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The DAWN

A Herald of Christ's Presence

Dedicated to the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in the Spirit of Tolerance and Good Will

Vol. 12, No. 1

FEBRUARY 1943

One Dollar a Year

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EARTH'S COMING JUBILEE

A dialog presentation of some of the typical features of God's dealings with ancient Israel, particularly the manner in which they point forward to blessings soon coming to a sin-sick and dying world.

TWO MASTERS

The Bible emphasizes that a Christian cannot properly serve two masters. This article examines some of the Scriptural testimony concerning these two masters, and the importance of rendering full obedience to only one, which should be God.

GREATNESS

THE REWARD OF SERVICE

A Reprint article, published with the prayer that it will again be used to refresh the hearts of the consecrated.

PRECIOUS PROMISES

A review of some of the promises referred to by St. Peter as being "exceeding great and precious," and by which we are made "partakers of the divine nature."

BIRTHDAY CARDS

A new assortment of twelve lovely cards—all different—for 60 cents. Each card has an appropriate Scripture text. Envelopes in which to mail the cards are included.

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THE FACT FINDER



IS THERE A TIME TO DIE?

QUESTION: Is there anything in the Bible to indicate that God has set a time for each individual to die, and that no one can die until that time comes?

ANSWER: There is nothing in the Bible to support the tradition that a man cannot "die before his time comes." In Ecclesiastes 3:2 we read that there is "A time to be born, and a time to die," but this should not be construed to mean that the Creator arbitrarily determines either the time of birth or the time of death of individuals. In the succeeding verses the prophet goes on to say that there is "A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh," etc. It would be unreasonable to suppose that God has predestined the exact time, and every time, each one of us must weep or laugh. What this passage evidently means is that there are appropriate times and seasons for all the various experiences of life, and that one who is trusting the Lord will not try to change them, nor rebel against what divine providence permits.

Death reigns throughout the earth because of sin, all mankind having come under condemnation to death as a result of original sin. Concerning this Paul declares, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12.) In the outworking of this blanket condemnation of death some die in infancy, others as juniors, while some are able to resist the ravages of death and live to what we call middle or old age. The length of time any individual actually lives is determined by heredity, environment, habits of life, accidents, etc. The Lord has put a somewhat flexible ceiling on the condemned human life-span of "threescore years and ten"—seventy. Some live beyond this time, but not often with a great deal of pleasure.—Psa. 90:10.

Death for human beings at any age is unnatural, and as one of the enemies of the human race, will be destroyed during the thousand years of Christ's reign. (1 Cor. 15:54, 55, 25, 26.) While we often use the expression "natural death," in contradistinction to death by accident or in war,

yet actually death in any form is unnatural for mankind. Man was created in the image of God, and provision was made whereby he could have lived forever had he not disobeyed God's law. But sin entered the world, and death by sin, so that the children of Adam have thus far known no other experience but to walk "through the valley of the shadow of death."—Psalm 23:4.

But man will not always be a dying creature. Jesus gave His human life in death for the life of the world, and during the thousand-year Kingdom period that which was lost by Adam will be restored, and all will be given an opportunity to accept the provision of life made for them through Christ, and, in accepting it, will live forever as human beings upon the earth. (John 6:51-58; Heb. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:4-6.) Then the temporary span of threescore years and ten will be removed, and those who die even at a hundred years of age will go into death because they have proven themselves to be wilful sinners and unworthy of life. Even at the age of a hundred years they will be mere infants as compared to the lasting life that will be possible for those who obey the laws of the new Kingdom. See Isaiah 65:20.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

QUESTION: Would it be right for a church to keep as a member anyone who continues gambling, drinking, etc., just as he did before joining the church?

ANSWER: Joining the true church of Christ is a matter between the individual and the Lord. Christians here on earth can neither take anyone into this church, nor put anyone out. It is, however, within the province of any group of consecrated followers of the Master to withhold their cooperation and fellowship from those who walk disorderly. (1 Cor. 5:9-11.) This, however, is merely a matter of keeping ourselves, as Christians, separate from those who, by their disorderly conduct, would bring reproach upon the cause of Christ and also wield an unwholesome influence over us. We have no power to cut off anyone from the favor of God, nor even to decide whether or not God has withdrawn His favor from an individual. This is something that is

entirely in the Lord's hands, and we can rest contented in the thought that the "Lord knoweth them that are His."—2 Tim. 2:19.

When viewed from the Scriptural standpoint we see that immoral habits of every kind must be given up before one can present himself in consecration to the Lord. It is a mistake to suppose that the Lord wants anyone to give Him his pipe or liquor as a sacrifice. Quite apart from following in the footsteps of Jesus, one has no right to any immoral habits which injure his body and degrade his morals. One becomes a Christian by presenting himself in consecration to God, which means the giving up for His service, not sinful things to which we have no right, but the legitimate advantages of life, for the enjoyment of which human beings were created.

The Christian life, then, is a life of sacrifice, and sacrifice means the giving up of things to which we have a right. In this respect we follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Jesus was born under the Jewish law which promised life to anyone that could keep it inviolate. Jesus did keep that law perfectly, hence could have continued to live upon the earth forever as a human being; but, instead, He gave up His humanity as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. (John 1:29.) In the next age, those who accept the gift of life provided through the death of Jesus will enjoy everlasting life upon the earth. But during this age, those who accept Christ are invited to lay down their lives, with the assurance that through the merit of Christ's blood the sacrifice of their humanity will be acceptable to God, and they will be counted as dying like Jesus died, not because they are sinners, but because they are participating in the sacrificial phase of God's plan to destroy sin and remove its penalty, death.—Romans 12:1, 2; 6:1-13.

WAS ADAM THE FIRST MAN?

QUESTION: Will you tell me if Genesis 1:26, 2:7, and 5:2, all refer to the same people? Or was it only Adam that was made subject to vanity, while Genesis 1:26 refers to a spiritually minded being which God created in His own image?

ANSWER: Our understanding is that all three of these texts refer to the same created beings. The first chapter of Genesis is a brief summary of the entire work of creation, while the second chapter begins with the details of man's creation, his fall into sin and death, etc. (According to the Masoretic or Jewish division of the Bible, the second chapter should begin with the fourth verse.) The purpose of the entire Bible is to reveal God's purpose in the creation of man, and that, even though he fell into sin, he is to be re-

covered in due time. From this standpoint, we might say that details of God's plan for man, as they begin to unfold in the second chapter of Genesis, continue to be revealed throughout the entire Bible, culminating in the beautiful pictures of restoration presented to us in the last three chapters of Revelation.

It is incorrect to speak of man as being spiritual in the sense that he had a spirit nature. True, man was created in the image of God, but still he was an earthly, not a spiritual, creature. When fallen man is restored to perfection upon the earth, at the close of the "times of restitution," he will still be an earthly creature, but will be in harmony with his Creator, and his character will reflect the wisdom, justice, love and power of his Creator. See 1 Corinthians 15:45-47.

BEYOND THE MILLENNIUM

QUESTION: I wonder if you can tell me what will happen after the thousand years of Christ's reign is completed?

ANSWER: In Revelation 20:7-9, we are informed that following the thousand years of Christ's reign Satan will be permitted to test the people, and that some will, even after all the advantages of the Millennial age, follow him. A rather bungling translation of this passage has given the thought to some that the number of those who join Satan at that time will be as the sands upon the seashore. The thought is, rather, that those whom he attempts to deceive are in numbers as the sands. Actually, the text doesn't say how many will join in the rebellion.

When Satan has thus been permitted to test the loyalty of the restored human race, he, together with those who join him, will be destroyed in what the Scriptures describe as the "second death." The Scriptures give no hope of a recovery from this final penalty of death upon the incorrigible. The death penalty upon any of God's intelligent creatures was first inflicted upon Adam and his race. Redemption from this penalty is provided through Christ. When the penalty of death is imposed upon the incorrigible at the end of the Millennium it will be the "second" death. It won't be the second time that Satan has died—although it will be that for most of the others—but it will be the second application of the death penalty, hence is called the "second death."

Following that will be the endless ages of happiness for the restored race. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 that Christ will then turn over the Kingdom to His Father. Then the Creator may be supreme in the earth. This means that man, in whom the divine image has been restored, will again take his rightful place as king of earth, exercising the dominion prepared for

him from the foundation of the world, as indicated in Matthew 25:34.

In Matthew 25:41 the fate of the incorrigibly wicked is again mentioned, and here they are described as going away into everlasting fire. As fire is a symbol of destruction, this indicates that they are everlastingly destroyed. Those who argue that there will be universal salvation, and that even the devil will be saved, claim that the Greek word *aionios*, here translated "everlasting," does not mean eternal—as it is translated in the Revised Version—hence that there will be another resurrection, beyond which a further trial period will be granted the goat class of this parable. This is reading things into the Bible that are not there!

The words *aion* and *aionios*, as in the above text, mean age-lasting. But how long is an age? It is this same word that is used in the New Testament promises of everlasting life for the faithful. If sometimes it doesn't mean eternal, then the hope of eternal life is not held out to us in the Bible. The length of the "age" denoted by these Greek words depends upon the context in which they are used. For example, the present average length of human life is somewhere around fifty years. This, then, is the human age. Should a man make a promise to a friend that certain privileges would be extended to him as long as he lived, it would mean, on the average, about fifty years.

But it is not man that makes the promises of everlasting life recorded in the Bible, but God. It is not man that says the incorrigible will be destroyed in *aionios* fire, but God. God's life will continue for ever—from everlasting to everlasting—hence the length of the age when He makes promises is, indeed, eternity. As long as God lives He will continue to give life to those who obey Him, thus it will be eternal life. Hence, beyond the thousand-year reign of Christ, there will be an eternity of life and joy for all the obedient and restored of mankind. As to the promises made to the church, Christ's followers, see Ephesians 2:7.

WHAT IS ARMAGEDDON?

QUESTION: What is the meaning of the word "Armageddon"?

ANSWER: The term "Armageddon" appears in the Bible only once, and that is in Revelation 16:16. The word is of Hebrew origin. Concerning it, Prof. Benjamin Wilson, author of the *Emphatic Diaglott* translation of the New Testament, says: "A place in Samaria, east of Cesarea; the mountain of Megeddon, or Megiddo, a city at the foot of Mount Carmel, and noted for scenes of carnage. The Canaanites and Philistines, Jews and Egyptians, Chaldeans and Persians, Greeks

and Romans, Moslems and Christians, of almost every age and nation, have encamped around Megiddo because of its commanding position, its abundant supply of water and rich pasture. In the Apocalypse this place is referred to, probably as a symbolical name for great slaughter."

Prof. Wilson has overlooked the fact that when the ancient Jews fought at Megiddo, the Lord directed the issue of the struggle, causing the defeat of Israel's enemies. It is this, we believe, that has the most important bearing upon the symbolic meaning of the word as used in Revelation 16:16. Pictorially, it suggests a mighty struggle in which the Lord directs the issue, and, in prophecy, applies to a struggle in which the kingdoms of this world are overthrown preparatory to the full establishment of the Kingdom of Christ.

There is general agreement as to the above mentioned symbolism of Armageddon, but some limit the application to the final engagement in a series of struggles which brings about the end of the present evil world, while others think of it as applying to the whole period of what the Bible describes as the day of "God's wrath." But irrespective of which of these views we accept, it still remains that the prophetic Battle of Armageddon is the last struggle of a dying world in which the Lord intervenes to establish His Kingdom.

The meaning of any word used symbolically in the prophecies is based upon the circumstances and characteristics associated with it. So it is with Armageddon. Time and again the Lord fought for Israel at Armageddon, but He didn't always do it in the same manner. In the case of the Midianites, He gave Gideon and his three hundred the victory over them by a strategy which caused this mighty army to turn upon each other. At other times, miracle working power was used on behalf of Israel. It may be that, in these various methods, we have a picture of the manner in which the Lord's hand directs the overthrow of Satan's empire.

In Isaiah 42:13 we read, "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." This is one of the prophetic descriptions of God's part in the events at the end of the age. Note that in this case the nations are turned against each other. In Zechariah 14:3 begins a description of what seems to be a more direct manifestation of God's power against His enemies, and the enemies of His people. We believe that it is important to note, however, that regardless of the method used, the Lord takes the responsibility of directing the outcome of all the phases of the great "time of trouble" which precedes the full establishment of the Messianic Kingdom.



BROADCAST



SCHEDULE



Frank and Ernest GOOD NEWS FROM THE BIBLE

Sunday, February 7

***THE LAST DAYS**—A revealing discussion showing that the "last days" period described in the prophecies is not "doom's day," but the introduction to an era of peace and happiness for all nations. "God's New Order" booklet announced.

Sunday, February 14

THE THIRD HEAVEN—A discussion of some of the pictorial language of the Bible, especially as it applies to the organizational arrangements of the coming Kingdom of Christ. "God's Plan" booklet announced.

*Note:—"When There is no Peace" was originally scheduled for February 7, but unavoidable difficulties have made it necessary to postpone it until **March 7** and substitute "The Last Days" for February 7.

Sunday, February 21

MANY MANSIONS—Discusses the heavenly hopes of the church, and shows that there is an "afterward" of blessing for all mankind. "God's Plan" booklet announced.

Sunday, February 28

THE CHURCH—Which is the true church? Who are its members? What is its mission? These are some of the questions discussed in this program. "God's Plan" booklet announced.

Sunday, March 7

WHEN THERE IS NO PEACE—Prophecy declares of the end of the age that there would be a cry of peace when there is no peace, which, as this program shows, is now a further evidence of the times in which we are living. "God and Reason" booklet announced.

(SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

EASTERN TIME

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Akron, Ohio, WADC, 1350 kc., | 9:15 A. M. |
| Baltimore, Md., WFBR, 1300 kc., | 9:15 A. M. |
| Bangor, Maine, WABI, 910 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Binghamton, N. Y., WNBF, 1290 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Boston, Mass., WORL, 950 kc., | 10:30 A. M. |
| Cincinnati, Ohio, WCPO, 1230 kc., | 10:15 A. M. |
| Columbus, Ohio, WHKC, 640 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Dayton, Ohio, WHIO, 1290 kc., | 12:30 P. M. |
| Detroit—Windsor, CKLW, 800 kc., | 1:00 P. M. |
| Grand Rapids, Mich., WLAV, 1340 kc., | 12:30 P. M. |
| High Point, N. C., WMFR, 1230 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |
| Jacksonville, Florida, WJHP, 1230 kc., | 10:45 A. M. |
| Kirkland Lake, Ont., Can., CJKL, 560 kc., | 5:15 P. M. |
| Lewiston, Maine, WCOU, 1240 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |
| Muskegon, Mich., WKBZ, 1500 kc., | 4:30 P. M. |
| New York, N. Y., WMCA, 570 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Orlando, Florida, WLOF, 1230 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Philadelphia, Pa., WIP, 610 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Pittsburgh, Pa., WWSW, 1490 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |
| Pittsburgh, Pa., W-47-P (Freq. Mod.), | 9:45 A. M. |
| Saginaw, Mich., WSAM, 1400 kc., | 6:45 P. M. |
| Scranton, Pa., WGBI, 910 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Springfield, Mass., WSPR, 1270 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Toronto, Ontario, Can., CKCL, 580 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Washington, D. C., WOL, 1260 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |

CENTRAL TIME

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| Anderson, Ind., WHBU, 1240 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Chicago, Illinois, WJJD, 1160 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Clinton, Iowa, KROS, 1340 kc., | 10:15 A. M. |
| Dallas, Texas, KSKY, 660 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Hot Springs, Ark., KTHS, 1090 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Indianapolis, Indiana, WIBC, 1070 kc., | 9:30 A. M. |
| Jackson, Tenn., WTJS, 1390 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |
| Knoxville, Tenn., WROL, 620 kc., | 10:15 A. M. |
| Louisville, Ky., WGRC, 1370 kc., | 8:45 A. M. |
| Madison, Wis., WIBA, 1310 kc., | 10:15 A. M. |
| Medford, Wisconsin, WIGM, 1500 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |
| (Wednesdays instead of Sundays) | |
| Memphis, Tenn., WHBQ, 1400 kc., | 9:15 A. M. |
| Minneapolis, Minn., WTCN, 1280 kc., | 9:15 A. M. |
| St. Louis, Missouri, KXOK, 630 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| San Antonio, Tex., KMAC, 1240 kc., | 8:45 A. M. |
| Shenandoah, Iowa, KMA, 960 kc., | 9:00 A. M. |
| Tulsa, Okla., KTUL, 1430 kc., | 9:15 A. M. |
| Wichita, Kans., KFBI, 1070 kc., | 9:00 A. M. |
| Winnipeg, Manitoba, Can., CJRC, 630 kc., | 10:30 A. M. |

