation came when Jesus presented himself to them as the Messiah. Had they been truly obedient to the Law they would have been prepared in heart and mind to receive him and to become associated with him as a people in dispensing the blessings to the world—which God had promised to their father, Abraham. But, as a people or nation, they failed in this final test. Concerning this we read, "He [Jesus] came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."—John 1:11,12

Among those faithful ones of Israel who did receive Jesus were his apostles. But, to begin with, they did not fully realize that the number of worthy individuals of their own people who did accept Jesus was not sufficient to make up the predetermined number of those who, with Jesus, would be the 'seed' of promise, and that the remainder of this number was to be made up of believing Gentiles.

Actually, from the divine standpoint, no one could be a member of this exclusive company simply because of

parentage, although the descendants of Abraham were given the first opportunity to qualify. The qualifying condition for all is wholehearted obedience to the divine will, regardless of what the cost of obedience might be.

This obedience to the LORD's will is described by Paul as a 'baptism', or 'burial', into Christ, which is the acceptance of his headship in our lives. Paul wrote, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:26-29

## SONS AND HEIRS

Paul explained that when God made that wonderful promise to Abraham concerning the 'seed', that Jesus Christ was actually the one to whom he referred. (Gal. 3:16) Jesus, before his visit to earth, was the beloved Son of God, and has continued to be such. He gave Jewish believers the privilege to become sons of God. Now Paul includes believing Gentiles also—"Ye are all children of God by faith."

Romans 8:17 reads, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Here again the heirship to the Abrahamic promise is referred to, for that is the great prize God has offered to those who qualify through faithfulness to him. Christ, as the beloved Son of God, was the chief heir. We, as sons of God by faith and obedience, are joint-heirs.

## CORNELIUS ACCEPTED

The first Gentile to accept Christ, and through faith to be brought into the family of God to be a joint-heir of the promise made to Abraham, was Cornelius, leader of a Roman band of soldiers. The record says that Cornelius was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his

house." He also "gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway."—Acts 10:1,2

Cornelius' devotion to the God of Israel did not in itself constitute him a son of God, and heir of the Abrahamic promise. In addition to this it was necessary that he accept Christ and receive the Holy Spirit. So, in his own due time, God directed Peter to visit Cornelius and minister the Gospel of Christ to him that he might have the opportunity to accept the invitation to the high calling.

We read that "about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God" visited Cornelius, and said to him, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside."—Acts 10:3-6

Cornelius followed these instructions, and dispatched three messengers to Joppa to get Peter. (vss. 7,9) The LORD, meanwhile, prepared Peter for their visit. He "went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: and he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."—Acts 10:9-15

While he still wondered how to interpret this dream, the men sent by Cornelius arrived at the home where Peter was living, and inquired for him. He met them and learned the purpose of their visit. While Peter had never ministered to Gentiles, he agreed to return with these men

to meet Cornelius. Evidently he began to see the meaning of his dream, which was that now Gentiles who previously had been looked upon by the Jewish people as unclean and outside the pale of God's favor were, upon the basis of faith, to be made clean and acceptable. Because of this he was willing to visit Cornelius and to preach the Gospel to him.

Reaching the home of Cornelius, he "found many that were come together. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." (vss. 27,28) Then Cornelius related his experience in being visited by an angel who instructed him to send for Peter.

After hearing this explanation as to why Cornelius had sent for him, "Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." (Acts 10:34,35) Continuing, Peter presented the truth concerning Christ, and the important position he occupied in God's great plan of salvation for all mankind.

The record is that while Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and his household in evidence of the fact that they had been accepted into the divine family, even as it had come upon the Jewish disciples at Pentecost. And this was just the beginning of Gentiles accepting the Gospel. It was a very revealing experience for Peter, and later, when the apostles met in conference at Jerusalem to decide what should be done about the Gentile believers who were now coming among the Jewish believers in various places, he related this experience—God's blessing was truly upon this new, and to their Jewish minds, astonishing development.—Acts 15:6-9

Paul and Barnabas were also at the conference and testified concerning "what miracles and wonders God had

wrought among the Gentiles by them. And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon [Simon Peter] hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name." (vss. 12-14) It should be noted from this statement that the divine purpose then in having the Gospel preached to the Gentiles was not to bring about a mass conversion of the entire non-Jewish world, but merely to take out of them 'a people for his name', or those to be taken into the divine family as sons of God, and heirs of the Abrahamic promise.

This work of taking out from the Gentiles 'a people for his name' has already taken nearly two thousand years, and it is still in progress. Meanwhile, countless millions have, in a nominal sense, associated themselves with the name of Christ, the vast majority of whom have had no conception whatever of the divine purpose centered in Jesus, or of what it really means to be one of his footstep followers. Most who have claimed to be Christians have not known that Jesus was sent into the world in fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham concerning a seed who would bless all the families of the earth. Not knowing this, they, of course, have not known that by suffering and dying with Jesus, his followers qualify to be joint-heirs with him in the inheritance of that promise to Abraham.

James, the chairman of the conference, explained this as he continued—"And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the LORD, . . . who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts 15:15-18

The 'tabernacle' of David which is rebuilt is in reality the 'house' of David, the divine rulership which was established in his family, and guaranteed, upon the basis of mercy, to remain forever. Isaiah 16:5 reads: "In mercy shall the throne be established: and he [Jesus, the antitypical David] shall sit

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Little Rock KAAY 1090 6:30 a.m.  
Marshall KCGS 960 4:30 p.m.

## CALIFORNIA

Claremont KTSJ 1220 9:45 a.m.  
Lancaster KVOY 1340 8:15 a.m.  
Los Angeles(Span) KALI 1430 5:45 a.m.  
Monterey KNRY 1240 8:30 a.m.  
San Francisco KEST 1450 5:00 p.m.  
Tehachapi KTPI FM 103.1 8:15 a.m.

## FLORIDA

Jacksonville WXTL 1010 7:45 p.m.  
Orlando WGTO 540 9:00 a.m.  
St. Augustine WSOS FM 94.5 7:15 a.m.  
St. Petersburg WTIS 1110 5:00 p.m.

## GEORGIA

Augusta WGAC 580 8:00 a.m.

## ILLINOIS

LaSalle WLFO 1220 9:45 a.m.  
West Frankfort WFRX 1300 9:15 a.m.

## INDIANA

Hammond WJOB 1230 8:30 a.m.  
LaPorte WCOE FM 96.7 10:00 a.m.  
North Vernon WKRP 1460 8:00 a.m.

