

# The DAWN

VOLUME NO. LXXX, Number 5  
(USPS 149-380), May 2012

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*First-class postage paid at Rutherford, NJ. Published monthly by The Dawn Bible Students Association, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. \$12.00 a year.*

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# Election Year 2012

*“We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”*

*II Peter 3:13*

## **THE MOST COVERED NEWS**

story over the next six months will likely be the United States presidential election. Indeed, it hardly seems that the dust had settled from the 2008 election when various individuals began to campaign for the next one four years later. The Republican Party, currently out of power in the White House, has put forth many candidates during the intervening period. Many of them have been in the race for a period of time, only to fall by the wayside. At the time of this writing, it appears that former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney will be the likely Republican candidate, having a sizeable lead in delegates over his two closest rivals, former Pennsylvania senator Rick Santorum and former Georgia congressman Newt Gingrich.

Should Mitt Romney succeed in obtaining the Republican nomination at August’s Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida, he will

face the Democratic Party nominee, certain to be incumbent President Barack Obama. The task of defeating an incumbent president is a daunting one, but we can be sure Mr. Romney will use every means at his disposal to accomplish this and put the Republican Party back in the White House. For the Republicans, gaining the presidency, along with the sizeable majority they already have in the United States House of Representatives, will give them a distinct advantage over the Democrats when it comes to trying to pass their legislative agenda.

During the coming months we will most certainly see the escalation of campaign rhetoric from both political parties as well as from the candidates themselves. Each will spend hundreds of millions of dollars on advertising from fund-raising efforts and their own personal resources on advertising. Both candidates will claim that past experience and other qualifications point to them as the best choice at the voting booth. Claims will be made of corporate experience, foreign policy insight, knowledge of domestic affairs, and the ability to govern in periods of crisis. Naturally, each candidate making these claims will of necessity be critical of their opponent's lack of these qualifications and of their past performance. As we have seen all too often, campaign ads seem to turn ruthlessly negative as the election approaches, knowing almost no boundaries of criticism. The candidates also will make many campaign promises to the people, telling them mostly the things they want to hear. Again, we see from past elections that the vast majority of these promises are never delivered. In fact, in many

cases it was not even possible to keep them, yet they were made to sway the voters.

Regardless of all the campaign rhetoric, questionable claims, and hollow promises, one thing is certain. Many events in the world over the next four and one half years will likely be impacted and shaped by the determination of this year's presidential election winner. With that in mind, it is important that we follow the scriptural instruction to "watch and be sober," and look at world events through the prism of God's plan as found in the Bible.

### **PRESENT GOVERNMENTS TO BE REPLACED**

Despite the many failings and shortcomings of this country's government, most Americans would probably agree that our system of governing is better than that of most any other country on earth. In many parts of the world, countries are led by the strongest arm, or those who have the backing of the military. Some countries are ruled by those with radical religious beliefs, and others have only achieved a semblance of order through much bloodshed. The rule of law is severely lacking in many parts of the world. In some cases, even, conditions of near-anarchy exist throughout entire countries. Taking a world view of the matter certainly should make us thankful to live in an environment where life can go on in relative peace and safety.

The Scriptures reveal to us that it is God's plan to bring man back to righteousness here upon the earth in his coming kingdom. To accomplish this, a righteous government must be established in order to instruct man and enforce God's laws for his

benefit. None of the present governments of earth, or their leaders, are the ones the Scriptures say will be the rulers of that kingdom. Rather, it is Christ and his faithful associates, the church, “elected” or selected by God himself, who will be the governing authority at that time.

## **FUTURE GOVERNMENT TO BE ORGANIZED**

The prophet Micah provides us insight as to how that future government will be organized. He says, “The law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” (Mic. 4:2) We notice in these words two branches of this future government will be operative. In “Zion” will center the heavenly branch of government, and in “Jerusalem” the earthly branch. Zion is a symbolic reference to Christ and his church, who will direct all of earth’s affairs as heavenly “kings and priests” during the thousand years of Christ’s reign. (Rev. 5:10; 20:6) Jerusalem symbolically represents the earthly governmental authority. This authority, the Scriptures indicate, will be centered in the faithful Ancient Worthies of old—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and many others—heroes of faith as described by the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 11. The psalmist prophetically describes these as “princes in all the earth.”—Ps. 45:16

Referring again to the above scripture from Micah, the prophet states the primary role of the two branches of earth’s coming new government. The “law” will come from Zion—the heavenly branch consisting of Christ and his church. This law will be God’s standard of righteousness, and only by obedience to it will man gain everlasting

life under this kingdom arrangement. The Scriptures refer to the law of the kingdom as a New Covenant. (Jer. 31:31) It will be superior in every way to “old” arrangements whereby God dealt with man in past ages. Having offered “better sacrifices” (Heb. 9:23), Christ, together with his church, will be the mediator of the New Covenant during the time of man’s education and learning. The Apostle Paul states the matter with these words, “Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.”—chap. 12:24

Micah says also that the earthly branch of the kingdom government will be for the purpose of disseminating “the word of the LORD.” In other words, although the source of earth’s laws in the kingdom and the standard of righteousness will be from heaven, God will use his earthly representatives to teach that law to man. We believe the Scriptures indicate God’s use of the above-mentioned faithful Ancient Worthies of old to be the instruments which will be used to accomplish this worldwide education process. Indeed, all mankind will help to assist each other in the learning process of the kingdom, as each becomes familiar with and applies its laws to their own hearts and characters.

## **NEW GOVERNMENT AWAITING COMPLETION**

In order for the new kingdom government to become operative, the two branches, heavenly and earthly, must be complete and in place, ready to rule. The fulfillment of prophecy indicates to us that the heavenly phase of the kingdom government is close to completion. The first step in completing this branch of government is the second return or coming of Christ. The correct scriptural

thought is not that of a visible return to earth, but the invisible “presence” (Greek, *parousia*) and influence of Christ over earth’s affairs. The fulfillment of many signs given in the words of the prophets, apostles, and Jesus himself provide much in the way of evidence that Christ has already invisibly returned and is working in various ways to accomplish God’s purposes in the earth during the Harvest period of this Gospel Age. Space here does not permit a detailed consideration of these signs. We merely refer the reader to the following scriptures as a sampling of the evidences of Christ’s invisible presence: Matt. 24:27-51; Luke 12:37-46; 21:24-32; Dan. 12:1-4; II Pet. 3:3,4.

The resurrection of the church, the “body of Christ,” must also take place before the heavenly branch of kingdom government is made complete. The Bible speaks of this as the “first resurrection” (Rev. 20:5,6), clearly implying with these words that there will be a “second” or additional resurrection to follow later. The Apostle Paul says concerning those of his day who had been faithful unto death and were awaiting the first resurrection, “Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him,” and that this would take place at “the coming [presence] of the Lord.” (I Thess. 4:14,15) These verses indicate that the first resurrection begins at the time of the Second Presence of Christ, and is experienced by the faithful saints who have “slept” in death during this Gospel Age prior to that time. In another place, Paul adds, “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” (I Cor. 15:51) Putting together these two sets of scriptures explains that the faithful members of the church who die subsequent to

our Lord's return also experience the first resurrection. However, they do not have to sleep, but one by one are raised until the last member of the church has gone "beyond the veil." In our Lord's parable of the wheat and the tares, he says concerning the wheat, representing the church, that he will gather them "into my barn" at "the time of harvest." (Matt. 13:30) Because there is evidence that many are still running for the "prize of the high calling" (Phil. 3:14), we must conclude that this gathering of the church in the first resurrection, although in process, is not yet complete. As a result, the heavenly branch of kingdom government is not yet ruling over mankind.

