

The Dawn

A Herald of Christ's Presence

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ARGENTINA: A. Lupsor, Calle Almirante Brown 684, Monte Grande C.P., 1842 Buenos Aires

AUSTRALIA: Berean Bible Institute, P.O. Box 402, Rosanna, Victoria 3084

BRAZIL: A Aurora, Caixa Postal 50088, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, CEP 20050-971

BRITISH ISLES: Associated Bible Students, 102 Broad Street, Chesham, HP5 3ED, England

CANADA: P.O. Box 1565, Vernon, British Columbia, V1T 8C2

FRANCE: L'Aurore, 45, Avenue de Gouvieux, 60260, Lamorlaye

GERMANY: Tagesanbruch Bibelstudien-Vereinigung, Postfach 11 03, 64368 Ober-Ramstadt

GREECE: He Haravgi (The Dawn), 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073 USA

INDIA: The Dawn, Blessington, #34, Serpentine Street, Richmond Town, Bangalore 560025

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Walls of Salvation

***"In that day shall
this song be sung;
... We have a strong
city; salvation will
God appoint for
walls and
bulwarks. Open ye
the gates, that the
righteous nation
which keepeth the
truth may enter in.
Thou wilt keep him
in perfect peace,
whose mind is
stayed on thee:
because he trusteth
in thee."***

—Isaiah 26:1-3

THE LACK OF PEACE AND

security in the world today is not just among nations. There are various conflicts between individuals, businesses, special interest groups, political parties, religions, and ideologies of many kinds. The ultimate discord which exists in the world, however, is between God and man. This disharmony between man and his Creator must be reconciled before any of the conflicts among mankind can have a satisfactory and lasting res-

olution. Besides all the struggles among nations and people, there are many battles within our own minds. These also must be conquered before we can obtain true peace of mind and heart. Such peace is based upon the assurance that our Heavenly Father approves of our thoughts and actions, is caring for us, and overruling all our experiences for our highest good.

The Gospel of Christ is a message of peace and goodwill, as it was announced by angels to the shepherds over two thousand years ago at the time of Jesus' birth. (Luke 2:10,14) However, there are many shades of meaning contained in the word peace. Naturally, our first thought, no doubt, is that of the cessation of armed conflict between nations and peoples. Peace also means tranquility of mind, rest and security, unity and accord. First and foremost, peace means reconciliation with God, which can only come through being "at one" with him.

Nearly all people desire to have peace of heart and mind, but few know how it can be properly attained. Many have sought to attain wealth, power, or fame, thinking that through these they could find peace, only to discover that it mostly has eluded them. Whether man realizes it or not, unrest and a troubled spirit are essentially due to a lack of fellowship with God. No one can have true peace of mind and heart without close communion with his Creator.

Thankfully, the Scriptures teach that in God's due time peace will come to this world. Wars and conflicts of every kind among men will cease. Let us remember, however, that God's long-promised peace on earth can come, in the fullest sense, only by reconciling mankind to himself. Indeed, this will be done through Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the true "Prince of Peace."—Isa. 9:6,7; Luke 1:79

BORN UNDER SIN

At birth, we were "shapen in iniquity" and conceived "in sin." (Ps. 51:5) We required reconciliation

to God, and needed a Savior. (Rom. 5:10) Only through accepting Jesus' ransoming sacrifice as the means of our salvation can we find our way back to God. Additionally, only through developing into Christ's character likeness of kindness, mercy, and love, will any be able to attain a full and lasting relationship of peace with God.—Phil. 2:1-5; Rom. 15:1,2,5,6; Eph. 5:1,2

Real peace is out of our reach as long as we are alienated from God. It can be found only in fellowship with him. It necessitates being released from the condemnation of sin, and partaking of the blessed benefits of salvation. Through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ our Lord, we must first be made right with God. Thereby we can have communion with him, and its resulting peace, security and true happiness. Only by such reconciliation can the peace which man lost in Eden be restored. As the prophet declares, "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked [those guilty of sin]."—Isa. 48:22

WALL OF PARTITION BROKEN

Throughout history, mankind has built literal walls for the purpose of providing peace and security to citizens of cities, nations, and large empires. Even today, much discussion is taking place in this country about the building of a wall between the United States and Mexico. The stated purpose of such a monumental project is to protect our country's citizens by keeping undesirable, criminal elements from entering our borders from the south. If past history is any indication, however, such efforts, in the long-term, will prove futile.

Nearly every literal wall that has ever been built in man's history has either been eventually destroyed, or significantly breached, to such an extent that it either lays in ruin, or has disappeared altogether.

God, we believe, has put into motion an entirely different arrangement. The Apostle Paul wrote, "In Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition; . . . Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, . . . to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you."—Eph. 2:13-17

The words "wall of partition" which Paul speaks of in this passage has a twofold significance. First, it speaks to the "wall" which separated Jews and Gentiles for a long period of time. God had dealt exclusively with Israel for many centuries, bestowing upon them his favors and blessings. During this period, Gentiles were considered "aliens" from God's special care. Paul, however, says that by the "blood of Christ," both Jews and Gentiles can be reconciled to God. "In Christ Jesus," the "wall of partition" was now "broken down," which separated these two groups.

In a larger sense, a "wall of partition" has existed between God and all mankind since the fall of our first parents into sin. This wall has separated God from both Jews and Gentiles alike—that is, from all mankind, regardless of nationality, religion, or any other differences. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) This wall,

too, has been broken down through the blood of Christ, and will provide mankind the opportunity to be reconciled back to God in his coming kingdom on earth, concerning which Jesus taught us to pray. (Matt. 6:10) In this way, Paul concludes, Jesus “came and preached peace.”

WALLS OF SALVATION

In contrast to the “wall of partition” between God and man which Christ has broken down, our opening text uses this metaphor quite differently. Here the Prophet Isaiah says that “salvation” has been set in place by God “for walls and bulwarks.” This is not a wall of separation, but rather a wall of strength and protection. Salvation is a wall built by God, impenetrable by Satan and his devious methods and deceptions. God’s walls of salvation are not for the purpose of keeping any nation or people out, for the prophet says, “Open ye the gates.”

Just as Jesus was God’s chosen instrument to break down the wall of partition between himself and mankind, he is also the one who has brought about the opportunity for man’s salvation, building it as a “wall,” so to speak, for man’s eternal blessing. In God’s coming kingdom of righteousness, mankind will not only receive the immediate benefits of salvation—release from Adamic condemnation—but also will be taught and learn of God’s laws and loving character. All who, in their actions as well as in their heart, come into conformity with righteousness will, as the prophet says, “enter in” to the “strong city” of God, and be kept in “perfect peace” eternally.

Thus we see that while mankind continues their attempts to build walls of separation, literally and figuratively, between themselves and their fellow-man, in order to maintain some sense of temporary peace and security, God's method is different. He has broken down forever, through Jesus, the walls of partition between peoples as well as the wall which has separated all mankind from him because of sin. At the same time, God is building the walls of salvation, strong and eternal, through which all will have the opportunity to enter, through the operation of his kingdom, under the administration of Christ. Only by this will true and lasting peace, goodwill, and security be achieved.

THE PEACE OF GOD

Another important aspect of peace is the personal, inward peace, which all desire to have, but which is so elusive and seemingly unattainable in our present chaotic and uncertain world. Some take sleeping pills so they can have rest at night, and tranquilizers that they can have rest by day. Others take stronger drugs, to which many become addicted, just to survive from one day to the next. Indeed, in today's world there is unrest, nervousness, tension, frustration, and confusion. However, our focus is not the peace which may momentarily come from pills, tranquilizers, or drugs. True and lasting peace of mind cannot come from these.

Some seek inner peace in worldly substitutes, such as self-sufficiency, business involvement, or in various meditation exercises. One by one, though, these learn that lasting peace is not gained by such substitutes. The peace of God comes from knowing

and trusting our Heavenly Father. A good physician knows that a peaceful attitude of mind may be better than all his pills. A peaceful attitude is good for physical health and also for spiritual health. We may properly ask, then: How can we attain personal, inward peace—the peace of God—in the confusing and fear-filled world we live in today?