## IOWA

Waterloo KXEL 1540 10:15 p.m.

## KANSAS

Goodland KLOE 730 7:30 a.m.  
Coffeyville KGGF 690 9:05 p.m.

## KENTUCKY

Bowling Green WBGW FM 107.1 8:15 a.m.  
Manchester WWXL 1450 7:45 a.m.  
Winchester WHRS 10:30 a.m.

## MICHIGAN

Detroit WLQV 1500 9:30 a.m.  
Fremont WSHN 1500 9:00 a.m.  
Fremont WSHN 100.1 FM 9:00 a.m.

## MISSOURI

Excelsior Springs KEXS 1090 7:30 a.m.  
Osage Beach KRMS 1150 8:30 a.m.

## NEW JERSEY

Camden WTMR 800 2:30 p.m.  
Salem WJIC 1510 9:45 a.m.  
Salem WNNN FM 101.7 9:45 a.m.

## NEW MEXICO

Los Alamos KRSN 1490 6:45 a.m.

## NEW YORK

Buffalo WHLD 1270 12:00 noon  
New York WOR 710 9:15 p.m.

## NORTH CAROLINA

Wendell WETC 540 4:45 a.m.

## OHIO

Cleveland WRKG 1380 7:45 a.m.  
Fairfield WCNW 1560 6:00 p.m.

## OREGON

Portland KKEY 1150 7:00 a.m.

## PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown WHOL 1600 10:45 a.m.  
Pittsburgh WPLW 1590 8:00 a.m.  
Pottstown WPAZ 1370 12:45 p.m.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston WOKE 1340 7:06 p.m.  
Lexington WLGO 1170 12:30 p.m.

## TENNESSEE

Nashville WSM 650 7:45 p.m.

## VIRGINIA

Richmond WGGM 820 7:45 a.m.

## WASHINGTON

Spokane KAQQ 590 7:00 a.m.  
Tacoma KAMT 1360 10:15 a.m.

## WEST VIRGINIA

Wheeling WVVA 1170 6:30 p.m.



PLEASE NOTE  
CHANGES!

# WORLDWIDE RADIO BROADCASTS

## Canada

### **ALBERTA**

Banff	CFHC 1340	11:45 a.m.
Brooks	CIBQ 1340	8:00 a.m.
Canmore	CFNC 1450	11:45 a.m.
Stettler	CKFQ 1400	7:45 a.m.

### **BRITISH COLUMBIA**

Duncan	CKAY 1500	9:00 a.m.
	CKAY 1500	7:30 p.m.
Grand Forks	CKGF 1340	9:00 a.m.
Nanaimo	CHUB 1570	9:30 p.m.
Qualicum-Parksville	CHPQ 1370	9:30 p.m.

### **MANITOBA**

Winnipeg	CKJS 810	9:00 a.m.
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### **ONTARIO**

St. Thomas	CHLO 1570	10:45 a.m.
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### **SASKATCHEWAN**

Rosetown	CJYM 1330	9:45 a.m.
Weyburn	CFSL 1190	8:45 a.m.
Estevan	CJSL 1280	8:45 a.m.

## Argentina (Spanish)

Buenos Aires (Sat.)	FM Malvinas 91.5 MHz	10:00 a.m. & 10:00 p.m.
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## British West Indies

Trinidad	Radio Trinidad 610	10:30 p.m.
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## Chile (Spanish)

Falcahuano Radio	Almirante Latorre
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## Costa Rica (Spanish)

San José Radio Sonora	105.9 FM, 700 AM	6:15 a.m.
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## Kenya and Uganda

## Mexico (Spanish)

Culiacán Ranchera	XEQC	8:30 a.m.
Guadalajara	XEWK 1130	8:30 a.m.
Monterrey	XHSR FM	10:00 a.m.
Torreón	XETB 1350	8:15 a.m.
Tuxtla Gutierrez	XEON 720	7:30 a.m.

## New Zealand

Whakatane	IXX	8:10 a.m.
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## Nigeria

Radio Africa (Thurs.)		7:45 p.m.
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## Panama (Spanish)

Panama City (Fri.)	HOQ 1250	6:15 p.m.
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## Peru (Spanish)

Trujillo	105.7 FM	9:30 a.m. & 10:00 p.m.
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## Philippines

Manila (Sat.)	DZAM 1026 kHz	7:15 p.m.
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## Portugal (Portuguese)

Vila Nova de Gaia Radio Minute		8:45 a.m.
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## Russia (Russian)

Novgorod	FM 71.3	10:00 a.m.
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## South Africa

Swaziland SWAZI Commercial Radio	1400 AM	
Shortwave	49m 6155 kHz	8:15 p.m.

## Tonga

Nuku' Alofa (Mon.)		10:15 a.m.
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## Uruguay (Spanish)

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Eastern Time—9:30 a.m.

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- 16-For the Glory of God
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(Continued from Page 31) upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.”

The work of calling, selecting, and proving those who will constitute the ‘people for his name’ has steadily gone on, unnoticed and unknown to the world. The world has not known these in their true light, even as it did not know Jesus. (I John 3:1) Many times they have been persecuted by the world and by the worldly churches, even as Jesus was persecuted by the religionists of his day. The enmity which the Creator said would exist between the ‘seed of Satan’ and the ‘seed of the woman’ has often led to acute suffering by these, even as it led to the crucifixion of Jesus. Eventually this phase of the divine plan for the recovery of the human race from sin and death will be completed, and then will follow the glorious consummation of that plan.

It will be then that Jesus will fulfill that wonderful promise of Isaiah 9:7, which reads, “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever.” It will be then that the typical kingdom of David will merge into the antitypical kingdom of the Messiah, the ‘seed’ of promise. And it will be through the agencies of that kingdom in the hands of Jesus and his joint-heirs that all the families of the earth will be blessed.

God’s promise concerning the seed not only gave assurance that he would provide a Deliverer, but also that blessings would flow to all the families of the earth through the promised seed. This is a promise of God which applies to all the natural descendants of Abraham, and to all Gentiles—those who have not qualified to become part of the seed of blessing.

In the 11th chapter of Romans the Apostle Paul likens the unbelieving Jews of Jesus’ day to branches broken off from an olive tree: and the Gentiles who throughout

the age have been called out from the world to be a 'people for his name' to wild branches which are grafted into the olive tree to take the places of the broken-off branches. Then he explains that a Deliverer shall come "out of Sion [Zion], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (vs. 26) Paul explains that the result of this will be that "all Israel shall be saved."