MOUNTAIN TIME

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| Denver, Colo., KFEL, 950 kc., | 9:15 A. M. |
| Edmonton, Alberta, Can., CFRN, 1260 kc., | 9:00 A. M. |
| Kalispell, Montana, KGEZ, 1460 kc., | 4:45 P. M. |
| Nampa, Idaho, KFXD, 1230 kc., | 4:00 P. M. |
| Phoenix, Ariz., KTAR, 620 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |
| Safford, Ariz., KGLU, 1450 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |
| Saskatoon, Sask., Canada, CFQC, 600 kc., | 10:45 A. M. |
| Scottsbluff, Nebr., KGKY, 1490 kc., | 10:30 A. M. |
| Tucson, Ariz., KVOA, 1290 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |
| Yuma, Ariz., KYUM, 1240 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |

PACIFIC TIME

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| Bakersfield, Calif., KERN, 1410 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Berkeley, Calif., KRE, 1400 kc., | 9:05 A. M. |
| Chehalis, Wash., KELA, 1470 kc., (no time given) | |
| Fresno, Calif., KMJ, 580 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Los Angeles, Calif., KMPC, 710 kc., | 1:30 P. M. |
| Oakland, Calif., KROW, 960 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Reno, Nev., KOH, 630 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Riverside, Calif., KPRO, 1440 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Sacramento, Calif., KFBK, 1530 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Santa Rosa, Calif., KSRO, 1340 kc., | 10:00 A. M. |
| Seattle, Wash., KJR, 1000 kc., | 8:45 A. M. |
| Spokane, Wash., KGA, 1510 kc., | 4:00 P. M. |
| The Dalles, Oregon, KODL, 1230 kc., | 9:15 A. M. |
| Vancouver, B. C., Canada, CKWX, 980 kc., | 2:45 P. M. |
| Vancouver, Wash., KVAN, 910 kc., | 9:15 A. M. |
| Wenatchee, Wash., KPQ, 560 kc., | 10:30 A. M. |

ATLANTIC TIME

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| St. Johns, Newfoundland, VOXM, | 5:00 P. M. |
| Sydney, Nova Scotia, Can., CJCB, 1270 kc., | 9:45 A. M. |
| Sydney, N. S., CJCX (Short Wave), | 9:45 A. M. |

POLISH RADIO PROGRAMS

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Baltimore, Md., WCBM, 214½ kc., | 8:45 A. M. |
| Chicago, Ill., WGES, 1390 kc., | 8:45 A. M. |
| Chicago, Ill., WGES, 1390 kc., (Wednesdays) | 6:45 P. M. |
| Detroit, Mich., WJBK, 1490 kc., | 8:30 A. M. |
| Jersey City, N. J., WHOM, 1480 kc., | 4:30 P. M. |
| Muskegon, Mich., WKBZ, 1500 kc., | 10:45 A. M. |
| Niagara Falls, N. Y., WHLD, 1290 kc., | 8:45 A. M. |
| Racine, Wis., WRJN, 1400 kc., | 2:30 P. M. |
| Springfield, Mass., WSPR, 1140 kc., | 8:30 A. M. |

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTS

Geelong—near Melbourne—Sunday evenings. Can be heard in most of Australia.

Note: CJKL of Kirkland Lake, Ont., Can., and KELA of Chehalis, Wash., are new on the list. Also WGBI, Scranton.

OUR BIBLICAL DIALOG

Masters of Destiny

ERNEST:

Frank, while discussing the Scriptures with some friends, one of them remarked that human beings have practically nothing to do with their destiny, that we are merely clay in the hands of the Creator, who, like the potter, will shape us according to His own desires. Does the Bible support such a theory of fatalism?

FRANK:

No, Ernest, it doesn't. The Bible shows, on the contrary, that while God has established arbitrary laws and principles to which all of His intelligent creatures are subject, yet it is left to the individual's own choice as to how he reacts to those laws and principles; and God's blessings, in the long run, are commensurate with the degree of obedience the individual renders to His laws. This principle is clearly stated by the Apostle Paul in Galatians 6:7, where he says that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

ERNEST:

Well, that's the way I have always understood the matter, but there are some texts of Scripture which seem to contradict that thought. Here's a text in the 9th chapter of Romans, for example, that seems to present a different idea. Verses 20 and 21 of this chapter read: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Now, Frank, isn't that a pretty clear statement that God intends to have His way with us, irrespective of what we do about it?

FRANK:

There can be no question but what God will have His way with all of us, but just what that way will be is determined by our own position in the matter.

ERNEST:

Do you mean that there is anything we can do that will change God's will for us?

FRANK:

Yes, Ernest, that is the lesson of the passage you have read from the 9th chapter of Romans. The passage is addressed to the natural descendants of Abraham, the Jews, who rejected Jesus at His first advent. Paul is explaining that God, as the Master Potter, had the right to change His plan for them because they had rejected the Messiah.

ERNEST:

But, Frank, are you sure that the Jew's own position in the matter had anything to do with whether or not they were to be made vessels of honor or of dishonor?

FRANK:

Yes, the Scriptures make that point very definite. Paul's lesson of the potter and clay is taken from the 18th chapter of Jeremiah's prophecy. In this chapter the Lord tells Jeremiah to go to the potter's house and observe how the potter works. The prophet did this, and noticed that the potter, in making a vessel that didn't turn out as he had planned, took the same clay and formed a vessel of a different shape than the one originally started. After the prophet had observed this the Lord spoke to him and explained the meaning of the lesson. That explanation begins with the 6th verse. Here's my Bible, Ernest, I think you would enjoy reading what the Lord said to Jeremiah.

ERNEST:

I **always** enjoy reading the Bible. I'll begin at the 6th verse, which reads: "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O house of Israel." Why, Frank, this seems to disprove the point you are making. It looks as though the Israelites didn't have much choice in what was to happen to them.

FRANK:

Continue reading, Ernest. The Lord explains the matter further in the succeeding verses.

ERNEST:

Very well; "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in My sight, that it obey not My voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them."

FRANK:

You will see from that, Ernest, that it is the attitude of individuals and nations that determines the manner in which God deals with them. God made wonderful promises to the nation of Israel, but the fulfillment of those promises depended upon obedience to Him. God also explains that in the case of a people upon whom judgment had been pronounced, if that people turn from their evil course, God will change His attitude and bestow His blessings instead. We have a good Scriptural example of this in the

case of Nineveh. God sent the Prophet Jonah to tell the Ninevites that they were to be destroyed because of their sin. When they heard the message they repented, hence God did not destroy them. God, as the Master Potter, does change the shape of the clay at His will, but His will is determined by the degree of obedience or disobedience of those represented by the clay.

ERNEST:

That's plain enough, Frank, and Scriptural, too. From that standpoint I can see that as individuals we are more or less masters of our own destiny. Isn't that right?

FRANK:

Within the scope of God's plan, yes—

ERNEST:

What do you mean by that?

FRANK:

Simply that God has provided certain blessings for those who are loyal to Him, and that by obedience we can secure those blessings. Beyond that we cannot go. For example, there is a beautiful old hymn which reads, "I want to be an angel and with the angels stand; a crown upon my forehead and a harp within my hand." Now God hasn't made any provision for human beings becoming angels, so no matter how desirable such a destiny might be, we can't attain to it because it isn't in the divine plan for us.

ERNEST:

But Frank, doesn't the Bible say something about human beings becoming angels?

FRANK:

No. The Bible does hold out a heavenly hope for the faithful followers of Jesus. These are promised that they shall be exalted to the same high position in the divine plan now occupied by Jesus, that they may live and reign with Him in His thousand-year Kingdom which is to bless all the nations of the earth. Of Jesus it is said that at the time of His resurrection He was highly exalted, far above angels, and His followers are promised that they shall be like Him. They will really be higher than the angels in nature and honor.

ERNEST:

Is that God's plan for all mankind?

FRANK:

No! God's plan for mankind in general is to live upon the earth forever as human beings.

ERNEST:

But Frank, human beings keep on dying, they are not continuing to live here, as you say they are.

FRANK:

That's true of the present time, and it has been true ever since our first parents transgressed God's law in the Garden of Eden. That's where man, by disobedience, brought a change in the plan—God there changed the shape of the vessel, as it were.

ERNEST:

Didn't God know that Adam would sin; and if He knew it, why didn't He prevent it in some way?

FRANK:

Yes, God's foreknowledge enabled Him to know in advance that Adam would transgress His law; but God was able to know that, without in the least interfering with Adam's free choice in the matter. In other words, God didn't make Adam sin; He merely permitted him to sin. God had told Adam that death would be the penalty for disobedience. He would have continued to live had he not sinned. He was commanded to multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. Had Adam remained obedient to God, and carried out this command, the whole earth eventually would have been like the Garden of Eden, and filled with a perfect human race free from sickness and death, enjoying God's favor continuously.

ERNEST:

And Adam changed the whole picture by disobeying God's law, is that it?

FRANK:

Yes!

ERNEST:

Couldn't God have prevented such a tragedy?

FRANK:

Yes, but His wisdom saw it would be best not to prevent it. Man was created in the image of God, with the ability to know right from wrong, and to choose between them. While God has the power to crush the wills of His creatures, He does not do so. He desires, not compulsory obedience to Him, but willing obedience—an obedience based upon an intelligent and free-will choice. Aggressive dictators may be able to subjugate a people into unwilling obedience, but God, in His long-range plan, will bring about the hearty cooperation of all mankind upon the basis of a free choice to do so.

ERNEST:

I hope you are right, but it seems to me that the plan got off to a bad start in the beginning. I still don't see why God permitted that tragedy in Eden. What good can be accomplished by it?

FRANK:

God permitted sin to enter into the world in order that man might learn by experience the terrible results of disobedience to divine law.

ERNEST:

Why couldn't our first parents have been told about it, without the necessity of actually experiencing it?

FRANK:

They were told! But that wasn't sufficient. There are four principal ways of learning things. One is by being told; another is by observation; another by intuition; and the fourth by experience. Adam was fully in-

formed of the result of sin—"In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die"—is what he was told. There was no way of observing the results of disobedience; and since intuition belongs only to God, there was only one way left for man to learn more fully what disobedience to God's law would mean, and that was by experience; so God permitted him to take the wrong course in order that he might learn this hard, but very effective, way.

ERNEST:

But what good will it do? The penalty of death is already upon the human race, hence it's too late now to learn, is it not?

FRANK:

No, Ernest! God's grace and love enter the picture, and in the divine plan we find a provision has been made to escape the lasting results of original sin. Thus God has given the human race an opportunity to learn by experience, and thus to be better able to choose between right and wrong when, later, the opportunity to do so is given. That provision is through the redemptive work of Christ, which guarantees an awakening from the sleep of death for all of Adam's children, and the giving to each one a future opportunity to obey God's law and live forever, even as Adam had that opportunity but failed.

ERNEST:

Frank, that's a very reasonable viewpoint, but before I accept it I have another Scripture or two I would like to consider. You have emphasized the thought that God "permits" sin but does not cause people to sin.

FRANK:

That's right!

ERNEST:

I hope it's right, but how do you harmonize that thought with this statement here in the 45th chapter of Isaiah and the 7th verse, where God says, and I'll read it, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Amos 3:6 is another text I'll read while I'm at it. Here it is, and it reads, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Now, Frank, how do you harmonize those texts with the thought that God is not responsible for sin?

FRANK:

Ernest, you are confusing the terms evil and sin. Sin is always an evil, but evil is not always a sin. An earthquake, for example, is an evil, but not a sin. The word evil in the texts you have read signifies calamities. These texts are addressed to the Jewish nation with whom God entered into a covenant at Mount Sinai. That covenant called for divine blessings upon the nation when faithful, and punishment when unfaithful. In the texts you have read the

prophets are reminding Israel that if calamities befall them it is an evidence of God's faithfulness in punishing them, in keeping with the covenant they had made with Him. Israel could have avoided the evil by faithfulness to their covenant.

ERNEST:

Well, that's a simple answer, but very satisfactory, and it brings us right back where we started, that is, to God's dealings with the Jews, as illustrated by the potter and the clay. I have another question in that connection however. We know that Israel was cast off from divine favor at Christ's first advent, but does that mean that the Lord will never again change His attitude toward them?

FRANK:

No, Ernest, the Bible shows God's mercy will again be extended to the Israelites, that they will have an opportunity to benefit from their hard experiences outside the fold of God's protection and care. The 11th chapter of Romans makes that very clear. In Jeremiah 18:17 we are told that God would turn His back to Israel instead of His face, and that as a result a great calamity would be upon them. In Acts 3:19-23 Peter shows that God's face will be turned to Israel, and also the world, following the second coming of Christ.

ERNEST:

I didn't know Peter had said anything like that.

FRANK:

There are many wonderful things in the Bible we haven't learned as yet. Peter's words in this text are somewhat obscured by a mistranslation, but what he actually said was that times of refreshing shall come out from the face of the Lord, and that this will follow and be the result of Christ's second advent. He then describes the refreshing blessings as being "times of restitution of all things, spoken of by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began."

ERNEST:

Will the blessings of that day be arbitrarily forced upon the people?

FRANK:

No, the apostle says that those who do not obey, will be destroyed from among the people. So you see that even then, God will leave it up to the individual as to what he will do about it.

ERNEST:

Frank, what is meant by restitution?

FRANK:

It means restoration; and the promise implies the reclaiming of the race, and the restoration of paradise. Many of the Scriptures pertaining to restitution are presented in a little booklet I have here entitled "God's Restitution Project."

The Christian Life

“Teach Us To Pray”

“And it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”—Luke 11:1.

COMMUNION with the Heavenly Father in prayer is one of the most blessed privileges enjoyed by the Christian, as well as vitally necessary to spiritual growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord. The blessings of prayer are in proportion to the extent that our communion with the Father is based upon and in harmony with the divine will. Jesus said, “If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” (John 15:7.) Those who abide in Christ, and who have His words abiding in them, will not ask for anything except that which is in harmony with the divine arrangements, hence their prayers are sure to be “effectual,” because uttered by a fervently righteous soul, which, according to the apostle, “avail-eth much.” (James 5:16.) Contrariwise, James also declared, “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss.”—James 4:3.

In response to the disciples' request that Jesus teach them to pray, the Master gave them what is sometimes referred to as a “model prayer.” This model prayer, otherwise familiarly known as the “Lord's prayer,” exemplifies three of the important principles of, and reasons for, praying. The first is that of ascribing proper reverence and adoration to God—“Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.” The second is that of desiring the divine blessing to reach others ultimately, even upon the whole world of mankind—“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:9, 10.) The third is that of petitioning the Heavenly Father for the blessings we need, including forgiveness of sins—“Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses.”

As we meditate upon the wondrous attributes of our Heavenly Father's character which add up to make His glory, our prayerful expressions of reverence and adoration will, of necessity, include thoughts of thanksgiving and praise. The point of first consideration in our minds as we approach the throne of heavenly grace, therefore, should be that of concern for the glory of the Father's name and the expression of thanksgiving to Him



that He has given us a measure of appreciation of His wisdom, justice, love and power.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF PRAYER

The Scriptures furnish us with valuable and inspiring illustrations of prayer in which the principal motive was that of concern for the glory of God's name. Notable among these, and illustrative of complete self-abnegation on the part of the petitioner, is that of Moses' prayer in which he offered his own life to God as a sacrifice to save the lives of the Israelites. From the time that Moses led the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, they continually manifested a lack of faith in God, and a spirit of disobedience to the divine leadings coming through Moses. In view of this lack of faith on their part, God suggested to Moses that He destroy the entire nation, and through Moses as the father, start a new nation. Inasmuch as this suggestion came from the Lord, it furnished a wonderful opportunity for Moses to be relieved of the irksome and nerve-racking responsibility of directing this stiff-necked and rebellious people.

But the unselfish Moses did not think of his own position in the matter. Betokening the great leader of God's people which he was, and a type of Christ, Moses was more interested in the glory of God's name than he was in becoming the head of a new nation. In prayer, Moses replied to this proposition of the Lord saying, “Then [if You destroy the Israelites] the Egyptians shall hear it, (for Thou broughtest up this people in Thy might from among them;) and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that Thou Lord art among this people. . . . Now if Thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of Thee will speak, saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which He swore unto them.”—Num. 14: 13-16.

That Moses' concern for the glory of God's name as it would be affected by the destruction

of the Israelites was not a matter merely of words on his part, is emphasized by the fact that he offered his own life to God as a substitute for the nation. Moses was willing, in other words, to die and pass out of the picture entirely, if, by so doing, the glory of God's name would not be jeopardized. Thus, in a way more meaningful and genuine than could be expressed in a whole bookful of words, Moses was saying to his God in this wonderful prayer, "Hallowed be Thy name."