We have already considered that all mankind, under the righteous reign of Christ in God's kingdom, will have the opportunity to attain full and lasting peace and security under those arrangements. At the present time, however, the inward "peace of God" is limited to those who, by faith, have committed their lives in full consecration to do the will of the Heavenly Father. God shows his acceptance of these by begetting them with the power and influence of his Holy Spirit. One of the evidences of this begetting is the inward "fruitage" of peace. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."—Gal. 5:22

As we allow God's Holy Spirit to rule in our lives, we grow in an abundance of peace. This peace of God does not depend on feelings and circumstances. Its foundation is in knowing the eternal purpose of God as revealed in his Word. Through our understanding of God's plan, we know of his love and goodness. Through faith in his absolute dependability, we can lay claim to the promise that we can cast all of our cares upon him, because he cares for us.—I Kings 8:56; I Pet. 5:7

NOT DEPENDENT ON GOOD FORTUNE

The peace of God does not depend upon the smile of good fortune, nor is it dependent upon physical health, or the friendship of others. We do not wish

to belittle these material good things—they are precious, valuable, and helpful. However, the peace of God does not depend upon them. We know this because we have seen the peace of God abide in poverty, ill health, when friends forsake, and even as some “walk through the valley of the shadow of death.”—Ps. 23:4

The consecrated child of God should have a sense of security. The peace of God provides this. Just as a child feels secure in his parents’ ability to care for and protect him, so we also have the security of knowing: “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. . . . If God be for us, who can be against us?”—Rom. 8:28,31

Paul exhorts, “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful [anxious] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”—Phil. 4:4-7

Here the apostle identifies several things as connected with the peace of God. First, he says “rejoice.” Only such a disposition prepares us to be at peace inwardly. Have “moderation,” he continues. The word translated “moderation” has the thought of gentleness and mildness. By displaying this kind of attitude toward others, we will gain inward peace. “Be careful,” or anxious, about nothing, the apostle adds, but use prayer to present your concerns to God. What peace of mind it should give us to lay our burdens before our all-wise and loving Heavenly Father!

PROMISED BY JESUS

Paul makes it clear that this peace of God passes all human understanding, all human reasoning, in its power on our behalf. Jesus promised us this same peace. It is the peace that sustained him in his hours of need. He said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. . . . These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—John 14:27; 16:33

This is the peace of God which surpasses human ability to understand. God is always at peace—undisturbed, unperplexed. We could not imagine his being otherwise. He has promised this same peace and rest to us, provided we cease from our own works and submit to his will for us. Let us accept it, in faith. It is the peace of God because only he can give it, through Jesus Christ our Lord and by the power and influence of his Holy Spirit.

WHERE IS OUR TRUST?

Oftentimes in this age of materialism, men put their trust in things of a transitory nature. Others put their trust in people, which is sometimes better, but it is not enough. We must put our trust in God. Through faith, we must be able to say, as Jesus did, "Not my will, but thine, be done." (Luke 22:42) No doubt, on the mount of transfiguration, when the Master heard the Father say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," he felt secure. (Matt. 17:1-5) These words must have given him strength in the later days of severe trial. Peter, James

and John also felt very close to God on the mount. They were filled with joy. They felt very secure, and had great peace. There are times when we also feel close to the Father. Let each day be a special time like this for us, for if we live close to him, as the words of the hymn express, “No storm can shake our inmost calm.”

We know that it is possible to enjoy this calm. We have heard the testimony of those who have suffered the loss of their health, or the death of a family member, or gone through some other severe trial of faith, and yet have kept the peace of God in their hearts throughout these experiences. They have learned the secret of peace. They live close to God, and God is near to them. His infinite power, beyond human comprehension, gives them peace in the realization that he knows, loves, and cares. In those who have this assurance, pain and peace can live together.

The “walls of salvation” will be for man’s eternal benefit, and bring eternal peace to all the willing and obedient in God’s kingdom. For the consecrated children of God at the present time, let us have the peace of God as our wall and bulwark at all times. May we also always keep in mind that the source of our peace, and that of the world in the kingdom, is the redeeming blood of our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. “Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; . . . whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, . . . hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight.”—Col. 1:20-22 ■

The Rainbow Covenant

Key Verse: *“The bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.”*
—Genesis 9:16

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 8:20-22;
9:8-17

that “the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.”—II Tim. 2:19

The covenant of our lesson was given following the Flood. God said to Noah that he was making it “between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.” (Gen. 9:15) The seal of this covenant was in the form of a rainbow, something which Noah had likely never seen before. Our Key Verse points out that the rainbow, visible to the human eye, was to be the confirmation of this important promise. Repeated assurances of this are given

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

among men are usually sealed, or confirmed, in one or more ways, that the covenants may be the more formal, and their performance surer, to the satisfaction of both parties. Paul, when speaking of God’s covenant made with Abraham, illustrates this principle by stating that “to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel,” God confirmed the covenant “by an oath.” (Heb. 6:17) Concerning those whom God has invited to be his people, we have the pledge

in the surrounding context. “God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make . . . I do set my bow in the cloud. . . . And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant.”—vss. 12-15

A rainbow can appear in the clouds when rain is likely to soon occur at a given location. It also may return after the rain is over and has moved to another area. In both cases, the rainbow serves as a seal of God’s promise that he will never again destroy all flesh by a flood of waters. When the clouds are thickest and darkest, the brighter the rainbow appears to our vision. In these simple illustrations of nature, God gives us assurances of his abiding promises. Indeed, he is “the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.”—II Cor. 1:3

In order for a rainbow to appear, one part of the sky must be clear and sunny, indicating that the clouds and rain are limited, and do not overspread the heavens. In fact, the rainbow is caused by the refraction and dispersion of the sun’s light by rain or other water droplets in the atmosphere. The connection between the sun, the rainbow and the clouds well illustrates the glory and majesty of God and his Son, Christ Jesus. God’s throne is described as having a rainbow surrounding it. (Rev. 4:3) The glorified Christ is spoken of as “the Sun of righteousness.” (Mal. 4:2) He is also said to be “clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow . . . upon his head, and his face . . . as it were the sun.”—Rev. 10:1

The rainbow is bent upward, not toward the earth, well illustrating that God is its author, not man. Marvelously designed, it serves as a fitting symbol of God’s mercy even at times of severe judgment. “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5:8) Thus, as God looks upon the rainbow in remembrance of his covenant, let us also be ever mindful, with faith and thankfulness, of his further promise, “The earth abideth for ever.”—Eccles. 1:4 ■

Covenant of Circumcision

Key Verse: *“This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.”*
—Genesis 17:10

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 17:9-14

throughout subsequent generations.—Gen. 17:12,13

In a general way, circumcision serves as an illustration of man's need for putting away the sinful ways of the flesh inherited from Father Adam. The accomplishment of this has been enabled by God's plan for man's salvation, centered in Jesus. He was the spiritual fulfillment of the seed promised to Abraham. (Gen. 22:18; 28:14; Gal. 3:16) Although born of a woman, and circumcised as required under the Jewish Law, Jesus' was the son of his Heavenly Father. As such, he was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” (Heb. 7:26) By maintaining this perfection, even in the midst of a sin-filled world around him, he showed that true separation from sin was not to be accomplished by fleshly circumcision,

IN OUR CONSIDERATION

of the covenant of circumcision, the Scriptures say that it was enjoined not only upon Abraham and his seed, but also upon all his servants, and all male children born in his house. Male servants purchased from foreigners were also to be circumcised. In his capacity as a father and a master, Abraham was given the responsibility of administering this rite, and it was to be followed

but by a circumcision of character.

Circumcision is a reminder to us that, even as followers of Christ, we were all “shapen in iniquity,” and conceived “in sin,” from birth. (Ps. 51:5) We were in need of purification, regeneration, and the making of “all things . . . new.” (Heb. 10:22; Tit. 3:5; II Cor. 5:17) Only by these provisions, made by God through his Son, could we hope to achieve any success in the circumcision of our character.

The spiritual circumcision of our character begins with the innermost motivations and sentiments of the heart. The Israelites were told, “The LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart. (Deut. 30:6) How much more this is so with the followers of Christ. Paul reminds us of this in his words to the brethren at Corinth, where he commended them for their heart character. “You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men; being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”—II Cor. 3:2,3, *New American Standard Bible*

As our heart becomes circumcised, we are also to be engaged in cutting off, or separating ourselves, from the flesh—its aims, hopes and desires. Our goal is to comply with these words: “Put off the old man with his deeds;” 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.”—Col. 3:9; Rom. 12:2

Circumcision teaches an important work which is to be daily seen in our life. God carries out his part by having provided his son, Christ Jesus, as our means of salvation, and by supervising the daily experiences which are to circumcise our characters. Our part is to look to the Heavenly Father, and the perfect example of Jesus, being submissive and obedient to their leading in our lives. Thus, may we have fulfilled in us the words, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”—Col. 1:27 ■

Sabbath Observance

Key Verse:
***“Wherefore the
children of Israel
shall keep the
sabbath, to observe
the sabbath
throughout their
generations, for a
perpetual
covenant.”***
—Exodus 31:16

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 31:12-18

WHEN WE THINK OF SABBATH day observance, we may at first reflect upon it strictly as being a day of rest from earthly labors. (Exod. 20:10) However, upon conducting a thorough examination of the numerous aspects of this subject, we come to see that there is much more that is implied than merely a day of temporal rest each week.