The earthly branch of the new kingdom government awaits the resurrection of its teachers and leaders, the Ancient Worthies. The Scriptures indicate that their resurrection will take place very shortly after, but not before, the completion of the first resurrection. "These all [the faithful Ancient Worthies], having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise [of joint-heirship with Christ]: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without [before or ahead of] us should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11:39,40

Only when both the heavenly and earthly branches of the new kingdom government are complete and in place will Christ's (and hence God's) righteous rulership become operative in the earth. None of earth's present governments will be a part of this new administration. To a greater or lesser degree they are all fallen, sinful, corrupt, and grossly lacking in righteousness. They have all been "weighed in the balances, and . . . found wanting."—Dan. 5:27

## **ISRAEL'S ROLE**

We might ask why the prophet Micah said that the “word of the LORD” will come from Jerusalem during the future kingdom arrangement. We recall that for many centuries the nation of Israel was God’s specially chosen and favored people, and Jerusalem the center of that typical kingdom. “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.” (Amos 3:2) Like mankind in general, they transgressed God’s law and even denied the one who was their Messiah, Jesus Christ. For these things they were severely punished, their kingdom was taken away, and they were scattered throughout the four corners of the earth. God, however, plans to recover them, showing them as an example to all mankind of his love, longsuffering, and faithfulness.

During the Harvest of this Gospel Age, we have witnessed with our own eyes the regathering, in a measure, of Israel to their land. They were reestablished as a nation in 1948, and are today considered one of the most powerful nations on earth. They still must yet, however, go through a severe period of trouble near the close of the Harvest, in order to finally bring them to the recognition of the one whom they crucified. Then, they will finally say, as Jesus foretold, “Blessed is he [Jesus their Messiah] that cometh in the name of the Lord [God].”—Matt. 23:39

The generation of Israelites regathered to their promised land who are living when the great miracle of divine intervention for their protection takes place, will be the first to receive the opportunity of blessing under the beneficent rulership of

the Messianic kingdom arrangements. Those who show their loyalty to the new regime, under the leadership of their Messiah and the Ancient Worthies, will share in extending its blessings. How appropriate, then, for Micah to speak of Jerusalem as the source of the word of the LORD in the kingdom government.

A prophecy pertaining to this reads: "It shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong. For thus saith the LORD of hosts; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, and I repented not: So again have I thought in these days [of the Messianic kingdom] to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not. These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates: And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD."—Zech. 8:13-17

The divine principles of righteousness here set forth, which the Israelites will need to observe and obey in order to receive the blessings of Messiah, will also have to be observed by the people of all nations, that they, too, may receive the blessings of the kingdom. Those who do will be blessed and will likewise have the privilege of joining in that great project of blessing which ultimately will be extended to include "all the families of the earth." (Gen. 28:14) Israel's role in all this will not be through

their current human leaders who, like all the other rulers of this world, are not capable of bringing man back to righteousness. Their “fathers,” the Ancient Worthies, will be given the privilege of leading them under the authority of Christ and his church. As quoted above from the prophet Zechariah, Israel will then be an example to all mankind of a blessing, and no longer an example of a curse.

### **WATCH AND WAIT**

As we await the completion of the heavenly and establishment of the earthly branches of the new kingdom government “elected” by God, we see many things coming to pass in a preparatory way. As already touched on, we have the many signs that our Lord has invisibly returned. He has been gathering the wheat out of every corner of the world. He has overseen the dissemination of a feast of spiritual food—“meat in due season” (Matt. 24:45)—to feed those being so gathered out. He has also used his faithful human instruments to assist in proclaiming the Gospel message as a witness to every corner of the earth. This work is also in fulfillment of prophecy: “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” (Matt. 24:14) The “end” spoken of here is not the end of this earth and its people, but rather the end of this Gospel Age phase of God’s plan. Indeed, we have previously seen that when the present age is completed, a new age will be ushered in, the Messianic Age, which will bring mankind in general back to fellowship with God and a “restitution of all things” lost because of sin and death.—Acts 3:21

As we watch and wait on the Lord, we also see his overseeing of the process of tearing down this present order of things. Although this signifies a severe Time of Trouble, it is necessary so that earth's current political, economic, social, and religious systems can give way to the new order of the kingdom. This trouble is described by the prophet Haggai: "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts." (Hag. 2:6,7) Notice how all-encompassing this "shaking" is. Everything is shaken: the heavens—human religious systems; the earth—current political systems; the sea—the masses of dissatisfied human society; and the dry land—the dried up economic systems of today. As if to further emphasize the point, the prophet then says that no nation will escape this—"all nations" will be shaken.

It is important to note that the above prophecy of Haggai does not end at merely the mention of shaking and destruction. He goes on and says that following this period of severe trouble, the "desire of all nations" will come. The Apostle Paul, when quoting this prophecy, added that when everything had been shaken during this Time of Trouble, "those things which cannot be shaken may remain." (Heb. 12:27) That which cannot be shaken will be God's newly elected government, centered in Christ and the church. It will be that government alone which can bring the "desire" of all nations to pass. What are some of these desires? Peace, health, safety,

restoration of loved ones, family, happiness, mental and moral soundness, and quality of life are just a few of the wonderful desires which will come to fruition for man under the direction of the kingdom administration. Indeed, such a kingdom “cannot be moved” or shaken.—Heb. 12:28

In advance of this wonderful time, the processes of the present Harvest time go grandly on. The gathering of the church continues, as well as the tearing down of this present worldly order of things. When these features of God’s plan are completed, it will signal the end of both the harvest of the wheat (Matt. 13:30), and the harvest of the “vine of the earth.” (Rev. 14:19) Only then will the heavenly branch of the new government be fully in place. Only then will the earth be rid of the old order of things and be ready for the new. God will put into operation his newly-elected government and establish the New Covenant through his chosen Mediator—the Christ, head and body.

### **WHAT MANNER OF PERSONS OUGHT YE TO BE?**

For those who know and appreciate God’s marvelous arrangements for man’s future here on earth, what should be our attitude toward this year’s presidential election, and how should we view other events going on in the world? First, we should heed the words of Jesus and “render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.” (Matt. 22:21) Having done this, we must remember that the kingdom we seek is “not of this world” (John 18:36), that we are actually “ambassadors for Christ” and his coming kingdom. (II Cor. 5:20)

As such, we are merely “strangers and pilgrims” here on the earth at the present time.—I Pet. 2:11

We rest in faith, confident that God will overrule this year’s presidential election in November to the extent that his ultimate purposes are served, for man’s eventual blessing. The Apostle Peter speaks of this time in which we are now living: “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens [religious systems] shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements [earth’s current order—economic and political] shall melt with fervent heat, the earth [its present social structure] also and the works that are therein [fostered by pride and fruits of the flesh] shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be [those who know these things in advance] in all holy conversation and godliness [holy conduct], Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth [a new order of things, a new government], wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent [use speed, be prompt] that ye may be found of him in peace [inner rest], without spot [before God], and blameless [before others].”—II Pet. 3:10-14

In the midst of such turbulent times and as we view this year’s presidential election from the Lord’s watchtower, let us follow Peter’s admonition

to be of holy conduct, diligent in all things before God and men. “Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”—II Pet. 3:18 ■

