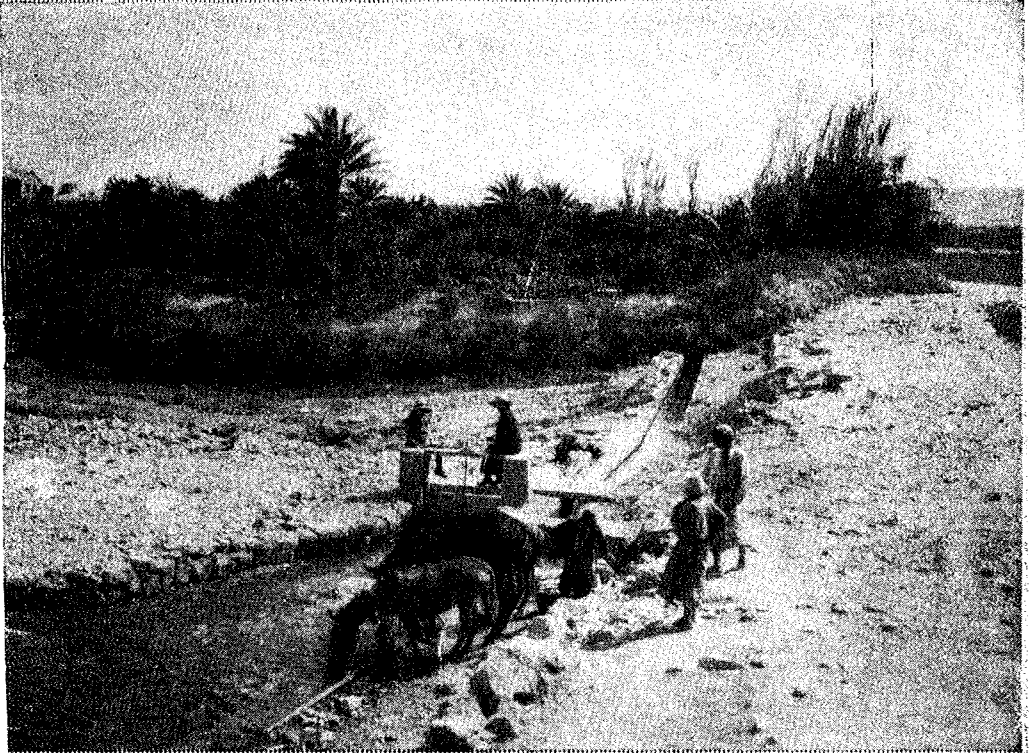


THE DAWN



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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

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

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

That the basis of hope for the church and the world lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God tasted death for every

man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be a partaker of the divine nature and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 11 Pet. 1:4

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

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35

The Truth About Hell

THERE has been a pronouncement by the Pope to the effect that the doctrine of hell-fire be more energetically preached by the church as an aid in restraining what has become an almost universal drifting away from God. The Pope explained that while it is granted that the hope of going to heaven at death is a much-to-be-preferred motive for serving God, since it is not as effective as it was hoped it would be, the only alternative is to resume the preaching of hell-fire in order that, through fear of this terrible punishment, the people might be kept more successfully in line with the church and with religion.

Regardless of the effect the Pope's pronouncement will have upon public opinion in general or upon the opinion of Catholics specifically, it does make it more than ever important that all thinking people endeavor to ascertain, if possible, just what the truth is about hell. Is the idea of eternal torture for the wicked actually taught in the Bible? If not, where did it originate? Let us examine these questions briefly and see what we will find.

The word hell itself is of Anglo-Saxon origin, and before it was used in English translations of the Bible, simply meant a covered or

hidden state. For example, the act of burying potatoes in the ground to protect them through the winter was called "helling" the potatoes. They still follow the custom in Great Britain of helling their potatoes. Putting a thatch roof on a house was called "helling" the house, but it didn't mean to set the house on fire.

However, back in the Dark Ages, and much to the confusion of the professed Christian world, theologians, mostly papal, gave a twist to the meaning of this word and used it to translate certain Hebrew and Greek words in the Bible with the idea of making it appear that the Bible teaches the doctrine of eternal torment for the wicked. So thoroughly was this fraud foisted upon the public mind that there have been very few professed Christians from then until now who haven't taken for granted that eternal torment is taught in the Bible.

But let us delve into the matter a little more deeply. In the Old Testament Scriptures—all of which were written originally in the Hebrew language—there is only one word that is translated hell in our Common Version of the English Bible. That word is *sheol*. This word appears in the Old Testament a total of sixty-five times.

It is translated hell thirty-one times; grave thirty-one times, and pit three times. Obviously this inconsistency of translation has added to the confusion which exists in the public mind with respect to the condition of the dead.

True, the translators of our Common Version of the Bible were not Catholics, but they lived at a time when the papal-inspired doctrine of hell-fire and damnation was quite generally accepted, even in Protestant circles, and naturally this influenced their work to a large degree. Since the original meaning of the word hell, that is, to conceal, or cover, was not so much different from that of grave, or pit, perhaps the translators took this into consideration and thus eased their consciences in using hell to translate sheol. At the same time, they were well aware of the sinister meaning that had erroneously been attached to the word hell, and knew that by using it to translate sheol, it would confirm the idea of torture that was already in the public mind.

But they found it impossible to use the word hell in every instance as a translation of the Hebrew word sheol, for to do so would have put some of the most faithful servants of God mentioned in the Bible in a place of torment, hence they switched back and forth from hell to grave as suited their purpose best.

For example, the very first time the word sheol appears in the Old Testament it is used by the good patriarch Jacob. He supposed his beloved son Joseph had been slain by wild beasts and was broken-

hearted over his great loss. Mourning for Joseph he said, "I will go down into sheol unto my son mourning." (Gen. 37:35) In this text the translators have given us the word "grave," for otherwise it would have revealed that Jacob believed Joseph was in hell and that he expected to go there himself when he died. With the papal meaning of torture which had been attached to the word hell, this would have been too much for the average reader to accept.

The Prophet Job prayed to go to sheol, but in translating this prayer the translators gave us the word "grave." (Job 14:13) Job had been going through much hardship and suffering. It had gotten to the point where he felt he couldn't endure it any longer, so he asked God to let him go to sheol where he knew he would be at rest. (Job 3:17-19) Had the translators given us the word hell in this instance, readers of the Bible would have soon learned that the hell of the Bible is not a place of torment, but a condition of unconsciousness—they would know that Job did not ask to go to a place where his suffering would be increased, and where it would last forever.

Another Old Testament prophet defines sheol for us in no uncertain words, saying, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in sheol, whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9:10) What a wonderful revelation of truth this text would have been had the translators here given us the word hell to translate

sheol, instead of the word grave, as they did!

The point is that sheol is the only hell of the Old Testament—the only hell that the people of God were told about throughout a period of 4,000 years. And what kind of place was it? It was a place of quietness and rest, a condition of unconsciousness, to which, they were taught by the prophets, both the righteous and the wicked go when they die, there to await the time when, by the power of the Creator, they would be restored to life in the resurrection.

Hell in the New Testament

The facts concerning hell as they unfold in the New Testament are fully in harmony with what is revealed in the Old Testament. The New Testament was written originally in the Greek language, and here the Greek word *hades* corresponds to the Hebrew word *sheol* of the Old Testament. We know this from the fact that the Apostle Peter, in a sermon he preached on the Day of Pentecost, quoted a text from the Old Testament in which the word *sheol* appears, and in doing so, he translated *sheol* by the Greek word *hades*.

The text Peter quoted on this occasion was that of Psalm 16:10. It is a prophecy of the death and resurrection of Jesus, declaring that Jesus' soul would not be left in *sheol*. As we have already noted, first of all this proves that Jesus went to the Old Testament hell when he died; and it proves, also, that the Old Testament hell is the same as the New Testament hell. In both these instances the

translators have given us the word *hell*. Here they were caught in a dilemma, for if they had used the word *grave* they would have put Jesus' soul in the grave, which, of course, would have been quite correct, but certainly would not harmonize with that other papal inspired doctrine concerning the immortality of the soul.

We should be glad that Jesus did go into the Bible hell when he died, for thereby he provided redemption for those who are there. In Revelation 1:18 Jesus himself makes a very interesting statement in this connection, saying, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, . . . and have the keys of hell and of death." The use of the term keys by Jesus is his way of assuring us that he will unlock the great prison-house of death and set its captives free.

This, in turn, is quite in harmony with the last two uses of the word *hell* in the Bible—that is, in the twentieth chapter of Revelation, verses 13 and 14. Here the Revelator tells us that *hell* will give up its dead; and that after this, it will be destroyed. The symbol used to describe the destruction of *hell* is that of lake of fire. It is generally supposed that the "lake of fire" is the Bible *hell*, but not so. The Revelator tells us that it is the second death, and that in it, death and *hell* will be destroyed. Fire is one of the most destructive elements known to science, and the Lord employs it in his word to picture destruction.

There is another Greek word in the New Testament which is trans-

lated hell, and that is **Gehenna**. This was the name of a deep ravine just outside of the ancient city of Jerusalem which was used as a place for the disposal of the garbage and offal of the city. Fires were kept burning in Gehenna in order to effect the destruction of whatever was thrown into the valley.

Because of the circumstances associated with Gehenna, and because Jesus knew that the people of his day would understand the import of what he was saying to them, he used it as a symbol of destruction. Nobody was ever tormented in Gehenna—it was used exclusively for destructive purposes. As a matter of fact, the Jews were prohibited from the use of torture of any kind, even of animals.

That Jesus' use of Gehenna was for the purpose of symbolizing destruction, is clear from his statement to his disciples, when he said, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." (Matt. 10:28) The translators give us the word hell here as a translation of Gehenna, and it is rather strange that sincere readers of the Bible have not noticed that it is a place of destruction, not of torment.

In another reference to Gehenna, Jesus intensified the picture of destruction by referring to the ever-present worms which infest dead carcasses. Speaking of ad-

verse attractions which might come into a Christian's life to draw him away from the Lord, and symbolizing these by such highly prized things as hands and eyes, he said that it would be better to cut off one's hand, and to pluck out one's eye, rather than to be cast into Gehenna, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. —Matt. 5:29, 30; 18:8, 9

As we have seen, fires were kept burning continually in Gehenna, so that everything that was cast into the valley was destroyed. In the event that a carcass thrown into the ravine should not reach the fires but lodge rather on the jagged sides, these would be destroyed by worms. Thus, by these powerful illustrations, Jesus confirmed the universal teaching of the Bible, that the wages of sin is death, not torment.

In telling us that the wages of sin is death, the Apostle Paul also declares that the "gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) Thus is emphasized again the glorious hope of a resurrection from the dead for all who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

This is but a brief consideration of the subject of hell. There is much more in the Bible about hell than we have space for here, so we suggest that you send for a copy of the book, "The Truth About Hell." This book examines every text in the Bible in which the word hell appears.