In our selected verses, the keeping of the Sabbath is directly connected to holiness and sanctification. It is spoken of as “a sign . . . that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath; . . . for it is holy unto you. . . . [It] is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD.” (Exod. 31:13-15) It is later identified as “the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the LORD.”—Exod. 16:23

Our Key Verse states that Sabbath observance was to be for a “perpetual covenant.” The word translated “perpetual” is the Hebrew word *olam*, which means: always, everlasting, or age-lasting. The keeping of the Sabbath, part of the Mosaic Law arrangement, was to continue in force until such time as a better law would come through Christ. (Heb. 8:5,6) Thus, like all other features of Israel’s law, it was a shadow of greater things to come—a greater, more complete, and eternal rest.

The nature and intent of the Sabbath, by God’s own

declaration, put an honor upon its observance to be esteemed as something of great value to each Israelite. It was a “sign” between God and his people that, just as “he rested, and was refreshed,” following his creative works, they too, would be given a similar opportunity to be refreshed from each week’s labors. (Exod. 31:17) This was a mark of great favor to the Israelites, and a sign that he had distinguished them from all other people. Faithful observance of the Sabbath would be an indicator of their obedience to him. It would also serve as a constant reminder that they were to be holy, separated from all other nations, to serve and worship God. “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you.”—Lev. 20:7,8

The words, “sanctify yourselves,” and “I am the LORD which sanctify you,” apply with even more force to spiritual Israel. Let us reflect upon Paul’s words in this regard. “Ye are washed, . . . ye are sanctified.” “Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.” “God hath . . . chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” “If a man therefore purge himself, . . . he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”—I Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:25,26; II Thess. 2:13; II Tim. 2:21

The spiritual Israelite who has consecrated himself unreservedly to do God’s will, is spoken of as being of “them that are sanctified by God the Father.” (Jude 1) As this process continues, by faith, we enter into God’s rest. “We which have believed do enter into rest. . . . He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest.” (Heb. 4:3,10,11) Our complete rest will come when we hear the words, “enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”—Matt. 25:23 ■

A New Heart and New Spirit

Key Verse: *“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”*
—Ezekiel 36:26

Selected Scripture:
Ezekiel 36:22-36

sin. “There is none righteous, no, not one. . . . For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”—Rom. 3:10,23

For God’s goodness to reach his fallen human creation, sin must be broken apart and swept away. Man’s very experiences teach that sin is not only the direct cause of many of his sorrows, but it has also had the effect of clogging his heart, so to speak, turning it to stone. Such a condition keeps God’s love from dwelling within fallen man. However, God’s plan, as expressed by the prophet, calls for the cleansing and sanctifying of all the willing and obedient in his coming kingdom. This will include replacing clogged and stony hearts with a “heart of flesh,” and putting “a new spirit” within man’s mind.—Ezek. 36:23-27

IN OUR CONSIDERATION

of God’s people being given a “new heart” as stated in our Key Verse, we first note the previous verse. God says, “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.” (Ezek. 36:25) “Clean water” is a Scriptural symbol of pure truth and the righteous influence of the Heavenly Father. God’s bestowal of blessings toward his people, as well as to all mankind, must begin with cleansing from Adamic

The basis of God's promise of a new heart and a new spirit is cleansing, and the Apostle John tells us that this comes only through Christ. He says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:7-9) The process of first being cleansed, and then being given a new heart and a new spirit, shows the proper order. The former deals with the removal of Adamic sin, and the latter involves the giving of a new opportunity to develop a heart and spirit in conformity to God's principles of love and righteousness.

In advance of the world, a new heart condition is essential now to those striving to walk in the sacrificial footsteps of Jesus, and separated to God's service. As David counseled his son Solomon, so also we are instructed: "Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee." (I Chron. 28:9) The high reward of "glory and honour and immortality" is promised to those who have been called "out of darkness into his marvellous light," and who are faithful "unto death."—Rom. 2:7; I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 2:10

For the remainder of the world, God purposes to instruct them in righteousness during his coming kingdom on earth. He will establish a "way of holiness" for man to walk upon toward perfection. (Isa. 35:8) God's instructions, together with man's daily walk toward perfection, will enable all the willing and obedient to have their hardened, stony hearts removed, and replaced with soft and pliable hearts of flesh. For then, God promises, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. . . . For they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."—Jer. 31:33,34 ■

Paul at Ephesus

“I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

—Acts 20:20,21

WHEN THE DOOR OF opportunity for witnessing to the Truth opened at Ephesus during Paul's third journey, he extended his stay in that city beyond the two years initially mentioned by Luke. (Acts 19:10) While he desired to travel again to Macedonia and Achaia [Greece], at this time he sent Timothy and Erastus to those regions, planning to join them when he completed his ministry in Ephesus. (vss. 21,22)

Because of his long time in Ephesus, Paul became a well-known figure to many of the townspeople as a result of his extensive preaching and the reforms that it precipitated. However, his work also created some extreme enemies.

An imposing temple had been erected to the pagan goddess, Diana, in the city of Ephesus. It had been impressively built—roughly four hundred and fifty feet long, two hundred and twenty-five feet wide, and sixty feet in height. More than one

hundred and twenty-seven huge pillars graced the structure, many of which bore intricate carvings. So outstanding was its architecture that it has since been called one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

THE GODDESS DIANA

The people believed that the heathen goddess Diana, also called Artemis, had been sent by the god Jupiter to select Ephesus as the site for this temple. The time of its construction spanned many years, beginning about 323 B.C., and its preservation was considered a sacred responsibility. Every year thousands made pilgrimages to worship this Asian goddess of nature and emblem of motherhood to all living things. When visitors came to see this great temple dedicated to Diana, they wanted to return home with a souvenir which they could worship. As a result, a very profitable trade was brought into existence by silversmiths, who produced miniature replicas of the temple, as well as small images, charms and amulets to be worn in honor of Diana.

During Paul's long stay in Ephesus, their business fell off sharply. One of the leaders of the silversmiths, named Demetrius, investigated the reason for this, and found that Paul's influence in the city was no doubt the probable cause. He assembled all the craftsmen of the city and explained that Paul had convinced many in Ephesus and throughout all Asia Minor that gods made by the hands of man were false and had no power. (Acts 19:23-26) Their once-profitable business had dwindled since many people were now holding

these charms in contempt. Shrewdly, Demetrius did not make their loss of business his chief concern. He stressed, rather, that since the effective preaching of Paul was directed against Diana, her worship was diminishing, and as a result the great temple eventually would be left in neglect, or even destroyed.—Acts 19:27

Paul, of course, had not primarily directed his preaching against Diana. He emphasized instead a belief in the true and living God, the Creator of all things, who had given everyone life—an invisible spiritual being whose form could not be copied in material substance. Demetrius, however, was successful in inciting his fellow tradesmen into action, as well as other citizens of Ephesus. These quickly developed into an angry mob who poured through the streets crying, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians,” as if to safeguard her interests, and save her from extinction.—vs. 28

CONFUSION AND DANGER

The mob action soon grew into mass rioting which filled the city with confusion. The silversmiths, it seems, had only one objective in mind, and that was to seize Paul and silence him. Exactly how they planned to accomplish this is not completely clear. From Luke’s brief account of these events, however, it is obvious that Paul’s life was in extreme danger.

At that time there was a council of “certain of the chief of Asia.” (vs. 31) Various Bible commentators state that this group was composed of ten men chosen from the prominent cities of Asia Minor. These rulers were called “Asiarchs,” and were men of wealth and influence, whose tasks included presiding

over pagan religious observances and public games. The Asiarchs, at least some of whom lived in Ephesus, were evidently gathered together at this time for either special religious rites, or games being planned or happening there. They were well acquainted with Paul, even considering him a respected friend.