Mount Zion in Jerusalem was the seat of King David's government, or, more properly, the LORD's government in which David represented the LORD as ruler in Israel. When David's throne is reestablished with Jesus as King, it will be as though Mount Zion again exists as the center of divine government, and this is the way it is represented in the prophecies. Psalm 2:6 reads: "Yet have I [Jehovah] set my King [Jesus] upon my holy hill of Zion."

Revelation 14:1 shows Jesus as the "Lamb" which had been slain for the redemption of the world standing on Mount Sion, "and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." Thus again, it is shown that the people for his name will be associated with Jesus as the promised seed, and will share with him the kingly honor, authority, and power symbolized by Mount Sion.

And it will be "out of Sion" that deliverance will come to "all Israel." And the 'all Israel' to be saved in this way are the former unbelievers of this people, unbelievers upon whom the LORD will bestow mercy; for Paul explains that God has considered them all in unbelief, that he might show mercy to all. (Rom. 11:32) It will include those who have died, as well as those who will be living at the time these blessings of enlightenment and life begin to be showered upon mankind.

Jesus said to the unbelievers of his day who persecuted him unto death, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD." (Matt. 23:39) All of those to whom Jesus directed these words fell asleep in death. For them to say, as prophesied by Jesus. "Blessed is he that cometh in the name

of the LORD," it will be necessary that they be raised from the dead. The Apostle Paul realized this, hence his explanation, "What shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead."—Rom. 11:15

## THE SODOMITES

Contemporaneous with Abraham during part of the time when God was dealing with him, promising that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed, were the Sodomites. These were a wicked people, so wicked, in fact, that God had them destroyed. Nevertheless, these are to be among all the families of the earth who will be blessed through the promised seed. In a promise to Israel of the resurrection, Ezekiel 16:55 reads, "When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate."

Not only will Jews and Gentiles be raised from the dead to receive the blessings which the LORD has promised, but, beginning with the natural seed of Abraham, they will be enlightened concerning Christ and the provision of life which the Creator has made through him. Isaiah 60:1-3 reads: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall rise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

Jesus is the true light which yet will enlighten every man who has ever come into the world. (John 1:9) Associated with him as the seed of Abraham will be his faithful disciples from among both Jews and Gentiles, for to these Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world." (Matt. 5:14) Together with Jesus these will constitute the "Sun of Righteousness" which will rise to enlighten all mankind, beginning with the natural descendants of Abraham.—Mal. 4:2

Concerning that future time, now so near, when all the families of the earth will be enlightened concerning the true God, and concerning Jesus their Redeemer and Savior, the Prophet Isaiah wrote: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9) The Prophet Zephaniah (3:9) wrote that the LORD would turn to the people a "pure language, [message], that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent."

Isaiah wrote: "The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." (Isa. 40:5) One of the ways in which the glory of the LORD will be revealed to mankind is to be through the restoration of the dead to life. Just before the awakening of Lazarus from the sleep of death, Jesus said to Martha, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (John 11:40) Surely if the awakening from death of one individual was a display of God's glory, will not that glory be seen throughout all the earth when those of every nation now asleep in death, begin to be awakened by divine power, as the Scriptures show they will?

## **FOREKNOWN BY GOD**

When James, the chairman of that Jerusalem conference, summed up the findings of the brethren, he added, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18) James knew this because God had foretold his works from "the beginning of the world." In the Garden of Eden he had spoken of the seed that would bruise the Serpent's head. This seed was Christ. It was this same seed that God referred to in his promise to Abraham, the seed that was to bless all the families of the earth.

It was this seed that was to be a great King who would rule "from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." (Ps. 72:8) This was the king who was to sit on the throne of David, together with his faithful followers, the people for his name, who will live and reign with him a thousand years. It will be through the agen-

cies of this kingdom, with Jesus at its head, that the foretold blessings of peace and joy and life will be dispensed to the whole sin-sick and dying world.

Yes, God foreknew and foretold his wonderful works on behalf of the children of men! Let us rejoice in the hope that his promises set before us, promises which assure the faithful followers of Jesus that they are to be associated with him in the rulership of the kingdom, and promises which assure us that mankind in general will be given an opportunity, through belief and obedience, to be restored to perfection of human life here on the earth. Truly, ours is a great and wonderful God. ■

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## CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

### “THOU KNOWEST”

*“I have preached righteousness in the great congregation:  
lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.  
I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart;  
I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation:  
I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and  
thy truth from the great congregation.”*

—Psalm 40:9,10

**I**N THIS PROPHECY of Jesus' faithfulness throughout his entire life here on earth, he is represented as saying, "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips." The 'great congregation' mentioned here probably refers to the people of the Jewish nation who were alive during his First Advent, and not just the priestly class, who at that time often were thought of as God's special servants. As we are invited to be the ambassadors of Christ, we are to follow in our Master's footsteps. And in our activities along these lines, the 'great congregation' might comprise the whole world of mankind to whom we endeavor to spread the Gospel message.

That Jesus did 'preach righteousness'—the message of the coming kingdom, the truth, which magnifies God's righteousness—throughout Israel, came to light in a bold observation by the Master himself, when he was on trial for his life. We read that "the High Priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine." Jesus' reply was, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the Temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said

unto them: Behold, they know what I said.”—John 18: 19-21

Here is a marvelous testimony! Will we be able to give such a report as we near the end of our Christian walk? A serious weakness with some of us is to procrastinate—it is so easy to put things off. We may hear of various opportunities for service, but we might wait until ‘a more favorable time’ comes to avail ourselves of them. Today, we reason, it is too hot, or too cold, to go downtown to insert a radio or TV ad in the newspaper. Tomorrow it may be more temperate. This disposition to wait until a more ‘favorable time’ (for us!) to serve the LORD along any particular line, could easily be continued throughout our entire lifetime. Indeed, some have testified that this has happened to them, and that finally, when they realize they are too aged or unable for other reasons to perform services for the LORD, possibly having but a short time remaining on this side of the veil, they looked back with regret upon the wasted years.

This was not true of Jesus. All Israel could testify that it was not true! As Jesus told the High Priest, if he wanted to know what he had been teaching all across the land, he had simply to ask the people. ‘They heard me speak—they know what I said, and they saw my works of healing the sick and afflicted of Israel’, said the Master. Will this be true of us?