*His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,  
The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The  
Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government  
and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of  
David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to  
establish it with judgment and with justice from  
henceforth even for ever.—Isaiah 9:6,7*

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**MAY 3**—“Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”—Hebrews 5:14 (Z. ’03-167 Hymn 20)

**MAY 10**—“Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over.”—Psalm 23:5 (Z. ’03-413 Hymn 286)

**MAY 17**—“They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.”—John 16:2 (Z. ’97-57 Hymn 272)

**MAY 24**—“Love . . . is not easily provoked.”—I Corinthians 13:5 (Z. ’97-247 Hymn 130)

**MAY 31**—“It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.”—Romans 14:21 (Z. ’03-43 Hymn 143A)

# The Bread of Life

**Key Verse:** “*Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*”

—**John 6:35**

**Selected Scripture:**  
**John 6**

them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.”—John 6:10-12

After this miracle, the people desired to take the Master by force and make him a king. Realizing this was not the Father’s plan, Jesus withdrew from the multitude and retired to a mountain for a season of communion with God.—vss. 14,15

Another incident which gave evidence of Christ’s divine appointment was his walking on the sea to meet his disciples who were traveling in a boat in the midst of a storm.—vss. 19-21

This act was perhaps another instance which stimulated the people’s interest in Jesus. For most, this interest was likely not from an appreciation of his being

**ONE MANIFESTATION OF** Christ’s authority and power included the feeding of a great multitude from five barley loaves and two fishes.

“Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to

God's representative on earth, but from an increasing determination to thrust him into a position of leadership that would result in their being freed from Roman subservience. The Lord could read their thoughts and sought to draw their minds away from merely acknowledging his miracles. Instead, he desired that they would accept him as their Messiah and become his followers.—vss. 25-27

In their failure to appreciate Christ's words, the multitude asked him for a sign to give them a reason to believe him. They drew a comparison between his feeding of the five thousand in their midst with the extensive feeding of all Israel during their wilderness experience in Moses' day, when manna was sent from heaven and sustained their forefathers for forty years. Jesus then corrected their thoughts by pointing out the fact that God, not Moses, had created this special provision. He also stated that the true bread of God which came from heaven would give life to the world.—vss. 30-33

In our Key Verse, Jesus identified himself as the "bread of life," and said that whoever came to him would never hunger or thirst. In this context, the Lord intimated that coming to him would be to approach him with a desire for righteousness.

During this present Gospel Age, a special invitation has been extended. It has gone to those who are willing to devote their lives to following Jesus' example of self-denial and cross bearing, to become a part of his church that will live in heaven.—Matt. 16:24

How thankful we are that the human family at large will have a future opportunity of receiving everlasting life here on earth by believing on and obeying their risen Lord and King. "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."—John 6:40 ■

# The Good Shepherd

**Key Verse:** “*When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.*”  
—**John 10:4**

**Selected Scripture:**  
**John 10:1-18**

Jesus addressed the Pharisees in this matter, and declared, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.”—John 10:1-3

The “porter” in the foregoing passage seems well to represent the Law Covenant arrangement. Its exacting requirements were fully satisfied by Christ and culminated in his sacrificial death.

Our Key Verse reflects the beautiful intimacy between Christ and his church throughout the Gospel Age. The sheep who obey his voice are pictured as receiving guidance by following the Master’s voice as revealed in the Scriptures. These would be known by the shepherd individually, as he calls them by name and leads them.

**IN THIS LESSON, OUR LORD** uses symbolic language to reprove the Pharisees for their failure to help and encourage those depicted as sheep to accept Christ as their true shepherd, and inherit the long promised kingdom of God.—Matt. 23:13

There have been many false voices in the world that have sought to imitate the Shepherd's call. These have sought to draw away the sheep by using deceptive theories that do not harmonize with the teachings of Jesus or the Apostles. Any attempt to attain salvation through self-righteousness or great works, ignoring the value of Christ's ransom sacrifice on behalf of all mankind, is a distortion of God's plan for human salvation. The Bible declares unequivocally that no individual can have a relationship with the Father without first coming to Christ. He is the satisfaction for the sins of the church, as well as for the whole world.—John 14:6; I John 2:2

Throughout this Gospel Age, Christ has been caring for and blessing his sheep. These are described as a "little flock." (Luke 12:32) The individuals of this class are generally held in disesteem by the worldly-wise.

Nevertheless, there is a future provision made for recovering even those who presently oppose the true sheep of this Gospel Age. "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."—John 10:16

The Good Shepherd gave his life as "a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Thus, he made provision for offering salvation to those who would become his sheep as part of an earthly fold during God's kingdom.—I Tim. 2:4-6

When Christ comes in his glory, during the Millennial reign with his church of the present Gospel Age sheep-fold, he will judge the human family in righteousness. (Matt. 25:31-33) All who then practice willing obedience to the divine arrangements in force at that time, when the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth, will prosper and ultimately gain everlasting life. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. 22:17 ■

# The Resurrection and the Life

**Key Verse:** *“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”*  
—John 11:25

**Selected Scripture:**  
*John 11:1-27*

to stone him.—John 11:1-8

Our Lord foreknew all the circumstances regarding his visit to Bethany. He indicated he would proceed with his plans. In doing so, Jesus understood fully that the miracle he intended to perform would further disconcert his enemies.

When Jesus finally reached Bethany, Martha went out to greet him in the midst of her sorrow and probable disappointment that he had not arrived earlier. “Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.”—vss. 21,22

In response, Jesus affirmed that her brother Lazarus

would rise again. (vs. 23) In pointing Martha's mind to the resurrection, it is important to note the Lord did not say that Lazarus was not really dead. The general understanding among all believing Jews at that time was the hope of a resurrection at some future day which was to be accomplished by divine power. (vs. 24) This is an important message which believers should proclaim at this time as well, especially in view of the prevalent human theory that the dead are more alive than ever.

The scriptural viewpoint of death is simply that it is the cessation of life. The Bible explicitly states that the dead know nothing. (Eccles. 9:11) Were it not part of the divine plan that Jesus would provide the ransom price for Adam and, ultimately, the entire human race, death would be an eternal condition from which there could be no hope for release.

The Key Verse explains that our hope for life is lodged in Christ. The only means by which all the dead are to be awakened and attain to life is the ransoming power of his atoning sacrifice. This is true whether it be for the church during this Gospel Age, or for the human family at large during God's Kingdom.

The climax of this lesson was realized when Jesus demonstrated why he had not traveled to Bethany prior to the death of Lazarus. "When he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go. Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him."—John 11:43-45

If the raising of Lazarus convinced many of the Jews as to what divine power could accomplish on that occasion, think of all the rejoicing that will occur when God's kingdom is established, and similar miracles occur on a worldwide basis.—Isa. 35:10 ■

# The Way, the Truth and the Life

**Key Verse:** “*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*”  
—*John 14:6*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*John 14:1-14*

**ON JESUS’ LAST NIGHT ON** earth, we may well imagine the sense of sorrow and fear that engulfed the hearts of his eleven chosen apostles. First, the Master had shamed them all by washing their feet. Then, after the sop had been given to Judas, he went out from among their little company. After that, Jesus told them all they would be offended because of him, especially informing Peter that he would deny his Lord thrice before the cock crew.

Jesus then proceeded to give his apostles many words of comfort and consolation that are recorded in John’s gospel account. “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.”—*John 14:1-4*

Thomas expressed perplexity as to the meaning of these words. Jesus explained in our Key Verse that he was the “way” in the sense that through the sacrifice of his perfect human life the ransom price would be provided.