Meanwhile, Demetrius and his supporters went looking for Paul, perhaps going to the home of Aquila and Priscilla, but he was not there. Instead, they found two of Paul's companions, Aristarchus and Gaius, whom they seized. (vs. 29) We can imagine what a difficult experience it was for all of them, as they must have undergone rough treatment and threats to disclose the whereabouts of Paul. The likelihood that this confrontation occurred at the home of Aquila and Priscilla is attested by Paul's later writing that they were his "helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles."—Rom. 16:3,4

Thus, Aristarchus and Gaius became hostages in Paul's stead. This is the first time in the Book of Acts that Aristarchus is mentioned. We learn that he was a Macedonian from Thessalonica, one of the faithful Gentile brethren of that ecclesia. (Acts 20:4) The Thessalonians were a great inspiration to Paul because of their zeal for the Gospel, and Aristarchus was evidently an excellent example of these faithful brethren. He well fits Paul's description of their spirit of love and loyalty as commended in his first epistle to them, specifically in chapters one to three. Aristarchus had come to Ephesus to assist Paul in his ministry. From that time until Paul's

imprisonment in Rome, he accompanied him, and is mentioned on several occasions.—Acts 27:2; Col. 4:10; Philem. 1:24

As far as Gaius is concerned, we know he was the “Gaius of Derbe,” who was with Paul in Ephesus at this time. (Acts 20:4) Both he and Aristarchus were taken by the angry crowd and carried into the amphitheater. Apparently some kind of religious ceremonies or games were being held, and the arena was full. Soon there was great confusion. Some were shouting one thing, and some another, and many of those present had no idea what was going on.—Acts 19:32

When Paul heard what had happened, he wanted to go to the coliseum and secure the release of his friends, but the brethren restrained him. He also received a special message from the Asiarchs advising him not to go near the amphitheater. They knew that the riot was caused by the silversmiths for the purpose of getting rid of Paul. With difficulty, Paul took their advice and stayed away—vss. 30,31

Matters got further out of hand when the mob started to speak against the Jews who resided in Ephesus. Because of Paul’s background and association with the Jews, many things were said against them. The Jews who were present put forward a man named Alexander as spokesman in their defense. Although Alexander’s words are not recorded, he likely tried to explain to the people that Paul was a renegade, and that the Jews in Ephesus took no part in his preaching. The crowd, however, realizing that Alexander was a Jew, wanted no part of his defense. They shouted continuously for two hours, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians.”—vss. 33,34

MOB QUIETED

Finally, a town official was successful in quieting the people. He pointed out that Paul and his associates were not temple robbers, nor blasphemers of the goddess Diana. He suggested that if Demetrius had a charge against Paul, there were courts and proconsuls who would handle the matter. He also explained that they were all in danger from the Roman authorities, because of the uproar that had come about from among their own citizenry. The assembly was then dismissed, and no harm was done to Aristarchus or Gaius.—Acts 19:35-41

This experience was, no doubt, an attempt to disrupt Paul's work in Ephesus by the Adversary, but he was unsuccessful for the time being. However, it seems that subsequently some brethren were deluded and drawn away from the Truth. In a later letter to Timothy, who had been in Ephesus at the time of this uprising, Paul instructed him to continue his admonitions to those who were separating themselves from the faith. It seems, as he said, that they were involving themselves in "fables and endless genealogies," and erroneous teachings concerning the Law. (I Tim. 1:3-7) In concluding this chapter he wrote, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."—vss. 18-20

It has been supposed that this Alexander was the same as the one involved in the mob experience.

Since he was a coppersmith, he had a profession similar to that of Demetrius, but exactly how he opposed Paul is not clear. It is believed that he had at one time joined the disciples as a follower of Christ, and then later returned to Judaism, becoming an ardent opponent of the apostle. Paul wrote of him again in his second letter to Timothy: "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words."—II Tim. 4:14,15

Some suggestions have been made that Demetrius the silversmith later became converted to Christianity. If this be so, it is conceivable that the Demetrius subsequently mentioned in III John verse 12 as having a "good report of all men," is the same person who, earlier in his life, led the riot against Paul at Ephesus. This is, of course, purely a matter of speculation, and we include mention of it only as an interesting possibility.

THE "BEASTS AT EPHESUS"

While Paul stayed in Ephesus, he wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians. In this letter he refers to some of the difficulties they were undergoing, and showed that the will of the brethren to endure was an expression of how firmly they believed the Truth and the hope of a future resurrection. He said, "Why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." (I Cor. 15:30-32) His mention of "beasts"

seems to be a metaphorical reference to the unruly men who opposed him and raised the insurrection at Ephesus previously noted. Paul's point was that if there was no hope of a resurrection, why would he risk his life, as well as the lives of his associates, in speaking about doctrines such as the resurrection and other teachings pertaining to the Gospel of Christ.

Before the uproar at Ephesus occurred, Paul had planned to go to Macedonia for the purpose of revisiting the church at Thessalonica, and then to Corinth, in Achaia. From there he knew he would be going to Jerusalem and later Rome, having been made aware of this by God's Holy Spirit. (Acts 19:21) He had already sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia in advance, and now he was ready to join them. Paul embraced the disciples at Ephesus and, bidding them farewell, left for his new destination.—Acts 20:1

MACEDONIA AND ACHAIA

Paul's trip to Macedonia is described only in brief, Luke writing simply that he gave them "much exhortation." (Acts 20:2) However, it is evident from even this abbreviated statement that Paul was a great blessing to the brethren there. Although the churches are not named, it seems reasonable that he went to Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. From Macedonia he went on to Achaia, as he had planned, visiting Corinth for about three months.—vs. 3

When a plot was made against his life by the Jews in Corinth, Paul returned to Philippi in Macedonia. A number of brethren—Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus and Trophimus—went ahead and sailed to Troas, awaiting Paul's arrival.

It was also during this brief stopover at Philippi that Paul is rejoined by Luke. Evidence of this is that Luke again begins to record events with the pronouns “we” and “us,” as he had done several years earlier when he was with Paul in Philippi during his second journey. (See Acts 16:11-17) In the intervening time, Luke wrote in the third person, but now he states, “We sailed away from Philippi, . . . and came unto them [the brethren who had traveled ahead to Troas] . . . where we abode seven days.”—Acts 20:3-6

All of the aforementioned brethren would accompany Paul to Jerusalem. The enormous task of searching for God’s people could not be accomplished by one man alone. We do not know the names of all the many brethren who toiled in the service of the Lord, aside from those mentioned in the writings of Luke in the Book of Acts, and some named by Paul, Peter, and John in their letters. However, it was through the efforts of these many brethren, known and unknown to us, that the important work of starting the churches was accomplished.

ADDITIONAL HELPERS

Two of the helpers acquired on this journey, as cited above, were Tychicus and Trophimus. These two brethren served Paul faithfully to the end of his life. They were used to fulfill assignments for Paul, serving brethren, carrying messages, and assisting him in any way possible. Several references are made to these lovingly performed services.—Acts 21:29; Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7-9; II Tim. 4:12,20; Tit. 3:12

Another loyal aide not mentioned in the Book of Acts was Titus. Starting prior to Paul’s second journey, Titus supported him in various assignments.

Paul entrusted Titus with a letter he had written to the brethren who were having trouble in the church at Corinth. Paul wanted to go personally to see them, but was unable to do so. He sent Titus to assist the brethren in their problems in his stead.

Paul's appreciation of Titus is evident in II Corinthians 7:5-16. He explained that he was "troubled on every side," but when Titus came he was comforted. Titus brought a cheering message to Paul that things were better in the church at Corinth. "We were comforted in your comfort," Paul wrote the Corinthian brethren. "Yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all." (vs. 13) We see from this passage that Paul's first letter to the brethren in Corinth was softened by Titus' explanations, so they would not misunderstand what seemed to be harsh words that Paul had written to them. Titus' service in this way was very useful to Paul, and to the Lord.

Titus also was instrumental in bringing a gift from Corinth to the poor among the brethren in Jerusalem. Other churches in Macedonia had also made such a contribution previously. This was a delicate matter, as the collection of money for others always is, but Titus handled it well. "Thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went to you. . . . Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. And we have sent with them our

brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you. Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow-helper concerning you.”—II Cor. 8:16,17,20-23

Still another incident which shows Paul’s admiration of Titus’ character and the role he played in removing misunderstandings and in promoting the Spirit of Christ, was when he wrote to the Corinthians concerning the establishment of his apostleship. Paul asked the brethren, “Have I gained selfish advantage over you through any one of the messengers I have sent to you? I begged Titus to visit you, and sent our brother with him. Did Titus gain any selfish advantage over you? Were not he and I guided by one and the same Spirit, and did we not walk in the same steps? . . . It is as in God’s presence and in communion with Christ that we speak; but, dear friends, it is all with a view to your progress in goodness.”—II Cor. 12:17-19, *Weymouth New Testament*

After Titus had completed these assignments for Paul, he rejoined the apostle’s traveling group. Later, when Paul journeyed to Rome and made a stop at the island of Crete, he left Titus there to establish and organize congregations of the brethren. (Acts 27:7,8,12; Tit. 1:4,5) The letter written by Paul to Titus explains more concerning this commission, and gives us greater insight into the faithfulness of this dear brother in Christ.