In the prophecy Jesus said, “I have not hid thy righteousness [truth] within my heart ” This implies the possibility that such could be done. This statement carries different connotations, and one of them might well be the erroneous viewpoint that the LORD wants us to treasure up the truth in our hearts, using it principally as a power in our lives to help us make our own “calling and election sure.” In a sense this viewpoint is true. Where it comes short of the full truth is in its failure to realize that the truth is most potent in molding our own lives into the character-likeness of the Master when we are faithful in making it known to others. Certainly we are not de-

veloping into the image of Christ unless we are doing as he did, and he surely did not conceal the truth within his heart.

But this viewpoint, we think, is just another of Satan's misleading sophistries in his continuous effort to keep people from knowing the truth concerning the lovingkindness of our God. Beginning soon after the apostles fell asleep, the Devil, the great deceiver, became successful in his efforts to distort the truth. After a few generations false concepts of the kingdom and its doctrines almost completely supplanted the real Gospel of the kingdom in the hearts and minds of the professed people of God.—I Tim. 4:1

When the end of the age came and the great truths of the divine plan were restored to God's people, with the error identified and exposed, those who received these great truths were enthusiastic in making them known to others. Again Satan endeavored to distort the message. But there are still thousands throughout the world who have not been deceived, and rejoice to know and believe that an opportunity for salvation has been provided for all during the times of restitution of all things, and that this was the glorious theme song of all God's holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21) These have kept themselves free, or have extricated themselves, from human philosophy and are insisting that every doctrine they accept and teach must be supported unequivocally by the unadulterated Word of God. Satan, however, has not given up in his efforts to deceive and entrap them. Despite this, the LORD sustains and keeps them so that they continue to hear the "joyful sound" of truth, and to walk in the light of his countenance.—Ps. 89:15

### **"NOT IGNORANT"**

James wrote that if we resist the Devil, he will flee from us. (James 4:7) But this does not mean that he will not come back and try again, and again. At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus resisted Satan, yet Satan later did all he could to discourage and to destroy the Master.

And so he does with us. He is the prince of darkness and, as such, wants to keep the world in darkness. So, if he cannot succeed in blinding the minds of those who have the light of truth, then he employs devious methods to hinder them from actively proclaiming it. One of these is the deceptive idea that the LORD gave his people the truth to treasure up in their own hearts, and not to proclaim it to the world.

Another of Satan's methods to prevent the promulgation of the truth is to induce discouragement. He is quick to call attention to the meagre results of light-bearing, using the argument that if it were the LORD's will to spread the message there would be greater results. But Jesus did not say, "Let your light so shine before men if the results are good, otherwise hide your light under a bushel." Those who know the truth expect that the results of their activities in its service will be small. They know that it has required an entire age to find and prepare a "little flock" to live and reign with Christ, so it is not to be expected that suddenly large numbers will now accept the truth, and consecrate themselves to the LORD and to his service.

In this era of high tensions and nervous strains it is almost inevitable that at times minor misunderstandings will arise among the brethren. These little difficulties are not in themselves serious, but Satan is quick to seize upon them as something he can use to confuse and to discourage those involved, thus destroying their zeal for the service of the truth. Solomon tells us of seven things which the LORD hates. One of them is, "He that soweth discord among brethren." (Prov. 6:19) Satan is the one most guilty of this, and he is quick to use whatever situations he can to do it.

But let us not be ignorant of Satan's devices, and thus play into his hands. If the slightest suggestion is brought to us concerning any brother or any sister, anywhere, which, if believed, would cause us to have a little less confidence in that brother or sister, let us not begin to wonder whether or not it is true. If we are reasonably

sure that it is not true, then we should at once dismiss it from our minds. If we have a doubt, then we should go to the one involved and find out directly for ourselves. If we start asking others about it, we are helping to spread the rumor and getting second-handed opinions concerning the matter at issue. Besides, by following this unscriptural method we are cooperating with the Devil. He would like to have all the brethren lose confidence in one another, for then he would know there would be little activity in the proclamation of the truth.

## JUDGE NOT

If our hearts are right before the LORD, and we are sincerely and zealously doing all we can in the service of the truth and of the brethren, we will automatically conclude that others are doing the same. This in itself will be an encouragement to us. In this connection the important consideration is that the LORD knows what we are doing, and how sincere we are in doing it. This was a great consolation to Jesus, who stood alone in making his supreme sacrifice. He said, "I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest." Although none was able to understand his position, or the meaning and value of the great sacrifice he was making, Jesus was comforted by the realization that his Heavenly Father knew and understood.

How precious this realization should be to us! Actually it should not matter at all what others are doing, or what they may think of our efforts. We should not be faithful simply because we see others faithfully serving. The all-important consideration to us should be that the LORD knows, for it is he whom we are serving, and it is his name we are endeavoring to glorify by our service.

To maintain this viewpoint requires strong faith, and yet if we are serving with any other thought in mind the LORD will not be pleased with our efforts. Jesus realized how important it was that the Heavenly Father knew of his faithfulness. Later, in his messages to the "seven churches" Jesus emphasized that he had similar knowl-

edge concerning all his professed followers throughout the age. "I know thy works," he said to "the church of Ephesus," "and thy labor, and thy patience." (Rev. 2:2) To the "church in Smyrna" Jesus also said, "I know thy works." Likewise to the five other churches. See Rev. 2: 9,13,19; 3:1,8,15.

This precious truth should be of great encouragement to every one of the LORD's people, especially the isolated. There is a proper enthusiasm engendered in working with others. Brethren in an ecclesia who can work together in the ministry of the truth are highly favored. But in the LORD's providence many of his people are alone. There is no one to encourage them. In cases like this how sweet must be the words of Jesus, "I know thy works," I know you are using as much of your time, your strength and your means in my service as you possibly can. Yes, "I know thy works," and if you continue faithfully in the same zealous manner until your life is consumed, "I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10

"I know thy works"—'I know that deep down in your heart you would rather be serving me and serving my Heavenly Father than doing anything else. I know that at times you get discouraged, that your flesh becomes weary; but, knowing and understanding this, I will give you comfort and courage for your every time of need'. Yes, "I know thy works"—thy "love, and service, and faith," and "patience." (Rev. 2:19) 'I know that even though you see little or no result from your sacrifices, you will continue to lay down your life in the service of the truth, for my sake, and because you know that it is the will of my Father and your Father that you should thus let your light shine'.

Whether we are isolated workers or among those privileged to serve with others, it is equally true that the LORD knows the intents and desires of our hearts. Realizing this, can we, with confidence, go to our Heavenly Father as Jesus did, and say to him, "I have preached

righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest”?