BIBLE STUDY

LESSON FOR AUGUST 7—

Songs of Thankfulness

PSALM 92:1-5—"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord"! How full of meaning, and how true, are these words! It requires but a moment's reflection to realize that everything we prize in life, yes, even life itself, has come to us through the mercy of the Lord, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. This is true, not only of the material blessings which he provides, but more particularly of the spiritual—those precious truths of his Word by which the eyes of our understanding have been given a vision of his glory, and by which we are inspired to serve him and to be like him.

Giving praise to God should not be thought of as something which is appropriate to do once a week, such as when we attend church on Sunday, for it is a daily privilege. Our hearts should be continually praising him. The psalmist speaks of showing forth his loving-kindness every morning, and his faithfulness every night.

There is an important thought suggested by these two words, "shew forth." To show forth means to put on display, and since it is the Lord's loving-kindness that we are to show forth it means that we are to spread out in array all the facts which will demonstrate

his loving-kindness. And what are those facts? They are the precious and revealing truths of the divine plan for human redemption and salvation.

The central truth of the divine plan is God's provision for redeeming the world from sin and death. In a very special way this demonstrates divine love, for we read that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16

Not only has the Lord made a loving provision on behalf of the sin-cursed and dying race, but we have the assurance that every detail of that plan will be carried out exactly as he has purposed. "My word . . . that goeth forth out of my mouth . . . shall not return unto me void," the Lord declares, "but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isa. 55:11

Because we have this divine guarantee that the plan of God for both the church and the world will be accomplished, we can show forth the Lord's faithfulness as well as his loving-kindness. In order properly to show forth the attributes of God's character in a

manner which will redound to his praise and glory, it is essential to proclaim the truth of his Word. Peter speaks of this as showing "forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—I Pet. 2:9

And we are to do this in the morning and in the evening—in other words, it is a daily privilege to "offer the sacrifice of praise to God," even "the fruit of our lips." (Heb. 13:15) It is a very similar thought to that of sowing the seeds of truth in the morning, and in the evening withholding not our hands from continuing the same appropriate effort to sing the praises of our God.—Eccles. 11:6

Verse three speaks of an "instrument of ten strings," a "psaltery," and a "harp." These instruments were apparently in general use in Israel in ancient times. While it is quite appropriate to employ musical instruments in our praise to God, it is quite possible that here they are being used in a symbolic manner to denote great truths pertaining to God's plan. It has been suggested, for example, that the ten strings mentioned might well represent ten important doctrines of the divine plan, beginning with creation. The ransom would be another of these doctrines, and so would be the high calling of the church, and the restitution of all things. It requires a harmonious blending of the tones produced by all of these doctrines to sound forth the praises of our God properly.

The term "solemn sound" is a translation of the Hebrew word

Higgaion. Its literal meaning is soliloquy, or meditation. The thought we get from its use in this passage is that our praise of God should not be a mere outburst of momentary enthusiasm, or excitement, but should be based upon a well thought out acceptance of the divine plan, a praise to God that springs forth from a heart that has meditated deeply and seriously on the great verities of the divine Word. If the Lord and his Word are our meditation day and night, our lips are certain to be busily engaged in showing forth his praises.

"O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep." The more we come to know about the divine plan of the ages the better we understand the meaning of expressions like this. Truly, the Lord's works are great! His original work of creation was great. His work of restoring the lost race, and the lost paradise, will be great. The bringing into being of the new creation is another of his mighty works.

And his thoughts are indeed "very deep." The Apostle Paul, after relating some wonderful truths pertaining to God's dealing with Israel, declares, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be

glory for ever. Amen."—Romans 11:33-36

PSALM 103:1-11—In this Psalm is continued the thought of praising God. In the Psalm just considered, the praising of God along general lines as his glories are reflected by his wondrous plan to bless all mankind is stressed; but in this Psalm some of the reasons for praising him which apply to us individually are referred to. For these "benefits" which mean so much to us our "souls" "bless" or praise the Lord. To make it more emphatic, the Psalmist adds, "And all that is within me, bless his holy name." The soul is the being, and we are to praise our God with our whole being!

In verse two a negative thought is expressed—"and forget not all his benefits." The appropriateness of this expression is readily seen when we consider how impossible it would be to remember all the Lord's benefits. The Lord blesses us in so many ways that it would be quite beyond our ability to remember everything he does for us. Indeed, there are many of his blessings of which we are not even aware. No, we could not remember them all, but how tragic it would be should we forget all the blessings which the Lord showers upon us from day to day! We are liable to forget many of them, but let us remember as many as we can, and as we meditate upon them, have our hearts and lives filled with thoughts of his loving-kindness.

One of the benefits which has reached us from the hand of the Lord is the redemption which he

has provided through Christ Jesus. He has redeemed us from destruction, from death. By faith we are even now justified to life through Christ, and have peace with God. What a marvelous blessing it is to know this; and having accepted the divine provision of redemption, this great truth should be helping to sanctify or set us apart more completely day by day to the doing of our Heavenly Father's will.

"Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." (Verse 5) All the natural good things we have to eat are furnished by the Lord, and we should be thankful for them. But more important are the spiritual morsels provided in his Word. Through this provision we are able to "taste" that the Lord is good. In Revelation 10:9, we are told of a "little book"—evidently symbolic of the truths of the divine plan—which the Revelator was told to eat, with the explanation that it would be in his mouth "sweet as honey."

John represents the church class living at the end of the age when this "little book" would be given to the followers of the Lamb, and many of us have tasted its sweetness and have rejoiced therein. In the case of the "little book," the eating of it finally results in bitterness; that is, bitter experiences of persecution because of having accepted the truth. But all such can say, nevertheless, that the Lord has satisfied their mouths with good things—truths, precious and enduring.

And when we feast upon the blessings of present truth our

"youth is renewed"—that is, we become new creatures in Christ Jesus through the begetting of the Holy Spirit. As new creatures, we should daily be growing stronger, and more like him who is our pattern. As new creatures, we do not grow weary and faint, as do the aged according to the flesh, because he gives us strength, and in his strength we can "mount up with wings as eagles."—Isa. 40:31

To know God's plan and to have his viewpoint, in the very nature of things, widens our interest in others. Because of this, while there are many blessings which the Lord showers upon us as individuals, we are not unmindful of his loving plan to offer blessings to all mankind in his own due time. The Psalmist mentions this point, saying, "The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed."—Verse 6

Then the Psalmist gives an illustration of this; that is, the deliverance of the oppressed Israelites under the leadership of Moses. In this illustration, the Hebrews represent the whole world in bondage to Satan—typed by Pharaoh—and their deliverance from Egyptian bondage represents the deliverance of all mankind from bondage to sin and death. Prior to this larger deliverance from Egypt, there was the deliverance from death of Israel's firstborn, which pictures God's dealings with the "church of the firstborn" during the Gospel age. (Heb. 12: 23) For our knowledge of this, and for the fact that our deliverance draweth nigh, we can indeed

thank the God of our salvation.

Verses eight to eleven enlarge upon the mercy of God as exemplified in his loving-kindness toward us, his people. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins," writes the Psalmist. How true! If he had, we would have no hope of life at all. But, because of his mercy, he made provision to cover our iniquities. Because of this, he rewards us according to our heart intentions.

The Psalmist declares that the Lord has removed our transgressions as far from us as the east is from the west. What a powerful illustration! The east and the west never come together, and so it is in the experience of those whose sins have been covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness. So far as counting against them is concerned, their sins are completely removed. The old man is reckoned dead, being offered in sacrifice. Truly our God is good, and let us continue to rejoice in his merciful loving-kindness!

QUESTIONS:

Why is it a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord?

How do we "shew forth" the Lord's loving-kindness and his faithfulness?

How do we praise the Lord upon an instrument of ten strings, and what is meant by a "solemn sound"?

Why does the Psalmist speak of the Lord's thoughts as being deep?

How do we bless the Lord with our "souls"?

Why did the Psalmist admonish us to "forget" not all the blessings the Lord bestows upon us?

How does the Lord redeem our souls from destruction?

In what sense does the Lord remove our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west?

Festival Songs

PSALM 105:1-6—The Psalms chosen for today's lesson were supposed to have been used on festival occasions, hence, appropriately we find that in them the note of thankfulness is very dominant—"O give thanks unto the Lord." In the opening verse of this Psalm, two other privileges are mentioned; namely, that of calling upon the Lord, and of making known his deeds among the people.

If we neglect the privilege—which is also our need—of calling upon the Lord in prayer to seek his forgiveness and his strength to help in our times of need, it won't be long before we will be neglecting to thank him for his loving-kindness. There are almost innumerable causes for giving thanks to the Lord, and not the least of these is the privilege we have of calling upon him in prayer; of approaching boldly to the throne of grace, there to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

And what a wonderful privilege it is to "make known his deeds among the people"! Outstanding among the deeds of the Lord, the deeds with which we are the best acquainted because he has revealed them to us, are those pertaining to his loving plan of salvation—that plan whereby he has promised to bless all the families of the earth. To make known these deeds to the people, therefore, is simply the privilege we

have—and the responsibility also—of bearing witness to the truth.

The second verse states that we are to sing psalms unto the Lord and to talk of all his wondrous works. If we are joyful in the Lord and by our joy are prompted to sing psalms and spiritual songs of praise unto him, our lips will not keep silent concerning the wonderful works of the Lord. Any Christian who has decided not to talk to others about the Lord and his wonderful plan of salvation, has contracted a very serious spiritual malady which, if not cured, is liable to lead to his death as a new creature in Christ Jesus.

"Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord"—While the rejoicing Christian will manifest his joy outwardly, his heart rejoicing, his inward meditations of joy in the Lord, will be especially treasured; for this joy will not in the least be affected by outward circumstances. It will be abiding, and a treasured source of strength in every time of trial.

We are to seek strength from the Lord, verse four declares. The apostle expresses a similar thought saying that we should be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." (Eph. 6:10) In other words, we are to be overcomers, not in our own strength, but in the Lord's strength. And to those who are thus "strong" in him, the promise is given that they shall

share with Christ in the great reward that was given to him of glory, honor, and immortality.—Isaiah 53:12

“Remember his marvelous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.” (Verse 5) We cannot remember all the Lord’s marvelous works, but we should endeavor to keep as many of them in mind as possible. There are his marvelous works of creation, and also the glorious features of his divine plan. And besides, the Lord is continually doing things for us individually. Every child of the Lord should be able to look back upon the providences of God in his life, and by recalling them, rejoice and be exceeding glad.

And this is true even though some of the Lord’s works on our behalf have been in the nature of judgments—“the judgments of his mouth.” Sometimes we need these judgments more than we need anything else; and when we do, we should be thankful that the Lord, in his wisdom, and in his great love for us, does not hesitate to administer them.

PSALM 117—This two-verse Psalm calls upon all the nations to praise the Lord, yet the second verse speaks of his “merciful kindness” toward us and declares “the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.” The application is apparently to the church beyond the veil, when, together with the Head, Christ Jesus, the whole world—all nations—will be enlightened and called upon to praise the Lord, as is here indicated.

Certain it is, that up until now,

the nations have not praised the Lord, nor will they until, following their great shaking by the Lord, their desire shall come. (Hag. 2:7) Then the knowledge of God’s glory shall fill the earth, and all people will rejoice in the privilege of praising the Lord, and of worshipping him in the beauty of holiness.