Subsequently, he would provide the imputing of his merit to sinners, that they might be made acceptable to the Father. He was the “truth” because only through his words of instruction could there be any hope of coming into lasting harmony with God. He was the “life” also. The whole human family was condemned to death because of Adam’s disobedience. They would have no possibility of entertaining any hope for a future life without appreciating that Christ, by his sacrifice, would become the life-giver, first for the church, and later for the world during God’s kingdom.

Christ also promised to send the Holy Spirit to guide his apostles after his departure from them. “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”—vss. 16-18

On the day of Pentecost, the apostles received special gifts and were especially commissioned to proclaim the resurrection of Christ. They were instructed to inform the Jewish people that through repentance and baptism they might obtain the Holy Spirit, which the apostles themselves had received earlier that day.—Acts 2:4,22-41

Spirit-begotten believers today are exhorted to develop the fruits of the Spirit. The Apostle Paul lists these as being “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” He adds, “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:22-25) How thankful we should be for the opportunity of being transformed in such a manner. It should be our desire to ultimately prove acceptable to our Heavenly Father and share in the privilege of reigning with Christ in the kingdom.—Rom. 12:1,2; 8:14-17 ■

# Adversity: The Lord's Diamond Dust

*“They shall be  
mine, saith the  
LORD of hosts, in  
that day when I  
make up my  
jewels.”  
—Malachi 3:17*

## **SOME MACHINE SHOPS**

have what is called a diamond wheel. This wheel is similar to an emery wheel used to sharpen ordinary tools. However, there are certain types of tools which are too hard for an ordinary emery wheel, so a special one is used, a diamond wheel. This wheel is made of diamond dust, the remains from the grinding of other diamonds. This refuse dust is worthless except to be compressed into a wheel form and used to shape, sharpen, and polish cutting tools which are too hard for the usual emery wheel.

Adversity, too, while seemingly worthless, in the divine economy is utilized to sharpen and polish Christian character. One might at first think that the child of God should be exempt from adversity. However, the facts are to the contrary. The Apostle

Paul recognized this, and wrote, “Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace.”—I Cor. 4:11

As noted in our theme text, the Christian is a special jewel in the sight of the Lord—a jewel in the rough as yet, a rare gem in the making. To such, adversity is as diamond dust by which they are being polished. Jesus said, “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.”—Matt. 5:11,12

### **PURPOSE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

The Master reveals the real purpose of the Christian life, saying in verses 13-16 of this same chapter, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

The Christian is the salt of the earth. In order for the divine purpose to be fulfilled in our lives as individuals, the salt must not lose its savor. The savor is the taste that gives salt value and purpose. By nature, we are all fallen and imperfect. We thus have no savor of our own, being part of a dying race. However, it is as New Creatures in Christ

Jesus that we have the Truth and its spirit, and thus we have savor. In these verses, Jesus implied that it is possible to lose this savor if we are not constantly on guard. The spirit of selfishness is ever present to draw us away from and lose the savor of truth. Thus, we would find ourselves without its spirit and power in our lives.

One of the virtues of salt is its power to season and preserve from decay. The number of true Christians throughout this Gospel Age has been small indeed. Nevertheless, these have exercised a preserving influence upon mankind within their limited sphere, and the world has been blessed by their presence. The next age will be even a greater period of fulfillment of this picture. Then, associated with Christ, the church will preserve and give everlasting life to all those who obey the laws of the kingdom.

Jesus also said, "Ye are the light of the world." This "light" of the Gospel message of truth is of value only when it is permitted to shine. Jesus admonishes us not to hide this light under a bushel. It is the only true light in the world today, and we are to make it shine as widely and as brightly as we possibly can. This light has not attracted very many because the "god of this world," Satan, has blinded the vast majority so as not to be able to recognize the light.—II Cor. 4:4

The light has, however, attracted a peculiar class that God desires. These are his "jewels." Through special experiences and polishing, they are being fitted for a place in the heavenly phase of Christ's kingdom. With Jesus, the church will shine as the sun, and the world shall ultimately be enlightened.

“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”—Hab. 2:14

### **FROM WHENCE COMES ADVERSITY?**

From whom, or by whom, do such adverse experiences come? In order properly to appraise our trials, and in them maintain the true Christian spirit, it is essential that we adopt the Master’s attitude respecting such experiences. He said, “The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”—John 18:11

The Heavenly Father permitted Jesus’ suffering. This is corroborated by his experience before Pilate, as recorded in John 19:10,11: “Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.”

We must also recognize it to be so with the “cup” the Father is giving to us to drink. This does not mean that God is the author of evil. Indeed, he is not a participator in evil things. However, there are all manner of evil forces and evil influences surrounding us. These can all be traced to one of three sources. One of these sources is Satan and the fallen angels. Our “adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” (I Pet. 5:8) Thus we see that Satan, together with his fallen angels, are ready and waiting to assault the children of God.

The world is also a source of evil, particularly the so-called religious world, from which much opposition comes to those who live godly in Christ Jesus. Satan again enters into the picture, for he has blinded the minds of the world by putting error for truth and darkness for light. He does this so that the way of righteousness and obedience to God might seem foolish and extreme.

The third source of evil is our own flesh. It is a constant, ever-present adversary, and is inclined to be in harmony with the spirit of the world and the sinful influence of Satan. Paul said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."—Rom. 7:18

### **PERMITTED FOR GOOD**

Let us always remember that if we live close to our Heavenly Father, he will not permit any evil influence to touch us, or do injury to us, as New Creatures in Christ. The true thought is not that God creates evil or adversity, rather that he permits it, knowing that by his overruling it will work for our good. In this, however, he will prevent any experience to come to us that would injure or harm us as New Creatures.—I Cor. 10:13

Satan knows that certain ones have the Truth, and he is determined to do anything within his power to take it from them, if it were possible. This prince of darkness will stop at nothing to accomplish his purpose. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." (Heb. 2:1) He will try to instill dissatisfaction and restlessness in our minds by ever hinting that we

should look at something new and put aside the things we have learned.

Such a course would eventually prove a delusion and a snare. To be able to hold our ground against all opposition means that we must possess the proper qualities of mind and heart. We need to “endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” (II Tim. 2:3) Our adversities, in fact, should be crystallizing our determination to overcome.

The world and its spirit often become our adversary. “Do not take such an extreme view of things, and you will get along better,” the world suggests. “Do not spend so much time studying your Bible, or people will call you an extremist.” The ideal of many in the world is to do good, to work for social and civil reforms. In this, the world tries to influence us sympathetically.

A certain amount of opposition also comes from those who seemingly have our best interests at heart. For example, when our Lord announced that he was going to Jerusalem to be crucified, Peter said, “Be it far from thee.” Our master turned to Peter saying, “Get thee behind me, Satan [adversary].” (Matt. 16:22,23) For the time being, Peter was our Lord’s adversary, because his suggested course was in opposition to the one God had set for Jesus.