JOSHUA'S PRAYER

Joshua succeeded Moses as leader of Israel, and he, too, manifested great concern for the glory of God's name. When, under his leadership, the Israelites first entered into the land of promise, he received instructions from God as to how the city of Jericho was to be conquered. These instructions were followed, resulting in a great victory for the Israelites and for their God.

Flushed with this great victory, Joshua and the Israelites proceeded at once to attack and subdue other cities in Canaan. The first on their list was Ai. Without consulting the Lord as to what His will was in the matter, and, if the city was to be attacked, how to proceed, spies were sent to Ai who brought back the report that it was a small city and that only a small portion of Israel's fighting men need go up to capture it. This small contingent of soldiers was sent against Ai, but to the great surprise of Joshua they were driven back, shamefully defeated.

This discouraging experience brought Joshua to the Lord in prayer. The failure was due to no fault of Joshua's, but to the failure of one of the Israelites to obey the Lord in the capture of Jericho. Nevertheless, Joshua should have asked divine guidance before the undertaking; but his failure to take the matter up with the Lord ahead of time was apparently not willful, and now that he realized the great need of divine guidance and help, the spirit of his petition is noteworthy:—

"And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord, until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel. . . . And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast Thou at all brought this people over Jordan, . . . O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites, and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, . . . and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?"—Joshua 7:6-9.

"What wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?" seemed to be the thought uppermost in Joshua's prayer. This was his way of saying, "Hallowed be Thy name." That Joshua was sincere in this is evidenced by the fact that when God pointed

out to him that someone in the camp of Israel had disobeyed instructions in connection with the capture of Jericho, he at once proceeded to locate the wrong-doers and when they were found did not hesitate to punish them as the Lord directed. In this incident that followed Joshua's prayer, we are reminded of the fact that if our prayers are to be acceptable and effective, our lives must be brought wholly in line with the divine will. In other words, our actions must be in keeping with our prayers.

KING HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER

An interesting example of prayer in which the primary consideration was the glory of the Lord is that of Hezekiah when Jerusalem was attacked by Sennacherib and his army. Messengers were sent by Sennacherib for the purpose of inducing the Israelites to surrender the city. These messengers spoke against the God of Israel, charging that He was no better, no more powerful, than the gods of other people conquered by the mighty Sennacherib. Following this charge, the account says, "And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven." (2 Chron. 32:20.) We quote the prayer as follows:

"O Lord God of Israel, . . . bow down Thine ear, and hear: open, Lord, Thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. . . . Now, therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech Thee, save Thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou art the Lord God, even Thou only."—2 Kings 19:15-19.

God honored this prayer, destroying 185,000 of the Assyrians encamped around Jerusalem, and dispersing the remainder. It seems likely that if Israel's leaders by their prayers should have displayed more concern for their own safety than for the glory of the Lord's name, their prayers would have gone unanswered. Here again, then, we have a practical example of what it means to pray, "Hallowed be Thy name."

JESUS SEEKS THE FATHER'S GLORY

Jesus' own prayer life is an outstanding example of how acceptable prayer should reveal the heart's desire to glorify God beyond any other consideration. In a prayer near the close of the Master's earthly ministry He said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." (John 17:1.) The Master's suggestion that He be glorified should be understood in the light of His further request in this same prayer in which He said, "O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." (John 17:5.) Thus we see that Jesus was, in

reality, not asking anything for Himself, but merely that, having finished the work given to Him on earth, He might be permitted to return to His pre-human condition.

The Master had come to earth, humbling Himself in becoming a man, in order that His Father's name might be glorified. He had suffered much, and was to suffer a great deal more, even to the extent of being cruelly put to death upon the cross. The divine promises had set before Him a great joy, which, the apostle declares, enabled Him to endure the cross and despise the shame, (Heb. 12:2) but so far as a special reward of glory and exaltation was concerned, Jesus, in this prayer, manifested His desire that the Father's name be glorified irrespective of the advantage that would accrue to Him.

PRAYING FOR OTHERS

The second motive of prayer exemplified in Jesus' reply to His disciples when they asked Him to teach them how to pray, is that of our concern for the blessing of others. The statement, "Thy kingdom come" is all-comprehensive in this respect. When we offer this petition, we are praying not only for the blessings of peace and happiness and life which will be dispensed to the world during the thousand years of Christ's reign, but also for divine guidance and blessing in the lives of those who are being prepared to reign with Christ in that Kingdom. Our prayers for the brethren, therefore, represent one of the practical ways in which our petitions at the throne of heavenly grace represent our interest in all that the Lord has promised to do on behalf of both the church and the world.

It is very enlightening to observe the Master's example of prayer on behalf of others. There can be no question but what Jesus had all the interests of the Kingdom at heart, but the chief burden of His prayers was not that God would then relieve all the sufferings of the world, but rather that He would care for and bless those whom He had chosen, and would choose, to share in the work of the future Kingdom. While, without doubt, it is proper that, in a general way, we should have the interests of all mankind at heart when we pray, and express that interest as Jesus indicated in the model prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," yet, like the Master, the "others" in our prayers should primarily be the brethren.

Dispensational truth should help to guide us in the matter of prayer as well as otherwise. It did for Jesus. The Heavenly Father had promised Him that if He would ask, the nations would be given to Him for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. The motive in thus asking for the nations as an inher-

itance would, of course, be that they might be brought into the condition wherein Kingdom blessings might be showered upon them. However, while Jesus showed clearly that it was proper to remember this future climax of the divine purpose in prayer, He did not then ask for the inheritance which His Heavenly Father had indicated would be His in due time.

Thus in prayer near the close of His ministry, Jesus first of all indicated His concern for the glory of God's great name, and then proceeded to pray for others, saying, "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine." (John 17:9.) It is interesting to notice that even in His prayer for His disciples Jesus indicates that His chief concern for them was because they belonged to His Father. Thus we have a beautiful blending of concern for the glory of God and interest in His people.

Not only did Jesus, in this general way, pray for His church, but on other occasions He prayed specifically on behalf of individual disciples. For example, to Peter He said, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." (Luke 22:32.) In this, too, we have an inspired example of appropriate prayer. Not only is it a privilege to daily remember at the throne of heavenly grace the general interests of God's people everywhere, and the work for God in which they are enthusiastically engaged, but in our association with the brethren occasions will be observed which will furnish us with blessed opportunities for praying particularly for one or another of them in connection with their specific and immediate needs.

Many of the Lord's people who enjoy the privilege of attending prayer and testimony meetings are in the habit, when giving their testimonies, of asking an interest in the prayers of the brethren. This is a very helpful custom, but often, perhaps, they may later overlook the privilege of remembering those who specially asked for an interest in their prayers. Our prayer and testimony meetings would be richer with divine blessings if all in attendance would momentarily, and in silence, lift up their hearts to God on behalf of each individual who asks thus to be remembered. Thus it would be a prayer meeting indeed.

In Ephesians 6:18,19, the Apostle Paul admonishes us along this line and asks the brethren at Ephesus to pray especially for him. We quote, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." It should be noticed that in asking prayers on his

own behalf the apostle emphasizes that the purpose of it should be that he might be enabled the better to "make known the mystery of the gospel." To properly make known the mystery of the gospel is to bring honor and glory to the name of the Lord.

PRAYING FOR OURSELVES

In the Master's model prayer the last motive illustrated is that of our own needs. The petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," would seem to include both material and spiritual needs. God has promised to supply both, and yet it is clear from the Scriptures that He is pleased to have us make these things a matter of prayer. Obviously, however, our spiritual needs come first, and certainly our Heavenly Father must be pleased when He sees that we are most interested in the spiritual food provided for the sustenance of the new creature. In Luke 11: 9-13, the Master gives us a lesson on prayer in which He reveals that one thing the Father is pleased to give in response to our petitions is the Holy Spirit. To have the burden of our prayers that of a more abundant filling of the Holy Spirit means that our petitions are in line with the divine will, hence are certain to receive favorable answers.

The daily receiving of an increasing measure of the Holy Spirit will manifest itself in many ways in the Christian life. The fruit of the Spirit, the Scriptures tell us, is love, joy, peace, gentleness—in fact, all of the Christian graces. This means, then, that when we pray for patience, or gentleness, or long-suffering, or for a greater measure of any of these Christian graces, such a prayer is, in effect, a petition for a larger infilling of the Holy Spirit.

In the Master's lesson of Luke 11: 9-13, He gives us an example by which He assures us of a hearing at the throne of heavenly grace; namely, that of children asking their parents for bread. "How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him," is the Master's application of this illustration. Comparing this with the statement in His model prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," it would seem that the "bread" for which we should particularly petition the Heavenly Father is indeed the spiritual sustenance by which we grow more and more into the image of His dear Son. By growing in character-likeness to Him as a result of the Holy Spirit's influence in our hearts and lives means that when our prayers are answered, additional glory redounds to God's great name. With this thought in mind, it is apparent that even when we ask our Father for the daily bread which we need, especially the spiritual food, the primary

motive of the petition should not be the furthering of our own special and perhaps selfish interests, but the hallowing of His name.

PRAYERS FOR FORGIVENESS

Another point of Jesus' model prayer is that of asking for the forgiveness of sins. In this there are no examples in the Master's life for us to follow. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." But while Jesus did not need to seek forgiveness for sin, being, as the apostle says, "without sin," yet, as the apostle further explains, He was touched with "the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are." Because of this, He is a faithful and merciful High Priest for the church, and through Him we can "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy [forgiveness of sins], and find grace to help in time of need."—Hebrews 4: 15, 16.

But as is always the case in connection with our prayers, our petitions to the throne of grace must be supplemented by a course of life consistent therewith. That is why the Master appended the additional thought to our request for forgiveness in which He bids us to base our request upon the fact that we have already forgiven those who have trespassed against us.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18, the Apostle Paul admonishes us to "pray without ceasing," and "in everything give thanks." The matter of giving thanks in everything might well be Paul's explanation of what he means by praying without ceasing. Obviously, the Christian cannot continually be praying to the Lord orally, but his whole life can be so ordered as to be an expression of thanksgiving to the Heavenly Father. This proper attitude of thanksgiving to God for all of His benefits is, in turn, the most concrete way in which we can say to Him, not only in word, but more tangibly by deed, "Hallowed be Thy name."

To the extent that we get a proper perspective of what God should mean in our lives and of how dependent we are upon His boundless grace, we will realize that our requests for blessings upon others as well as for ourselves should be made in the spirit of thanksgiving to Him who is so abundantly able to answer. However, not only should our petitions for divine blessings be presented in the spirit of thanksgiving to the Giver of all good, but we will show an even deeper appreciation of blessings received by faithfulness in our endeavor to use them to the glory of God's great name. Thus will it be true that our lives will be a continuous prayer of thanksgiving to Him from whom all blessings flow. Thus will we be saying in word and in deed, "Hallowed be Thy name."

Self-denial and Cross-bearing

"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

—Matthew 16:24.

SELF-DENIAL and **CROSS-BEARING** are the terms of Christian discipleship. They are very exacting terms, so exacting that they have served to limit the number of the true followers of the Master to a "little flock." In brief, these terms imply the death, first of all human hopes, aims and ambitions, and finally physical death in devoted service to the Heavenly Father's purpose. As a compensating portion to encourage us while thus laying down our lives, we have the Master's own promise, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10.

As has happened with so many of the beautiful teachings of the Bible, the true significance of self-denial and cross-bearing has been largely lost sight of by nominal churchianity, hence to most people today these expressions are applied to the little inconsequential pleasures one may forego from time to time, and to the experiences of life which are not pleasant to bear. These details are, of course, a part of true self-denial and cross-bearing, but are related to the meaning of these terms only as they add up to the full renunciation of self, and a following in the footsteps of the Master all the way into death—not merely until we die, but finding each step of sacrifice which the Master took, and then resolutely taking these steps until they lead us all the way into sacrificial death.

Jesus was crucified upon a cross. This entailed much suffering, hence it has been natural that the cross should come to be used as a symbol of trials and difficulties. While this symbolism is quite proper, and it is comforting to realize that divine grace helps us to bear these daily "crosses," yet this limited meaning of cross-bearing should not be confused with what the Master meant when He addressed the words of our text to His disciples. It was near the close of His ministry. In verse 21 we read, "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."

Here we find Jesus explaining to His disciples that His pathway of devotion to His Heavenly Father was leading Him to death. This was quite out of keeping with the viewpoint the disciples had of what the ministry of Jesus was to accom-

plish, and the way in which it would terminate. To them He was the Messiah of Israel, sent of God to deliver their nation from the Roman yoke, enthrone it as the leading nation of earth, and through it fulfil the divine promise to bless all nations. How could Jesus accomplish all this if He exposed Himself to the animosity of His enemies, permitting them to arrest Him and put Him to death?

Probably all of the disciples thought that Jesus was making a great mistake, and the impulsive Peter so expressed himself, and in no uncertain terms. The account reads, "Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee." (Matt. 16:22.) The natural-minded Peter, not yet begotten of the Holy Spirit, like all natural-minded people, who, no matter how noble or devotional they may be, could not see how anything worthwhile could be accomplished by a course of self-sacrifice such as the Master had indicated He purposed to take.

The Master's reply to Peter was straightforward and full of meaning—"Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offense unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." (Matt. 16:23.) Sacrifice, suffering and death are repugnant to the natural man, and Peter reasoned that if Jesus was the Messiah who had come to bring peace, happiness and joy to Israel and the world, He was surely going about it in the wrong way, and if he had any influence with the Master he would do what he could to change His mind.

How all the disciples must have wondered when Jesus replied to Peter, "Thou art an offense unto Me." He simply meant that Peter, despite His good intentions, was advising Him contrary to the will of God, hence contrary to the course which He was determined to follow. After Pentecost, when the apostles received the Holy Spirit, they understood why it was necessary for Jesus to suffer and die, and Peter himself, in his first epistle, tells us that the prophets had been inspired to write concerning the "sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."—1 Pet. 1:11.

INVITED TO FOLLOW CHRIST

It was immediately following this dynamic dialog between Jesus and Peter, in which each rebuked the other, that the terms of discipleship set forth in our text were stated. It would seem that Jesus considered the occasion an excellent opportunity to let the disciples know that if they expected to be His true followers they too would

be called upon to suffer and to die. This was not the first intimation they had heard of this, but being merely natural-minded men, they hadn't as yet comprehended the thought, nor is there reason to suppose that even then they realized to any great extent what Jesus meant when He said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."—Matt. 16:24.

To "come after" Jesus means to do as He did, to follow His example. Jesus explains that this means self-denial and cross-bearing. To know then what these two expressions involve it is but necessary to observe what they meant in the life and death experiences of the Master. Did self-denial in His case mean merely that each day He would deprive Himself of some little thing that might be pleasant to His taste, or otherwise appeal to His natural senses? Did it mean that one day a week He ate fish instead of meat, etc.? We have no doubt but that the Master exercised the spirit of a sound mind with respect to all His daily habits of life, but His self-denial meant a whole lot more than this, and also something more vital than the daily practice of monk-like "austerities," as Catholic theology later construed Christian self-denial to mean.

Jesus' self-denial was, just as the term means, a denial of self—not withholding from Himself a few things which His natural senses might enjoy, but a complete renouncing of all His rights and privileges of a natural, but perfect, man under the Law that was given to the Jews at Sinai. Jesus, the only one who had been able to keep that Law inviolate, had, by keeping it, gained thereby the right to life upon the earth as a natural man. His death on the cross, therefore, implied much more than was the case with others who were thus put to death. With others crucifixion meant merely that they died some little time before they would have had to die in the normal course of events. But not so with Jesus. He would not have died at all had He not voluntarily given Himself up to die.

Jesus' denial of Himself, therefore, was the renouncing of that which was properly His under the Law; namely, the right to live forever as a perfect human being. This was His "self"—that is, what was properly His own as a human being; and it was this that He "denied." With His right to life as a human being went all the privileges of a natural man—the privilege of raising a family, etc., etc. All of this He denied, and concerning it we read that, "He was cut off out of the land of the living," and there was none to "declare His generation."—Isaiah 53:8.

The Master's "way of life" during the three and one-half years in which He was laying down

His life was, of course, in keeping with His purposed self-denial. He did not seek to get all He could out of life. Rather, He used His strength, His time, His talents—His all—in doing the work the Heavenly Father had given Him to do. He never considered His own interests paramount to that of the divine ministry. There was a supreme sacrifice to be made at the end of the way, and there were daily sacrifices all along the way. Jesus was faithful in both—faithful unto death. Thus His denial of self was complete.