Our faith assures us that the LORD does know, but are we glad to have him know? Are the little sacrifices we make from day to day to show forth his praises, so absolutely the best we can do that when we hear the LORD say through his Word, “I know thy works,” the realization of this knowledge encourages us, and we can respond in prayer, saying, ‘Yes, LORD, I am glad thou knowest’?

The LORD in his great kindness has given us to know the “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven”—the truth. (Matt. 13:11) Those who know the truth are the only ones who are in a position to declare the LORD’s “faithfulness” and his “salvation.” Are we doing it? Or are we just rejoicing that we have a better understanding of the Bible and of God’s plan of salvation than others? When we hear the LORD say, “I know thy works,” do we rejoice in the knowledge that we are not among those who have not hidden the lovingkindness of God in our hearts?

Our responsibility in carrying out the terms of our covenant of sacrifice is to the LORD, not to the brethren. We can rejoice in this because we realize that when he says, “I know thy works,” he knows us also—all our weaknesses, all the things which hinder us from being more active, all our handicaps. He also knows how earnestly we would like to do more to show forth his lovingkindness if we were able to do so. Our Heavenly Father knows this, and Jesus, our sympathetic High Priest and Advocate, also knows it. And we know that our acceptableness to God is not on the basis of what we accomplish in his service, but upon the sincerity of our desire to serve and praise him.

So when we go to our Heavenly Father and say, “O God, thou knowest,” we can be assured that his reply is, ‘Yes, my child, I do know. I know that today you did the very best you could. I know all about the situation which prevented you from doing more. In fact, I permitted it in order to see if you would be faithful in the little things

that you could do, rather than to be enthusiastic simply because you could render some outstanding service for me'.

When we say to our God, "Thou knowest," we also realize that he knows not only how zealously we have endeavored to serve him, but also the motive which prompted our zeal. If we are doing things in the LORD's service to be seen and known of men, we will be a little embarrassed to say to our Heavenly Father, "Thou knowest." And yet he does know; hence the importance of searching our hearts to make sure that they contain no selfish motives, no bitterness, no pride, no human ambition to 'shine', but are filled only with love for God, for the brethren, and for all mankind. We may speak "with the tongues of men and of angels," we may "give our bodies to be burned," yet if we have not love, these "works" will profit us nothing.—I Cor. 13:1-3

Let us be faithful to the great privilege of being the LORD's ambassadors during this dark nighttime of the reign of sin and death—to preach of the soon coming time when all mankind will be enlightened concerning the lovingkindness of our God! ■

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**OCTOBER 6**—"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them."—Luke 9:55,56 (Z. '04-43 Hymn 296)

**OCTOBER 13**—"I will show thee my faith by my works."—James 2:18 (Z. '04-45 Hymn 177)

**OCTOBER 20**—"Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."—Matthew 10:16 (Z. '04-91 Hymn 260)

**OCTOBER 27**—"My times are in thy hand."—Psalm 31:15 (Z. '04-237 Hymn 186)

## CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

### “By Faith . . . Not Knowing”

*“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.”*

—Hebrews 11:8

**A**BRAMHAM'S LIVING FAITH in the promises of God highlight many of the experiences of his life. The apostle cites other Old Testament saints as also being examples of faith, but dwells more upon the life of Abraham than on any of the others. “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,” Paul writes, and “by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death” because he “walked with God.” By faith Noah built an ark, and by faith Moses was hid three months by his parents and by faith he later forsook Egypt “esteeming the reproach of Christ” greater riches than anything that could be offered to him in the court of Pharaoh.—Heb. 11:1-27

These outstanding experiences in the lives of the various patriarchs are indeed wonderful examples of faith, and undoubtedly it was their continued strong faith that enabled them to bear up through all the trials which divine wisdom and love permitted to come into their lives. But in the apostle's citation of Abraham's faith he covers nearly the whole life of this father of the faithful in his endeavor to illustrate for us the manner in which faith is “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”—Heb. 11:1

When God first called Abraham, he offered him a “land.” (Gen. 12:1) Abraham had never seen that land

He was wholly unfamiliar with its fertility and whether or not it was favorably situated. But he accepted the invitation and left his native country 'not knowing whither he went'

God promised Abraham that he would have a "seed," but his wife was barren, hence Abraham did not know how this promise would be fulfilled. (Gen. 17:7,8) His lack of knowledge, however, did not weaken his faith. Abraham believed God. He believed that God was both willing and able to fulfill his promises, so he embarked upon a life of faith, ever believing that the time would come when the seed of promise would be born.

When finally Isaac was born and had grown to manhood's estate, God asked Abraham to offer this beloved son in sacrifice. Abraham did not understand why this was necessary, but he obeyed, 'not knowing'. Finally, like the other Ancient Worthies—faithful ones of old—Abraham died in faith not having realized in full all the implications contained in God's promises to him. Abraham did not know, and will not know until he is resurrected, the exact manner in which his seed is destined to participate in the blessing of all the families of the earth. To him, faith was truly the 'evidence of things not seen'.

## PARALLEL EXPERIENCES

Many of Abraham's experiences were similar to those in which the followers of Jesus during the present age have an opportunity to demonstrate their faith. From the time God first spoke to the patriarch while he was living in Ur of the Chaldees, we can note these similarities. And, even as with Abraham, our faith takes hold of the promises of God, enabling us, by comparison, to prize most highly the things which cannot be seen by the natural eye, nor understood by the human intellect.

First, let us note the fact that God spoke to Abraham and revealed to him the great theme song of his purpose toward the children of men. David inquired, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?" (Ps. 8:4) And well

might Abraham have asked, "Who am I, that God should speak to me, and to me make known his purpose to bless all the families of the earth?" But this was exactly what God did, and Abraham had the necessary faith to believe what God told him—to believe it so thoroughly that he gladly staked his life upon it. Surely Abraham was honored, and he demonstrated his worthiness of that honor by believing that which he could not understand.

Evidently, Abraham believed in the existence of God even before the divine plan was made known to him. Many throughout all the ages have been blessed with a faith of this kind. But only those to whom God has spoken, and to whom he has revealed some measure of his plan, have had an opportunity to demonstrate their faith by obedience to the knowledge received.

In this respect, faith is based upon knowledge. It is not 'blind' in the sense of having no assurance of the unseen blessings to come. By faith, Abraham started out for the Promised Land 'not knowing whither' he was going, but he did know that God had promised him the land; and he knew also that God had promised him a seed. What Abraham did not know was the exact manner in which God would fulfill his promises, and just what the land would be like when he reached it. These points of knowledge were not essential to Abraham's faith. All he needed to know was that God had promised. On these promises his faith rested.