Then there is our own flesh and its natural tendencies, which often severely try us. Our flesh is prone to follow the path of least resistance. Our fallen habits seem so difficult to change, and it is easier to say, “What is the use? I can’t change now.” The flesh will say of our consecration vows, “Do not carry these things too far.” It is at these times that we need to say with Paul, “I keep under my

body, and bring it into subjection: lest, . . . when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.”—I Cor. 9:27

### **WHY PERMITTED**

Why are evils permitted to come upon God’s people? It is by these that we are being polished as the Lord’s “jewels.” (Mal. 3:17) James wrote, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation [trial]: 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

We must keep in mind that every trial, every test, every persecution, every difficulty which is permitted to come upon those who have made a covenant “by sacrifice” (Ps. 50:5), is designed to develop, prove, and test our love. They are allowed in order to demonstrate that our character is fixed and rooted in righteousness. When viewed in this way, all our painful experiences are seen in a new light, and they will greatly assist us in fighting the good fight of faith. It is by these trials and tribulations that we prove our love and devotion to the Lord. “The LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”—Deut. 13:3

The Word of God aptly describes the human family in their present condition as a groaning creation: “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” (Rom. 8:22) The Lord’s consecrated people are no exception to this. “We ourselves [also] groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption [deliverance] of our body.” (vs. 23) However, while we are waiting

for deliverance, the experiences of life have an important mission to accomplish in us. Therefore, the manner in which they are received should be of deepest concern. According to their use, each day's prosperity or adversity brings a blessing or a curse.

## **RESULTS**

The results of our trials can be illustrated by the storms of winter and summer. How different is one from the other. In the winter, they rush over the earth with violence, and any remnants of foliage or flowers are swept away, leaving nothing but desolation in their wake. Long after the storms have ceased, the wind-driven cold remains as a token of what has been.

However, in the summer, when the clouds have poured forth their torrents and the winds have spent their fury, the sun comes forth in all its glory. Vegetation seems to rise with renewed loveliness, as after a refreshing bath. The flowers smell sweeter than before. The grass takes on a brighter shade of green. The young plants, which were barely in sight before, now take their place among their fellows, so quickly do they spring up after a summer shower. The air, too, which previously may have been oppressive, is now clear and fresh.

Likewise it is with the storms of adversity. To the unregenerate, the storms of life are apt to bring dreariness and a desolation which was not apparent before. Their gloom is not relieved by the prospect of a cheering ray to follow. There are no flowers or fruit to show its beneficence. To these, adversities, like the *(Continued on page 36)*

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*“Send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me;  
let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to  
thy tabernacles.”—Psalm 43:3*

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*(Continued from page 31)* storms, winds, snow, sleet, and rain of the winter time, still leave the heart barren and cold.

These same adversities which come upon the Christian should be like the storms, winds, and rain of the summer time. They should beautify our character and brighten our outlook on life, and strengthen the faith and hope which God has planted within us. The Apostle Paul wrote, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are [rightly] exercised thereby."—Heb. 12:11

As we look at the benefits which we derive from our experiences with the assurance that they are supervised by God, let us "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (James 1:2-4) Peter wrote, "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour 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."—I Pet. 1:7-9

How encouraging is Paul's description of the Christian life, as recorded in these verses: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but

not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.” “As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”—II Cor. 4:8,9; 6:9,10; 4:16,17

### **EXAMPLE OF JOB**

Let us remember the example of Job. Very few, if any, have suffered the troubles that this man endured. He lost all of his property, and all of his children, whom he loved dearly. They perished in the home of his eldest son, which was struck by a great wind. Then Job lost, at least for a time, the love and loyalty of his wife. Finally, Job was smitten by a loathsome disease which caused his skin to erupt from head to foot with boils. To further cause him suffering, along came three of his best friends. Instead of comforting him, they added to his grief by insisting that these disasters were a result of his sins, and that he was being punished by the Lord because of his unfaithfulness to him.

The beautiful part of Job’s life story is that, like the rains and winds of summer, these experiences had a most beneficial effect upon his character and life. Through all of them Job did not lose faith in God. His testimony was, “The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” (Job 1:21) In the end, we see that all of

Job's troubles passed away, and he was blessed more abundantly than before, with children, servants, and cattle. "So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." (Job 42:12) We believe God used Job as an illustration of the human family. First was their prosperous, but short-lived, condition as experienced by Adam in his perfection. Then came mankind's many troubles and groanings as a result of Adam's fall. Finally, however, will come the restitution blessings which they will receive as a result of Christ's coming kingdom. Added to this will be the blessing of their valuable previous experience with evil which will make them wise. The Christian marks Job as an example of trust, faith, patience, and love for his Creator, as expressed in Job's immortalized testimony, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."—chap. 13:15

### **GOD'S FAVOR**

There are still other benefits which the Christian realizes because of adversity. Strange as it might at first seem, adversity is an evidence of God's favor. In Hebrews 12:6-8, we read, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye [illegitimate children, *New International Version*], and not sons."

Each of God's children needs chastening from time to time. If we stray from the path of righteousness, chastisements are designed to bring us back.

However, we still need chastening even if we do not wander, for by it we learn obedience and discipline. The word chastisement ordinarily signifies correction for wrongdoing, but in the Bible it is also used to signify discipline, or instruction in righteousness. Of our Lord, we read in Hebrews 5:8, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."

Let us appreciate more the privilege of being trained in the school of Christ. In this school, we learn some very valuable lessons through our experiences. We receive chastisements, and encounter all kinds of adversity which comes to us under the Heavenly Father's supervision. Surely we should desire to learn all of our lessons well. Paul wrote, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (chap. 12:2,3) Whoever does not appreciate the spiritual joys of things "set before him" can hardly be expected to endure with patience, and with cheerful endurance, the present period of training. One must see the glory that is to follow in order to appreciate the necessity and value of adversity.

How long will these adversities continue? When will they end? To the individual Christian it will be only as long as his life lasts on the earth. In short, the answer is given in Revelation 2:10: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The adversity of the rest of mankind will not last

forever either. “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” (Ps. 30:5) Soon the permission of evil will be over. While we are here, it is good to know that all things in God’s plan of salvation are working together not only for our good, but ultimately and most assuredly for the good of all. ■

*“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”—Philippians 1:6*

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## OBITUARIES

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

Brother Walter Blicharz, Detroit, MI—March 11.  
Age, 89

Brother Don Wilson, Buffalo, NY—March 16. Age,  
85

Brother George Washington, Huntsville, AL—  
March 18. Age, 88

Sister Jana Lamb Couch, Guntersville, AL—March  
25. Age, 58

Sister Edith Chandler, Tigard, OR—April 6. Age,  
94

Sister Ruby Williams, New York, NY—April 9. Age,  
80

# Overlaid with Gold

*“Thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made. And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver.”*  
—Exodus 26:31,32

**GOLD, BY VIRTUE OF ITS** beauty, value, and natural qualities, is a fitting symbol of things divine. There are many scriptures in the Bible that mention gold, its uses, and the symbolism related to it. In an early reference to gold in the book of Genesis, we read, “A river went out of Eden, . . . and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good.” (Gen. 2:10-12) This is perhaps the first veiled reference to those who will be of the first resurrection, as they are separated from the rest of the world. When proven faithful they will receive the divine nature, of which “the gold of that land” is a fitting symbol.

## **THE TABERNACLE'S CONSTRUCTION**

In the book of Exodus, chapters 25-38, is described the design and construction of the Tabernacle, its structure, and the furnishings of the Holy and Most Holy. We should remember that the Tabernacle pictures the development of the true church. When we read these accounts, we notice how many parts of the Tabernacle were to be overlaid with gold. "Overlaid" means to be covered up, or to be wrapped up. There is significance to be found in these words. The fact that many of the furnishings of the Tabernacle were made of, or overlaid with, pure gold implies that these represented conditions related to those who are called to the divine nature. Only the Priests and Levites, those who were consecrated to the work of sacrifice and service, had access to the Tabernacle. Likewise, only those of the household of faith who are consecrated to sacrifice unto death enter into the divine conditions represented in that typical arrangement.