PSALM 118:19-24—Perhaps a more comprehensive understanding of this passage can be obtained by considering verse twenty-four first. It reads, “This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” The context indicates that the “day” referred to here is the time of our Lord’s first advent. There have been many outstanding “days” in the outworking of God’s plan, such as Noah’s day, Moses’ day, etc., and very important among these is the day of our Lord’s second presence, the wonderful day in which we are now living.

But the day of Jesus’ first advent was also very important. It was then, as is indicated in verse twenty-two, that the Head Stone of the Lord’s spiritual temple was rejected by his own people, and crucified. It was in that day also, nevertheless, when through the power of the resurrection, he was exalted to be the “Head Stone of the corner.”

Jesus, of course, is the one referred to, and it was through his death and resurrection that he opened up “a new and living way,” even the heavenly way that leads into the antitypical most holy, where our Forerunner has for us entered. (Heb. 10:20; 6:20) Thus it was that the Lord opened up for

the church the "gates of righteousness"—those gates prefigured by the arrangements of the typical tabernacle; that is, the gate into the court, the door into the holy, and the veil, or the way under the veil, into the most holy. These would seem to correspond with the Lord's own statement, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."—John 14:6

These are gates of righteousness because those who enter them become justified through the merit of Christ Jesus. These gates of righteousness were not open for the Lord's people until Jesus' first advent. Abraham, for example, became a friend of God because of his great faith in the divine promises, but he did not receive justification to life.

In verse twenty the Psalmist writes, "This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter." Here the term is used in the singular, whereas in the preceding verse "gates" are referred to. Perhaps we could think of this "gate" as the one mentioned by Jesus when he said "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be who find it." (Matt. 7:14) The gates of righteousness are provided by the Lord, but there is a gate of consecration, that is, a gate which we open by our consecration; and in passing through it, we enter the heavenly way which leads to immortality and joint-heirship with Jesus in the kingdom.

The privilege of entering these gates of righteousness, and of presenting ourselves in full consecra-

tion to the Lord is indeed great cause for thankfulness, as suggested in verse twenty-one, for Christ truly has become "our salvation." Here the reference is to that "so great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."—Heb. 2:3

There is a "common salvation" which later will be offered to all mankind, that is, during the "times of restitution of all things." (Jude 3; Acts 3:21) That salvation will be a restoration to human perfection and life here on the earth. There will be a "highway" leading to that salvation, "The way of holiness." Over this highway the "ransomed of the Lord shall return . . . with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isa. 35:8, 10

QUESTIONS:

What three privileges of Christians are mentioned in Psalm 105:1?

What is the purpose of calling upon the name of the Lord?

How do we make known the Lord's deeds among the people?

What kind of rejoicing is especially treasured by all true Christians?

How does a Christian obtain the necessary strength to be an overcomer?

What are the works of the Lord which we should remember?

When will all the people praise the Lord?

Name some of the "days" which the Lord has made, and identify the one referred to in Psalm 118:24.

What are the "gates of righteousness"?

How many salvations are referred to in the Bible?

Praise for the Works of God

PSALM 19:1-6—This well-known passage of Scripture describes the silent yet eloquent testimony of nature to the power and skill and wisdom of God, all of which reflect his wondrous glory. The testimony of the heavens may be read by the thoughtful of every land; for regardless of the language used all can understand that “the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.”

The Psalmist was not the only Old Testament writer to recognize the glory of God in the heavens. Job wrote concerning the Lord, “He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength . . . which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south. Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.” (Job 9:4, 9, 10) And the Lord, in order to impress Job even more vividly concerning his superior strength and wisdom, inquires of him, “Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth [the constellations of the zodiac], each in its season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? [or dost thou appoint its rule on the earth?—*Leeser*].”—Job 38:31-33

The shining hosts of heaven, by their numberless multitude, their

orderly groupings in various constellations, their continual yet never conflicting movements, their perfect harmony, their magnitude and their mutual benign influence, continuously—day and night—declare the glory of God. Anyone who meditates upon the unmistakable testimony of God’s glory as revealed in the heavens will scarcely be like the “fool” who saith in his heart, “There is no God.”—Psalm 14:1

“Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge,” declares the Psalmist. And then he adds—as translated in the margin—“Without speech or language, their voice is heard.” Thus we are reminded that throughout all the ages, the most brilliant and effective testimony to God’s glory that has daily been given, has been a silent one. Just as actions speak louder than words, so the object lesson of the heavens does also, and without doubt, as a result of this testimony, countless millions of human beings have been able to maintain their faith in the existence of God.

The faith in God that is engendered in the hearts of men by the testimony of the heavens, while a great blessing, and doubtless very pleasing to the Creator, does not enlighten the mind concerning his plans and purposes. This information can be obtained only through a study of his Word.

Thus we might say that God has two great Books—one, the Book of nature, and the other, his written Word. The Book of nature tends to establish faith in the hearts of the reverently inclined, while the written Word serves as a guide to those who seek, regardless of cost to themselves, to know and do the will of the Creator.

PSALM 65:9-13—Here the mighty and loving works of God which come closer home to man are related. Not alone do the heavens declare his glory, for his loving provision of the bounties of earth brought forth under the invigorating influences of the sun and rain, also testify of his loving-kindness.

While the bounties of the earth which come to us so plentifully every year seem more understandable to our finite minds than do the heavens above, actually they are not. We can plant our seeds in the ground, but the power of God which makes them grow is quite beyond our comprehension. How true are the words of a well-known poem, "Only God can make a tree."

"O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made

them all: the earth is full of thy riches." (Psalm 104:24) As we scrutinize the works of God we can see the wisdom that is manifested in many of them. On the other hand, because of our limited understanding, we might be inclined to wonder about some of the things which have been created. But in this passage, the Psalmist assures us that divine wisdom is displayed in all that God has created.

It will probably require all the ages of eternity for human beings to come to this full appreciation of the wonderful works of the Creator. In the New Testament we are told that throughout the ages to come the manifold wisdom of God will be made known through the church. (Eph. 2:7; 3:10) This is another reason the consecrated followers of the Master should give all diligence to make their "calling and election sure."—II Pet. 1:10

QUESTIONS:

Does the testimony of God's glory in the heavens enlighten human beings concerning the divine plan of the ages?

Where alone can one learn about God's will, and how to do it?

What will be one of the channels through which the world will learn about the wisdom and love of God?

LESSON FOR AUGUST 28—

Exalting the Word of God

PSALM 19:7-14—The first six verses of the Nineteenth Psalm remind us of the manner in which God has revealed himself through his vast and manifold works of

creation, particularly the heavenly bodies. But there is another book of revelation, one which is even more important, and that is his written Word. It is this that is

discussed by the Psalmist in the last eight verses of the Psalm. He speaks of this written revelation variously as being God's Law; his Testimony; his Statutes; his Commandment; and his Judgments. Each of these terms emphasizes a particular viewpoint of God's Word, and together they encompass the entire will of the Lord for his people.

"The law of the Lord is perfect," writes David, "converting the soul." The marginal translation reads, "The doctrine of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul." Doctrine means teaching, and here the Psalmist is telling us that the teaching of the Lord results in the restoration of the soul. This is understandable only in the light of the divine plan of the ages. The term soul as here used denotes life, and according to the doctrine of the Bible man lost life because of original sin so that now all, by heredity, are under condemnation to death.

The doctrine of the Bible further asserts, however, that God in his love sent his beloved Son into the world to redeem the fallen race from death, and that Jesus, in accordance with this plan, died the just for the unjust. (I Pet. 3:18) Also, according to the teachings of the Bible, Jesus was raised from the dead "for our justification." (Rom. 4:25) The Apostle Paul speaks of a "justification of life" which results from a full acceptance of the provision of life through Christ and a consecration to do God's will.—Rom. 5:18

Through the acceptance of and obedience to this "doctrine" therefore, our souls are restored, that is, by faith we are given a standing of life before God, and our service is made acceptable to him. During the Gospel age this is a faith restoration to life, and is provided in order that consecrated believers may, in turn, lay down their lives as co-sacrificers with Jesus. In the next age, however, those who believe with the heart will actually be restored to perfection of life, and will live forever.

"The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple," continues David. No true wisdom can flow from teachings that are not "sure." When there is any degree of uncertainty pertaining to information received, one cannot build upon it, hence it is valueless as a foundation for true wisdom. Satan would have us believe that truth must be tentatively accepted, and that we should be ready always to change our minds as so-called "new light" is presented to us. This is one of the greatest delusions of these "last days" in which we are now living.—II Tim. 3:1, 13, 14

David gives us a wonderfully true thought when he says that the testimony of the Lord makes wise the "simple." The proud of heart and those who are wise in their own conceits, are not fit subjects to be blessed by the wisdom from above. They prize their own wisdom too highly. Jesus gave us a beautiful lesson on this point when, in speaking of little children, he said, "Except ye . . . become as little children, ye shall

not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. 18:4; Mark 10:15

"The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." This is a reference to the divine standards of righteousness, or the expressed will of the Lord for his people, and David declares that they are "right." Only the fully consecrated heart is ready to acknowledge at all times that the will of God is right. If our hearts are to any extent not wholly submissive to the Lord we may find ourselves—inwardly at least—rebellious against his "statutes." But if we are fully resigned to the divine will, then the statutes of the Lord will rejoice our hearts.

It was thus with Jesus, of whom it was written, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psa. 40:8; Heb. 10:7-9) On one occasion, at least, Jesus found the will of his Heavenly Father very difficult, and would have been glad to be released from its obligations—"if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But he did not waver, and, regardless of the cost, he was resolute in saying to his God, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."—Matt. 26:39

"The commandment of the Lord is pure," says David. The term commandment and statutes as used in this text are somewhat synonymous, the two different words being used to avoid repetition. However, the Psalmist gives us an additional thought in his reference to the Lord's commandment, saying that it is "pure," and that it enlightens the eyes. God's commandments, his statutes, are ex-

pressive of the wisdom which is from above, which James tells us is "first pure."—James 3:17

Spiritual vision, referred to by David as an enlightening of the eyes, goes hand in hand with obedience to the will of God. Paul speaks of those who desired to forget God, that is, not to be bound by his righteous statutes, or commandments, and that God gave them over to their reprobate minds with the result that "their foolish heart was darkened." (Romans 1:21) It is certain that our depth of spiritual vision is in proportion to our heart obedience to the commandments of the Lord.

The beginning of verse nine refers to the proper attitude all the Lord's people should have toward him as a result of their knowledge of his doctrines and his commandments; that is, they should "fear," or reverence him. This proper and sincere reverence for the Lord is "clean," writes David—it couldn't be otherwise. And because it is pure, it will endure forever, for that which is based upon purity and righteousness has a solid and enduring foundation.

"The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether"; or, as the marginal translation puts it, are "truth and righteous altogether." The Lord expresses his judgments through his Word, and to the extent that we heed them, we are richly blessed. But this may also be a reference to his disciplinary judgments, his chastenings, which are administered by him in love in order that we may be trained to walk more circumspectly in the narrow way.