CHANGES TO OCCUR

As Paul’s third journey drew on toward its conclusion, the Holy Spirit gave indication that certain changes would soon begin to occur in the search for

God's people. This search would not cease. On the contrary, the Lord would continue it through those Paul had found, taught, and nurtured. Paul himself would be giving special testimony, and soon would no longer be free to move around as he had previously.

More than twenty years had elapsed since Paul was intercepted by the risen Lord on the road to Damascus, and was immersed into the body of Christ. During that time, many ecclesias of God's people were established in remote areas of Gentile lands. These came into being and prospered in the Truth through the energy, zeal, and untiring efforts of Paul and those associated with him. ■

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SEPTEMBER 21—"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."—Psalm 23:4 (Z. '03-413 Hymn 12)

SEPTEMBER 28—"Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith."—I Peter 5:8,9 (Z. '04-11; '00-32 Hymn 200)

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Unity of Spirit and Faith

*“Behold, how good
and how pleasant
it is for brethren to
dwell together in
unity! It is like the
precious ointment
upon the head,
that ran down
upon the beard,
even Aaron’s
beard: that went
down to the skirts
of his garments; As
the dew of Hermon,
and as the dew
that descended
upon the
mountains of Zion:
for there the LORD
commanded the
blessing, even life
for evermore.”*
—Psalm 133:1-3

resulted.

A HARMONIOUS SPIRIT

of goodwill among people is a blessed condition, whether it be in the home, the community, business relationships, social life, and particularly when it is found in the associations of the Lord’s consecrated people. For these “brethren,” as David calls them, to dwell together in unity is “good and . . . pleasant.” The experiences of the brethren throughout the Gospel Age attest to this. Conversely, where there has been envy and strife, whatever the cause might be, a corresponding lack of good and pleasant fellowship has

In our text, David used two illustrations to bring to our attention how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. First, he referred to one of the features connected with Israel's Tabernacle services. He calls our attention to the holy anointing oil which was poured upon the head of Israel's High Priest. There was doubtless a rich fragrance to this oil that was very pleasant to the priest, and to those who were in his presence.—Exod. 30:23-31; Lev. 8:12

The second illustration which David used was the dew that fell upon Mount Hermon, and upon other "mountains of Zion." In Israel, where there was little or no rain during the dry seasons of the year, some much-needed moisture fell upon the hills and mountains in the form of heavy dew at night. This doubtless helped to keep a little water in the streams of that dry land during periods of great need. Sweet and refreshing, then, would be the dew that fell upon the mountains of Zion. It had certain life-giving qualities, as David says, "For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the holy anointing oil poured upon the head of Israel's High Priest was a symbolic foregleam of the Holy Spirit which came upon Jesus at the time of his baptism. It is referred to in the Scriptures as the "oil of gladness" with which Jesus was anointed "above" all other fellow human beings. (Heb. 1:9) It brought joy to Jesus' own heart, and it empowered him to be a proclaimer of glad tidings for the comfort of others.—Luke 4:16-21; Isa. 61:1-3

The anointing of the Holy Spirit which came upon Jesus began to flow down to his consecrated footstep followers starting at Pentecost. Just as the anointing of the High Priest of Israel was upon his head, and then ran down to the other parts of his body, so the anointing of the Holy Spirit was symbolically poured upon Jesus, our “head,” and we receive of that anointing by being accepted as members of his “body.” (I Cor. 12:12; Col. 1:18) Thus, the Apostle John states that the anointing which we have received from the Father, through his Son, abides in us.—I John 2:27

The Holy Spirit is God’s Spirit. It is the power of his thoughts which is to direct our minds, words and deeds. Its influence is the same in the life of every dedicated follower of the Master. Therefore, to the extent that we yield to this holy power we will find ourselves in unity with one another. To the extent that we resist the Holy Spirit, and insist upon our own ways and preferences, there will almost assuredly be disunity among us.

THROUGH THE WORD

The power of God’s thoughts reaches us through his written Word, the Bible, provided by him through the ministry of his faithful servants, the prophets, apostles, and our Lord Jesus. “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit,” Peter informs us. (II Pet. 1:21) This is a reference to the inspired prophets of the Old Testament and including John the Baptist. The ministry of these prophets was, in turn, passed on to the church through the apostles, who also performed their ministry under the inspiration and power of

“the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.”—I Pet. 1:12

Jesus’ anointing by the Holy Spirit empowered him miraculously to reveal the thoughts of God through his teachings. Thus, the Bible becomes the inspired Word of God, and it is through obedience to its teachings that the Lord’s consecrated people are brought together. By keeping humble before him, they are able to maintain the unity of the Spirit. Paul refers to this with these words: “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”—Eph. 4:3

According to the flesh, the Lord’s people are all imperfect, and each one is unique. There are differences of nationality, age, and religious background, and there are differences of temperament and abilities. The Holy Spirit, however, through the written Word, points out the one course for all to follow, and it is our faithfulness in following this course which results in the unity of the Spirit. This means that a disposition of humility, as well as the spirit of love, must be at the center of our thinking at all times. Paul wrote concerning this mindset, encouraging us to deal with our brethren in “all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.”—Eph. 4:2

Paul specified the basic essentials of our unity in Christ. “There is one body.” (vs. 4) This is the body of Christ. In the preceding chapters of this epistle Paul reminds us of one of the things which tended to disrupt the full unity of the brethren in the Early Church. It was the fact that Gentiles were coming into the congregations, and being accepted by God as “fellowcitizens” with the Jewish converts,

and sharers in the “commonwealth of Israel”—that is, counted as spiritual Israelites. (Eph. 2:11-19) It was difficult for many of the Jewish believers to accept this situation fully. Doubtless also some of the Gentiles might well have felt somewhat out of place meeting with Jewish people. This placed a strain upon their overall spirit of unity.

Nevertheless, they all were to endeavor to maintain the unity which God purposed should come through the Holy Spirit. They were not to suppose that there was one body of Christ for Gentile believers, and another body of Christ for Jewish believers. There was only one body, Paul said, then adding, “and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.” Thus, so far as God’s purpose during this Gospel Age is concerned, there is but one arrangement for both Jews and Gentiles.

While this particular issue was prominent in the Early Church, throughout the age there have been other situations, locally and generally, among God’s consecrated people which have tested the genuineness of their desire to maintain the unity of the Spirit. To the extent that the brethren have followed the instructions of the written Word with humility and love, they have enjoyed the blessedness of unity in Christ, which, as our text declares, has been both good and pleasant. In cases where the influences of the Holy Spirit, through the written Word, have been ignored, this blessedness has been marred.

ONE LORD, ONE FAITH

Our unity in Christ is also based upon our common belief in the “one Lord,” and “one faith.” (Eph. 4:5)

Those enlightened by the Word of truth have learned that there are not multiple “Lords,” somehow mysteriously combined into one divine being. On the contrary, God Almighty, our Heavenly Father, is the one supreme Lord of the universe. He has been pleased to appoint his Son, Jesus, as mankind’s Redeemer, who gave himself a “ransom for all.” (I Tim. 2:3-6) He is our “advocate,” by whom we have access to the Father. (I John 2:1) He is our “good shepherd,” who leads and cares for us as his sheep. (John 10:14) He is our Head, through which the will of God is expressed as the guide of our lives. (Eph. 1:22,23) Indeed, he is our “Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things.”—I Cor. 8:6

What a harmonious group of doctrines, our “most holy faith,” is centered in Jesus. (Jude 20) These make up the “one faith” which is the light and inspiration of our lives. The creation and fall of man; the Abrahamic promise of deliverance from sin and death; the coming of Christ at his First Advent to redeem mankind from death; the High Calling of this Gospel Age; the return and second presence of Christ; the establishment of his kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth. These are the soul-satisfying core teachings of our faith.

Our unity of the Spirit is based upon the fundamental doctrines of God’s plan. The question might be raised as to how we are to determine what are the fundamental doctrines. We suggest that the central teachings of our most holy faith are those which can be firmly established by a “Thus saith the Lord,” or to state it another way, by the confirmation of multiple “witnesses” of the Scriptures

and by the “sure word of prophecy.” (Isa. 44:6-8; Rev. 11:3; II Pet. 1:19-21) This is true of doctrines we have mentioned, and of other fundamental truths of God’s plan.