THE SYMBOLIC CROSS

The wooden cross that Jesus was expected to carry to Golgotha, and which Simon carried instead, because the Master's strength was not equal to the burden, was but symbolic of the real cross which He carried from Jordan to His crucifixion. And what was this symbolic cross? It was the daily laying down of His life which He continued to do until on the wooden cross He cried, "It is finished."

Crucifixion was the method of capital punishment under the Roman law, and it was customary for the condemned criminal to carry the cross from the judgment hall to the place of crucifixion. Thus, for anyone to be seen carrying a cross meant that he was on the way to death. How significant, then, are the words of our text explaining that the terms of Christian discipleship call for the taking up of a cross and following the Master. Peter had tried to dissuade Jesus from taking a course which would result in His death, but instead of heeding this advice He rebuked Peter for giving it, and added, by using the symbol of cross-bearing, that His disciples also would be expected to die by voluntarily following in His footsteps.

As incidental items in the one larger experience of death, all the daily trials and persecutions which came upon Jesus constituted a part of His cross-bearing. Being perfect in the flesh He would have had no trials of weakness, sickness and pain, but He was caused to suffer by His faithfulness in the ministry. He was the world's Light-giver, but the world hated the light and persecuted the Giver, even unto death. Thus He voluntarily put Himself in a position where He had to carry a cross, and carry it until the end of the way was reached in death.

The Master's denial of Himself as a man, and the renouncing of His earthly life-rights, was not doing the whole will of God as it had been outlined for Him in the "volume of the book." It was not only necessary that He thus relinquish His claim to all things earthly, but in addition to this His zeal for the doing of His Father's will required that He should actively engage in the

work of God, thus bringing upon Himself the enmity of those who sat in darkness, which enmity finally resulted in His death. Thus, not only did Jesus deny Himself, but He took up the symbolic cross which crucified Him—that is, put Him to death.

WE FOLLOW THE MASTER

When, in the words of our text, Jesus said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me," He meant that self-denial and cross-bearing for us would be the same in principle as experienced by Himself. True, we do not have perfect human life to deny or renounce as was the case with Jesus; nevertheless, the Scriptures show that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, making our standing before the Heavenly Father the same as His. This means that the voluntary sacrifice of what little remains of our earthly existence at the present time is a part of our self-denial. It also means that our restitution life of the future is renounced in order that we may be a true disciple of Christ.

But with us, even as with the Master, the doing of the whole will of God means more than merely a passive willingness to sacrifice earthly rights and privileges. If we are to be true followers of the Master, we, like Him, must also take up our cross; that is, our zeal for the work of God must lead us in the pathway of willing sacrifice, even unto death. Thus seen, cross-bearing is a step further in doing God's will than is self-denial. Self-denial is our acquiescence in the terms of the narrow way which call for the sacrifice of earthly rights, while cross-bearing is the actual sacrificing.

When we keep in mind the full significance of cross-bearing, namely, the actual laying down of our earthly life, the Apostle Paul's several references to being crucified with Christ are most significant. In Romans 6:6, for example, the apostle says, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him." The "old man" here referred to is our earthly life and privileges. It is said to be crucified with Christ because through the merit of His blood the Heavenly Father has made it possible for us to be planted together in the likeness of His sacrificial death. (Rom. 6:4, 5.) It is in harmony with this thought that the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:44 describes the Christian's change of nature from earthly to spiritual, saying, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

In Galatians 2:20, Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but

Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Here we have the same thought, namely, that to be crucified with Christ means that we renounce our earthly life, with its rights, receiving instead a new life which is ours now only by faith in Christ. That Paul understood the terms of discipleship, as set forth by Jesus in our text, is evident from his statement in Galatians 5:24, which reads, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts"—that is, have taken up their cross to follow Jesus even unto death.

That the full symbolism of the cross and of crucifixion is death and dying, and not merely our daily and sometimes petty trials and annoyances, is further shown by Paul's statement recorded in Galatians 6:14, which reads, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Here the apostle is telling us, by using the word "crucified," that the world had become dead to him, and also that he had become dead to the world. The will of God in Christ had completely separated him from the world and its spirit, having set him apart to the doing of God's will, which was the presenting of his body a living sacrifice unto death.

Those who have intelligently entered the narrow way of sacrifice by denying themselves and taking up their cross to follow the Master, cannot afford to turn back. In the verse following our text (Matt. 16:25) Jesus points out the seriousness of any desire or attempt on our part to save that which has been offered in sacrifice. We quote, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it." Not only would a turning back result in the loss of life, but such a course would be displeasing to the Heavenly Father. This is shown by the apostle in Hebrews 10:38, where he quotes the words of the Lord from the Old Testament relating to the life of faith (Hab. 2:4), saying, "If any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him." Let us, then, who have taken up the cross, resolve afresh to continue carrying it to the very end of the way. May we all find echoed in our hearts the further words of the apostle in Hebrews 10:39, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

“A Bride Adorned for Her Husband”

“And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”—Rev .21:2.

OUR Lord in a number of places in the Scriptures is represented as the Bridegroom and the true church as His espoused, waiting for the marriage when, at the end of the Gospel age, she is to become His bride, the Lamb’s wife. (Rev. 21:9.) The text of Scripture used as the basis for this article similarly uses the illustration of the bride and the bridegroom to show the glorious union when the Kingdom of God and of His Christ shall take up their abode with the children of men—when God’s Kingdom shall be a glorious reality here upon this now sin-cursed earth.

With reference to the marriage of Christ and His faithful followers, the church of God, let us first consider the invitation that has been extended to her to become the bride of Jesus. It was extended to her by the Heavenly Father Himself. In Psalm 45:10, 11, 14, we find a reference to this invitation: “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him. . . . She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework.” How does God invite us? First, we must have a desire to know Him and His purpose for us, and then, when we learn something of His character and plan as it is disclosed in His Word, the Bible, we are ready for His invitation, which, in the words of the prophet is: “My son, give Me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways.” (Proverbs 23:26.) Thus giving ourselves to Him and being directed by His Word, we learn of the two salvations of His Plan of the Ages—one of restitution for the world of mankind and the other, a salvation to the divine nature in the heavenly home with Jesus, the Husband and Head of the church.

Then He shows us the course we must pursue to become members of this heavenly class. First, we must accept Jesus as our personal Savior, whose death on Calvary’s cross—the just for the unjust; the perfect Man Christ Jesus for the perfect man, Adam, who fell, through disobedience—freed us from the Adamic death penalty. Not until we accept the merit of the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus to release us from the penalty of sin, can we have any clear understanding of His plan of salvation. We realize that, according to the flesh, we are imperfect; but that when the merit

of the perfect man Jesus is imputed to us, God no longer considers us as being imperfect. But this imputation of Christ’s merit, bringing justification to life, is ours only on condition that we take the next step of full consecration of all that we have to do the Father’s will. This attitude of full consecration is urged upon us in Romans 12:1: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies rifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

This presenting of our bodies “a living sacrifice” is to be a daily work all the rest of our lives. The apostle goes on to say in the second verse of this same chapter of Romans, “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

In Psalm 45, already quoted in part, the Heavenly Father calls those who will become members of this church class, by the name daughter because they are pictured collectively as one who will become the wife of His Son. He tells her to, “forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house.” He is here referring to Adam’s house, the world in general. She is asked to forget not only the present earthly aims, hopes, and ambitions and instead to set her affections on the heavenly, spiritual things, but also to give up her hope of restitution blessings.

There is always the possibility that having responded to God’s invitation to forget earthly things, we may forget to forget them. We intend to be loyal to the Lord and the truth, and to continue active in the divine service. We are confident, perhaps, that nothing could dim our appreciation, but we need to be continually on guard lest the cares of the world, or the appeal of ease or pleasure, take the place of the Lord in our lives. This has happened in the case of many, and can happen to us if we do not continue to watch and pray. We have promised God that we would forget our earthly house with its earthly ties. Let us not forget that promise.

Suppose two friends were carrying on a conversation and then someone should turn on the radio so loud that it drowned out their voices. They would have to stop talking. And that is somewhat the way it is in the case of those friends who have lost their interest in the Truth. The devil had turned on the radio of worldliness and the music representing the allurements, attractions, and honors of the world had drowned out their fellowship with God and the brethren. They forgot to “forget thine own people and thy Fa-

ther's house." The beauty of Christlikeness which the King desired to see developed in them, had faded away.

RAIMENT OF NEEDLEWORK

Now let us consider the needlework referred to in Psalm 45:14: "She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." Each one of this church class is given the robe of Christ's righteousness. In our Lord's parable, this robe is also pictured as a wedding garment. It is given to the new creature as a covering, not for the new will, but as a covering for the flesh. And let us not forget that this robe of Christ's imputed righteousness covers the unavoidable weaknesses of the flesh, but it does not cover any possible sins in our hearts. If in our hearts there is the spirit of pride or hate or rebellion against God, we must not expect to see it covered because of our justification.

On each robe is stamped the pattern of a Christ-like character of love and full obedience to God. Each one of us must embroider the robe according to the pattern. That represents developing in our hearts this Christian character. God can give us instantly in the resurrection, divine bodies, but He leaves to us the development of Christian character now. It must be slowly developed and that requires, on our part, full cooperation and patience and effort. Sometimes, if we make a wrong stitch, we have to take it out and try again.

Let us now consider three rules which will enable us to do this fine needlework. The first one is

PUT GOD FIRST ALWAYS

This is what Jesus had in mind in Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Also Psalm 16:8, "I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." The Christian does not ask the question, Shall I do God's will? That has been definitely settled in his mind. But the question that he decides each day is, What is God's will for me in this experience? He is watching always for things and circumstances which will help him to grow in faith and love and give him more opportunities to witness for the truth and to serve God's people. The second rule for doing this fine needlework is

DO WHAT YOU CAN

The story is told of a famous instructor who was to come to a certain school for a public examination of the pupils. When the day arrived for this visit, the children came to the school dressed in their best clothes. The parents and special friends were also there as guests. All eyes were on the

pupils when the professor arose to ask the questions. He then said, "All of you who have note books and pencils, please hold up your right hand." One little boy held up his left hand. The teacher noticed it, but thought that he would be patient and give the boy another chance, so he said again, "All of you who have note books and pencils, please hold up your right hand." Again the boy lifted up his left hand. By this time, the professor lost his patience and pointing his finger straight at the boy, said, "You, the boy in the third row and the end seat, now listen carefully. All of you who have note books and pencils, please hold up your right hand—not your left hand."

The boy's face flushed. He glanced around with a frightened look. Then he slowly raised his right arm. It was only a stump. This brought tears to the teacher's eyes as he beheld the pathetic spectacle. He ran over to the boy and threw his arms around him and said, "Oh, I am so sorry! I did not know that your arm was in that condition. You could not raise your right hand, but you did do what you could. You did raise your left hand." Oh, how glad we are to read in 1 Samuel 16:7, "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

Can we draw a lesson from this little story? Some one may wish that he had the ability to stand upon the platform and deliver a flowery, polished oration, where, with ease and eloquence, he could sway the audience to heights of praise and reverence for God. And yet, all that he can do is to get up in a testimony meeting and stumble through a few sentences, which but imperfectly express his love for the Lord and his appreciation of the blessings of the truth. He breaks down in the middle of his testimony, just when he wants to keep composed so that he can tell the brethren of the things which fills his heart with joy. When it comes to public speaking, to use the figure in this illustration, he has only a stump of an arm; but he can hold up his left hand, he can testify, even if it is in a stumbling, halting way. Dear brother and dear sister, are you doing what you can at the testimony meetings? Are you getting up to testify, and using your opportunities to praise the Lord, even though you know that your testimony is not expressed as nicely as some of the others present can express themselves? And is it not true that "expression deepens impression" and "we learn in the doing"?

Then again there may be a sister who says to herself, "Oh, how I wish I had the time and strength to put out a thousand tracts every day, but I have only a little time and a little strength,

so I will not give out any tracts." The Lord tells us in Luke 16:10, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." This sister could give a tract to the grocer or to some salesman who comes to her door. The Lord in this text is telling us that if this sister would use the few opportunities that she has, He would consider it just the same as if she really put out the thousand tracts every day, according to her desire. Are we all making use of every little opportunity we may have to witness for the truth? Are we doing what we can, even if we have but a stump of an arm? You may not be able to address an audience, but, perhaps you can address wrappers or envelopes in which the message of the Kingdom can be sent out.

Oh, let us make use of every opportunity that we can to show the Lord how much we want to serve Him. We may not be able to give a million dollars a week as a donation to carry on the work of the Lord, but if we can put twenty-five cents a week in the collection box, let us do what we can even if it is little. We may want to make big sacrifices for the friends and are not able to do so, but we do have occasions to say kind, gracious words. Let us do what we can along this line also, and avoid using bitter, sarcastic words or giving mean, hateful and unloving expressions. The third rule for doing this fine needlework is to

TRUST GOD TO TRANSFORM US

We alone, without God's aid, could not develop Christian character and make ourselves fit for the kingdom. We must put ourselves into God's hands by following the instructions He gives us in His Word. When thus we cooperate with Him, and when also, on the other hand, we "resist the devil" (1 Peter 5:9), so that our wills are fully responsive to His guidance, then God's Holy Spirit, as a wonderful transforming power can enter into our hearts and minds and conform us to the divine disposition of love and righteousness. It is only when the trolley arm of the street car contacts the power line and the circuit is completed that the electricity flows into the car and heats it, lights it, and makes it go. And so it must be with us—we must be in touch with Jesus by full consecration, to have His Holy Spirit warm our hearts with love, enlighten our minds with an understanding of His Word, and energize our mortal bodies to do His service. The transformation of the Christian is well illustrated by the poem which tells us of a queen who went to a paper mill, where she saw—

Rags from out the very gutters,
Rags of every shape and hue:
While the squalid children, picking,
Seemed but rags from hair to shoe.

What then, rang her eager question,
Can you do with things so vile?
Mould them into perfect whiteness,
Said the master with a smile.

Then he explained to her how, by putting these rags through certain machines, he could change them into paper that would be white and clean. Isaiah declares, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."—Isaiah 64:6.

Precious lesson, wrote the master,
Hath my mill thus given me,
Showing how our Christ can gather
Vilest hearts from land or sea;

In some heavenly alembic,
Snowy white from crimson bring;
Stamp His name on each, and bear them
To the palace of the King.

Let us now consider some of these figurative machines at this figurative paper mill, and see how the Lord uses them to transform us into beautiful Christian characters. The name of the first machine is

FULL SUBMISSION

I Thessalonians 4:3: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." Every Christian has to be put through this machine. Hymn 114 well expresses it:

I love Thy will, O God!
Thy blessed, perfect will,
In which this once rebellious heart
Lies satisfied and still.

The hymn goes on to say, "It glorifies my common task." In what way? Because now whatever we do—even the commonplace routine acts of eating and drinking—we do because we believe that it is God's will for us. We are careful of just what we eat and how much we eat because now we are ambassadors of the Lord, and therefore desire to be in good mental and physical condition so that we can serve the Lord to the best of our ability. St. Paul voiced this same thought when he said, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31.) If we are in the home or the office or the factory, we will try to do every detail of our work in a way that will reflect glory to our God.

The hymn also says, "It makes each trial blest." How true! Because of our experiences in this "full submission" machine, our prayer in each trial can be expressed in the words, "I thank

Thee, Lord, this is just what I need. What lesson do you want me to learn?" We realize that the Lord overrules all of our affairs so that only those experiences that are for our best spiritual interests can reach us. We also know that we can come to Him "for grace to help in every time of need," and that through the transforming power of His Holy Spirit we can grow in love and patience, and kindness, and sturdiness of character in these very trials. Thus He "makes each trial blest" and we can "glory in tribulation." (Rom. 5:3.) The next machine in this figurative paper mill is called

JUDGING OURSELVES HONESTLY

In Jude 21, we read, "Keep yourselves in the love of God." To do this we need to continually scrutinize our thoughts and words and actions. And we should be honest about it and not try to cover up and excuse ourselves, when we are really at fault.

The story is told of a doctor who had an important case at a hospital. He was especially anxious to make a good showing. The patient had a diseased throat and therefore needed a private nurse. In the middle of the night, the patient suddenly became much worse. The nurse, instead of staying with the patient and trying to drain his throat, became panic-stricken and left the patient, to run for the doctor. The patient died. The doctor was very much provoked with the nurse because she should have known better than to leave a patient at such a critical time. He gave her a black mark which would have prevented her from graduating, although she had only one more day to finish her course. When she went to the doctor and asked him to forgive her and remove the black mark, he asked her, "What excuse have you for what you did?" All she could say was, "None—only please give me another chance." He looked into her tear-stained face and said, "I think that you have learned your lesson. I will give you another chance." Today she is a very successful nurse and is the head of a very large hospital force of nurses.