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The value of the Lord's judgments to us as individuals depends upon the manner in which we receive them. If we see and appreciate their meaning, and realize that they are for our eternal good, then they will be more desired, says David, "than gold, yea, than much fine gold"; and they will be "sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." The reason for this, the Psalmist explains, is that by them we are "warned," and also that in doing the divine will, there is "great reward."

Then David raises a very pointed question—a question to which the answer is so obvious that he does not bother to state it—"Who can understand his errors?" The Apostle Paul agrees that no member of the fallen race can correctly appraise his own thoughts and words and deeds, by saying, "I judge not mine own self." (I Cor. 4:3) We are not to take from David's question, however, that we are not at all responsible. The point he is apparently making is that apart from the statutes and judgments and doctrines of the Lord to guide us, we would not be able to know when we are doing right or wrong. However, by using the Lord's Word as a touchstone we should be able to keep ourselves measurably in line with the divine will.

But in addition to this we need to seek the Lord's guidance, and, as David did, pray that we may be cleansed from "secret faults." The thought here is that in addition to determining upon the basis of the Lord's Word when our course in life is pleasing to him, and when

it is not, there may be hidden ways, ways not apparent to us, in which we are out of line with the Lord. These "secret faults" could well be the beginning of serious sin against the will of God, hence the earlier they can be detected and put down, the healthier we will be as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

We also need the Lord's help in order to be kept back from presumptuous sins; that is, sins which are committed knowingly and wilfully, and without desire to restrain our actions. It is these presumptuous sins which lead to what David describes as the "great transgression." This evidently is the "sin unto death," and the Apostle John indicates that once an enlightened Christian gets so far away from the Lord as to commit such a sin, nothing will be accomplished by praying for him. —I John 5:16

It is important that we pray to be cleansed from secret faults, and to be kept back from presumptuous sins; and there is no question but that such prayers will be answered. But if we neglect thus to pray, and in other ways also neglect the provisions of divine grace, and as a result become guilty of the "great transgression," it is then too late for prayer to help.

In the last verse of the Psalm, we are given a brief, but model prayer which expresses to God the great desire of every true servant of his to order his life in keeping with the divine will, that "good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" which is expressed so clearly in His Word. (Rom. 12:2) It

reads, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

PSALM 119:1-8—Here we again find that meaningful word "blessed"—another "beatitude" expressive of the joy which belongs to those who keep themselves in the love of God through heart obedience to every "jot" and "tittle" of his Word so far as it is possible for them to do so. (Matt. 5:18) In the margin the word "perfect" or "sincere" is given for "undefiled." By using the word sincere, the text tells us that those who are sincere in their "walk in the Law of the Lord" are the ones who are "blessed."

And then the second verse adds, "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." "No man can serve two masters," Jesus explained, and the Psalmist also has properly emphasized the necessity of seeking the Lord with our "whole heart." (Matt. 6:24) Half-hearted Christians are not and cannot be pleasing to the Lord. James speaks of such as those who are "double minded," and that they are "unstable" in all their ways. —James 1:8

It is important, as someone has expressed it, "to do the Lord's will in the Lord's way," and one of the ways we are to do his will is diligently—"Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently." (Verse 4) Paul speaks of being "not slothful in business," and undoubtedly the chief business of every Christian is serving the Lord. (Rom. 12:11) Therefore the doing of

God's will is not to be looked upon as a mere incidental of life, but should be considered our real vocation. Because of this, everything else in life should be made subordinate to it. Then, with the Lord's will clearly outlined before us, we should pursue this course in life "diligently," regardless of what the cost may be.

In verses five and six we are given the thought that if all our ways are directed of the Lord, then we will have no cause to be "ashamed." The Hebrew word here translated "ashamed" carries the thought of "disappointed." Those who diligently do the will of God, can depend upon it that he will fulfil all his gracious promises to them. He will give them needed strength and courage; he will guide them in all their ways; he will extend his mercy toward them, forgiving all their unintentional sins. As for the saints of this Gospel age, he finally rewards them with "glory and honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7

QUESTIONS:

What two books of divine revelation are brought to our attention in the Nineteenth Psalm?

How does the Law of the Lord convert the soul?

Who are the "simple" who are made wise by the testimony of the Lord?

What are the statutes of the Lord, and how do they rejoice the heart?

Who alone are blessed by God with spiritual vision?

What are the judgments of the Lord, and how should they be viewed by Christians?

How are we able to understand our errors?

What are secret faults and presumptuous sins?

To whom does the joy of the Lord belong?

"Take Now Thy Son"

GOD'S PLAN IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Chapter Twenty-Two

22:1, 2 "AND it came to pass after these things." Evidently the statement, "these things," refers to the experiences of Abraham following the weaning of Isaac, as related in the preceding chapter. These accounts indicate that some time had elapsed—sufficient for Ishmael to grow up and marry; and, in addition, for what may have been somewhat protracted dealings with Abimelech.

While the period between the weaning of Isaac and the time when the Lord asked Abraham to offer him as a burnt offering is not clearly defined, it is safe to assume that the boy was well past twenty when the Lord spoke to Abraham on this occasion. To appreciate the full value of the lesson set forth in this chapter it is essential to remember that Isaac was a grown man, not a young boy, when his father was called upon to offer him up as a sacrifice.

The Hebrew word translated "tempt" in verse one signifies to prove. The apostle tells us that "God tempteth no man," and explains that one is tempted when he is drawn away by "his own lust." (James 1:13-15) In other words, temptation is usually associated with sin. God "tests" his people by holding before them the

opportunity to co-operate with him—sometimes at great cost—but he does not "tempt" them to do wrong.

"Take now thy Son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest"—Abraham certainly must have loved Isaac very dearly, and it is reasonable to conclude that this fact is especially mentioned here because the Lord was making an illustration of a much more important sacrifice which, in the divine plan, was to be made later—the sacrifice of his own beloved Son, Christ Jesus.

God had promised Abraham that his seed was to be the channel of blessing for all the families of the earth. But before this blessing could flow to the people, a loving father must give up in sacrifice his beloved son. In the outworking of this arrangement it was the Heavenly Father who gave his own beloved Son to be this sacrifice, and here the Lord is making an illustration of this by having Abraham offer his son in sacrifice—his "beloved" son.

22:3-6 Abraham met this test of faith with courage and determination. He had waited a long while for Isaac to be born; and the child was born under such circumstances that there could be no doubt about the Lord's hand in the matter. This increased

Abraham's faith so that now, even though the Lord had asked him to do something that might seem out of harmony with his promises, he had faith to believe that it would in some way be overruled. The Apostle Paul tells us that Abraham had sufficient faith to believe that if it were necessary God would raise Isaac from the dead.—Heb. 11:19

It was a three days' journey to the land of Moriah, where Isaac was to be offered, and this afforded plenty of time for Abraham to think the matter over and change his mind, had he been disposed to do so, but he did not. His was no halfhearted obedience. Having received the request from God to offer his son as a burnt offering he "rose up early in the morning" to be on his way to the place where the Lord had directed him to go. And the same spirit of faith and obedience enabled him to endure the suspense of those three days which it took him to reach the specified destination.

22:7-10 When Abraham and his party came within sight of the mountain on which the sacrifice was to be offered, he told his servants to remain behind while he and Isaac proceeded alone. By this time Isaac was getting curious. He was carrying the wood for the burnt offering, and his father had the fire, and also a knife with which to kill the lamb; but they did not have a lamb, so he asked Abraham, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

This question must have pierced the heart of Abraham, but he continued to spare Isaac from

knowing the real truth, and replied, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." Abraham, of course, did not realize how literally true this would turn out to be, either in the type, or in the antitype. In the antitype, Jesus was the Lamb which God provided, to take "away the sin of the world."—John 1:29

Arriving on the mountain on which the Lord had directed that Isaac was to be offered, Abraham built the altar, placed the wood upon it, and then laid Isaac upon the wood ready to be slain. Here it is well to remember that Isaac was a mature man, and could not have been placed upon the altar against his will by his aged father. By this time Isaac must have known what the Lord had asked his father to do, and the fact that he was willing voluntarily to cooperate helps to make the type accurate; for Jesus, the antitypical Isaac, also willingly laid down his life because it was his Heavenly Father's will for him.

22:11-14 Up to this point evidently Abraham believed that he was actually to slay his son. He poised his knife ready to strike the fatal blow when, by means of an angel, the Lord intervened and called his attention to a ram in the nearby bushes. Abraham was directed to use this lamb as a substitute for Isaac on the altar. Thus is pictured the fact that the antitypical Isaac, even Jesus, would become identified throughout the Scriptures as a "lamb"—the lamb which God provided to be the Redeemer and Savior of the world; the seed of

Abraham through whom, upon the basis of his sacrifice, all the families of the earth are to be blessed with an opportunity to gain everlasting life.

The angel who intervened to prevent the slaying of Isaac said to Abraham, "Now I know that thou fearest God." This angel was speaking for the Lord, and we get the thought from this statement that God was allowing Abraham actually to demonstrate his faith and obedience before reaching a decision as to his true attitude of heart and mind. Certainly God could have known this without putting Abraham to such a severe test. God has the ability to know by intuition, but we are not to conclude because he has this ability, that he is limited to this method alone, or that he cannot—if he so wills—choose, by observation, to find out things he desires to know.

22:15-19 Now that Abraham had fully demonstrated his faith by his works, God confirmed the original promise he made to him, by his oath. Thus it became the oath-bound covenant. Paul refers to this in Hebrews 6:13-19, and speaks of God's promise, and the oath by which he bound the promise, as "two immutable things." In the first place, it was impossible for God to lie, so his promise apart from the oath was immutable; and his oath was also immutable, and by virtue of these two unshakable testimonies, we "have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

The church is vitally concerned with this oath-bound covenant

because, as members of the body of Christ, we are the spiritual seed of Abraham, and will be the channel of divine blessings to all nations. (Gal. 3:27-29) Abraham's seed was to be as the "stars" of heaven, and also as the "sand" upon the seashore; that is, there will be a spiritual seed, and also an earthly seed. The spiritual seed is Christ and the church; and the earthly seed, beginning with the resurrected ancient prophets, will eventually include all the restored world of mankind. The oath-bound covenant, then, embraces God's promise to develop a "seed" which would be the channel of his blessings; and also the actual pouring out of his blessings of life, purchased by the antitypical Isaac, even Jesus, the Redeemer and Savior of the world.

22:20-24 Having proved his faith and obedience, the story of Abraham now begins to enter another phase; and these closing verses of chapter twenty-two introduce the patriarch's brother, and his family. This is in preparation for the account which is later given of Abraham's servant seeking a bride for Isaac from these kinsfolk of Abraham. This family of the patriarch's relatives apparently has no great importance in the divine arrangements except that it provided Rebekah to be Isaac's wife.

DEATH AND BURIAL OF SARAH

Chapter Twenty-three

23:1, 2 Sarah died at the age of 127 years. She was ten years younger than Abraham, who

was 100 years old when Isaac was born. (Gen. 17:17; 21:5) Therefore Sarah lived to see Isaac grow into manhood, and no doubt knew that he was presented as a burnt-offering to the Lord, and had been received back from the dead in a figure, a lamb having been substituted for him on the altar. Sarah is the only woman whose age at death is given in the Bible.