## **GOD'S THEME SONG**

A Christian who is enlightened with the truth of the divine plan knows that God has spoken to him, even as he spoke to Abraham. This is a fact of positive knowledge to those who have been blessed with the "witness" of the Spirit. (Rom. 8:16) It is not a matter of basing their faith on an uncertainty. One of the main reasons they know that God has spoken to them is that they have heard the same joyful theme song of the divine plan that delighted the heart of Abraham—they have

heard that glad message concerning the divine purpose to bless all the families of the earth.

And as it was in the case of Abraham, accompanying this message is the 'call'. We might well wonder why God has singled us out for such favor; why we should be honored with the privilege of hearing his voice. But it is not long until we learn that such marvelous grace is not bestowed upon us without a purpose. It is a wonderful thing, indeed, to hear the voice of God, but it is costly. To Abraham God said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." (Gen. 12:1) This meant the forsaking of much that he held dear, but Abraham obeyed.

And when we hear the voice of God there is in the message not only the hope of restitution blessings for the world, but we hear, as well, God saying to us, "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." (Ps. 45: 10) While this invitation does not have the same literal meaning as did the divine call to Abraham, it is no less exacting in terms of sacrifice. We are not asked, necessarily, to move away a great distance from our relatives; but we *are* asked to forget them, in the sense that God and his will should henceforth come first in all our plans. Jesus said that those who love father or mother, sister or brother, husband or wife, more than they love him, are not worthy of him.—Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26

Leaving our 'father's house' is a far more drastic requirement for the Christian than it was for Abraham. In our case, it is father Adam's house. When God speaks to us we are given a vision of Paradise restored. We learn that it is the divine purpose to restore the human race to life upon the earth. We speak of this as the hope of restitution. Acts 3:19-21) We are glad to learn that all mankind will have an opportunity to live everlastingly upon an earth made perfect. Truly, we think, our father Adam's house is to be one of joy and peace, health and life; and we look forward to the time when all mankind can 'return home'

But to us as Christians, the divine call is to 'forget thine own people and thy father's house'. What does this mean? It means we have an opportunity to forego restitution blessings and to embark upon a long and difficult journey to a heavenly Canaan. Yes, God has promised us a 'land', not on earth, but in heaven, for we are partakers of a "heavenly calling." "Unto us," writes Peter, "are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature."—II Pet. 1:4

## THINGS WE KNOW

And so, by our appreciation of the message that has come down to us from the past, we know God has spoken to us. We know that the 'exceeding great and precious promises' belong to us. We know that we have passed from death unto life. We know that no good thing will be withheld from us if we walk uprightly in the narrow way of sacrifice. We know that all things will work together for our good because we love God and have been called according to his purpose. We know that we are now the sons of God, having received the Holy Spirit of sonship. These, and other precious points of knowledge, are the foundation of our faith; and our faith in the promises of God relating thereto is the evidence of things unseen.

But it is also true of us, even as of Abraham, that by faith we enter the narrow way 'not knowing whither' we are going. The Apostle John wrote, "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) 'We know' that he shall appear; and we know that when he appears we shall be 'like him'. We know this because God has promised it, and our faith lays hold upon the promises; and, like Abraham, we heed the call, 'not knowing' its full meaning, for 'it doth not yet appear what we shall be'.

An interesting fact in connection with Abraham's faith is that it grew stronger with the passing years. When God first spoke to Abraham, his faith enabled him to 'obey' the call to leave his own people, although not as fully as he

might have done, for he took some of them along with him. In this, too, there is somewhat of a parallel to our own experiences: we do not always obey the call as fully as we should.

When we make a consecration to the LORD, we tell him that it is our intention to leave all things earthly behind. We promise, if need be, to break every tender tie which binds us to a world like this, yet how often we fail to live up wholly to this promise. With one hand, as it were, we lay hold upon the heavenly promises, while with the other we cling to earthly things. We hear the admonition to set our "affection on things above" (Col. 3:2, and we try to do it. But how often our affection comes tumbling down to earth and entwines around the temporal joys and advantages which we promised God we would give up in order to make the more rapid progress toward the heavenly Canaan.

Of course, our consecration was sincere. It had to be or else it would not have been acceptable to God. But our earthly minds and hearts will not bend heavenward all at once. It requires training and struggle over a period of years for the terms of our consecration to be carried out as we would like. And it is here that our faith becomes so essential. Faith, the apostle tells us, is the victory that overcometh the world. (I John 5:4) And we can understand how this is. If our faith in the heavenly promises of God is weak, those promises are sure to be proportionately unimportant to us, while at the same time, the temporal blessings and pleasures of the world will look up as being of great importance. If our faith in the promises is strong—an overcoming faith—the unseen things of God will become real and vital while the 'world and her pursuits' which 'perish', as the old hymn tells us, will fade into positions of relative unimportance.

Abraham's faith was put to the test, and each triumph enabled it to grow stronger. We should pray, "LORD, increase our faith," and when we pray this, we should expect God to permit experiences to come into our lives

which will test our faith; that is, give us an opportunity to lay hold upon the divine promises with a firmer grip because of the experience through which we are permitted to pass.

One of God's methods of testing the faith of his people is in connection with the element of time. A thousand years are but as yesterday in the sight of God, but we measure nearly everything by the short rod of our own lifetime. Ten years to us, therefore, is a long time, and if perchance God permits us to wait that long for the fulfillment of one or more of his promises, our faith is put to a severe test. It was so with Abraham. In addition to the land of Canaan, God promised Abraham that he would have a son, and that Sarah would bear this son to him. But when years passed and no son was born to Sarah, Abraham's faith was tested.

Finally, Abraham, through lack of faith, arranged with Sarah's bondsmaid, Hagar, to mother a child for him. Some time after Hagar's son was born, the LORD spoke to Abraham again, and told him that Sarah was to give birth to a son, and that the name of the child would be Isaac. When he heard this, Abraham fell on his face and laughed. (Gen. 17:15-19) Then he said to the LORD, "O that Ishmael [Hagar's son] might live before thee!" Here is evidenced a lack of faith. Abraham was suggesting that Ishmael could just as well be the seed of promise, and that if God would accept this arrangement, there would be no more difficulty about the promised seed.