Oh, how often when we judge ourselves honestly, we find ourselves overtaken in a fault. All that we can do is to come to the Lord and tell Him that we have no excuse to offer and ask Him to give us another chance. And He does forgive us, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." (Psa. 103:13.) From experiences like these we learn to be humble and to realize our weakness. They make us more watchful and prayerful, and as a result we keep closer to the Lord and thus these stumbling blocks can become stepping stones.

PRAYER

Prayer plays a very important part in preparing us for the Kingdom. Jesus tells us in Matthew 26:41, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Likewise, in Romans 12:12 St. Paul writes, "Continuing instant in prayer." No matter how busy we are, or where we are, we can send short messages to God, thanking Him for blessings as we receive them, asking for guidance when we are in perplexing circumstances, securing strength from Him in temptations, and talking to Him when we need His fellowship.

MEDITATION AND STUDY

Meditation and study also play an important part because when our minds are filled with thoughts concerning God's plan and God's character and when we meditate on the precious promises in His Word, we are able to view the transitory and trifling pleasures of this world from God's standpoint and with the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:18, can say: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Now let us note Psalm 119:97. It does not say: "O how I love the radio and the newspaper! They are my meditation all the day." No, we are not to let those things absorb all our time. On the other hand, it says: "O how I love Thy law! it is my meditation all the day."

MEETINGS

The fifth figurative machine that we observe as we look around in God's character-transforming mill, is meetings. Those who attend the meetings with the motives of (1) learning more about God's will for us so that it can be done more perfectly, (2) of building up the brethren in faith and love, (3) of glorifying God, and (4) of building up the strength to resist the devil and to gain victories in overcoming the world and the flesh, will find that the meetings play a very important part in enabling us to become conformed to the character-likeness of Jesus Christ.

We know how we like to keep an album of snap-shots where we can treasure up memories of happy seasons of fellowship with some who are near and dear to us. God is also keeping such a memory book. He tells us about it in Malachi 3:16: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon His name." There is one more machine that we want to consider. It is called

CHASTENING

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Pet. 4:12, 13.) These experiences are not always pleasant for the flesh, but the New Creature is made sturdier in love and righteousness because of them.

Now is the time when this Christian character is being developed. Now we are being transformed. But soon our course will be completed. The needlework will be finished. Then, in the first resurrection, we will be given perfect celestial bodies of the divine nature. "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." (Psa. 16:11.) "Thine eyes shall see the King in *His beauty*." (Isa. 33:17.) "So shall the King greatly desire *thy beauty*."—Psa. 45:11. —Contributed.

The Purpose of Our Trials

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."—James 1:12.

THE word blessed in this text may be understood to signify the condition of one in the favor of God. The state of such will be a happy one, a desirable one. The word blessed does not, of course, always suggest a happy condition as relates to the feelings, or emotions, but rather as relates to the outcome. It is used here in connection with the results of trial to the Christian. The child of God who wins the crown of life will be very highly favored or blessed of God; then whatever conduces to this end is a very great blessing, even though it cause much pain to the flesh.

Who will gain this crown of life? Of what character will he be? The Scriptures declare that it will be that man or that woman who endures temptation, trial. What is signified by enduring temptation? Evidently the thought is not the enduring of one temptation for one time or for many times. Even the world must endure trials. The reference is to the retaining permanently of the attitude of patient endurance and faithfulness when tempted, of remaining true to God under temptation and stress. Temptations come from

a variety of sources. They may come from friends, who may tempt us to live a life of more or less self-indulgence, to relax in a measure our fidelity to the Lord. The enticements of **wealth or worldly society**, a natural love of ease and disinclination of the flesh to endure hardness—any or all of these may prove strong and subtle temptations to the Christian.

But if we love the Lord supremely, that love will become the chief impulse of our lives. Our one aim will be that we may glorify God in our spirit and in our body. We know that there are things which are displeasing to God, and if we love Him we will seek to keep His commandments. The child of God might fail once, or he might fail repeatedly along the same line, until in deep humiliation and anguish of soul because of his continued manifestation of the same weakness, he would be led to cry out with strong crying and tears to the Lord; and his pain and distress of heart might so impress upon him his need of greater watchfulness along that line that he would become strengthened for further attacks of the same nature, and thus be enabled to gain the victory over his besetment, his special weakness.

THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

While we shall never reach the point of perfection in the flesh, nevertheless this power to endure temptation should become more marked day by day, as the new creature remains loyal, still resisting and striving still harder to resist and be true to the Lord in thought and word and deed. Blessed is the man who shall endure—time after time, day after day—thus proving his faithfulness and obedience to God. For when that man is tried, when the trial time is over, when God has seen that he has demonstrated fully his loyalty, then when God's "due time" has come, that tried and proved one shall receive the crown of life.

The expression, "the crown of life," is another way of saying the reward of life; and this life is on the highest plane. The Apostle Paul speaks of this same crown as the "crown of righteousness." The Apostle Peter calls it the "crown of glory." It is the crown of righteousness because it is the reward that comes as the result of righteousness, of obedience to God and the principles of His government, of faithfulness to our covenant. It is the crown of glory because it is the reward which brings glory, honor, immortality.

In the Grecian games certain rewards were given to those who endured successfully the trial of their skill, of their prowess and of their physical endurance. The reward given was usually a crown or wreath of laurel. That crown was valuable, not so much in itself, but especially as an

outward token of appreciation of superior merit. The fact that it was evergreen would suggest to the Christian that our reward as "overcomers" will be a lasting reward, an eternal reward.

The Lord is to give us life in fullest measure. The penalty that came upon our race because of sin was death; but now there is an opportunity to regain life—life in perfection, untainted, unending. This life is in the Son of God. At the present time life can be gained only by being begotten to the spirit nature. The crown of life, to be given to the "more than conquerors," is a very special kind of life—immortality, the highest form of life possible, the crown, or pinnacle, of all life. This is to be the reward of the class called in Scripture the bride of Christ, when they shall have demonstrated their faithfulness, when they shall have been proven worthy to be members of that exalted class.

There will be a crown of life in the next age—perfect human life—as the result of obedience to the tests and trials of that time. These tests will differ in many respects from the trials and difficulties of the church at the present time. They will be much less crucial; for then temptations to sin from without will be removed, and bodily and mental uplifting and assistance granted, which will make their trial a more favorable one. Righteousness, too, will immediately be rewarded in that day, and sin and disobedience of every kind will be promptly punished. But now righteousness often brings suffering, reproach, pain and loss, from the human standpoint; while sin often brings present advantage, popularity and pleasure to the flesh.

THE PROPER VIEW OF OUR TRIALS

There is a special love required by God of the Gospel church—this peculiar class now called of Him. They are to have a love that is so unselfish that it will be willing, yea, glad, to lay down the earthly life in the service of God, that they may bring blessings to others. To these God has promised the special crown of life—immortality, His own nature. These are to be the blessers of their brethren, those of the nature formerly their own. As Isaac was the blesser of Ishmael and of the sons of Keturah, and as the first-born of Israel were the blessers of their brethren, so these will bless all the peoples of the earth, from among whom they were chosen. How thankful we should be for an honor so great!

If these favored children of the Heavenly King could always keep in mind the fact that every trial and testing, every persecution and difficulty, permitted to come upon those who have made the covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, is designed to develop them, to prove and test their love, to

demonstrate whether or not their characters are fixed, rooted and grounded in righteousness, it would set all their painful experiences and temptations in a new light, and would be a great assistance to them in fighting the good fight of faith successfully. For if by these trials and tribulations the Lord is proving our love and devotion to Him, then whatever they may be, whether great or small, we should diligently use them as opportunities to demonstrate to our God the fullness of our love for Him and His cause, and as means by which we may rise day by day to greater heights of spiritual attainment, being changed into the likeness of our Master.

Thus viewed and thus met, every trial and affliction would prove a blessing, a heavenly messenger, bearing us on wings of faith "Nearer, our God, to Thee, nearer to Thee." Then, beloved, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [trials, testings], knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience [patient endurance]. But let patience perfect her work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Herein we "greatly rejoice—though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations [testings, provings], that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold, which perisheth, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."—James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6-9.

Truly, "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things that are seen [the things of the present order] are temporal, but the things which are not seen [the glories to come] are eternal."—2 Corinthians 4:17, 18.

"WILL YE ALSO GO AWAY?"

Thus we are assured in the infallible Word of God that those who love the Lord, and who are to receive the Kingdom will have their love tested by trials and temptations on the way to that Kingdom. Those who do not love the Lord with all their hearts, in whom self or some other idol has first place, will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the devil into some form of rebellion against the divine Word or the divine providences. They will have schemes and theories which they will prefer to the Lord's plan and the Lord's way; and their schemes when analyzed will usually be found to be based either upon self-

ishness or ambition or upon an evil spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, etc.

The Lord's leading and the Lord's words lose their attraction to such, and they lose their interest correspondingly; and like those who turned away from the Master at His first advent, and said, "This is a hard saying," so these also go away and "walk no more with Him." But some will continue to walk with the Lord; some will not be driven away nor decoyed from Him by the arts and wiles of the evil one and his hosts. These are such as are at heart fully the Lord's, not their own; they will follow the Lamb of God, whithersoever He may lead, because they have no will except His will. They will follow Him through all the narrow way of discipline and trial in this life; and by and by, as He has assured them, "They shall walk with Me in white; for they are worthy."—Revelation 3:4.

OUR UNFAILING SHELTER

Nor will this choice company lack in number by reason of the falling away of some. It will be of the predestinated number which God arranged to constitute the bride, the Lamb's wife. The Father's foreknowledge made full allowance for all who would turn back, and He knew that the requisite number would follow on, to make their calling and election sure. These have learned that the call of the world, the promptings of the flesh, and the arts of the adversary, are all snares and traps and pitfalls to drag them down to death. They have learned the sound of the true Shepherd's voice, and cannot be enticed by the voice of strangers.

Precious children of the Lord, blessed are ye! Sheltered in the "secret place of the Most High" no evil shall befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. "He shall give His angels charge concerning thee; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." How safe and secure are these! Though a thousand fall at their side, and ten thousand at their right hand, yet the plague shall not come nigh them. They have "made the Most High their habitation," and He will keep them from all harm.

"Under His wings I am safely abiding,
Though the night deepens and tempests are wild;
Still I can trust Him, I know He will keep me;
He has redeemed me, and I am His child.

"Under His wings! What a refuge in sorrow!
How the heart yearningly turns to His rest!
Often when earth has no balm for my healing,
Here I find comfort, and here I am blest.

"Under His wings! Oh, what precious enfolding!
Here will I hide till life's trials are o'er;

Sheltered, protected, no evil can harm me,
Resting in Jesus, I'm safe evermore!"

As the faithful disciples of the Master in the first harvest realized a meaning in His teachings which others of the professed children of God could not appreciate, so now, at the second advent of the Lord, His words have a precious significance to those who are in heart-harmony with Him which none others can realize. And we see now, as at the first advent, that some are stumbling and going back, while others are being drawn more closely to the Lord than ever, by means of the knowledge of His plan which He is supplying.

As we draw nearer to the close of the harvest, we shall not be surprised if the way become still narrower, still more difficult, and if the temptations to stumble and to fall become still more frequent. Let us then, dear brethren, be more and more on our guard against the wiles of the great enemy of our souls, and against the deceptions of our own fallen nature. Let the perfect love of God rule in your hearts, driving out self-love and world-love, with their pride, ambition and folly. Let entire devotion to God bring into your hearts the promised fulness of joy and rest and peace. Be fruitful branches in the vine, abiding even in Him, responding to all the prunings of the great Husbandman with more abundant fruitage.

If beguilement come to us, let us say with the apostles of old: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." There is life nowhere else, and we wish to go nowhere else. We are feasting in the banquet hall of our Father's house, "and His banner over us is love!" We have an abundant supply; our table is richly laden. So we eat and go on our way rejoicing. We are nearing home. We shall soon reach the last mile-stone in our journey! Then, with a song on our lips, let us press on!

"Tempted and tried, whatever betide,
In His secret pavilion His children shall hide.
'Neath the shadowing wing of eternity's King,
His children may trust, yea, His children may sing.

"Tempted and tried, yet the Lord will abide
Thy faithful Redeemer and Keeper and Guide,
Thy shield and thy sword, thine exceeding reward;

Then enough for the servant to be as his Lord.

"Tempted and tried, the Savior who died
Hath called thee to suffer—then reign by His side.
If His cross thou wilt bear, His crown thou shalt wear,

And forever and ever His glory shalt share."

—Reprints, page 5499.

DIVINE PLAN BEREAN LESSONS

MORTALITY AND IMMORTALITY DEFINED

(Lesson 94)

Text Book: The Divine Plan of the Ages, pages 185 and 186.

Key Sentence "His [Adam's] was a life sustained by 'every tree of the garden' save the one tree forbidden; and so long as he continued in obedience to and in harmony with his Maker, his life was secure—the sustaining elements would not be denied."

Main Text: "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden."—Gen. 3:22, 23.

What does the word mortality mean as used in the Bible? It means a state or condition in which it is possible to die. A person can have everlasting life and still be mortal as the word is used in the Bible.

What meaning is usually attached to the word mortality? It is erroneously understood to mean a condition in which death is unavoidable.

What does the word immortality signify, as used in the Bible? It means a condition in which death is an impossibility. This means that everyone that has immortality has everlasting life but that on the other hand, everyone that has everlasting life does not necessarily have immortality.

Was Adam mortal or immortal before his transgression? If we have the common ideas of mortality and immortality in our minds this would be a hard question to answer. Why? Because if he were mortal he would surely die. Then how foolish for God to say "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." On the other hand, if he were immortal why threaten him with death when he could not die?

With the right definitions of the word mortal and immortal, we see that Adam was mortal. Notice Genesis 3:22, 23, "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." This word tree should be translated trees or grove (plural). Notice also Genesis 2:16, "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." These Scriptures indicate that as long as Adam and Eve had access to the perfect food and could live in Edenic conditions they could have lived everlastingly. Their life was dependent on this particular food as well as being dependent on air and water. Taking the Bible definition of the word mortal as used at the beginning of this lesson, we can readily see that while it was possible for them to die if the food or water or air were cut off, on the other hand that if there were an unbroken supply of these life-supporting elements, they would have continued to live forever.

How do the creeds of Christendom get around this difficulty of deciding whether Adam was mortal

or immortal before his transgression? By saying that Adam had an immortal soul that could not die physically but could die spiritually. What do they mean by dying spiritually? Being condemned by God to go into eternal torment. Is this a Scriptural view? We answer, no. God did not say, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thy soul shall go to eternal torment." He plainly says "thou shalt surely die." This means that Adam would pass out of existence.

Was Adam promised immortality if he obeyed? No, but he was promised a continuance of the blessings then enjoyed. This would have lasted forever. Will the world in the next age when they receive restitution, be immortal? No, but they will have everlasting life. After the testings of the Millennial age they will have characters fixed for righteousness and God will see to it that there will be an unbroken flow of life-sustaining supplies.

What Scriptures show that originally Jehovah alone, and subsequently Jesus in His present highly exalted condition possess immortality? 1 Timothy 6: 15, 16, "Which in His times He shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." See also John 5:26, "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." What is meant by having "life in Himself"? It means inherent life not dependent on outside forces or sustenance.

Is this immortality or inherent life one of the characteristics or qualities of the divine nature? Yes, every one that has the divine nature has immortality.

Will the church in the resurrection receive the divine nature with this quality of immortality? The Scriptures answer, yes. See 2 Peter 1:4—"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Again in 1 Corinthians 15:53, 54, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'"

ANGELS NOT IMMORTAL

(Lesson 95)

Text Book: The Divine Plan of the Ages, pages 187 and 188.

Key Sentence: "We see that when incorrigible sinners are blotted out, both immortal and mortal beings will live forever in joy and happiness and love—the first class possessing a nature incapable of death, having inherent life—life in themselves (John 5:26); and the latter having a nature susceptible to

death, yet because of perfection of being and knowledge of the evil and sinfulness of sin, giving no cause for death."

Main Text: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."—Ezek. 18:4.