There are certain viewpoints toward which we lean that we might find difficult to establish directly by the Bible. These are generally based upon reasoning. We like a particular thought, and it seems reasonable to us, but perhaps other brethren disagree with us. They have reasoned from a different standpoint, and perhaps from a background that varies from ours. These concepts are not to be pressed upon our brethren from either side. They can be discussed to a reasonable degree if they do not cause conflicts, unless, of course, they are in direct opposition to basic principles of truth.

It is well to keep in mind that we cannot maintain the unity of the Spirit by insisting that all in the ecclesia conform to our ideas. Rather, all should want to conform to the Lord’s ideas, and we can know whether or not they are his by applying the simple test of their credibility by, as already stated, a “Thus saith the Lord.” For other ideas and thoughts we may have, we should be very careful never to present them in a dogmatic spirit, if, indeed, we feel the need to do so at all. We are to remember that if our ideas are not clearly expressed in the Bible, it is most likely true that the Lord does not consider them indispensable to our understanding.

NOT DISTORTION

It would not be proper to say that the fundamental truths of our faith are the non-controversial doctrines of the Bible. In reality, none of these doctrines

are universally accepted by the professed people of God. For example, the clear statement that “the wages of sin is death” would seem to be the end of all controversy as to what constitutes the divine penalty for sin. However, to many, death does not mean the same thing that it does to those enlightened by the anointing of God’s Holy Spirit.

Here enters the matter of interpretation. The Scriptures can be wrested and distorted. Those, however, who are enlightened by the Holy Spirit to know and understand God’s plans and purposes, have learned that the basic teachings embraced in this plan are founded upon plain statements of the Word of God. As such, they are not subject to interpretation without distorting the plain meaning of words, with which the Lord would not be pleased. It is these teachings, the harmonious plan of God as a whole, that constitute the “one faith” which is the basis of our unity in the Spirit.

Paul mentions the “unity of the Spirit” and the “unity of the faith.” (Eph. 4:3,13) We might think that what he meant by the unity of the Spirit is simply a tolerant, kind attitude toward others, regardless of what they believe. At the same time, we might also think that unity of the faith is an ideal for which we should strive, but will probably never attain. This differentiation does not seem to be Paul’s viewpoint. When he speaks of the unity of the Spirit, his reference is to the Holy Spirit, which is the holy influence of God that reaches us through his written Word.

In this chapter, Paul informs us that God’s Word has been communicated to us by servants whom he has provided—apostles, prophets, evangelists,

pastors and teachers—and that the work of these is of vital importance. It is for the “perfecting of the saints, . . . for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature [maturity] of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”—Eph. 4:11-16

UNITY OF SPIRIT AND FAITH

From Paul’s exhortation it is clear that unity of the Spirit finds its full fruition in unity of the faith. Lack of unity of the faith implies failure to attain “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” It implies being in a position where we might easily be “carried about with every wind of doctrine.” We know how important this matter is when we realize that stability in the faith and maturity in Christ are essential to be worthy to live and reign with him for the future blessing of the world.

Paul mentions our “speaking the truth in love” as being associated with growing up into Christ in all things. This is related to our use of the Truth. The proper use of the Truth, in addition to our belief in it, is also one of the fundamentals of our

unity in Christ. One of the purposes for which God gave us an understanding of his plan is that we might be its ministers. We are to hold forth the Word of life, and by doing this, to be the light of the world. (Phil. 2:15,16; Matt. 5:14) These are the instructions given to us in the Scriptures, and it is essential to heed them if we are to experience in rich measure how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

Speaking the Truth in love will help us grow up into Christ in “all things,” not merely in some things. We are to appreciate Christ, and emulate him in all the wonderful manifestations of godlikeness we see in him. We are to imitate Christ in patience and in kindness, just as he has imitated God. We are to be courageous in upholding truths which are unpopular, and which are contrary to errors that are popular in this present world. We are to lay down our lives for one another as Christ laid down his life for us. We are to be obedient to the Word of truth even as he was obedient to all which his Father desired concerning him, saying, “I delight to do thy will, O my God.”—Ps. 40:8; John 4:34

Thus we see that unity of the Spirit is based on the great fundamentals of the faith and the proper application of these truths in our lives, being doers of the Word, and not just hearers. (James 1:22-25) We are to keep this unity of the Spirit “in the bond of peace.” Peace and goodwill among ourselves, and a loving, enthusiastic cooperation in the ministry of the Truth are possible only within the framework of the basic doctrines of the Scriptures. Let us “hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.”—Heb. 10:23

NOT BY COMPROMISE

Unity based upon compromise of fundamental truth is not the unity of the Spirit, and will not be “good and pleasant.” To maintain an outward show of unity by ignoring one or more of the basic teachings of the Word of God is not pleasing to the Lord. This might appear to be a method of practice that would result in a larger attendance at our meetings, but it seldom works out this way, except perhaps temporarily. Jesus told us that God is selecting a “little flock” from the world, a “people for his name,” and “few there be” that would walk in the narrow way of sacrifice. (Luke 12:32; Acts 15:14; Matt. 7:14) Under such arrangements this will not result in large numbers in any one generation.

God is now calling and preparing this little flock to be his instruments of blessing during the next age. It will be then that a knowledge of his plans and purposes will fill the whole earth. It will be then that he will turn to the people a pure language, that they might all call upon him to serve him in unity and oneness. (Isa. 11:9; Zeph. 3:9) The whole world will then be united to serve the Lord, but again, not by compromising his truths or laws of righteousness, but by learning and obeying them willingly, from their hearts. Meanwhile, it is our privilege now to grow in grace and in knowledge that we may know and do God’s will more perfectly. In doing this we will find ourselves in sweet accord with all others who are likewise following the leadings of the Holy Spirit and are obedient to the truths of our most holy faith.

Jesus prayed for the oneness of his body members. He desired that they might be one just as he

and his Heavenly Father were one. (John 17:21) This prayer will not be fully answered while we are still in the flesh. However, this gives us no excuse for not keeping before us this ideal standard of good and pleasant Christian fellowship. It is even now attainable in our hearts. The imperfections of the flesh will, at times, blur our vision and hinder us from measuring up fully to the teachings of the Word. However, we must strive against these weaknesses, and as we strive against them we will become more mature in Christ.

Perhaps at no previous time in the experiences of the Lord's people has it been so important for all of us to distinguish clearly the basic truths of the Scriptures, and adhere to them tenaciously. If it were necessary, all the Lord's consecrated should be willing to die for the truth of God's plan. It is his Word that will continue to point the way concerning the will of God for us. It will guide all the truly meek and humble in the same way, and we will find ourselves in a sweet and blessed unity with one another, not only in the belief of the Truth, but also in the manner in which it is being applied in our lives.

In our text the psalmist wrote that good and pleasant unity of the Spirit is like "the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." The dew could well be, in this instance, a symbol of the refreshing blessings found in the Word of God. It is through the inspiration of these invigorating truths, and our obedience to them, that we enjoy unity with the brethren.

However, our text implies more than this, “for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.” It is those who attain a large measure of the Spirit of unity who are on the way to “life forevermore.” God is interested in seeing how well we are now yielding ourselves to the unifying influences of his Holy Spirit in this life. Upon the basis of this manifestation of our heart loyalty to him now, we will be given the reward of “glory and honour and immortality,” when we have finished our earthly course, and have been found “faithful unto death.”—Rom. 2:7; Rev. 2:10

In summary, the Lord is not merely saying that he would like, or prefer, to see us maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. Rather, his Word reveals that this is one of the requirements of all those to whom he will eventually say, “Well done.” (Matt. 25:20-23) This does not mean that we will attain perfect unity any more than we will attain perfection in the flesh with respect to any of the Lord’s requirements. Yet, it is to be one of the basic objectives of our endeavors as body members of Christ. Let us continue to strive for it, and rejoice as we look ahead to the time when God commands the blessing, “even life for evermore!” ■

*In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body,
whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free;
and were all made to drink of one Spirit.”*
—I Corinthians 12:13

Report of Trip to Africa

IT WAS THE privilege of Brother Joe Dolan to travel to Africa in April and May of this year. He attended several conventions, and visited many brethren in four countries—Cameroon, Uganda, Kenya and Ghana. We are pleased to have Brother Joe provide this report of his trip to readers of *The Dawn*.