Concerning the type of wood that was to be overlaid with gold in the Tabernacle's construction, the account states that it was "shittim wood," a species of acacia. This type of tree grows in the desert. We are reminded prophetically that Jesus was as "a root out of a dry ground" (Isa. 53:2), showing that his earthly life and ministry was in the midst of a symbolic desert, devoid of the water of truth. He was this "root" which came up in such dry conditions.

The wood of the acacia tree, sometimes three to four feet in diameter, is close-grained, hard, and easily adapted to cabinetwork. It served as the material that was the base, or frame, upon which

the outer coverings of the articles of the Tabernacle, including gold, would be overlaid. The boards also were made from this wood. It was strong, but light weight, because it had to be easily transported. How fittingly this depicts the church's journey from common things, or the human nature, to glory and honor.

Because acacia wood is very close-grained and strong, the tree itself is able to withstand the harsh conditions that exist in arid land. The church, or body of Christ, must also be strong to withstand their trials and experiences in the desert land of this present evil world. They must be proven faithful to be able to be covered with the gold of the divine nature.

## **OUR AFFLICTIONS**

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.” (Heb. 10:19,20) “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church.” (Col. 1:24) These scriptures allude to the work of self-sacrifice, self-denial, and cross bearing. To be overlaid with gold, the church must share in her Lord's sufferings for righteousness sake. Only such are promised a share in all the glories of her Lord.—I Pet. 5:9,10

When persecutions come as a result of living close to the Lord as part of our service and responsibilities to him, we are to view them as part of our sacrifice. The Body, as well as the Head, must be

subjected to the discipline of suffering. We are to share in the sufferings of Christ, which all believers cleansed by his blood have been invited to do during this Gospel Age. We should give thanks to be counted worthy to suffer with him, so that we might reign with him forever in glory. "Ye are a chosen generation, . . . a peculiar people." (I Pet. 2:9) Additionally, we are to be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus 2:14

To be a "peculiar people" means to be "a people for a purpose" (*Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*), separated from the world—in the world, but not of its spirit. This is a work of transformation, and includes having new hopes, aims, and ambitions. The church is admonished to "set your affection on things above." (Col. 3:2) Their hope is to be a partaker of the first resurrection, the divine nature, symbolized by gold. Such are developing a new mind that will lead to spirit birth as a New Creature. Striving to be different from the world in general, these must possess a special love for that which is good, just, noble, and acceptable to God. To do so one must be self-sacrificing, and know no will but that of "the King of kings, and Lord of lords." (I Tim. 6:15) To assist, the prospective members of the church have been begotten with the Holy Spirit—the influence and power of our great and loving Heavenly Father.

Christ is gathering those who have a hearing ear and a humble and contrite heart. To these has been presented the opportunity to develop and reach the "mark" of perfect love. (Phil. 3:14) By adhering to the word of the Lord as a law of life, each is to have a firm faith. Acting accordingly,

with zeal these are to strive to be in harmony with God's plans and purposes. This should include the desire to praise him and to have a heart filled to overflowing with the spirit of love. This indeed is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth. By putting on the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, such are to strive each day of their walk to attain the "quarter marks" of love until reaching the mark of perfect love, and thus attaining the "prize of the high calling."

### **SHARERS IN HIS SUFFERING**

The church, with their Head, is being sacrificed at this time, during the Gospel Age. This offering commenced with the Head, and continues with the members of his body. If we are a sharer in the sufferings of Christ, and not in any other kind of suffering, we should lay down our lives, especially on behalf of our brethren. The Scriptures state, "We are buried with him by baptism into death," and are counted as "dead with Christ." (Rom. 6:4,8) We are "made conformable unto his death."—Phil. 3:10

"We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (I John 3:16) "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) These scriptures indicate that the measure of our love for the Lord will be indicated by our love for, and service to, the fellow members of the body of Christ. In this way, we build up one another in our most holy faith: "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted [knit together in love] by that which every joint supplieth." (Eph. 4:16) The Apostle Paul here reminds

us that each member of the body, as yokefellows in Christ, is important. Our prayers should be rendered on behalf of all our brethren, that they may be gathered together and united in love, both now and beyond the veil. "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Ps. 50:5) "Gather the wheat into my barn." (Matt. 13:30) We cannot be gathered in the fullest sense until we are fully ripened, fully developed.

"They shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." (Mal. 3:17) The Father has called us to be part of this "jewel" class, offering us life and the divine nature. To be faithful to this call means we must be fully submissive to the headship of our Savior, Christ Jesus, the Head of the body. Just as Jesus was faithful, we must carry out day by day our covenant of consecration and sacrifice, and be a sharer in his sufferings.

On the typical Day of Atonement, the High Priest first offered a bullock for himself and his house. He then offered the goat, "the sin offering, that is for the people," making atonement for them (all of Israel) as God commanded. (Lev. 16:15) In the antitype, we see that our Head, Jesus, suffers first and then the body follows. We, as his body members, study to comprehend his course, his example, his teachings. We seek to appreciate and copy the meekness, patience, and suffering of Christ, and the fact that he suffered unjustly. We realize that he endured it all with love and the peace that came from knowing his Father was watching over him. The Master knew that he was

performing a work that was designed and blessed by God. Truly he epitomized the words: “Love suffereth long, and is kind.”—I Cor. 13:4

Concerning the development of the body of Christ, these are privileged to assist and serve others who have likewise taken up their cross to follow in the footprints of the crucified one. This body of Christ sacrifices their all for those who likewise love and serve the Truth. Those so doing are identified as adopted sons, heirs of God. Assisting others comes many times by our words. Fitly spoken, they are “apples of gold in pictures of silver.” (Prov. 25:11) The power of the tongue can be very positive. Those following their faithful Head will look for ways to help to build up and serve the brethren. They have been instructed to speak words that reflect the character of a consecrated footstep follower of the Lord, begotten with the Holy Spirit. This begetting illuminates the mind, enabling one to discern spiritual things (I Cor. 2:12-16), providing the holy influence of God and his Son.

## **A ROBE AND A CROWN**

Herein is another aspect of this overlaying or covering. “I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” (Isa. 61:10) God covers our unwilling imperfections with the “robe” of Christ’s righteousness. If faithful in wearing this robe, and embroidering upon it the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, we have the promise that “I will write upon him my new name.” (Rev. 3:12) In another place, the prophet says,

“She shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.” (Jer. 33:16) The Apostle Paul describes our attainment of righteousness, saying, “That we might be made the righteousness of God in him [Christ].”—II Cor. 5:21

The anointed body of Christ can be joyful even in this present life though it be filled with testings, hard experiences, and sorrows. Even in these, however, our salvation is not complete, as we “have not yet resisted unto blood.” (Heb. 12:4) It has begun, though, in the sense that we are already counted as being on God’s side because of the righteousness of our Lord Jesus.

Each member of the body of Christ is represented as a precious jewel which will be placed in its particular setting by God. “Now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.” (I Cor. 12:18) Each faithful member of this body will be given a place of glory in the royal diadem, which will be a beautiful ornament in the hand of God. Our Lord Jesus was the first setting in this great diadem, and his body members have the privilege of following him.