What evidence have we that angels are not immortal? The fact that Satan will be destroyed. Hebrews 2:14—"That through death, He [Jesus] might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." See also Matthew 25:41. If Satan, one of the highest angels can be destroyed, it shows that not only he is mortal but that angels are mortal as well. What is meant by the expression "power of death" in this text? In "Thy Kingdom Come," page 321, New Edition, there is a suggestion that this means "the empire of Sin, the dominion of death which for so long has held in chains of slavery many who will be glad to go forth to serve the Lord under the leadership of one like unto but greater than Moses.—Acts 3:22, 23."

Another text to show that Satan will be destroyed is found in Ezekiel 28:12-19. He is here referred to as the "king of Tyrus." "Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God." This does not refer to the literal garden of Eden but to the kingdom of God and implies God's favor. There is no reason to take this expression literally when all the context is figurative. It refers to the time when he was Lucifer before he disobeyed God. In the fifteenth verse it says, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." In the 16th and 19th verses, the prophet speaking for God says, "I will destroy thee . . . and never shalt thou be any more." Words can not be found which more plainly state Satan's ultimate destruction.

Will a time come when incorrigible sinners will be blotted out? Yes, in Acts 3:23 we read regarding the Millennium "that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." What will be the experience of all others? They will live forever in joy and happiness and love. Will all these people who live forever be immortal? No, the Church class will be immortal but the world will be mortal. What expressions does our text book use to distinguish between these two classes? Those who are immortal are referred to as having a nature "incapable of death," having inherent life—life in themselves. (John 5:26.) Those who are mortal are said to have a nature "susceptible to death." Does the fact that they are susceptible to death imply that they will be in danger of the second death after the Millennium? No, because of (1) the perfection of their being and (2) their knowledge of the evil and sinfulness of sin, they will be able to conduct themselves so as to give no cause for death. God will everlastingly supply them with those elements of food, etc., necessary to sustain them in perfection.

What false doctrine is based on the wrong definitions of the terms mortal and immortal? We answer the doctrine of eternal torment. Explain how? Well, if man is immortal and cannot cease to exist, then the incorrigible must live on somewhere and somehow. Those who hold to this theory further conclude that it must be an eternity of misery. Give

one Scripture which shows that these incorrigible ones will be destroyed. Ezekiel 18:4, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

If we now turn to page 174 in our text book, in the first sentence we will note a statement in which the author is outlining the main points in the first part of this chapter. It is divided into the following three sections:

(1) (Pages 174 to 184.) The failure to understand rightly what constitutes a perfect man.

(2) (Pages 184 to 187.) The misapprehension of the terms mortal and immortal.

(3) (Pages 187 to 191.) Wrong ideas of justice, etc.

We have just completed the first two sections of this outline and are now about to take up the third section, "wrong ideas of justice."

This section is headed with the text "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" (Rom. 9:20.) It is written to answer some who are replying against God in the sense of questioning the righteousness of His course. In what respect? They say that it would not be just for God to give some the human nature and others the divine nature. All should be treated alike.

Is this view reasonable? No, it is not reasonable to think that God would have to give all the angels the divine nature just because He gave it to Jesus. Likewise, it would not be reasonable to think that all men should receive the divine nature just because Jesus received it.

What lesson can we learn from the pleasing variety we see in nature? That this same variety in the inanimate creation will be found in the animate creation. The modest violet does not develop into a rose, the blade of grass does not develop into a tree. This variety is here to stay.

JUSTICE DEFINED

(Lesson 96)

Text Book: The Divine Plan of the Ages, pages 189 and 190.

Key Sentence: "An act of simple justice is no occasion for special gratitude, nor is it any proof of love; but God commendeth His great love to His creatures, in an endless train of unmerited favors, which should call forth their love and praise in return."

Main Text: "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—Luke 14:11.

What is the difference between a favor and an act of justice? An act of justice is something you ought to do, a merited recompense. A favor is an act prompted by love over and above an act of justice. Will all of God's acts towards the church and the world be acts of justice? No, God commends His great love to His creatures, in an endless train of unmerited favors. The poet refers to this in the hymn which says, "Streams of favor, never ceasing, call for notes of heartfelt praise." Why did the poet use the figure of "streams"? This is a beautiful figure indicating the many sources of favors which the Christian has. The streams suggest their continuous

flow, the clear bubbling water, the happiness which goes with these favors.

Favors call forth gratitude and love and praise in return and so the poet in this line says that the streams of favor call for "notes of heartfelt praise." Psalm 40:3, "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."

God has created the lower animals to live for a brief space of time and then to die without a hope of a resurrection. If He had done the same for mankind, would that have been an act of injustice? We answer, no. Even so brief an existence would be a favor. With these thoughts in mind, what should we think of God's act of redeeming us after Adam had forfeited for us the right of continued existence? We should be able to see that it was a great favor. Ephesians 2:5, "By grace [favor] ye are saved."

How should we look on the fact that we have a nature higher than beasts, and that angels have a nature higher than men? It is purely of God's favor. Would it be right for anyone to find fault because he did not get as many favors from God as someone else? No, it becomes all creatures to receive with gratitude whatever God bestows.

Can we think of anyone who aspired to have more than God had given him? Yes, Satan. We have a description of this in Isaiah 14:12-14, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer [who afterwards became Satan], son of the morning! [one of the first ones to be created] how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!"

Then the prophet Isaiah goes on to show that undue ambition was the cause of Lucifer's fall, saying, "And thou hadst said in thy heart, 'into heaven [the position of power] will I ascend, above the stars of God [other sons of the morning] will I exalt my throne; and I will sit also upon the mount of the assembly, in the farthest end of the north [universal dominion]; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be equal to the Most High.'"—Isaac Leiser translation.

Thus, instead of humbly and thankfully appreciating the favor of God which brought him into existence and crowned him with glory and honor as a bright star of Creation's early morning, and instead of returning due filial reverence, love and submission to his Creator's righteous will, Satan cultivated a spirit of pride, until his rising ambition aspired first to be a leader of the other stars of the morning and finally to rival the Most High Himself, as king of the universe.

What will be the result of this self-exaltation on the part of Satan? His ultimate overthrow and destruction. On the other hand, what will be the result of Jesus humiliating Himself? He will be highly exalted. Phil. 2:8, 9, "Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name."

In our text book, the Scriptures is quoted to illustrate this principle—that self-exaltation brings God's disapproval and that self-humiliation to God's will brings His approval? Luke 14:11, "Whosoever

exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

"NOT OF HIM THAT WILLETH NOR OF HIM THAT RUNNETH"

(Lesson 97)

Text Book: The Divine Plan of the Ages, page 190.

Key Sentence: "It is not because the chosen ones were better than others, that God gave them the invitation to the divine nature, for He passed by the angels who had not sinned and called some of the redeemed sinners to divine honors."

Main Text: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called."—1 Cor. 1:26.

What lesson can we learn from Romans 9:16, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy"? The word here translated mercy has the thought of kindness and favor. If we apply this text to the church, it would mean that we would not obtain the divine nature merely because we put forth such strenuous efforts to obtain it. Without God's help we would never be able to overcome. Using the words in

In our text book, we are told, "It is not because the chosen ones were better than others, that God gave them the invitation to the divine nature." Some one will here speak up and say, "I would think that God would pick out the noblest and purest and best of mankind for this high calling to the divine nature." No, He tells us in 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence."

But if God is inviting only a few, what principles are guiding Him in the selection? We answer that only those who accept Jesus Christ and are justified are among the called ones. Evidently He is looking for those who are teachable—the meek, those who are willing to trust Him and obey Him and yet have strong wills so that they can stand in the trials and disciplines.

But coming back to our text, Romans 9:16, are we to think it is not necessary to "will" or "run" to make our calling and election sure? Only those who "will," that is, earnestly desire to serve God and be like Him and those who in addition to being "willing," also "run"—put forth every effort to overcome and "fight the good fight of faith" can be among the ultimate overcomers. What the apostle is teaching is that even with our best efforts, it is only through God's favor that we can obtain the great prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ.

Let us now read Romans 9:21—"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"

What does this mean? This word dishonor means

Concluded on page 29.



International Sunday School Lessons



JESUS AFFIRMS HIS ONENESS WITH GOD

February 7—John 8:12, 25-36, 56-59

GOLDEN TEXT: He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.—John 14:9.

OUR lesson is a portion of a brief report of one of our Lord's discourses while at the Feast of Tabernacles, probably delivered on the last, the great day of the feast. Although they are not mentioned, probably only a few heard in comparison to the multitude, and probably these made no demonstration at the time. We doubt not that there were some in the audience in whose hearts our Master's words found lodgment, bringing forth fruitage subsequently. These were Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile, no dishonesty, no disposition to deceive others, nor to deceive their own hearts.

These knew themselves to be sinners, unable to come up to the standards of the Law. They realized that they were indeed as the Lord had said, slaves of sin and imperfection. They desired to follow the perfect law of God as they discerned it with the eye of their understanding. They wondered in hope if it were possible that this Great Teacher had some word of truth, some message from the Lord which would relieve them of their great burden. These were in the attitude so graphically described and pictured by the Apostle Paul later, in the words, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this dead body? My mind desires to serve the law of God, but I have in my flesh all the imperfections and weaknesses of heredity and I am unable to do as I would.—Rom. 7:21-25.

Our Lord not only told His hearers that He was the Light of the world, but also that if they would continue in His Word, they might be His disciples indeed and would thus know the truth, and the truth would make them free. Jesus did not go into details to show how the truth would make them free; He merely stated the proposition, realizing that it would attract those of

a right condition of heart as the magnet attracts steel.

Under the enlightening and guiding influences of that Holy Spirit, we now see that which our Lord's hearers before Pentecost could not distinctly discern. We see that Israel was a house of servants and could not abide in the house of the Lord, in the place of His favor for ever. Only temporarily would they occupy the place to prepare the way for and enact types for the Gospel house of sons—"for Moses verily was faithful as a servant over all his house [of servants], but Christ as a Son over His house [of sons]." (Heb. 3:5, 6) How blessed is our realization that the Son makes free—free indeed, those who come to the Father through Him.

The apostle points out to us in Romans, the 8th chapter, that the whole creation is groaning and travailing, waiting for the Millennial day and for the sons of God, under Jesus, the great chief captain and high priest, to be their deliverer. The Apostle Peter points out that whosoever at that time will not avail himself of the great privileges of liberty and return to the Father's family will be destroyed in the second death.—Acts 3:23.

Another lesson which the Holy Spirit teaches us through the apostles and prophets respecting the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, is that those who can now exercise faith in Him and who earnestly crave this liberty, may in a certain sense be made free from sin and death now—in this present life—while outwardly to all appearances subject to similar conditions with the world. This faith-salvation is the one which is in operation through this Gospel age. Blessed are those who have the eyes of faith, for they may receive this liberty in advance of the world, in advance of the Millennial age, and receiving it into good and honest hearts, they receive still further blessings.

Through this faith-justification the Christian is free, but still in

danger of being overtaken by the snares of sin and the wiles of the adversary. To be free indeed, positively free, securely free, he needs to make an alliance with the Lord Jesus, to give his heart fully and completely to Him, to accept His will, His Word, His guidance, in every matter. True, the giving up of the will is the strongest kind of bondage, but this is exactly what the Scriptures represent as being the only proper course of those who would be free from the dominion of sin and death. The apostle declares that being made free from sin we became the servants (Greek, bondslaves) of righteousness and of Christ.—Rom. 6:18.

Any who seek to use liberty for themselves, those who boast that they have a mind of their own, and a will of their own, know not how dangerous is this position, and they surely will succumb eventually to the wiles of the adversary and to the ensnarements of sin. Only those who follow the course of full consecration to the Lord are wise. There is not only rest and peace and joy and liberty for the sons of God now, but additionally, O glorious thought, to these the Master has proposed that they shall be His bride, His associates in the Kingdom, His joint-heirs for all eternity.—Rom. 5:1, 2.

In His teachings, Jesus made perfectly clear His relationship to the Father, saying, "I know whence I came, and whither I go; . . . I am from above. . . . I am not of this world; I proceeded forth, and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. . . . It is My Father that heareth Me, and if I should say that I know Him not, I shall be a liar." Then said the Jews unto Him, Art thou greater than our Father Abraham? Jesus answered, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad."

Abraham did see Jesus' day with the eye of faith; believing the divine promise respecting Messiah. He may have seen His day of sacrifice typified in the offering of Isaac, his only son, but at all events

he saw Messiah's coming glory day, the Millennial day, and no wonder the prospect made him glad. With the eye of faith he beheld the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, the glorified Christ, the Kingdom class, and he beheld similarly the heavenly country—the world blessed by that Kingdom.—Heb. 11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14.

QUESTIONS:

Explain the meaning of the Golden Text in which Jesus says that those who had seen Him had seen the Father.

Does the world of mankind in general now enjoy the freedom of the sons of God?

Explain how true freedom can be obtained only by full surrender of the will to God.

JESUS HEALS A MAN BORN BLIND

February 14—John 9:13-38

GOLDEN TEXT: One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.—John 9:25.

CONCERNING the first miracle wrought by Jesus, John says, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and the disciples believed on Him." This apparently was the divine purpose back of many of the miracles which Jesus performed. It is also one of the reasons for the permission of sickness and death which calls for miracles on a world-wide scale in order to be eradicated. Jesus explained concerning the one of this lesson who was born blind, that this affliction had been permitted in order that "the works of God might be made manifest in Him."—John 9:3.

In all of the Master's miracles, He was careful to direct credit for them to His Father. He was honored by them only in the sense that He served as the Father's representative. This was important, however, as it was one of the means by which the fact of His Messiahship was established. The word Messiah means one who is sent by God and authorized by Him to do the work foretold by the prophets. From the Jewish viewpoint, one whom they accepted as the Messiah, would necessarily have to be able to do things that were beyond the ability of mere human power to accomplish.

The circumstances associated with the healing of the man who had been born blind indicates how mightily this miracle worked in the

minds of those who knew about it to convince them that Jesus had been sent of God. The Pharisees, as usual, tried to discount it on the grounds that Jesus was a sinner because He worked on the Sabbath day; but even among the Pharisees, there were some who dissented from this charge, and were inclined to believe that Jesus did have divine approval, else He could not perform such outstanding miracles.—Verse 16.

The influence of the scribes and Pharisees over the Jewish people of that time is shown in the case of the blind man's parents. A threat of excommunication from the synagogues was held over the people to prevent them from accepting Jesus as the Messiah. The people, of course, didn't know that God was about to repudiate the whole religious set-up of that time, and that they would be just as well, in fact, better off outside the synagogues than associated with them. In their ignorance they feared the wrath of God would surely be upon them if an interdict was placed upon them by the Pharisees, hence they were often hindered from expressing thoughts which they knew to be right.

The man's parents found themselves, symbolically speaking, in a tight place. The Pharisees sought to discredit the miracle by proving that a man similar in appearance to the one that was born blind, had put in appearance, hence no miracle had been performed. They hoped that the parents would bear them out in this—that even though they knew better, they would lie about it in order not to be expelled from the synagogue.

The parents were not willing to disown their son, yet did not have sufficient strength of character and faith in God to openly declare that their son had been healed by Jesus. They affirmed that the man was their son, that he was born blind, and that now he was not blind; but suggested that the son himself, being of age, could give the most reliable testimony as to how his blindness was removed. Let us not blame the parents for their lack of courage, but let us rejoice, rather, that the time is coming when that which is right will no longer be suppressed, as it has been throughout the centuries by false religious leaders.

The son was less fearful, and when the Pharisees attempted to have him repudiate Jesus' part in the miracle on the ground that He was a sinner, he replied, "Whether He be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." (Verse 25.) After discussing the matter further with him, and failing in their attempt to break down his testimony, they accused the man of being a sinner and cast him out. This is what the parents feared for themselves, but the son was willing to pay the penalty, for he had been convinced that Jesus was all that had been claimed for Him.

When the Master heard that the man he had healed was cast out by the Pharisees, He arranged a conference with him, with the result that the young man fully accepted Jesus as the Son of God and the Messiah. While not discounting the value of the physical eyesight which the man received, yet the opening of the eyes of his understanding was of greater eternal value. "Blessed are your eyes for they see," said the Master to those who could discern the truth of their day. This great blessing came to the one who was born blind physically and had both physical and spiritual sight given to him by Jesus. Thus he was doubly blessed.

The miracles performed by Jesus were few in number compared with the multitudes who were afflicted. It is the divine purpose to heal all the sick—in due time—and what Jesus did at His first advent were but samples of what will be wrought on behalf of all mankind during the thousand years of His second presence. Of that time the prophet declares, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." (Isa. 35:5.) The physically blind then will be healed, but even more important, all mankind will have the eyes of their understanding opened to behold the glory of God, and thus they will all know Him, from the least to the greatest.—Jer. 31:34.

QUESTIONS:

What was one of the principal objects of the miracles performed by Jesus?