I am very grateful to have had the privilege of meeting with so many brethren in Africa. I am also thankful and render praise to our Heavenly Father for all his watch-care and overruling throughout my trip. By God's grace, I am happy and humbled to submit this report of my travels and activities with the brethren in these distant lands.

CAMEROON

The first country I visited was Cameroon, arriving on April 6. I was met at the airport in Douala by Brother Alex Mokom and the local brethren. Brother Alex was to be my traveling companion and guide throughout the trip. We proceeded to Brother Alex's home in Doume, about 300 miles away, arriving on Friday, April 7, in the evening. The class



ELDERS SERVING THE EASTERN REGION OF CAMEROON

in Doume has about twenty brethren and meets in a hall next to Brother Alex and Sister Paulina's home. Currently they are studying Volume 6 of *Studies in the Scriptures* and the Book of Revelation. They also use articles from *The Dawn* magazine. The Doume class meets twice during the week and has a sisters' meeting each Tuesday evening. A brother will often be invited to serve at the sisters' meeting.

On Saturday, we traveled to a class at Paki, a nearby village, where the brethren from Doume presented a showing of *For This Cause* in French. The showing was outside, using a generator for power. The meeting had 200 in attendance. Brother

Alex gave some closing comments and invited everyone to attend future meetings in the area.

On Sunday, April 9, the date of our Lord's Memorial, meetings were held in the morning and evening. One



BRO. ALEX & SR. PAULINA

brother traveled over 450 miles, and a sister came 280 miles. Brethren from Douala also traveled more than 300 miles for this blessed occasion. Early that morning there was a baptism at river's edge for Brother Calvin Happi of the Doume class. Brother Alex performed the immersion, and about twenty brethren were gathered there for hymns and prayers. Meetings were held from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and the Memorial service began at 6:30 p.m. About thirty partook of the Memorial, and it was a very special occasion, ending about 8:30 p.m. with a hymn.

I was very thankful that the Lord permitted Brother Alex to accompany me in Cameroon, which allowed both of us to meet many brethren during the time we spent there. Brother Alex has been the driving force in spreading the message of truth in this part of Africa for a good number of years.

CONVENTION IN KENYA

In Africa, distances traveled to visit the brethren are great. Brother Alex and I journeyed forty-eight hours from Cameroon before we reached Brother Jackson's home in Mengo, Uganda. There we were welcomed by many brethren. Everyone then traveled together 140 miles to Brother Pius Were's home in Bungoma, Kenya, where his wife, Sister Agnus, had a meal waiting for us. Brother Pius had arranged for a two and a half day convention because he wanted us



SR. AGNUS & BRO. PIUS

to meet as many Kenyan brethren as possible in the time we had. Unfortunately, there was a problem obtaining a visa for Brother Alex at the Uganda-Kenya border, and he had to stay at a guest house until the convention was over. On Sunday, after the convention, about twenty-five brethren traveled nearly an hour to the border and fellow-shipped with Brother Alex. What a wonderful service this was by the brethren!

It was a blessed convention and visit at the Were's home in Bungoma. We had shipped two boxes of assorted Dawn publications to Brother Were, and they were retrieved after the convention ended. This was their first time receiving materials from the Dawn, and they are very grateful to have them. Handouts had been prepared for all the brethren of various presentations. The attendance was 200, and we were told that if transportation had been available the number would have approached 700, which they have sometimes had at past conventions. The talks and the testimonies were a blessing. Topics included: "Harvest of the



CONVENTION AT BUNGOMA, KENYA

Gospel Age;” “Born of the Spirit;” “God’s Kingdom;” “Joy Cometh in the Morning;” “What is a Soul?;” “Object of the Lord’s Return;” “Judgment;” “Restitution;” and an overview of Revelation. On Sunday the convention went from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m. Even then, the brethren wanted to linger for more fellowship.

The Bungoma class was established in 2005 and presently has about fifty attending meetings. One of the challenges is the need for follow-up visits to outlying classes because the distances range from 30 to 250 miles from Bungoma. These brethren are very serious about the Truth, and all were attentive throughout the entire convention. Brethren often comment that there is no problem getting the brethren to come together—the difficulty is having them say goodbye and depart after a meeting. This was indeed true of the brethren in Kenya.

TIME IN UGANDA

We traveled back to Brother Jackson’s home in Mengo, Uganda, arriving there in the early morning hours of Tuesday, April 18. After a few hours rest, we traveled to see Brother Eliezer Jjuuko at his home in Kampala. He and Brother Alex were very glad to see one another again. They had met at the Pan African Convention in Accra, Ghana in 2016. We were grateful to spend time with Brother Jjuuko. He is very busy with his consecrated time, and often travels to serve brethren far away in Uganda, Kenya and Congo.

On Wednesday we visited the class in Mutungo. Brethren meet there in the home of Brother and Sister Yasamu. Each Wednesday evening, elders from

the Mengo class travel to the Mutungo class to lead their studies. On Sunday's the Mutungo class travels and meets with the brethren in Mengo. The Mutungo brethren are excited and happy to have the Truth. There are six who are consecrated and six more who attend the meetings with them. After our meeting with them, Sister Sylvia served us "happy tea" with peanuts. They call it "happy tea" because everyone is so happy after having the meeting, as expressed in the hymn, "How Happy Are We!"

We visited the class in Bakka the next day, where Brother and Sister Crispo live with their children. Bakka is in a remote area without local electric power. Brother Crispo was one who had earlier traveled with us and served at the Bungoma Convention.



CLASS IN BAKKA, UGANDA

The Bakka brethren, which number about ten, are studying Volume 5 of *Studies in the Scriptures*, and they also use articles from *The Dawn*. The brethren there were loving, consecrated and zealous for the Truth. We had wonderful fellowship with them and discussed subjects such as the Tabernacle, repentance, and the Book of Revelation.

Next, we met with the Wakiso class, which is where Brother Laban and Sister Sarah live. Brother Laban is the elder and there are two deacons. This class is beginning to incorporate the systematic approach towards studying the Truth. While we were with them we talked about the Tabernacle, Christians of the Gospel Age, and the Call. The class is small, but they have a wonderful building to meet in and it was a blessing to be with them.

We traveled the next day seventy-five miles to meet with the brethren in Mubende. Brother Wilson is the elder there, and resides with his wife and family. There are about fifteen consecrated brethren in this class. Brother Jackson brought two First Volumes for new members of the class, and he plans to travel there when he is able, perhaps a few times a year. This fellowship was very wonderful. Our discussions with them included current world events, the Harvest, and sanctification. The village of Mubende has no electricity, and water is carried daily from “down in the valley.” Despite the disparity in our background and experiences, it is the Truth that was the tie that bound our hearts in Christian love and sweet fellowship with these dear brethren. They are well grounded in the Truth, and Brother Wilson is a good elder and study leader.

Our next visit was in Rakasa, where Brother Julius, his wife and family live. There, we met with about forty brethren. Brother Julius travels to the town of Hoima on Sunday evenings and has a radio program on which he broadcasts the Truth messages. Often he will listen to a *Frank and Ernest* broadcast and then present that material in his



CLASS IN RAKASA, UGANDA

own effective way for the local people. Brother Julius has all the Volumes and Reprints and is very busy with the Harvest work in that area. Recently, he immersed fifteen new brethren who had been studying with the Rakasa class for over a year. There are two school teachers and other elders in the class to help him. While with them in fellowship we discussed the coming kingdom, the Prodigal Son, and the doctrine of the ransom. It is a wonderful class, and they meet on Sunday and mid-week, relying on a generator for electricity during the meetings.

The day following our visit with the brethren in Rakasa, we went to the Uganda Museum with Brother Jackson's family, then to his farm to get food for all the brethren who would meet at Mengo on Sunday. The Jackson family and Brother Alex really enjoyed their time at the museum, because in the course of their lives they rarely have such experiences. There was much to learn about Uganda, and Brother Jackson's family was surprised to learn that their ancestors had actually come there from Cameroon. While at the museum we were able to hand out tracts before leaving to go to the farm. Sister Barbara's grandfather had

purchased the land, and now they have their farm there.

Brother Ouma, who is an elder from Mutungo, manages the farm for Brother Jackson. They raise coffee, passion fruit, mangoes, and many other fruits and vegetables. One of their staples, which is eaten seven days a week, is called matooki—a type of banana. They also raise rabbits, chickens, hogs, and milk cows on the Jackson farm. This land is very fertile and well-watered. The soil is the equivalent of what we call potting soil that we buy in bags at the store. It was a preview of the kingdom for us, as we noted how beautiful this planet, God's garden prepared for man, will be in the not too distant future.