Sarah died at Hebron, the more ancient name of which was Kirjath-arba. Some archeologists cite this method of identifying a city as an indication that Moses, in compiling these chapters of Genesis, simply followed records that had been inscribed by contemporaries of the incidents recorded; and that, when coming upon the name of a city which he knew would be unfamiliar to the Hebrew people of his day, simply added a parenthetical explanation of the current name of the city. In other words, Moses, followed copy, but added explanatory notes where he thought it was necessary.

23:3-20 The remainder of this chapter simply deals with Abraham's arrangements for the burial of Sarah. The sons of Heth were those otherwise known as Hittites. Ephron, the one from whom he bought the field containing the sepulchre in which Sarah was buried, was a Hittite. These Hittites seemed to be very friendly toward Abraham, speaking of him as a prince who dwelt among them.

Ephron wanted to give his sepulchre to Abraham, but Abraham countered with a suggestion that he buy the entire field in which the sepulchre was located. Abra-

ham seems to have been a prudent business man, and probably reasoned that it would be much better to establish a legal ownership of the field and sepulchre through purchase, than to accept it as a gift. Perhaps the customs of the times were such that that which was given away could be taken back if the giver changed his mind. In any event, Abraham bought the field, and the account says that "the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying place by the sons of Heth." This particular spot of land was known as the "field of Machpelah."

SEEKING A BRIDE FOR ISAAC

Chapter Twenty-Four

24:1 Two points are revealed in this verse—Abraham was now old—"well stricken in age"; and the Lord had blessed him "in all things." At this time Abraham was 140 years old; his wife, Sarah, had been dead for three years; and Isaac was now forty years of age. While he had made mistakes, it was still true that the Lord had blessed him in all things, for, because of the covenant the Lord had made with Abraham, his providences overshadowed him continually. No testimony more worthwhile could be given of any servant of God than that which is here stated concerning Abraham. What life could be more rich and more satisfactory than one which the Lord blesses "in all things"!

24:2-6 The "eldest servant" of Abraham's house was Eliezer (Chap. 15:2), although his name is not mentioned in this

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chapter. He was not only his chief servant, but before the birth of Isaac, Abraham had decided to make him his chief heir. But the Lord corrected him in this and gave instructions that one of his own children must be his heir.—Chap. 15:4

Abraham was very solicitous that Isaac should not marry one of the Canaanites, but that a bride should be secured for him from among his own people. At the same time, for some reason not explained in the chapter, he did not want Isaac to go personally to his kinsfolk in Mesopotamia to find a wife, so he decided upon the course here outlined; namely, that of sending his chief servant to seek a bride for his son.

The fact that Abraham occupied such an important position in connection with the outworking of God's plan, and that Isaac was the seed of promise, justifies the student in the assumption that the manner in which a bride was secured for the promised seed is intended to be illustrative of a still more important feature of the plan of God; namely, the manner in which a "bride" is found for Christ, the antitypical Isaac and the true spiritual seed of Abraham.

In this beautiful picture it seems reasonable to conclude that Abraham represented the Heavenly Father; Isaac, the Lord Jesus; and Eliezer, the Holy Spirit. It is through the work of the Holy Spirit of God, as it operates through the truth—which is the calling agency—that the church, the bride of Christ, is sought out, and enabled to make the journey

over the narrow way to her Heavenly Bridegroom, Christ Jesus.

24:7-9 Abraham had great faith that Eliezer's mission would be successful. God had blessed him, and he was sure that the same God would send his angel before Eliezer to direct in this important undertaking. And how true it is that, in the exercise of his influence, his power (the Holy Spirit), the Lord can and does make use of every necessary agency, or messenger, to accomplish his good purposes.

Abraham assured his servant that if he followed instructions and failed in his mission he would not be held responsible; that he would be released from the covenant that he had made to find a bride for Isaac from among his master's own people. All of the Lord's people during the Gospel age co-operate with the Holy Spirit in seeking and finding a bride for Christ; and Abraham's willingness to release his servant from responsibility for lack of success if he did the best he could, might suggest to us that we are responsible only for our best efforts to carry out the Lord's commission of service, not for the results we might or might not achieve.

24:10-14 In these verses is revealed what was probably one of the principal reasons that Eliezer had been made the chief servant in his Master's household, for they reveal that he believed in Abraham's God and was glad to look to him for guidance and blessing in the undertaking assigned him by his master. Doubtless Eliezer sensed that this

mission was one which had further to do with the covenant God had made with Abraham; and having witnessed the marvelous manner in which God had blessed his master up to this point, he believed that he would continue to do so. Hence, he looked to Abraham's God in confidence that he would guide him to the proper maiden to be Isaac's bride.

24:15-28 Abraham's servant outlined a plan in his mind by which he would be able to determine the Lord's leading. Arriving in Mesopotamia, he halted by a well just outside the city of Nahor. It was apparently the custom of maidens to secure water for their households and Eliezer reasoned that here he would have a good opportunity to meet the one for whom he was looking.

And it was at this well of water that Abraham's servant found Rebekah—found her drawing water, and glad to serve those in need. The spirit of service is one of the chief characteristics of those called by the Holy Spirit to be members of the antitypical Isaac's bride. They not only are found near the great fountain of truth—as represented by the well—but are on the alert to use every opportunity possible to refresh others with its sparkling waters—the exceeding great and precious promises of God which make up the divine plan of the ages.

Upon inquiry Eliezer learned that Rebekah was indeed one of his master's own people. Also, in addition to being glad to serve him with water, she manifested further her desire to serve through her

gracious hospitality. Like Abraham, who entertained angels unawares, Rebekah, unknown to her then, urged a messenger of the Lord to take lodging with them, saying, "We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."

Receiving this cordial invitation, Eliezer bowed down and worshiped the Lord. How appropriate! Too often, perhaps, we think more of the means the Lord uses to bless us than we do of him. Nor did Eliezer overlook the fact that God was blessing his mission because of Abraham, and in addressing him in prayer said, "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren."

James tells us that Abraham was called a "friend of God," and what a wonderful testimony Eliezer gave to the effect that God does not leave his friends destitute of mercy and truth. (James 2:23) And how destitute we would indeed be but for the Lord's mercy and his truth! Quite apart from his earthly possessions, Abraham was the richest man of his day simply because God had entered into a covenant with him and had revealed to him that portion of his plan which was then due to be understood. And how rich are we today whose eyes of understanding have been opened to see and appreciate the length and breadth and height and depth of the divine plan to bless all the families of earth, in keeping with

the promise made to Abraham.

Eliezer gave Rebekah a "jewel for the forehead" (margin), and bracelets. These might symbolize spiritual blessings which all receive when they begin to respond to the influences of the Holy Spirit through the truth. Rebekah displayed enthusiasm over what was occurring, and ran to inform her family. Enthusiasm for the Lord and for the truth is another trait essential to all those who will eventually become members of the antitypical bride class.

24:29-31 Laban, Rebekah's brother, displayed great interest in the one she had invited into the home. Before he confirmed his sister's invitation, however, he seemingly made sure that Eliezer was not an impostor. He noted the jewelry he had given to Rebekah, and listened to her testimony of what the visitor had said, and was convinced.

Evidently Abraham was not the only one in his family who trusted in the true God; and it would seem also that Eliezer's manner of expression in connection with the God of Abraham, was familiar to Rebekah and Laban, for he said to their visitor, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord."

24:32-54 Eliezer was extended every courtesy in the home of Rebekah's people. Food was at once set before him, but for the moment he had more important things on his mind than satisfying his hunger. The Lord had blessed him so wonderfully in leading him to this home that now he wanted to settle the matter at once as to whether or not the ar-

rangements could be consummated. This show of hospitality and desire to serve by Rebekah and Laban might quickly change when they learned the real purpose of his mission.

So, before he would eat, he insisted on telling his story. He started in by identifying himself as Abraham's servant. It had been many years since they had seen or heard from Abraham, and when they learned that his chief servant was now under their roof, they were overjoyed and anxious for Eliezer to proceed with his story. Then he explained the real purpose of his mission, going into great detail as to the exact manner in which the Lord's providences had guided him up to this point.

Having set the facts before the family, Eliezer put the matter right up to them as to whether or not they were willing to co-operate. In telling them the story, he stressed the thought of the Lord's directing hand in the matter, and when Laban answered his pointed question concerning their willingness for Rebekah to accompany him back to Canaan and to Isaac, he said, "The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken."

Hearing this reply, Eliezer again "worshiped the Lord." Then he gave further gifts of jewelry to Rebekah, as well as clothing; bestowing gifts also to Laban and their mother. This seems to pic-

ture the additional blessings which come to the prospective members of the bride class when they come to the point of decision to walk in the narrow way; and also the blessings which come even to members of their families who co-operate with, rather than oppose, those who make a consecration of their all to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

24:55-60 Eliezer remained but the one night in this hospitable home. He arose early the next morning, and asked that he be permitted to leave at once for the return journey. But when Rebekah's mother and brother were faced with her actual and sudden departure, it was seemingly more of a shock to them than they had expected, for they pleaded with Eliezer that she remain with them for a while—at least ten days. The margin indicates "a full year, or ten months." The betrothal of a year was customary in those days. But Eliezer insisted on the importance of being on his way.

Then they said to their visitor that they would call Rebekah, and let her decide the matter. If she was willing to start right away, they would not hinder. This was done, and when the matter was put before her, she said, "I will go."

How beautifully this represents the attitude of those who become members of the antitypical bride class! It is the spirit of true and prompt consecration. Through the truth, these learn about the love of God and the love of Christ. They learn that he is the One al-

together lovely, full of grace and truth. They learn of their privilege of following the leadings of the Holy Spirit and eventually reaching the heavenly Canaan to be forever with the Lord. They hear the Holy Spirit, through the truth, saying to them, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty"; and, like Rebekah, they respond, "I will go."

While it was apparently the custom of the day for the family to have some say in the matter of who the daughters would marry, the final decision was apparently left up to them. At least it was so in the case of Rebekah. And having made the decision favorable to Isaac, the mother and brother blessed Rebekah, and said to her, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions." This, in reality, is a prophecy. The antitypical Rebekah class, the bride of Christ, will, in association with him, be the channel of blessing through which life will come to the entire race—easily, "thousands of millions."

24:61-67 Rebekah and her maidens—servants—made the journey to Isaac on camels. These might well represent the Word of God, or the various doctrines of his Word, which support the prospective members of the antitypical bride to be, as they make their journey to him. Only a whole-hearted love for the Lord and a well-grounded faith in the "exceeding great and precious promises" of his Word will carry us

BIBLE STUDY

through to the end of the journey, joyful in our anticipation of being finally accepted into glory with our Beloved, the King of Glory.

In the antitype, it is not an individual who becomes the bride of Christ, but the entire church class, beginning with those accepted at Pentecost, and continuing even until now. Rebekah's journey would, therefore, represent the journey of the church throughout the entire Gospel age.