This diadem, symbolically speaking, is set in gold, picturing the divine nature. This is the crown of life, or crowning life, the reward for faithfulness unto death. (Rev. 2:10) This treasure can be obtained only at the cost of entire consecration and the sacrifice of all that we have in the interest of Christ and our Heavenly Father. Those who have made this consecration have vowed to relinquish their future earthly life-rights to gain an inheritance that cannot be corrupted by rust and decay, but which lasts forever. To gain such a victory requires

faithful and constant submission to the discipline of the Lord in the fiery trials that are necessary to consume the dross and refine the Christian character.

### **REFINED AS GOLD**

The faith and character of the true church is represented in gold, silver, and precious stones. Silver and other precious stones, even diamonds, need polishing. Gold, when rightly refined, does not need polishing. It is therefore representative of the highest heavenly riches, divine things, divine truth, and divine life. Obtaining of this character means we must be imbued with “the wisdom that is from above.” (James 3:17) Not until we fully lay hold upon the precious promises of joint-heirship with Christ, leading to our faithfulness unto sacrificial death, is the gold of the divine nature complete. This is why we are spoken of as being “a new creature” in Christ Jesus. (II Cor. 5:17) It is now only in him that we have this standing before God.

“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire.” (Rev. 3:18) Just as it is necessary that gold be put into the crucible for refining, so we must also be tried. This requires faithful and constant submission to the disciplines of the Lord. “Examine me, O LORD, and prove me: try my reins and my heart.” (Ps. 26:2) God proves us to determine if we are worthy, to see if we love him above all things, or if we love self. In order for the dross of self to be consumed, we must keep our “living sacrifice” on the altar until the image of the refiner is seen in the luster of the gold. Then, if faithful, we will be

in the hand of God as pure gold. The faithful church will be forever a testimony to angels and men of the marvelous workmanship of the Creator, epistles “known and read of all men.”—II Cor. 3:2

## **GOD’S TEMPLE**

The account of the building of Israel’s Temple in Jerusalem by Solomon is recorded in I Kings 6:1-38. It was probably richer in its ornamentation and more costly than any other temple previously built by man. It represents, in symbol, a glorious work of God, which will result in the bringing of rich blessings to mankind. Solomon was not only a king and prince of peace, but also wise and very rich. He represents the great King and Prince of Peace, our Lord Jesus, described as “greater than Solomon.”—Matt. 12:42

In the Temple construction, great foundation stones were carefully laid first. In the building of God’s symbolic temple, these represent the apostles chosen of God, with Christ as the “chief corner stone.” (Eph. 2:20) Additionally, this greater spiritual temple is built of “lively [living] stones,” representing the body of Christ. (I Pet. 2:5) Each of these stones is fitted and prepared for a unique place in God’s temple, and is made ready in the quarry of this life. (I Kings 6:7) Once fitted and chiseled in the experiences of this life, each stone is brought to its place and added to the temple building until it is complete, having been made so by the resurrection power of God.

Solomon used cedar in the construction of Israel’s Temple. He then overlaid it all with pure gold. (I Kings 6:18-22) The use of cedar and not acacia

wood, as in the Tabernacle, is significant. Cedar is an evergreen tree and represents eternal life. This house was meant to be permanent, showing that the blessings of the coming kingdom will last forever. Although glorious in its construction, the Temple was not complete until “the priests brought in the ark of the covenant . . . unto his place.” (chap. 8:6) The ark being placed in position illustrates that every member of the body of Christ must be changed from the Tabernacle to the Temple, or permanent dwelling place, in the first resurrection. During Christ’s kingdom, the world will approach God through the glorified church—their mediator—and have an opportunity for eternal life on earth. The law of that kingdom will be love, and man’s heart obedience to the New Covenant arrangement will lead them back to favor with God. “Love never faileth . . . the greatest of these is love.”—I Cor. 13:8,13

## **THE NEW JERUSALAM**

Concerning the New Jerusalem, we read, “The building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.” (Rev 21:18) We note that in this finished picture of Christ and his church, the gold is completely pure. All of the dross is gone; there are no impurities such as sin and death; the refining work is complete. “The street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.” (vs. 21) In this, we see a picture of unfading, untarnished glory reflecting the attributes of God.

Under the leadership of the New Jerusalem, all mankind will be raised from the dead to learn of

God's wonderful character. "For they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." (Jer. 31:34) Having their eyes of understanding opened, man will come to a knowledge of the Truth. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD."—Isa. 11:9

The "way of holiness" will be so plain that "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." (Isa. 35:8) "He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Rev. 22:1) This symbolic river of water—God's word of truth—will lead the willing and obedient ones to human perfection. These will receive restitution—restoration—of what was lost by our first parents when they sinned. The obedient of mankind will be forever turned away from the "broad" way that led them to "destruction" in this life. (Matt. 7:13) They will walk up the "[high]way of holiness," to be finally returned to the character image of God in which they were first created, and will enjoy life on a restored, perfect earth forever.

This will all be accomplished through the carrying out of God's plan to its completion. The fulfillment of this plan began with the giving of that good and perfect gift from heaven, God's only Begotten Son, as man's Redeemer. Now it awaits only the selection and completion of the called-out ones, the "church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23) Therefore, let us press on to the mark that is before us, being submissive to the refining process. If faithful, we will receive the glorious prize of the divine nature, and be completely overlaid with gold. ■

# General Convention Bulletin

July 21-26, 2012

**THE 2012 GENERAL CONVENTION** will be upon us in only three months. If you have not yet made plans to attend, now is the time to do so. We encourage as many as are able to join in the blessings of this annual gathering of the Lord's people. The convention will be held on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Hotel-like rooms with private bathrooms in the Living-Learning Center (LLC), family style apartments (also air conditioned) with private bathrooms (APTS), and housing with two rooms sharing one bathroom (not air conditioned) in other facilities are available on campus. A child may sleep on a bedroom floor at no charge in their own sleeping bag if both beds are occupied. If a child is alone in a bedroom sharing the bathroom with other adults, the double occupancy rate will apply to all family members.

The convention program appears in this issue of *The Dawn*, on the pages following the General Convention registration form. Included on the program is a dialogue between two brethren on the subject, "Current Events of 2012," which we believe will be of special interest and an encouragement to the Lord's people as they view and are touched by the events of the time in which we are living.