CLASS IN MENGO, UGANDA

Our last meetings in Uganda were with the Mengo class. Subjects considered included the Holy Spirit, prayer, the Passover, Jesus' resurrection, the high calling, love, the Beatitudes, and blessings to come. Brother Jackson gave the closing remarks of our day together with the brethren in Mengo. Brother

Jackson and Sister Barbara are very busy with their work, the family, the care of surrounding classes and the brethren in Mengo. The class schedule and programs are posted in the meeting hall, and the studies are carried out very systematically. The love and care provided at the Jackson home were great blessings poured upon us, even though we were trying to be a blessing to them.

VISIT IN GHANA

On Thursday, April 27, we traveled to Ghana, where we were met by Brother Leonard Plange. The next day we left for Dunkwa-On-Offen where we were welcomed by Brother Plange's wife, Sister Margaret. This class has been meeting since 1999, and there are presently about ten who attend their meetings. Brother Plange has done follow-up visits to area villages for many years. As a result, there are numerous small groups of consecrated brethren in this region of the country. While in this area, we visited brethren in Anyanfuri, Femenyo, Autobiese, Asikuma, Amofo, and Amoabeng. Some of these classes go back to 1999, and a few even before that, when Brother Hilarion Hayford, an elderly brother from Dunkwa, began the village witness work.

In Ghana, we also visited the brethren in Kumasi, who meet at the home of Brother Samuel Amoo. There we had a nice meeting that lasted several hours, and there were about fifteen who attended. Brother Amoo commented that it is his desire that the African brethren continue to take the initiative to do things for themselves and become less dependent upon foreign brethren. Brother Noah Amoo was also present, and we appreciated his

taking leave from his work to be with us. He is busy in translation of truth literature and working with the young people. In this regard, a three-day young adult seminar had been completed in Kumasi just before we arrived. The Kumasi class is very well established and grounded in good study habits, with capable elders to lead their meetings. They actively do public witnessing and follow-up work, as well as engage in pilgrim work in the Kumasi and Accra region. We were very warmly greeted and blessed by being with these brethren.



CLASS IN KUMASI, GHANA

The visits to the villages in Ghana did not include all the places where classes once existed. Brother Plange no longer has the means to visit all of the classes, but perhaps the Lord will open a way for those brethren to again be visited and nurtured in the Truth. We again met with the brethren in Dunkwa on May 6. Brother John Quaidoo, from the western region of Ghana, served the class with a wonderful message titled “The Law of Love.” Brother Leonard spoke about the *Manna* scripture text for the day, and Brother Alex talked on the subject of consecration.

The meetings in Dunkwa are held in an old Baptist church. Entering and leaving the building seemed to be precarious. It is located on a hillside with forty steps to climb or descend each time you enter or leave. The brethren there, however, do not mind. This spirit of sacrifice and effort by the brethren was shown many times during our trip.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

All the brethren we visited wished that their Christian love be carried back to all the brethren in North America. During this month-long trip, I was able to meet with approximately 400 brethren, and traveled thousands of miles—to and from Africa, as well as within the continent. Special blessings which the Lord allowed were being with the brethren in Cameroon for the Memorial, and also having Bro. Alex as my traveling companion and guide. Indeed, his consecrated actions speak much louder than his humble words.

Being with the brethren in Kenya was also a rich blessing. Fellowship with Brother Jjuuko was especially a joy, and I only wished we had more time with him. The visits and sweet fellowship in Uganda and Ghana increased my faith, even as it was our desire to be a blessing to all of them. How true it is that differing cultures and surroundings fade when brethren of “like precious faith” assemble together. We are all bound by one hope, one faith, one baptism, and one Lord over all, and by all the precious promises given to those who have been called according to God’s eternal purpose.—Eph. 4:1-6; II Pet. 1:3,4; Rom. 8:28



CLASS IN DUNKWA-ON-OFFEN, GHANA

Never on this trip did I hear one murmur or complaint from any of our brethren in Africa. There were long travels, lack of food and water on occasion, mosquitoes, and other discomforts to the old nature. However, only words of thanksgiving and praise were heard from the brethren. I desired to bring a blessing to them, but feel that I received much more in return than I was able to give. I am constantly reminded of these brethren when I turn on a faucet, a stove or a light. I have confidence that they are remembering all of us in their prayers. I would ask that you likewise remember in prayer all of your brethren in Africa, that they and we might all be faithful and hear the joyful sound of the Master's voice saying "well done."—Matt. 25:21 ■

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

T. N. Alexander

Jackson, MI September 2,3
Milwaukee, WI 23,24

M. Balko

Seattle, WA September 2-4

D. Christiansen

Rogue River, OR
September 16,17

M. Colletti

Seattle, WA September 2-4

M. Davis

Seattle, WA September 2-4

O. B. Elbert

Seattle, WA September 2-4

R. Goodman

Seattle, WA September 2-4
Milwaukee, WI 23,24

R. Gorecki

Pittsburgh, PA September 30

L. Griehs

New York, NY September 2,3
Pittsburgh, PA 30

B. Keith

Rogue River, OR
September 16,17

H. Montague

New York, NY September 2,3
Huntsville, AL 9,10

R. Niemczyk

Seattle, WA September 2-4

A. Oystryk

Seattle, WA September 2-4

D. Rice

Jackson, MI September 2,3
Huntsville, AL 9,10

T. Ruggirello

New York, NY September 2,3

R. Shahan

Pittsburgh, PA September 30

J. Trzeciak

Pittsburgh, PA September 30

A. Williams

Milwaukee, WI
September 23,24

*Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord;
Abide in him always, and feed on his Word.
Make friends of God's children;
help those who are weak;
Forgetting in nothing his blessing to seek.
—Hymns of Dawn*

CONVENTIONS

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

JACKSON CONVENTION, September 2,3—FaHoLo Camp and Conference Center, 3000 Mt. Hope Road, Grass Lake, MI 49240. For information, contact B. Davis. Phone: (517) 788-6552 or Email: r2d2lad@comcast.net

NEW YORK CONVENTION, September 2,3—Double-Tree Hotel Mahwah, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NJ. Contact G. Passios. Phone: (201) 939-3196 or Email: gpassios11@verizon.net

SEATTLE CONVENTION, September 2-4—(New location) Bastyr University, 14500 Juanita Drive NE, Kenmore, WA 98028. For reservations and information, contact L. Flinn. Phone: (206) 518-2678 or Email: laurie@flinn.us

HUNTSVILLE CONVENTION, September 9,10—Comfort Inn, 4725 University Drive (Hwy. 72), Huntsville, AL 35806. Phone: (256) 562-2525. Mention “Huntsville Bible Students” when making reservations. Contact J. Cothren. Phone: (256) 852-8505 or Email: jimmycothren@att.net

MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, September 23,24—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact D. Farchione. Email: Debfarchione@aol.com

PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, September 30-October 1—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact G. Balko. Phone: (724) 771-0139 or Email: gbalko57@gmail.com

GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 14,15—Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact T. Malinowski, 5609 Buttrick Avenue SE, Alto, MI 49302. Phone: (616) 868-0313 or Email: malinowski.tjm@gmail.com

SAN LUIS OBISPO CONVENTION, October 21,22—Masonic Hall, 859 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA. Contact M. Allard. Phone: (805) 773-2962 or Email: med-lallard@juno.com

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 28,29—South Seminole Lodge, 122 Triplet Lake Drive, Casselberry, FL 32707. Contact J. Kuenzli. Phone: (407) 831-2098 or Email: jkuenzli@cfl.rr.com

DETROIT/METRO DETROIT JOINT CONVENTION, October 29—Pleasant Ridge Community Center, 4 Ridge Road, Pleasant Ridge, MI. Contact G. Zendler. Phone: (248) 399-8843 or Email: ngzendler@wowway.com

NEW HAVEN CONVENTION, November 5—Westwoods Italian-American Club, 85 Chase Lane, West Haven, CT. Contact A. Suraci. Phone: (203) 248-3793 or Email: annasuraci@comcast.net

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Virginia Palmgren, Wenatchee, WA—July 15, Age 98

Sister Nancy Brown, Los Angeles, CA—July 29. Age, 79

Brother Rod Thomas, Clarkston, WA—August 4. Age, 88

Brother George Chatters, New Orleans, LA—August 6. Age, 79

Brother David Mayforth, Columbus, OH—August 8. Age, 64

Sister Ruth Mitchell, Chicago, IL—August 13. Age, 91