As Eliezer brought Rebekah safely to the end of her journey,

and to the presence of Isaac at Lahai-roi, so the Holy Spirit guides the church to the end of her journey, even to the presence, the **parousia** of Christ. How stimulating it is to realize that now we are in his **parousia**, that already the majority of the bride class no longer need their camels, and that those still this side the veil have the assurance that their deliverance draweth near, and that they, too, soon will be with their Lord, the Heavenly Bridegroom, in glory! —Luke 21:28

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

AUGUST 4—"The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."—II Tim. 2:24, 25 (Z. '00-14. Hymn 95)

AUGUST 11—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of

life."—Rev. 2:10 (Z. '04-63. Hymn 20)

AUGUST 18—"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—I Thess. 5:21 (Z. '03-26. Hymn 44)

AUGUST 25—"We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."—I John 3:2 (Z. '03-151. Hymn 327)

The School of Christ

A CHILD is not prepared to solve a mathematical problem until he has first been instructed in the use of figures and of language. So also with divine truth: it is built up step by step, and to gain an understanding of it we must ascend by the steps provided—carefully, of course, proving by the Scriptures every advance step we take, yet not fearful to take the steps as we thus find for them sure footing. Only those who have implicit faith in God, and to whom a "Thus saith the Lord" is the end of all doubt and controversy, can be led by the Spirit of God into advanced truth as it becomes due—led into things new, as well as confirmed in things old and proved true by the same authority.—C. T. R.

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

O Foolish Galatians!

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"—GALATIANS 3:1

PAUL'S letter to the Galatians brings into sharp focus a condition in the Early Church which was a constant source of trouble to all the apostles, and particularly to Paul, because it was a condition which peculiarly affected the new Gentile converts; and Paul was the "apostle to the Gentiles." It constantly presented itself under the guise of an "advanced" form of Christianity and was promulgated by teachers who claimed not only to be Christians, but who also claimed to represent the "mother" church at Jerusalem.

The letters of Paul to the various churches were often prompted by some inimical condition within the particular church addressed. Thus, in his first letter to the Church at Corinth, the particular topic was carnality, represented in divisions. (I Cor. 1:10-15) In addition, there was pride, a desire to reign and rule over God's heritage, and an overriding of the spirit of justice in the church in favor of the judgment of worldly courts.

In this letter to the Galatians, Paul attacks another problem—the

imposition upon Gentile converts of Jewish ritualism; and, coupled with it, the undermining of his own apostleship by jealous church members who resented his appointment to the ministry of Christ by other than the sanction of the Jerusalem church.

Both these problems were inter-related, and constituted a serious menace to the spread of the light of truth, even so short a time after the departure of Jesus. That both of these obstacles have persisted within the church to the present time may seem remarkable, yet it is, nevertheless, true. In fact, the spirit of opposition there made manifest within twenty-five years of the Master's departure has been and still is one of the most virulent illnesses that afflicts the church.

The opposers of Paul on both counts were the "legalists" among the early Christians; those who were jealous of their power as a self-appointed hierarchy which arrogated to itself the authority to approve anyone who should be considered a teacher in the church. This presumption of authority be-

came solidly entrenched in the church as the years advanced, until it became of the force of a dogma—the doctrine of apostolic succession. In fact it was for centuries the source of virtually all power wielded by the early popes of Rome who claimed that they had a direct line of descent in authority from Simon Peter at Jerusalem, who was the one appointed by Jesus himself to lead the church after his death.

It is essential to a knowledge of what Paul is saying to the Galatians to understand, first of all, just who these people were, and also why Paul was so austere in his greeting when compared with the warmth of the superscriptions of his letters to most of the churches. In fact, his first sentence is a challenge, "Paul, an apostle, sent not from men neither by any man, but by Jesus Christ and by God the Father." Here he strikes instantly to the heart of part of the Galatian problem, for one of the principal parts of the defection of the church was caused by the doubts, sown in the minds of the brethren, of Paul's apostleship.

Who were these Galatians? Galatia itself was a state well outside of Palestine, occupying a central position in Asia Minor, in that part of Turkey known as Angora. Its people were of Gaul stock and, of course, Gentiles and heathen.

Paul's first recorded visit to Galatia was during his second missionary journey (Acts 16:6), and he again visited parts of the province during his third journey. During his first visit he must have

founded the church which on his second visit some three years or so later he found infected with the doubts concerning himself, and the wrong concepts of Christianity which called forth one of his most able expositions of the relationship of the Christian church to the older Jewish faith. It is this explanation which constitutes the great value of the epistle to Christians of today, and with it this article will largely deal.

The ministry to the Gentiles, which involved Paul in his controversy with Peter over the constitution of the church, had been tentatively tried some years before Paul's definite missionary work among them. Philip preached to the Samaritans (Acts 8:5), and many of them were healed and received of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17); and an Ethiopian also was accepted by faith and baptized.

Thereafter, Peter received his vision of the unclean animals and the command to go to Cornelius who received his knowledge of the hope of life in Christ from Peter's preaching, and the Holy Spirit again manifested acceptance of these Gentiles and their conversion as demonstrated by baptism.—Acts 10

Paul, however, after his long periods of study and contemplation in the seventeen years from his conversion to his becoming recognized by the older apostles as one of the great ones of the faith, had come to a clear-cut understanding of the inner mysteries of the teachings of Jesus—things which were probably not so clearly perceived

by any of the apostles until Paul made them clear.

One of the main themes of the teachings of Peter was the early return of the Master; of John, Jesus' admonitions to love as the manifestation of the Christ spirit; of all, their testimony to Jesus as the Messiah and the kingdom of hope which he had founded in the hearts of men.

It is to be doubted if many of the small companies of Christians which came together in those days, largely composed of slaves and broken men and their devoted families, had any clear concept of the great work which Christ purposed to perform through their weakness and dependence. Yet Paul saw that Jesus' teaching showed he intended out of such unlikely material to build the nucleus of the kingdom which had been the constant theme of his parables and of his private instruction to his disciples.

Paul's position in the church was a peculiar one. Of all the apostles he was the best educated, having been a Rabbi of the Jewish Law, and of the sect of the Pharisees. He was also a Roman citizen by birth, not purchase, and could move in the most select Jewish-Roman society if he so desired.

Paul's education in Jewish history and religion helped him, once his feet were placed on the Christian path by his miraculous conversion on the Damascus road, to recognize the logical sequence of events leading up to the founding of the Christian church as the inheritors of the promises made to Abraham.

By special revelation it was made clear to him that once the transfer of favor had been made from Israel to the church of Christ, the hope of life was no longer a prerogative of Jews only, as they believed, but was open, by a way vastly different from the way of the Law Covenant, to all sorts and conditions of men. (Eph. 3:3-6) The catalyst which should fuse Jew and Gentile, bondman and free citizen, into one unit was Faith in Christ. Having seen this, the entire plan of God for the salvation of the human race opened to him, and in that faith, unswervingly he prosecuted the work of offering life on Christ's terms to everyone who was prepared to listen and, upon conviction, to act.

It was in this spirit that Paul approached the Gentiles of Galatia and among them made converts in sufficient numbers to found one and perhaps several "ecclesias" or local churches.

However, Paul was the victim of an insidious campaign carried on by certain ones of the Jewish-Christian churches, and his Galatian converts were—as were many others apparently—the victims of this attempt both to undermine his authority as a representative of Christ and also in respect to the freedom of entry into Christian fellowship which was the theme of his preaching to the Gentiles. In this letter to the Galatian church Paul strikes hard at the whole position of the "Judaizers," and, in doing so, destroys the whole structure of Jewish pride in their fancied superiority to all other peoples, which their centuries-old

place as God's chosen people had built up.

What was it these Judaisers taught which jeopardized the truth of Christ's message? Simply this: That to be a select Christian, a converted Gentile must accept the superiority of the Jew as a fact. They must be circumcised, thus adopting the physical sign of being of God's chosen ones, even as were the Jews; and they must adopt a ritual of worship patterned after the ancient Jewish fashion, as evidence of their adoption into Christ. In addition they must recognize the supremacy of the church at Jerusalem in all matters of faith and doctrine.

At a casual glance, and so far away from the events as we are today, none of these things may seem of grave importance. We have become inured to the observance of precise counterparts of these things in our modern Christian worship; for, unfortunately, the error survived the onslaughts of Paul, and endures to this day.

An examination, however, of Paul's argument shows wherein lay—and still lies—the danger; and Paul's method of attacking the insidious propaganda of his day contains some sharp lessons for us who fondly believe that what we see paraded before us every day as the Christian church, is, in truth, the church as Christ founded it.

Paul, as we pointed out earlier, throws down the gauge of battle with his traducers in the first phrases of his letter: Paul, an apostle, sent not from men nor by any man, but by divine appoint-

ment to the apostleship, given to him on the Damascus road. Several times in his writings he tells the story, affirming that his conversion to the Christian faith was directly as the result of a heavenly vision. In this letter to the Galatians, he makes a specific point of this fact:

"But when he who set me apart even from my birth, and called me by his grace, saw fit to reveal his Son within me in order that I might tell among the Gentiles the Good News concerning him, at once I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were my seniors in the apostleship, but I went away into Arabia, and afterwards came back to Damascus.

"Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to inquire for Peter and I spent a fortnight with him. I saw none of the other apostles except James, . . . afterwards I visited Syria and Cilicia, but to the Christian churches in Judea I was personally unknown."
—Gal. 1:15-22, Weymouth

In chapter two he continues the theme, "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also, and I went up by revelation."
—Gal. 2:1, 2

Why did Paul make such a point of his independence? Principally, perhaps, to lay a foundation for his forthcoming argument, for he is about to demonstrate that the thing which God does, needs no interpolation of man's ideas to make it operative; that man's interference with the direct works of God serves no good end, but