Abraham's laughter on this occasion would seem to denote that he doubted that Sarah would ever bear a son. Sarah was barren even as a young woman, and at the time God first made the promise of a seed. At that time Abraham's faith was strong enough to believe that God would overcome Sarah's barrenness. But years had passed, and this had not been done. Now she was not only still barren, but past the normal age for child-bearing as well. Why should God keep talking about what seemingly was

daily becoming more unlikely? His faith could not reach up to the occasion, and he laughed at the idea.

Abraham did not know how God would fulfill his promise,, and his faith was not strong enough to believe what he could not know. Had he understood the manner in which God proposed to fulfill the promise, Abraham would have been walking by sight. All that he needed to know was that God had promised. This should have been sufficient foundation for his faith. In the final analysis it was, because when God assured him that Sarah would bear a son, Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, . . . and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."—Rom. 4:20,21

### OUR FAITH SIMILARLY TESTED

God also tests our faith by permitting us to wait for the fulfillment of his promises. This principle of God's dealings with his people is referred to by the prophet where he says, "Though it [the vision] tarry [be long], wait for it." (Hab. 2:3) Jesus illustrated it by the parable of the ten virgins. And surely the LORD's people in this end of the age have had their faith severely tested by the seemingly long wait for the fruition of their hopes.

Finally Isaac was born. God had performed a miracle! The woman who was barren and old had conceived and had given birth to the promised seed.

There were long years of waiting before he grew to manhood, and when he did, Abraham's faith was further tested. God spoke to him again, and asked the patriarch to offer Isaac in sacrifice. This was truly a severe test of Abraham's faith—a test that surely he could not have endured when God first spoke to him while he lived in Ur of the Chaldees.

But through the years, Abraham's faith had grown strong. He had learned to know the voice of God. He knew that it was nothing short of the power of God that enabled Sarah to give birth to Isaac. Now he heard the

voice of God again. There was no question about that, but how strange was the message. It seemed contrary to all that God had wrought in and through him during all the years. God had performed a miracle in order that Isaac might be born, hence why should he now be slain?

But again Abraham obeyed, 'not knowing'. He obeyed because of his implicit faith in the wisdom and love and power of God. By now his faith was so strong that he believed God would raise Isaac from the dead if necessary, in order to fulfill his promises in connection with the 'seed'. This was "full assurance of faith" indeed! (Heb. 10:22) It is comparatively easy to have faith in God and in his promises when all the circumstances of life are favorable for the exercise of such a faith. If all our temporal affairs are in good order—we have a comfortable home, a congenial family, a secure position, good health; and besides these temporal blessings, we enjoy privileges of fellowship with the brethren and service of the truth—we exclaim, "Surely the LORD is good!" Yes, we have a strong faith under such circumstances, but how strong is our faith when God speaks to us out of a cloud, and his providences are dark and foreboding? Do we then have faith? . . .

"A faith that will not shrink,  
Tho' press'd by ev'ry foe;  
That will not tremble on the brink  
Of any earthly woe."

God spoke to Abraham in terms of sacrifice and he speaks to us in the same manner. Is our faith, like Abraham's, strong enough to obey, even though we may not know the reason for what we are asked to do? It was a great joy to Abraham when Isaac was born. There was no question about his faith then. There was too much evidence of God's providences in connection with that birth to doubt its meaning. But now it was different. This dear boy, this miracle son, this 'seed' for which he had waited a lifetime was to be slain as a burnt offering—this was what the voice of God said, and Abraham obeyed.

How does our faith compare with that of Abraham's in this connection? Oh yes, when we hear Jesus say, "My peace I leave with you," we accept that with rejoicing, and the peace and joy of the LORD is accepted as a blessed portion. It should be! But how do we react when we hear those other words, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, . . . that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service"? (Rom. 12:1) Do we recognize this 'call' as also being the voice of God; and recognizing it, are we obeying it?

### **GOD PROVIDES**

The place designated by God where Isaac was to be offered in sacrifice, was three days' journey from Abraham's home. During these three days Abraham did not divulge to Isaac just what was to occur. Isaac began to wonder, and as they began to ascend the mount (probably Moriah) he asked his father about the lamb for the sacrifice. Seemingly they had everything else they would need for offering a sacrifice except the lamb, and Isaac was puzzled.

But in simple faith Abraham replied that God would provide the lamb. Surely Abraham did have faith! Even here he did not know just what God would do, but he had faith to believe that, if necessary, he would raise Isaac from the dead. Strengthened by this faith, he took the step in the dark, knowing that God would meet him there and do for him what he could not do for himself.

Abraham said that God would provide the lamb, and he did. As the knife was raised to slay the boy, an angel of the LORD intervened to prevent the killing. Turning around, Abraham saw a ram in the thicket—the lamb which God provided. Abraham did not know why this test of faith was put upon him, but now we understand. We see in this sacrifice a picture of the sacrifice of Jesus, the antitypical "Lamb of God" which he provided to take away the sin of the world.

Abraham passed successfully this supreme test of his faith, and God said to him, "Now I know that thou fearest me. (Gen. 22:12) There is something very sweet about this. It indicates that God had reserved judgment concerning Abraham until he demonstrated fully that he truly believed and was willing to obey. It is even so with us! When we have finally reached the end of the way, and have been successful in demonstrating our faith by our works, we will hear that "Well don, thou good and faithful servant, . . . enter into the joy of thy Lord."—Matt. 25:21

So may we continue on! Our God is a promise-keeping God. We may not know, in fact we will not know, the full implications of his promise, but we know that the promises belong to us, and that he is able to fulfill them. Let us then step out upon these promises, leaving behind all earthly things, and keep our sacrifice upon the altar until it is wholly consumed. Brother, hast thou a faith like this? ■

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SOLOMON SAID, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." It is your thoughts that determine your character and destiny. People nowadays often scoff at the old-fashioned mottoes that mother used to hang on the walls, such as "Love One Another," "Dare to Do Right," "God Bless Our Home," etc. Of course, if you only hang your mottoes on the wall, they are worse than useless. But if you hang them in your mind and heart and think about them; try to picture how they fit into various situations, such as 'special temptations', and 'besetting sins', it may happen that having the right motto ready at the right moment will be your salvation in moments of temptation.

Every moment you think clearly about truth, honor, gentleness, goodness, things of 'good report', builds a habit of right-thinking; and 'if ye do these things, ye shall never fall'.  
—E. A. W.