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

The convention will provide one shuttle bus leaving the Pittsburgh airport in the early evening for the college in Johnstown on Friday, July 20. There will also be shuttle bus service leaving the college in the morning hours for the Pittsburgh airport on Friday, July 27. ■

	Ages	18 & up	***13-17
Breakfast		\$7.00	\$6.00
Lunch		9.00	8.00
Dinner		12.00	11.00
Total, three meals		\$28.00	\$25.00
Lodging (per night)			
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)		\$35.00	\$30.00
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)		\$28.00	\$26.00
**single occ (LLC)		\$60.00	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)		\$33.00	n/a
PKG: 7 nights, 18 meals			
**dbl occ (LLC or APTS)		\$325*	\$290*
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)		\$195*	\$160*
**single occ (LLC)		\$460*	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)		\$235*	n/a
If no breakfasts, deduct—*\$35    **Air conditioned ***100% of these costs will be refunded if the young person attends 75% of the studies for his/her age group			

## General Convention Registration

330 Jasmine Road—Casselberry, FL 32707

E-mail: [ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com](mailto:ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com) (407) 670-4189

	Brkfst	Lunch	Dinner	Bed
Friday, July 20, 2012				
Saturday, 21st				
Sunday, 22nd				
Monday, 23rd				
Tuesday, 24th				
Wednesday, 25th				
Thursday, 26th				

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

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

Names and ecclesia name (age if under 18)

Address:

# Saturday, July 21

Chairman: Allan Allers, *Boise ID*

- 9:30 Morning Devotions
- 9:45 Orientation by College
- 10:00 **Welcome Address**  
Jonathon Freer  
*Sacramento CA*
- 10:45 Intermission
- 11:15 Discourse  
Leo Houlmont  
*Grand Rapids MI*
- 12:00 Close of Morning Session
- 2:00 Discourse  
Robert Goodman  
*Orlando FL*
- 2:45 Intermission
- 3:15 Discourse  
John Trzeciak  
*Grand Rapids MI*
- 4:00 Intermission
- 4:30 Discourse  
Wade Austin  
*Portland OR*
- 5:15 Close of Afternoon Session
- 7:00 **Three Fires of the Tabernacle**  
**Brazen Altar:**  
Randy Shahan, *New York NY*  
**Incense Altar:**  
David Christiansen, *Seattle WA*  
**Without the Camp:**  
Mark Grillo, *New London CT*
- 8:15 Songs in the Night

## Sunday, July 22

Chairman: Mark Nemesh, *Detroit MI*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Discourse Regis Liberda  
*France*

10:30 Intermission

11:15 **Theme Discourse—Ephesians 5:16**  
“Redeeming the time, because the days  
are evil.”

Rick Suraci, *New Haven CT*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Praise and Testimony George Balko  
*West Newton PA*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse Aaron Kuehmicel  
*Chicago IL*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 **Current Events of 2012**

Ray Charlton, *Australia*  
Jim Parkinson, *Los Angeles CA*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **Public Meeting:**  
**After Armageddon God’s Kingdom**  
George Tabac, *Chicago IL*



## Tuesday, July 24

Chairman: Erwin Kalinski, *Chicago IL*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 **Baptismal Discourse**

Byron Keith  
*Seattle WA*

10:30 Intermission

11:00 **Immersion Service**

Ryan Hangs  
*Saskatoon SK*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Praise and Testimony    Homer Montague  
*Highland Park NY*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 **The Sin Offering**

Robert Gorecki, *New York NY*  
Joe Megacz, *Chicago IL*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

Adam Kopczyk  
*Australia*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

## Wednesday, July 25

Chairman: Kent Humphreys, *Phoenix AZ*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Convention Business Meeting

10:30 Short Recess

10:45 Convention Business Continues

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse

Len Griehs  
*Delaware Valley PA*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Praise and Testimony

Ed Byrd  
*Pittsburgh PA*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse

Tim Thomassen  
*Albuquerque NM*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **Witness of the Spirit**

Raymond Krupa  
*(1917-2002)*

7:45 Vesper Service

8:15 Songs in the Night

## Thursday, July 26

Chairman: Dan Wesol, *Albuquerque NM*

9:30 Morning Devotions

9:45 Praise and Testimony            Doug Rawson  
*San Francisco Bay Area CA*

10:30 Intermission

11:00 **Panel Discussion: The Armor of God**  
Michael J. Balko, *Orlando FL*  
Carlton Chandler, *Portland OR*  
Chris Kuenzli, *Milwaukee WI*

12:00 Close of Morning Session

2:00 Discourse                            Ken Fernets  
*The Dawn*

2:45 Intermission

3:15 Discourse                            Austin Williams  
*New York NY*

4:00 Intermission

4:30 Discourse                            Edmund Blicharz  
*Orlando FL*

5:15 Close of Afternoon Session

7:00 **Closing Discourse**            George Passios  
*New York NY*

7:45 Melodies of Praise

8:30 Love Feast

## SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

### **K. Fernets**

Agawam, MA                      May 19,20

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

### **G. Balko**

Los Angeles, CA      May 26,27

### **O. B. Elbert**

Jacksonville, FL                      May 6

### **R. Gorecki**

Agawam MA                      May 19,20

### **H. Montague**

Agawam, MA                      May 19,20  
Los Angeles, CA                      26,27

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*“By love serve one another.”*  
*—Galatians 5:13*

## NOW AVAILABLE

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E. Rutherford, NJ 07073

## 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.*

**JACKSONVILLE CONVENTION, May 6**—620 Wells Road, Orange Park, FL 32073. Hotel Phone: (904) 562-7400. Contact C. Hires. Phone: (904) 781-0506

**AGAWAM CONVENTION, May 19,20**—Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA 01001. Contact A. Gonczewski. Phone (863) 450-8299 or E-mail: aga49@yahoo.com. Hotel reservations only, contact M. Wardak. Phone: (413) 789-6198

**CHICAGO MEMORIAL DAY CONVENTION, May 26-28**—Addison Park District, 120 E. Oak Street, Addison, IL 60101. Contact L. Manzuk. Phone: (630) 660-1874 or E-mail: secretary@chicagobible.org

**LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, May 26,27**—Burbank Auditorium, 406 Irving Drive, Burbank, CA 91504. Room reservations contact N. Nekora. Phone: (310) 454-5248. Other information, contact J. Wojcik. Phone: (818) 438-1086 or E-mail: jrbwojcik@yahoo.com

**BUFFALO CONVENTION, June 2,3**—Holiday Inn Buffalo International Airport, 4600 Genesee Street, Buffalo, NY 14225. Contact R. Morin for reservations by May 5, 2012. Phone: (585) 322-3430

**DELAWARE VALLEY CONVENTION, June 10**—Sheraton Bucks County Hotel, 400 Oxford Valley Road, Langhorne, PA 19047. Contact R. Eldridge. Phone: (215) 949-0652

**PORTLAND CONVENTION, June 15-17**—Ramada Inn Portland, 6221 NE 82nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97220. Phone: (503) 255-6511. Mention ABSP for group rate. Deadline for reservations is May 20. Contact

S. Bicke'l Evans, 5545 E. Evergreen Blvd., #6606, Vancouver, WA 98661. Phone: (360) 750-7366 or E-mail: shirley@bickelstudio.com

**MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, June 30-July 1**—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact D. Farchione. Phone: (262) 895-4583 or E-mail: DebFarchione@aol.com

**PRINCE ALBERT & SASKATOON CONVENTION, June 30-July 2**—Siwak Farm. Contact A. Siwak, RR1 Stn Mpp Prince Albert, SK, Canada S6V5P8

**OKANAGAN CONVENTION, July 6-8**—Schubert Center, 3505 30th Avenue, Vernon, BC, Canada. Contact: T. Fernets. Phone: (250) 558-3055 or E-mail: afernets@shaw.ca

**BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 21-26**—See pp. 53-61 this issue—University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Johnstown, PA. Contact E. Kuenzli, 330 Jasmine Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 670-4189 or E-mail: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 5-10**—North University, Baia Mare, Romania. Deadline for reservations is May 1. For information and reservations, contact L. Griehs. Phone: (480) 837-4286 or (267) 688-8617. E-mail: griehs@comcast.net

**SEATTLE CONVENTION, September 1-3**—Seabeck Conference Center, 15395 Seabeck Hwy NW, Seabeck, WA 98380. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (253) 838-3822 or E-mail: laurie@flinn.us

*“If we love one another, God dwelleth in us,  
and his love is perfected in us.”  
—I John 4:12*