Radio Programs Promoted

FRANK AND ERNEST BIBLICAL DIALOGS

All Programs on Sundays Unless Otherwise Noted

N. F. TIME	STA.	KC.	P.M.	St. Louis, Mo.	KXOK	630	11:15
St. John's, N. F. (Thurs.)	VOCM	1006	9:00	San Antonio, Tex.	KISS	FM	8:45
				San Antonio, Tex.	KMAC	630	8:45
				Shenandoah, Iowa	KMA	960	9:15
EASTERN TIME	STA.	KC.	A.M.				
Adrian, Mich.	WABJ	1500	10:00	-----	>>	P.M.	
Akron, Ohio	WADC	1350	9:45				
Baltimore, Md.	WFBR	1300	9:15	Fort Worth, Tex.	KWBC	970	10:00
Bay City, Mich.	WBCM	1440	10:00	San Angelo, Tex.	KTXL	1340	2:15
Columbus, Ohio	WHKC	610	9:30	Wadena, Minn.	KWAD	920	2:45
Connellsville, Pa.	WCVI	1340	9:30	West Point, Miss.	WROB	1450	12:45
Guelph, Ont.	CJOY	1450	9:30				
Hamilton, Ont.	CHML	900	9:45				
Lynn, Mass.	WLYN	1360	9:00	MOUNTAIN TIME	STA.	KC.	A.M.
Middletown, Ohio	WPFB	910	10:15	Carlsbad, N. Mex.	KAVE	1240	9:15
Muskegon, Mich.	WMUS	1090	10:45	Kalispell, Mont.	KGEZ	1460	8:45
Philadelphia, Pa.	WIP	610	9:30	Douglas, Ariz.	KAWT	1450	9:45
Pittsburgh, Pa.	WWSW	1490	9:30	Globe, Ariz.	KWJB	1240	9:45
Waterbury, Conn.	WATR	1320	11:45	Phoenix, Ariz.	KPHO	1230	9:45
				Prescott, Ariz. (Sat.)	KYCA	1490	8:45
				Safford, Ariz.	KGLU	1450	9:45
				Tucson, Ariz.	KVOA	1290	12M
				Wallace, Idaho	KWAL	1450	10:15
				Yuma, Ariz.	KYUM	1240	9:45
				PACIFIC TIME	STA.	KC.	A.M.
				Albany, Ore.	KWIL	1240	10:30
				Berkeley, Calif.	KRE	1400	9:00
				Calexico, Calif.	KICO	1490	7:00
				Los Angeles, Calif.	KGER	1390	8:45
				Moscow, Idaho	KRPL	1400	9:15
				San Diego, Calif.	KFMB	550	9:45
				Spokane, Wash.	KREM	1340	9:45
				Stockton, Calif.	KGDM	1140	9:30
				The Dalles, Ore.	KODL	1230	9:15
				Vancouver, B. C.	CJOR	600	10:45
				Vancouver, Wash.	KVAN	910	9:15

In the Spirit of Tolerance

ing Christian Knowledge

Victoria, B. C. CJVI 900 10:00
Wenatchee, Wash. KWNW 1340 10:15
Yakima, Wash. KYAK 1400 10:15

>> P.M.

Seattle, Wash. KOL 1300 5:15

CALIFORNIA RURAL NETWORK

Frank and Ernest—9:00 A. M. Pacific Time

Blythe KUCB 1450 kc.
Brawley and El Centro KROP 1300 kc.
Indio and Palm Springs KREO 1400 kc.
Riverside and San Bernardino KPRO 1440 kc.
Channel 248 on PM dial KPOR FM
Santa Ana KVOE 1480 kc.

The California Rural Network—with the exception of KVOE, Santa Ana—also carries the following programs:

BIBLE LECTURES

G. Russell Pollock—5 P. M. Sundays
Don H. Copeland—8:55 A. M. Saturdays,
and 7:25 A. M. Sundays.

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

(A News Broadcast)

Norman Woodworth—6:45 P. M. Saturdays

BROADCAST TOPICS FOR AUGUST

The Frank and Ernest topics for the month, and the literature to be offered, are as follows:

Week of August 7—"Chosen People"; literature offer: "Chosen People."

Week of August 14—"The Truth About Hell"; literature offer: "The Truth About Hell."

Week of August 21—"The Rich Man and Lazarus"; literature offer: "The Truth About Hell."

Week of August 28—"Evolution Versus the Bible"; literature offer: "Creation."

First copies of any literature offered in connection with these programs will be sent free upon request. Address Frank and Ernest, Box 60, General Post Office, New York, N. Y. For additional copies see price list on inside of back cover.

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AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTS

Vic. and N. S. W. Time
Geelong 3GL 222 metres 10:00 A.M.
Sydney 2KY 294 metres 8:15 A.M.
Western Australian Time
Perth 6KY metres 10:15 A.M.

POLISH BROADCASTS

Adrian, Mich. WABJ 9:45 A.M.
Chicago, Ill. WGES 8:45 A.M.
Niagara Falls, N. Y. WHLD 9:45 A.M.
Meriden, Conn.
(Middletown) WMMW 9:00 A.M.
Stevens Point, Wis. WTWT 9:45 A.M.

and Good Will Toward All

may obscure the main issue until finally man's ideas are presented as superior to God's.

Paul had preached salvation to Gentiles, as the Galatians well knew. He had preached it on the authority of the Holy Spirit, through which God had conferred on him the apostleship. Paul had sought no confirmation of this appointment at the hands of the Jerusalem church. The divine instruction was sufficient, and transcended all that any man might do. It needed no addition.

More than that, it was out of the Jerusalem church that the legalists, the ritual-worshippers, the Judaisers had come to undo the work which Paul had done so well and of which the Galatians had been the beneficiaries. In fact—and this has been a shock to many who have gone along in the idea that among the apostles all was sweetness and light—Paul takes the occasion virtually to accuse Peter with paltering with what he knows to be truth in order to placate and keep quiet the very sort of people who were undermining Paul's great work.

Paul, in his second visit to Jerusalem, forced the issue with the Judaising party by taking with him an uncircumcised Greek, Titus, nor would Paul permit any discussion of the need for Titus being so treated by those whom he designates "false brethren," but to whom, he says, "not for an hour did we give way and submit to them, in order," as he says, "that the Good News might continue with you [Gentiles] in its integrity."

Paul, says he learned nothing new from the leaders of the Jerusalem church, and that they might be considered men of importance meant nothing to him, even as God took no notice of external distinctions. One development did come from that meeting, however, which was that they, the pillars of the Jerusalem church, Peter, James, and John, were compelled to recognize the integrity of Paul's ministry, and welcomed both him and Barnabas into the fellowship of the church on the understanding that they, Paul and Barnabas, were to go to the Gentiles while the others ministered to the Jews.

Paul wants it definitely understood, however, that he did not solicit this approval, it was offered to him, and offered also, after a complete understanding that his ministry to Gentiles would not tolerate the business of compelling them to come under the Jewish Law, and bear in their bodies the Jewish mark of circumcision. Yet the Judaising Christians were not discouraged, only driven to carry on their propaganda more clandestinely than they had formerly done.

Then Paul told the story of his controversy with Peter at Antioch. Long before, Peter had received conclusive evidence of the acceptability of Gentiles into Christ. He had had a vision, had visited Cornelius, a Roman of Italy then in Caesarea, had baptized him and had seen his acceptance by manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Peter should have been under no illusion concerning the place of Gentiles in the church, and, in fact, Peter demonstrated on many occasions,

when he was away from his own church, his cosmopolitan attitude by eating and fellowshiping freely with Gentiles in the sight of all beholders.

"But" says Paul, "when certain persons came from the Jerusalem church, he withdrew and separated himself for fear of the circumcision party, and other Jews with him also concealed their real opinions so that even Barnabas was carried away by their lack of straightforwardness." Paul, ever alert to see an opportunity to use the weapons which circumstances put into his hands, uses this attitude on Peter's part to strike a direct blow at the whole policy of the Judaisers.

It may be that Peter had never overtly shown any disposition definitely to support the party in its schemes; neither, however, had he taken a strong stand against it. He had temporized, perhaps through lack of clear insight into the insidious danger that lurked in the Judaisers policy. Paul turns on him in front of all, Jewish Christian and Gentile convert alike:

"If you, Peter, though you are a Jew, live as a Gentile does and not as a Jew, how can you make the Gentiles follow Jewish customs? You and I, though we are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, know that it is not through obedience to the Law that a man can be declared free from guilt, but only through faith in Jesus Christ." Then he goes on to show that Peter had freed himself from the condemnation of the Law by his faith in Christ, but now, by his

act, if not by his mental consent, he was replacing the yoke of the Law around his own neck, and tacitly accepting it for his fellow-Christians by not solidly opposing the circumcision party's propaganda.

Paul's reference to Gentile "sinners" was an intentional reminder to Peter of a situation which had come up in his earlier life, recorded in Luke 5. It must be remembered that the Jew did not consider himself as classifiable among sinners. Did not his day of atonement each year cleanse him nationally, and did not his personal periodic offerings at the temple cleanse him individually from the condemnation which rested upon all other peoples?

However, on the occasion of Jesus' miracle of the great draught of fishes, when he was aboard Simon's fishing boat on the lake of Gennesaret, Peter, terrified at the proximity of the great teacher, besought Jesus to leave the boat saying, "I am a sinful man."

Paul, knowing this, referred Peter to his unregenerate days when he was a self-confessed sinner, though under the Law Covenant which should have been able to cleanse him from condemnation, and showed him thereby that he, Peter, had come to see the inefficacy of this "cleansing," and the surety of the cleansing which came by faith in Christ. Now, Paul says in effect, you, as a Jew, were confessedly unclean and found hope only when you came into Christ, yet by your actions you relegate these Gentiles, who also have come into Christ, to the un-

clean condition from which faith has rescued them as it rescued you, and you give at least grounds to these "false brethren" to continue their un-Christian teaching that the Gentile converts must assume the burden of the Law in order to be acceptable to us converted Jews as brethren.

The Law, says Paul, actually condemned to death, for none of us could keep it, and in Christ we found life; yet not life of ourselves, except the Christ-spirit dwells in us; "it is no longer I that live, but Christ that lives in me." (Gal. 2:20) If it were otherwise, he continues, and the Law could give life, then Christ has died in vain.

Peter could not gainsay this argument. His whole life was a testimony to redeeming grace, and, not being able to answer the argument should, by that very fact, have taken a strong stand against the Judaisers. Yet they were to continue their destructive work within the church, and never were eradicated, nor have they been even to this day.

However Paul does not let the matter rest there. He immediately sets about demolishing the argument of the circumcision party, root and branch, and does it by a masterly exposition of the axiom that, whereas the whole may contain the part, the part cannot contain the whole. To do this he parades before the Gentile eyes a historic picture of the founding of Israel, and the basis, if any existed, for their fancied superiority. He goes right back to Abraham for his evidence and shows that the

agreement to bless all families of the earth originated with God, and was only made with Abraham because Abraham had demonstrated faith. Thus the original covenant, which contains the life of all subsequent covenants, was one of promise based on faith. It had no legal aspect whatever, and law did not enter the scene until four hundred and thirty years later. He shows (Gal. 3) that the blessing of all nations was to come through a "seed," for such a seed was integral in the promise, "through thee and through thy seed shall all nations be blessed."

The Jews, separated from all other nations at Sinai when Moses brought down to them, fresh from the hands of God, the Law by which they might enter into a relationship with him different from that enjoyed by all other peoples, came to assume that they, as a nation, were the promised seed. Paul undertakes to disabuse their minds of this fallacy. They were not the seed, for the seed was one, not many, and he identifies the seed as Christ.

"Your mistake," he says to Israel, "was in assuming that the Law Covenant abrogated or superseded or changed in some way the promise made to Abraham. Don't be any longer under this misapprehension, because your own reason should show you that if you inherit anything because you have been obedient to a Law, then it no longer comes because of a promise. But, as a matter of fact, God gave it, this blessing you claim you inherit, because of a promise."

In other words Paul shows that the Law, being only part of a thing, could not and did not change the original thing, the promise, in any way. Furthermore, he goes on to show that the Law was but a temporary measure, and when it should be completely removed, the promise would still continue. And so it was, he says, for it was given to set bounds upon sin, in so far as Israel was concerned, so that they might be brought down to the time when the "seed" should actually appear, and thus be ready, if they were so minded, to join with him already identified as Christ, in doing the work of blessing.