## ENCOURAGING LETTERS

### From the Philippines:

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I kept switching on my radio when I chanced upon your program. When I tried to turn it to another station I was halted by my mom, who was listening by then. I became interested, and so was the whole family. That was the start of my waiting for your next broadcast. Now the family is among your countless admirers, and we are getting a lot of good from it. God bless, and thanks for a nice one. Yours sincerely.—*Philippines*

### God Bless Us All to Be Faithful

My dearest people: I am writing to thank you for your steadfastness and faithfulness in sending me The Dawn magazine. I write to assure you that I read the magazines, and that it has really opened my eyes to behold the love and mercy of God. I have decided to follow Jesus, and to stand for the truth in the face of any opposition. May God help

me, and help you, and help every true believer in Jesus Christ. Once again, it is many thanks and God bless. Your sister in Jesus.—*Nigeria*

### Appreciates Poranek

Dear Brethren: We are grateful for your continued help in sending your publication, "Poranek," (The Dawn magazine in the Polish language) to us even though we have not written to thank you for it. We are thankful that we have the liberty to be able to get this literature, which has been such a help to us.

We will be visiting one of our sisters who is paralyzed, and she will rejoice greatly to read the last issue, #44, which we recently received. We wish you the LORD's blessings and joy in the LORD. Your brother and sister in Christ. Hymn #23, (Hymns of Dawn).—*Poland*

### Another Note from Poland

Dear brethren in Christ: I would like to let you know

that I receive the Polish Dawn (Poranek) regularly I am very thankful for this publication, and must tell you I appreciate it very much and rejoice with every issue when I receive it. I would like to continue receiving this publication, for which I thank you very much. I wish you the LORD's continued care and blessing. Your grateful brother in the LORD.—  
*Poland*

### Must Write!

Dawn Subscription Department Friends: I must write to let you know how much I enjoy The Dawn book. It has been a great teacher for me. As I have understood more about the Bible than what I have heard preached. There are teachers and there are preachers. But we must understand what is preached to understand the Bible. Thank God for a friend that showed me her magazine. Don't want to miss my next issue! I'm sending for another year. Please also

send a copy to my friend whose address I enclose —  
VA

### True Christianity

Dear Dawn: I want to first of all convey to you my appreciation towards you. The Dawn has contributed greatly in helping me, especially during the first few years of my conversion when I greatly needed to listen to Bible-believing Christians such as yourselves. I have always been able to recognize that there was something special about your ministry. I was, and still am, very impressed with the humble manner you conduct your evangelism on T.V. To be quite frank about it, your 'true colours' are displayed in the fact that you refuse to ask your listeners for money! Believe me when I tell you, I can appreciate that this fruit that you bear is a clear sign of true Christianity. God bless you, and thanks again. Yours truly, a Fellow Believer.—*Canada* ■



## OBITUARIES

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian courses. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to the families and friends in the loss of these dear ones. We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.

Sister Norma Stevens, Victoria, B.C.—August 3. Age, 78.

Sister Mary Langsev, Portland, OR—August 10. Age 72.

Brother Walter Jurek, Chicago, IL—August 24. Age, 77.

## SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

### Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of the Dawn, or by classes associated with 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**  
Plainville, CT October 7-9  
Lanaconing, MD 21  
Washington, D.C. 23  
Atlanta, GA 25  
Louisville, AL 26  
Orlando, FL 29,30

**C. Chandler**  
Clear Lake, CA October 12  
Palo Alto, CA 13  
San Luis Obispo, CA 15,16  
Fresno, CA 17  
Sacramento, CA 19

Paradise, CA 21  
Grants Pass/Roseburg, OR 22

**R. Gorecki**  
New Haven, CT October 23

**G.M. Jeuck**  
Claymont, DE October 30

**L.B. Post**  
New England Conv. October 7-9  
Pittsburgh, PA 15,16

**L. Young**  
St. Petersburg, FL October 9

**T**HE PROPER "ATTITUDE of heart is praying without ceasing. Sometimes the thought may only flash through the mind, but, nevertheless, it brings a blessing to us. All of God's dealings with the elect class are for their development; and one feature of this development is to learn to know whence our blessings come. —C.T.R.

# CONVENTIONS

*These conventions are listed at the request of the classes who sponsor them. In order to ensure your convention being accurately placed in these columns, please make your request **IN WRITING** and mail it to this address at least two or three months before the date of the convention: Convention Listing, Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.*

**BALTIMORE, MD, October 2—**Knights of Columbus Hall, 7910 Harford Rd., Baltimore. For information contact: Robert Wagner, 2753 Pelham Ave., Baltimore 21213  
Phone: (410) 483-1394

**NEW ENGLAND CONVENTION, October 7,8,9—**Howard Johnsons, (Please note: Correction on Address:) 400 New Britain Ave., Plainville, CT 06062. For reservations, contact: Mrs. Anna May Suraci, 171 Johnson Rd., Hamden, CT 06518  
Phone: (203) 248-3793

**FREDRICKSBURG NORTH, VA, October 8,9—**Holiday Inn. For information, contact Mrs. Felicia Everett, Washington Bible Students, 2027 North Lexington St., Arlington, VA 22205. **Reservation deadline: October 1st.**  
Phone: (703) 538-6406

**GRAND RAPIDS, MI, October 15,16—**Contact: Mark Carpenter, 804 Conger, N.E., 49505  
Phone: (616) 365-2635

**PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, October 15,16—**Sewickley Grange Hall, Rte. 136, West Newton, PA. For information, contact: Charles Martig, 94 S. Harrison St., Pittsburgh, PA 15202  
Phone: (412) 734-9269

**SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA, October 15,16—**Masonic Temple, 858 Marsh St., San Luis Obispo. Make reservations early by contacting either Lynn Murray, (805) 544-3037, or, Helen Franklin (805) 541-0132, for assistance.

**HUNTSVILLE, AL, October 21-23—**Holiday Inn, Research Park, 5903 University Drive, Huntsville, AL 35806. Contact Sandy Cothren, 1912 Stevens Drive, Huntsville 35812 for information and program.  
Phone: (205) 551-0696

**ORLANDO, FL, October 29,30—**Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Drive (Corner of Hwy. 17-92), Sanford. Contact Helen A. Jeuck, 587 Queens Mirror Circle, Casselberry, 32707, for information and accommodations.  
Phone: (407) 699-8303

**NEW HAVEN, CT, November 6—**Italian-American Club, 85 Chase Lane, West Haven, CT. Contact: Cindy Mason.  
Phone: (203) 481-9935

**JERSEY CITY PRE-THANKSGIVING CONVENTION, November 19,20—**Masonic Temple, 1912 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ. Contact: Mrs. Charlotte Teklinski, 84 Arthur St., Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660  
Phone: (201) 440-0925 ■

**T**HEY that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it.