What blessing came to the man in this lesson whom Jesus healed that was more valuable than the receiving of his physical eyesight?

Is there a time coming when all the sick and afflicted will be healed?

JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD

February 21—John 10:1-5, 11-16, 27-30.

GOLDEN TEXT: I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.—John 10:11.

TODAY'S lesson is presented to us in pictorial language. Jesus is the "Good Shepherd," and His people, lovingly cared for by Him, are His sheep. Just as in the caring for literal sheep, the shepherd encounters wolves, robbers, false shepherds, etc., and has to protect the sheep against these, so Jesus assures us that He will protect His own "sheep" from all enemies, and that nothing will be permitted to pluck them out of His Father's hand.

A truly "good" shepherd, Jesus explains, is one who will gladly give his life for his sheep. In this we have a very practical illustration of the difference between good shepherds and false shepherds. False shepherds are not specially interested in doing anything for the sheep, but ever watchful of how they may exploit the sheep for their own gain. This is a lesson that all under shepherds, who would serve the flock as representatives of Jesus, should take well to heart. The principle involved will also help the sheep to determine who are true shepherds, and who are not. Shepherds who have the Master's spirit, will be more interested in what they can do for the flock, than what the flock can do for them.

The doctrinal viewpoint of today's lesson is also important. With Jesus it was not merely a **willingness** to lay down His life for the sheep—He actually did die for them. It is the shepherd's work to find food and water for the sheep in order that their life might be sustained. Jesus came to earth to provide an opportunity of everlasting life for all those who would follow Him. In order to make such a provision it was necessary that He die—that He give His flesh for the life of the world.—John 6:51.

Jesus sacrificed His humanity as a substitute for the forfeited life of Father Adam and for all mankind who lost life through Adam. When the merit of this sacrifice is presented to the Father, as pictured by the sprinkling of the blood on the typical mercy seat of the tabernacle, it effects a release from

death-condemnation for all who in faith accept it and undertake to obey the divine law. Thus, through the death of Jesus, the Good Shepherd of our lesson, eternal life is provided for the sheep.

Another doctrinal point is brought to light in the 16th verse of the lesson, where Jesus is quoted as saying, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." Some have inferred that the "other sheep" here mentioned are the Gentiles who would later be given the opportunity of becoming Christians, but this is not in keeping with all the facts of the divine plan.

It is true that Israelites under the Law were the sheep to which Jesus came at His first advent. But the Law arrangement was for the purpose of making them eligible for joint-heirship with the Messiah when that opportunity was offered to them. So it was that Jesus came to His own, "but His own received Him not. But to as many as did receive Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God."—John 1:11, 12.

When the nation of Israel as a whole rejected Jesus it did not result in a new sheepfold being instituted. It simply meant that the Israelites had failed to qualify as "sheep" for the high calling under the leadership of Jesus, so they were rejected and Gentiles were invited in to take their places, in order that the full quota of this special flock might be made up. Under a different illustration, Paul refers to these as wild branches that are grafted into the tame olive tree. God did not make a new tree for Gentiles who become followers of Christ in this Gospel age, nor does He create a new sheepfold for them.

The "other sheep", therefore, must be a reference to the Millennial age sheep, who will be brought into at-one-ment with the Father and receive everlasting life during the times of restitution of all things. In Ephesians 1:10, the apostle tells us that in the dispensation of the "fulness of times" God will gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth. This seems to be a reference to the gathering of the spiritual and earthly sheep all

under the leadership of Christ, the Good Shepherd, fulfilling the Master's promise of the time when the "other sheep"—the earthly—would also be brought, that there might be one fold and one Shepherd. This is beautifully illustrated on the chart which appears in "The Divine Plan of the Ages."

That there will be sheep gathered to Christ during the next age is shown in the parable of the sheep and goats. (Matt. 25:31-46.) All of those who then come into harmony with the laws of the Kingdom are represented as sheep, and are undoubtedly the "other sheep" mentioned by the Master. Jesus gave His life for these also, and because He did, He became the propitiation, or satisfaction, not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world. He is truly a "Good Shepherd," one who loves all His sheep, and has made abundant provision whereby they may live forever.

Jesus' love for His sheep is the same as that of His father. It was God's love that caused Him to give His Son to be the Good Shepherd. In the closing verse of the lesson Jesus emphasizes the fact that He and the Father are wholly at one in their love for the sheep and in the divine plan whereby, at the cost of His own life, they will all be given life. The sheep of this age will receive immortality, while those of the next age will receive everlasting life upon the earth.

QUESTIONS:

What is the difference between a good shepherd and a false shepherd?

Who are the "other sheep" to which Jesus refers?

In what sense are Jesus and the Father "one"?

LAZARUS RESTORED TO LIFE

February 28—John 11:20-29, 32-35, 38-44.

GOLDEN TEXT: I am the resurrection, and the life.—John 11:25.

IN A previous lesson we had an illustration of divine power operating through Jesus for the opening of blind eyes. Today's lesson reveals that this same power is capable also of awakening the dead. Thus we have the assurance that when the Kingdom of Christ is established nothing will be able to prevent the free flow of God's promised blessings to all the families of the earth, for all that are in the grave shall hear the voice

of the divine Life-giver and shall come forth.—John 5:28.

There are several points of vital interest in connection with the awakening of Lazarus. When he became seriously sick his sisters, Mary and Martha, sent word to Jesus, supposing that He would come to their aid at once; for Jesus loved them, even as they loved Him. But the Master tarried where He was for two days, and then announced to His disciples that Lazarus was sleeping and that He proposed to go and awaken him out of sleep. They misunderstood the import of what Jesus said, supposing that He referred to natural sleep, and observed that it was a good thing for a sick man to sleep.

Then Jesus said to them plainly that Lazarus was dead. From this we learn that death, from the divine standpoint, is merely a sleep from which there is to be an awakening. This, the Scriptures reveal, is due to the redemptive work of Christ, apart from which there would be no hope of an awakening. Paul affirms that in such an event those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. (1 Cor. 15:18.) The "sleep" illustration of death also shows that the dead are unconscious, and will remain so until the resurrection.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she hurried to meet Him. Gently she chided Him for not coming sooner, saying, "If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Even so, Martha had such confidence in the Master that she quickly added, "But I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee."—Verses 21 and 22.

Jesus' reply was reassuring, but left a question in Martha's mind as to when she might expect her brother to be awakened. While Mary is given the credit of being the one of these two sisters who sat at Jesus' feet and learned of

Him, yet in this hour of trial Martha manifested a good understanding of the Messianic hope which centered in Him, and which He taught. Partly as an expression of her faith in the divine plan, and partly to draw from the Master a further expression of what she might expect Him to do at that time, she replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."—Verse 24.

Martha had learned that during the last thousand-year day in the divine plan—the Millennium—all the dead would be awakened and be given an opportunity to accept the Kingdom laws and live forever. She knew that Lazarus would come forth at that time regardless of what Jesus had in mind concerning him then. And after all, this was the important consideration. Should Lazarus be awakened from death then, it would be only for a short time, and he would go back into the tomb again to await the time when all shall hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth. If Jesus granted the extra blessing of giving their brother back to them temporarily, she would, of course, appreciate it.

The dialog continued. Jesus replied, "I am the resurrection, and the life." This was His way of reminding her once again that the "resurrection at the last day" to which she referred would be accomplished through Him. Then He further enlarged upon the work during the time of the general resurrection, saying, "He that [then] believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."—Verses 25 and 26.

Truly this was a wondrous revelation of truth! Jesus asked Martha if she believed it, and she replied that she did because she believed that He was the Christ, the promised Messiah. This was the very work that God had prom-

ised the Messiah should do. This was the manner in which all the families of the earth were to be blessed, namely, by being awakened from the sleep of death and given an opportunity to accept the provision of life made for them through the Redeemer, and to live for ever.

While this was the wondrous program to be carried out in the resurrection at the last day, as indicated by Martha, yet she was not to expect any such far-reaching blessing at that time. If Jesus desired to do so, He could then awaken Lazarus, even as he had awakened others, but the time had not come when the world could have everlasting life.

Jesus asked to be shown to the tomb of the dead Lazarus. When He met Mary, and other members of the family, all of whom were weeping, He wept also, thus revealing His heart of sympathy for the sin-cursed and dying world. This scene of sorrow was quickly turned into one of joy when the Master called Lazarus forth from the tomb. He didn't call him down from heaven, nor up from a creedal hell or purgatory—places which do not exist—but from the tomb, the death condition. How greatly the family must have rejoiced to have their beloved Lazarus with them again.

Like the other miracles of Jesus, this, too, was merely an illustration of what is to be done on a planet-wide scale during the thousand years of the Kingdom reign. This will be one of the means by which God will fulfil His promise to wipe away tears from all faces; for, when the Kingdom work is complete, there will be no more death.—Rev. 21:4.

QUESTIONS:

In what sense is death properly spoken of as being a sleep?

What did Jesus mean when He said, "I am the resurrection, and the life"?

How will God wipe away tears from off all faces?

DIVINE PLAN BEREAN LESSONS

Continued from page 25.

less honor. God is the potter. The clay represents our human nature. The vessels unto greater honor represent the church who will receive the divine nature, and the vessels of less honor picture those who were selected first. "Until John" the baptizer, who was one of the chief and the last of the ancient worthies, the house of servants. We could also apply these vessels of less honor to those who will attain restitution in the Millennial age.

The thought of the Potter and the clay suggests that we should be pliable like the clay in the Potter's hand—always ready to do His will and trust Him, as beautifully expressed in the Morning Resolve, "Trusting myself to divine care and the providential overruling of all my interests for my highest welfare, I will seek not only to be pure in heart, but to repel all anxiety, all discontent, all discouragement. I will neither murmur nor repine at what the Lord's providence may permit, because 'Faith can firmly trust Him, Come what may.'"

Talking Things Over

CHICAGO NEW YEARS CONVENTION

WHEN several hundred consecrated followers of the Master meet together over a period of four days for mutual fellowship and encouragement, rich blessings are sure to result. It was so at Chicago on the closing day of 1942 and throughout the first three days of 1943. The theme text of the convention was, "Thy wonderful works . . . and Thy thoughts cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee. If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." (Psalm 40:5.) The reality of this text and its spirit, seemed to captivate the hearts of the brethren throughout the convention, causing them to have their thoughts and words centered on the Lord more than ever.

It was a happy convention, but serious. With the dark night of the time of trouble settling down upon the world so rapidly, the brethren were impressed with the fact that the "time is short," hence in all earnestness they tried to make every minute of the convention count for good. The spirit of reverence and quietness was particularly blessed and impressive. The friends seemed to realize more than ever that when they came together for the meetings the Lord met with them, and they were careful to honor His presence by proper decorum and reverence.

The convention opened with a "Watchnight" service on the evening of December 31st. While we know that our calendar New Year date is an arbitrary one, having no Scriptural significance, yet when the Lord's people meet together for prayer and fellowship, a blessing is always obtained, regardless of the date or occasion. It was so at this long-to-be-remembered meeting, which consisted of three discourses and an uplifting prayer and testimony meeting.

One of the unusual features of the Chicago convention was a session devoted to the discussion of how best to follow up the interest being awakened by the radio programs. A number were present who are spending a considerable time in this service and it was inspiring to hear them tell of their experiences in meeting those whose hearts and minds are being turned in the direction of the truth by listening to the weekly messages of the Kingdom reaching them through the "air." Many of these newly interested ones are glad to get "The Divine Plan of the Ages."

The new interest being awakened by the radio work is very encouraging, but equally encouraging is the fact that so many who formerly had contact with the truth are being reached, and their interest renewed. Besides, many isolated brethren who have maintained their enthusiasm for the truth but lost contact with their brethren, are also being reached, and happy are these to learn that there are others of like precious faith with whom they can enjoy sweet fellowship.

The weather was extremely unfavorable on the afternoon of the public meeting, but in spite of this

a goodly number of the public came to hear a discussion on the subject, "God's New Order." A number of these proved to be regular listeners to the radio programs. The brethren, of course, know God's plan, yet we all rejoice when it is being told to others, and for this reason the public meeting at any convention usually proves to be very inspiring. We always receive a blessing when we try to bless others.

One of the disappointments of the convention was the absence of Brother J. A. Meggison, of Galena, Kansas, who was scheduled twice on the program. Speakers who did attend and serve were, Brothers S. C. DeGroot; G. M. Wilson; R. A. Krebs; C. A. Sundbom; L. H. Norby; and W. N. Woodworth. Brothers C. Lanowick; E. G. Wylam; D. J. Morehouse; I. C. Foss; J. Copeland; L. Poskonka; and A. Miskawitz, of the local ecclesia, also took part on the convention program.

1943 CONVENTION PROSPECTS

GOVERNMENT officials have requested that 1943 national conventions of all kinds, including religious, not vital to the war effort be cancelled. There is no law to this effect, but the voluntary response to this request is quite general. We believe that the brethren will do well to comply with the request, the purpose of which is to keep down non-essential travel, that railroad, bus, and other transportation equipment may be more readily available for essential use. This, however, should not affect local and district conventions where long-distance travel is not involved.

The committee in charge of arrangements for the Mid-West General Convention for 1943, met at Chicago early in January, and decided to postpone until May further definite arrangements to hold the gathering, at which time it will be decided, upon the basis of conditions then existing, whether or not to definitely cancel the convention for this year. The thought was that possibly unforeseen changes may take place by May which will make it advisable to hold the convention. This decision will be reached we understand, in time for publication in the June DAWN.

Due to the increasing difficulties of automobile travel the Mid-West Convention Committee discussed the possibility of holding the 1943 gathering elsewhere than in Chautauqua, Ohio, as there is no direct railroad or bus service to this location. Final decision on this point was also postponed until May. Should conditions change sufficiently to make it seem advisable to hold the convention, the announcement in the June DAWN will, of course, state where it will be held.

The Government's restriction on travel is not designed to curtail religious activity, and we believe that the brethren can make up for the loss of general conventions, in part at least, by holding more local conventions. Surely it is more than ever important

that we forsake not the assembling of ourselves together, and while it is a great inspiration to meet brethren from distant parts of the country, rich compensating blessings will surely accrue from more frequent association with those of our own districts. By comparison we here in America are still much better off than brethren in many other parts of the world, and while we are enjoying so many privileges of fellowship and service, let us not forget to remember the household of faith everywhere, bearing them all in prayer before the throne of heavenly grace.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

ABOUT the middle of December we received a card from a lady enquiring why she was no longer able to hear the radio programs in her district. The programs had recently been discontinued on the station over which she had first heard them. This particular station had carried the programs for a period of six months, and it was thought advisable to use the funds necessary to continue in a district where no witness had been given. A brief letter of explanation was sent to this friend, and after a few days we received the following letter from her. We believe it will be of interest to all, in that it is a further evidence of how the Lord is using the message over the radio to reach those who today are truly hungering and thirsting after the truth:

"Dear Friends: Thank you for your letter of December 17, 1942. Each month I put aside something for the Lord's work and I am only too happy to enclose \$5.00. Of course, I realize radio work is very expensive and it will need a great many 'fives' to carry on your blessed work. I will ask my relatives, and will write you later about it.

"The reason I am so worried about the radio work is because (if you will pardon my talking about myself) it was God's answer to my very fervent prayer and it may be desperately needed by others, hungry for the real truth.

"This is my story so you will see my point. We were all Episcopalians and, of course, loved the dignity and grandeur of the service, although we didn't like the Bingo parties, etc. My sister became a Jehovah's Witness, gave me all their pamphlets and told how the churches were part of Babylon, which was to fall. I loved her but rather resented the idea that good, honest people in the missionary group to which I belonged weren't doing absolutely right.

"Well, time went on. She talked, I argued. I still couldn't see, but I tried to see so I kept going to church. One morning I was sitting there wondering what was wrong about it when I looked up and it was as if scales dropped from my eyes. I saw the purple pieces on the altar, all the golden candlesticks and the red carpets, altogether, just as described in Revelation—the city, Babylon.

"I never entered the church again. I still wasn't a Jehovah's Witness, nor anything. I was desperately lonely, as I had loved the group to which I belonged. Well, to make a long story short, I became very much interested in the Seventh Day Adventists, as it was some place to worship where the people were sincere and honest. I went for a whole

year, trying to pretend I was one, but I knew I wasn't. Then, not to flaunt anything in God's face, I had J. W. meetings here; went to others, even tried to go out in the work. I was desperately unhappy all the time. The Scripture, "Be joyful in the Lord," kept ringing in my ears, and I knew I wasn't joyful.

"Well, my boy, 19, had left the church and there was nothing to take its place, although he, too, went to a few J. W. meetings. This went on for quite a while. The Seventh Day Adventist minister intimated if I didn't get baptized there, I was lost. The J. W's felt the same so you can imagine my feelings.

"Well, discouraged and heart-sick, I went alone in our yard. I sat there a long time praying God to let me do what was right for my own salvation, and so I could tell others the truth. I came in eventually, picked up the paper, and saw 'Frank and Ernest' advertised. We listened the following Sunday, and I became convinced my prayers were answered. I knew it was the truth. Now I am so happy, and I try to tell others what I know myself. One evening a week for the past two weeks my husband, son, father-in-law, and myself have read your little booklets. God willing, we will continue to do so. Thank you so much and God's blessing on your work. Sincerely yours, L. S., N. Y."

REQUESTS FOR PILGRIM VISITS

THE Lord's blessing continues upon the ministry of the traveling speakers, familiarly known to most of the brethren as "Pilgrims." We are glad to arrange for these brethren to visit individuals and groups wherever their services are desired. The number in any community desiring such visits is not a factor in arranging pilgrim schedules. If you or your class would like visits from these traveling brethren, do not hesitate to send in a request. There is no charge for the visits. We ask only that the brethren be comfortably entertained while with you.

Even if you are the only one in your community of "this way," you would enjoy the fellowship of the pilgrims. Perhaps you could arrange a meeting in your home, or in a small hall, to which your friends and neighbors could be invited. Address your requests to The Dawn, Pilgrim Department, 136 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

WHAT RADIO MANAGERS THINK

THE continued opportunity of sending forth the message of truth over the radio depends upon the good will of radio stations and managers. The Lord has blessed the work from this standpoint with the result that very little difficulty is encountered either in securing contracts on additional stations or renewing contracts. In this connection we believe the following excerpts from letters received from managers of radio stations will be of interest:

"We, here at this Mutual outlet, realize the importance of your program to our Sunday morning religious programs and many comments come to our offices regarding your type of presentation."—WCOU, Maine.

Concluded on next page.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

BROTHER H. E. ANDERSON

Hartford, Conn. February 14

BROTHER F. A. BRIGHT

Reading, Pa. February 14
Boston, Mass. 28

BROTHER N. T. CONSTANT

Paterson, N. J. February 21

BROTHER A. C. FREY

Paterson, N. J. February 14

BROTHER C. F. GEORGE

Duquesne, Pa. February 7

BROTHER G. S. KENDALL

Santa Ana, Calif. (A. M.) February 7
Los Angeles, Calif. (P. M.) 7
San Diego, Calif. 9
Yuma, Ariz. 11
Phoenix, Ariz. 13, 14
Dallas, Tex. 18-21
Fort Worth, Tex. 22
San Antonio, Tex. 24
Houston, Tex. 25, 26
Galveston, Tex. 27, 28
New Orleans, La. March 2, 3

BROTHER PETER KOLLIMAN

Lancaster, Pa. February 14
Wilmington, Del. (A. M.) 21
Philadelphia, Pa. (P. M.) 21

BROTHER R. A. KREBS

Houston, Tex. January 29-31
Galveston, Tex. February 1, 2
New Orleans, La. 4
Mobile, Ala. 5

Jacksonville, Fla. 7, 23, 24
Orlando, Fla. 9, 10, 21
Zephyrhills, Fla. 11
Tampa, Fla. 12
St. Petersburg, Fla. 14, 15
Miami, Fla. 17, 18
Savannah, Ga. 25-28
Atlanta, Ga. March 2

BROTHER J. Y. MAC AULAY

Duncan, B. C., Can. February 3, 4
Victoria, B. C. 6, 7
Vancouver, B. C. 8-10
Lynden, Wash. 11
Seattle, Wash. 12-14
Wenatchee, Wash. 16, 17
Spokane, Wash. 19-21
Lewiston, Idaho 22, 23
Boise, Idaho 25, 26
Ogden, Utah Feb. 28, Mar. 1

BROTHER W. S. MARSHALL

Dexter, Me. February 7
Guilford, Me. 14
Dexter, Me. 21
Ellsworth, Me. 28

BROTHER M. C. MITCHELL

New Haven, Conn. (morning) February 21
New London, Conn. (afternoon) 21

BROTHER T. G. SMITH

Wilton, Me. February 14

BROTHER G. M. WILSON

East Liverpool, Ohio February 14

BROTHER W. N. WOODWORTH

Toronto, Ont. Can. February 5
Tonawanda, N. Y. 6
Paterson, N. J. 28

WHAT RADIO MANAGERS THINK

Continued from previous page.

"May I say at this time that your transcribed series, 'Frank and Ernest,' has met with extreme interest up in these parts."—WABI, Maine.

"We are happy to learn that this account is continuing for another thirteen weeks, and are enclosing contract covering the new period. . . . If you desire any special cooperation on this account, please do not hesitate to call upon us."—WOL, Wash., D. C.

MEMORIAL SUPPER DATE

The date for the observance of the Memorial this year, according to the Jewish calendar, will be after sundown, Sunday, April 18.

CONVENTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

SAGINAW, MICH., Feb. 7. Convention to be held in Saginaw Woman's Club, 311 N. Jefferson Street.

SCOTIA, N. Y. (Albany District) Feb. 7. All day gathering in Masonic Temple, 127 Mohawk Ave., Scotia, N. Y.

DETROIT, MICH., Feb., 28. The Detroit Ecclesia holds regular conventions the last Sunday of each month. For details write Mr. Louis Zbik, 8032 Dobel Street, Detroit, Mich.

CHICAGO, ILL., Feb. 28. The Chicago Ecclesia holds local conventions on the fourth Sunday of each month in their hall, Central Masonic Temple, 910 N. La Salle Street. A Baptismal Service has been arranged.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., April 18. Y. W. C. A., 18th and Arch Streets.

INTERESTING LETTERS

"Dear Sirs: Two or three Sundays ago I heard your broadcast over the radio. Your ideas were very enlightening. Many ministers generalize too much without giving people specific benefits from their study of the Bible, but your broadcast cleared up a number of vague questions in my mind. You stated you will send your booklet, 'God's Plan,' to anyone who would write for it, and I would like to have you send one to me. I would like to use it in a devotional service. May God bless you and your work. Sincerely, A.F.E., Mo."

"Dear People: I have been listening to your broadcast and surely enjoy hearing you explain the Scriptures. Do you belong to an earthly congregation? I have read the Bible many times in the past, and I understand the Bible to teach just one church and that it is spiritual; and that it is a body of people who have to suffer. They are a people that are not deceitful and will not tell a lie, and God says He knows His people and the world does not know them. Please send me the book, 'Christ Has Returned.' Love to you both, A. L. N., Tex."

"Dawn Publishers: I am enclosing \$1.00 toward program expenses and \$1.73 for the literature listed on the attached order. I am glad your 'Frank and Ernest' program comes on before it is time for me to leave for Sunday School, for I would not like to miss it. The International Sunday School Lessons in the Dawn Magazine help me greatly in my class of 'teen-age boys. In fact all the literature received has given me answers to their questions, and these times make boys—and girls—ask questions. Yours very sincerely, J. C. H., Wash."

"Christian Friends: I have passed the 73rd milestone on life's journey and am unable to go to work for my living. I will have to be helped along the balance of my journey by the ones whom I helped when I was in my strong manhood. I would like you to know that the Bible is the Book of books, and I wish the time were here now, so I could be here when that last big battle is fought, when they will 'beat their swords into plow-shares,' etc., and be taught to use the sickle of truth and love instead of guns and hate. Well, I could write page after page and then have something to say, but I will close, bidding you Godspeed in your good work and saying that if you feel you can furnish me with your magazine I will accept it gladly and pass it on to my fellow-travelers when I have read it. Yours for the peace that is sure to come when Christ the King takes charge, J. O. S., Ky."

"Dear Sirs: May I please have your booklet, 'Hope Beyond the Grave,' and also 'Armageddon,' for which I sincerely thank you. 'The Divine Plan of the Ages' is marvelous. I never read such a wonderful book and one so easy to comprehend. I love to listen to the dialogs by Frank and Ernest. God bless you in your glorious work. H. M., N. Y."

"Dear Sirs: Thank you, thank you, for the booklets which came all right. Enjoy your program more than any over the radio. But, O why can you not give us more time! Fifteen minutes is so short for the interesting talks you give us. Have not quite finished reading all the booklets. I so much like to look up references and my eyes are not as they were when younger. With the best wishes for you both, and thanking you again, Yours truly, E. H. D., Tenn."

"Dear Frank and Ernest: I am sending you a small donation. Please send me the book, 'The Truth About Hell.' I listen to your question program each Sunday morning and enjoy it very much. Your program sounds so reasonable. I believe it, every word. Hell torture seems so unreasonable. It makes the most criminal shudder to think of it. No loving God could think of such a thing. Can you tell me when and where I can find more on the radio, or sermons? I will appreciate anything you can do for me in that line of thought. Yours very truly, M. H., Ill."

"Gentlemen: Will you please send me your 'Hope' booklet? I listen to your broadcast every Sunday morning and enjoy it very much. This last Sunday really gave me more enlightenment than other broadcasts. I just couldn't figure out why a sinner could go right to heaven (as the thief on the cross was supposed to) just by saying, 'God, forgive me,' while others did their best to live up to the Golden Rule all their lives. Respectfully yours, H. M., Mo."

"Dear Frank and Ernest: You will never know how thankful I am that I found your program this Sunday. I started to tune in to get the 10 o'clock news and heard them announcing your program, and of course I have always believed that Christ will establish His Kingdom here on this earth. But, Oh! so many are blinded to this truth. And I fully believe the time is at hand for this blessed event. There is so much turmoil here now. But then everything will be all right. He says we shall lie down safely and none shall make us afraid. And the lion and the lamb shall lie down together. It speaks about heaven in Revelation 21:23-27, of that city, but it still speaks of nations and says that the nations that are saved shall walk in the light of that blessed city. I don't see why people can't see into this. I think your program is just what we need today and I will pray that it may be continued. . . . My only hope is that Christ will soon speak peace to this old sin-sick world, set up His government, and everything will be peace and happiness. If it wasn't for this consolation, I just wouldn't even try to go on. Please send me all the information you have. I will be listening every Sunday. May God bless you both. I am, very respectfully, I. R. T., Calif."

"Dear Frank and Ernest: I am sending for The Dawn for 1943, starting this month. I love it. . . . I was baptized at the age of eleven and have since had

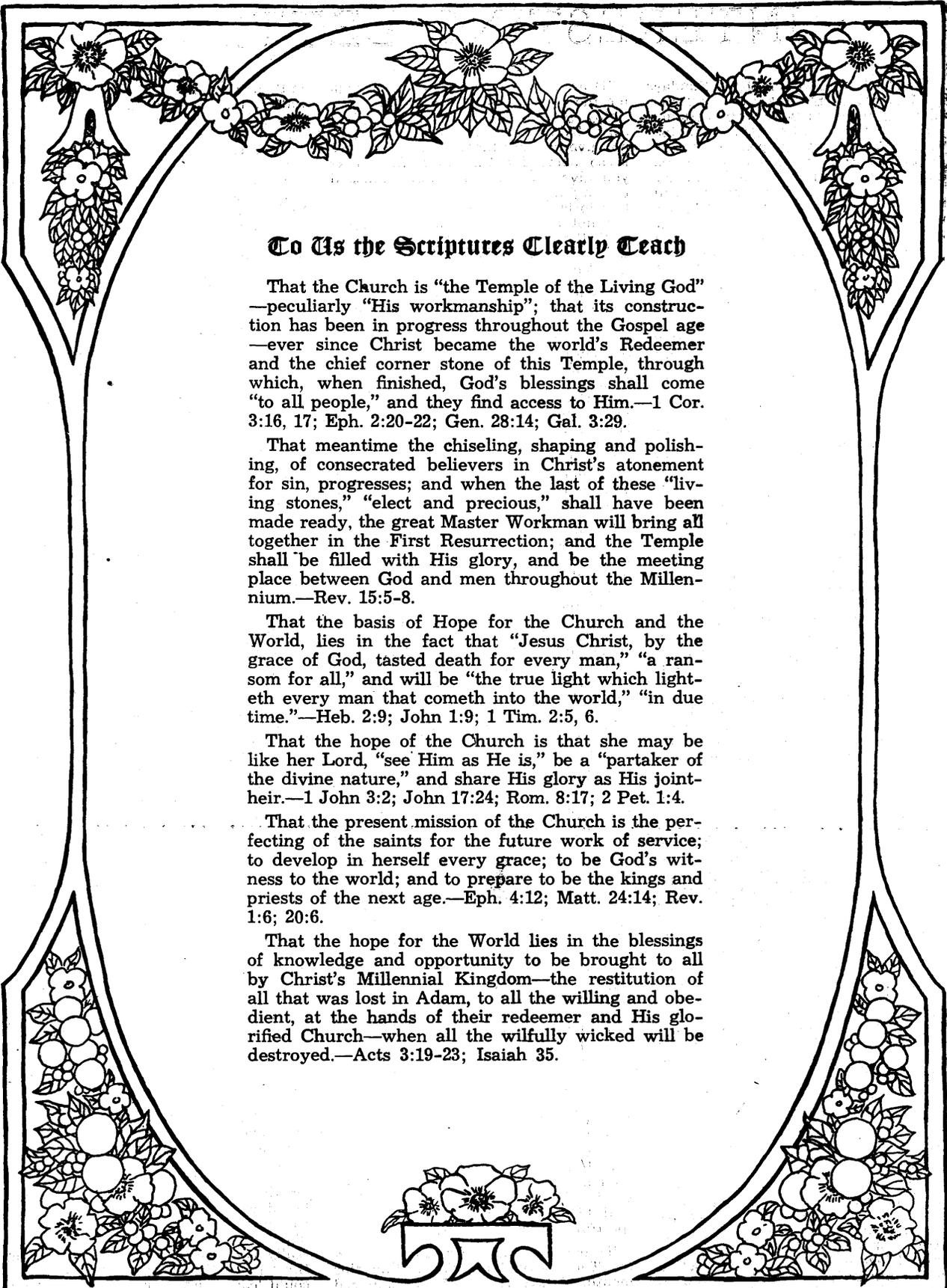
faith in God, but I was never satisfied until I read Pastor Russell's books. I had belonged to three different denominations (moving from place to place) and during those years of poverty, trouble, and a too great desire to please my loved ones at any cost, I did not pursue the truth in study and allegiance to its true promulgators. When I accidentally heard your broadcast, then I found that the truths I clung to really had a voice. Sincerely, G. T. C., Ill."

"Dear Brethren of the Faith: We do so much appreciate the Frank and Ernest programs on Sunday morning and only wish it was so arranged that we could attend class. We also anxiously await The Dawn each month, so please accept this small donation in appreciation of the word that is going forth. Sincerely yours, W. M., Ind."

"Brethren Frank and Ernest: I have been listening to your broadcast of the Kingdom interest. It coincides so harmoniously with my understanding of Pastor Russell's explanation of the plan of the ages that I want to ask whether you have or know where I can purchase a set of the six volumes written by him. I trust that you may set me in the straight path of salvation, for there are others as much interested as I. I have given and loaned two sets, and now have only one set left which I am keeping for myself. If you will send me a circular of all the literature, then I can make the selection. I remain, as ever, yours in Christ, R. J. F., Pa."

"Dear Brethren: I received your free booklets on 'Christ Has Returned' and 'God's Remedy for a World Gone Mad.' I want to order some of the booklets you have listed on the pink sheet you sent me. Send me two each of the one-cent booklets and one each of the five-cent ones, and you can send me a free copy of each except the two above mentioned, as I am going to use them in the Lord's work. They explain God's plan so well, and I have friends who don't know anything about God or His Word. Also send me The Dawn Magazine for six months. I enclose \$1.00. Use the few extra cents for postage. Will try to send an offering a little later on. I don't mind helping someone that I know is telling the people the truth. I'm only sorry I didn't start listening to you sooner. I could have. I was told about your program. Respectfully, L. G., Ill."

"Dear Frank and Ernest: Kindly send me your booklet on 'God's New Order.' I heard you speak over the radio Sunday. Also please let me know when you have your church services on Sunday, as I would like very much to attend. I found your tract on the sidewalk a few weeks ago as I was out walking, so I picked it up. I have heard you over the radio twice, and I was very much impressed, so I would like to go to your church where I really can hear you both speak. The Bible is worth hearing about, as we all could learn a lot, I am sure. God bless your work. H. M., N. Y."



To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to Him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping and polishing, of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8.

That the basis of Hope for the Church and the World, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," be a "partaker of the divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests of the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the World lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35.