Look, says Paul, before faith was a possibility we were prisoners hedged about by the Law, living under restraints and limitations, under discipline, in preparation for the faith which was to be. In this manner the Law played the part of a tutor, a "pedagogue," literally, a "boy-leader," one whose duty it was to lead children to school. (Gal. 3:24) Paul, in penning these lines, was evidently in no mood to save one shred of Jewish vanity, and it was for his ruthless stripping away of all the aids to Jewish pride that he earned the enmity of his former confreres, and the title of "apostate" in place of apostle.

Paul was a renegade Pharisee, a turn-coat Rabbi, according to his former compatriots, but, unfortunately, he was also the master of most of his assailants in knowledge and experience in the Law. Even to his Christian friends he was often a bitter draft, because Paul brought to Christianity an un-

changed austerity from his rabbinical days. As a believer in and a teacher of the requirements of the Law he had been one who hewed to the line. The letter of the Law was to be kept? Then keep it! No "try" to keep it with Paul, but a stern uncompromising unyielding demand, if you believe it, live it!

This is what had made him a fanatical persecutor of the church before his conversion. Christianized Jews were blasphemers against the Law, destroy them! Now he himself had turned about face, had seen the "liberty wherewith Christ made free" and that same uncompromising spirit that had driven him to persecute, now drove him to defend.

Paul was a purist. Upon his own flesh he used the whip and the spur, he drove himself in the harness of Christ, because to follow Christ was, to him, to refuse to admit that the flesh could not be made to go where the spirit led. Thus, when the Law, which he now knew to be less in power than the spirit, was made superior to the spirit, he stripped the arguments of his opposers to the bare bones and showed the inferior position of the Law, and the people of the Law, to Christ and the people of Christ.

The Law, says Paul, was for children not yet fully educated. It was a slave leading those who leaned on it to the Master; and in that simple, yet truthful illustration he placed Christ so far above the Law, and made the position of these despised, ignorant Christians so superior to the highly

placed doctors of the Law, that their rage must have been frightful to behold. Yet he had not stretched the truth one iota beyond what was the absolute fact of the matter.

God's original promise to Abraham was the fountain-head of both the Law of Israel and the faith of Christ. No Christian became one by following the channel of the Law to a conclusion, because the Law only served the purpose of demonstrating the existence of guilt, of sin, and could never end in giving life to any guilty man. It was a constant accuser, a "curse," as he has described it in the thirteenth verse, from which Christ had redeemed his people by accepting upon his own person the full weight of that curse, and had suffered death as a result.

In his letter to the Church at Rome, Paul develops the same theme, and in chapters seven and eight of that letter he reviews life as a Jew under the Law before his eyes were opened by the power of Christ. He tells us that his whole mind and soul were bound up in the Law, which was the only way to life, as he then believed, that there was in the world. Yet reason, based on his own experience, told him that this could not be true because Law was the one thing in the world that convicted of sin, ergo, if there was no Law there could be no violation of it, hence, there could be no sin.

Paul reasoned further. The Law only binds during the life of a person, and he uses the illustration of a marriage between two people. (Rom. 7:4) The Law was

of the earth; he, Paul, was formerly married to the world and condemned by the Law, but Christ had ended the Law and now Paul was free to remarry.

In our former state, married to the world, our flesh was full of passion, and that passion the Law condemned, but the Law was dead by Christ's victory and has no further power over us. We no longer obey the commands of a dead husband, but now live according to the demands of a new husband—Christ. No longer do we cater to the requirements of the flesh, but now we live after the spirit. Then Paul asks a question. (Rom. 7:7, 13) Does this mean that the Law itself was sinful? No, he answers, for without the Law we could never know what those things are which God counts sinful, and we must know those things in order to rid them out of our hearts.

We see this well illustrated in the case of Adam in the Garden, to depart for a moment from Paul's argument. Had God said to Adam, "Of all the trees of the Garden you may freely eat," and stopped there, sin could never have entered by the door through which it came; but God did not stop there. He placed a prohibition on one tree, and the moment that prohibition was placed, Law came into being. "You may not," God had said, and followed that stricture with a statement of penalty for breaking the prohibition. The existence of that law was the thing that would demonstrate the sin of disobedience. And so with all law. It convicts of sin where sin exists.

It cannot give life to fallen human beings.

Then Paul changes his viewpoint as recorded in chapter eight of his letter to the Romans, and shows that once we come out from under this dark menace of the Law, into the freedom which Christ offers us, legal condemnation ceases. What the Law could not do because it affected fallen human lives and was interpreted through imperfect human minds, God has done in another way.

His Son, a perfect man, was made a willing sacrifice for sin, and because he, a perfect human, was able to keep this Law—which could be kept only by a perfect human. Throughout the whole of his earthly life, Jesus never once violated one jot or tittle of that Law, thus never came under condemnation to it. He ended it in so far as believers are concerned.

The new law of Christ condemned also but after a different fashion. It condemned sin in human nature, and not **sinner**s. Thus, when one has come into Christ, he is regulated by the new spiritual mind of Christ. The flesh is no longer that which dictates our lives, nor dominates our thinking. However, if one so freed from condemnation persists in reverting to fleshly desires and sets hope upon earthly things, he simply returns voluntarily to legal condemnation. How much better it is to hold fast to the peace of mind and the full assurance of life which faith in Christ can give, than to return again to the old unsatisfactory and, in truth, **hopeless** condition from which we have been freed!

Those who have this peace of faith are no longer at war with God. They recognize the righteousness of God's law, agree with it, and accept the only way of escape—through Christ. "Great **peace** have they which love thy law, and there shall be no stumbling block before them."—Psalm 119:165

"You," says Paul, "no longer fear slavery to the sin within you because you have been adopted as God's sons. In this you rejoice, and the spirit of God bears witness with this spirit within you, that you are indeed sons of God." This reasoning of Paul's was the core of his argument to the Galatians, who, having accepted the freedom of Christ through faith in him, thus had become heirs of the promise made to Abraham by direct line of succession through the "seed" of Abraham. "Why, then," he reasonably asks, "do you feel constrained now to enter into legal bondage such as the Jew himself has been rescued from, if only he will accept the proffered freedom? It is foolishness, for if you are Christ's you are Abraham's seed and legitimate heirs of God's promise."—Gal. 3:29

We leave the argument at that point. It is plain enough for any man to follow the exact reasoning of Paul as it affected these puzzled Gentile converts, but what of ourselves? Have we fully persuaded ourselves that we could never be as foolish in such a circumstance as the Galatians? Let us examine the matter a little more closely. Is there no one among us who believes that if he will but follow

the instructions of a human leader, living or dead, without personal examination of the things taught and comparison with God's Word to see that they are exactly as taught therein, he shall inherit eternal life?

Is there no one among us who believes that to observe some certain ritual of worship is to do all that is required of a Christian? in other words, that salvation is of "works" of "doing" things, rather than of faith?

Is there no one who claims to be a Christian, yet also firmly believes that he must obey the Ten Commandments? Yet the Ten Commandments were given not to Christians, but to Jews, and were the sum of the Law given to Israel. These also were ended by Christ, to all who believe.

"But," you inquire, "do you mean to say that the Ten Commandments are not good things to obey? Would you take them away from the church? Why, you are advocating virtual anarchy!"

Glance casually around the world in which you live, and find some small evidence that anywhere at anytime in history, the Ten Commandments have ever been kept by any nation of which you have knowledge. You have a condition closely bordering on anarchy, which never could have been the case had the professed Christian church honored and obeyed the instruction of its Head who, while keeping the Ten Commandments inviolate as intended and magnified them and made them honorable (Isa. 42:21), said, "A new commandment I give to you, to love

one another as I have loved you. It is by this that everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."—John 13: 34, 35

If that one simple law or command of Jesus were to become the guiding motive of all conduct, is any further law required? Can one truly love, and not honor God above all other things? Can one really love and not treat his neighbor as himself? Can one unfeignedly love and not keep the Golden Rule?

The day is coming when, under the rulership of the Prince of Peace, every law book in every lawyer's office, every national code of laws in every nation of the earth will be torn up and cast aside, to be replaced with that one simple rule, "love one another." In it is the solution of all the earth's difficulties and perplexities; for love, pure, unadulterated love, is the solvent of every human, every national, every racial relationship.

O foolish Galatians! O foolish Christians! Can you afford to look for any other way to life and happiness than the way opened to you by Jesus of Nazareth? The time is short, as yet the door is open, the dark night has not yet fully set in, the opportunity to receive the peace of faith in Christ may still be taken advantage of.

But the night comes on apace, a dark night of terror and horror in which every man's faith, or lack of it, will be tested to the full, before the dawn of hope for the whole world of mankind breaks, and the Sun arises with healing in his wings.

"Songs in the Night"

AUGUST 1

Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.—Matthew 4:10

DURING the forty days in the wilderness our Lord had come to see that the dominion of earth could be attained only through great suffering. He was weak from his long fast, and all the details of prophecy were before his mind. He saw himself as a lamb dumb before his shearers; as the serpent lifted up in the wilderness. Satan's suggestion was a temptation, but after consideration he saw that Satan was asking him to violate his covenant—to go contrary to God's will. Immediately he answered, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Then the devil left the Lord, finding nothing to work upon—so loyal was Jesus to the Word of Jehovah. Afterwards the angels came and ministered unto him.—Z '12-262 (Hymn 200)

AUGUST 2

His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.—Jeremiah 20:9

IF EVERYTHING else in life were taken from us, and we were without a penny in the world, we would still be rich toward God if we had the truth. And so we all are needy in respect to this intelligence, this knowledge. When we perceive this, how could we be indifferent to the telling forth of the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light! So, then, God has so arranged this matter that all those who believe and become children of God may have a share with him in his great work. And since we know these things, they become a test of our loyalty and our love. And the Lord seeing or not seeing this character in us will determine whether or not we shall be associated in the

honorable work on the other side of the veil.—Z '13-315 (Hymn 275)

AUGUST 3

The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.—John 6:63

THE Master's words were "words of life" in the sense that they conveyed the great message of the terms upon which we may have everlasting life and become his joint-heirs. Nowhere are the terms of discipleship more clearly laid down than in Jesus' words, because the disciples could understand what would be the meaning of the figures of self-denial, cross-bearing, and walking in his steps, even if they could not understand the philosophy of justification, sanctification, election, and divine foreknowledge.—Z '12-271 (Hymn 264)

AUGUST 4

Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.—Psalm 73:24

THE humble and believing children of God will realize that while they may not be able at all times to understand the Lord's ways in all his dealings, they can know of his wisdom, love, and care, and they can therefore trust him where they cannot trace him. We should not expect to be able always to comprehend the divine wisdom, which is so much beyond our own; yet we can often see it afterward. Sometimes his discipline may be severe, and by no means easy to bear, yet "afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness." After the bitter comes the sweet; so let us take the bitter patiently, and rejoice in hope of the sure fulfilment of all the exceeding great and precious promises to be realized in due time by those who patiently continue in well-doing—in submitting without reserve to the providence of God, to the guidance with his counsel.—Z '93-233 (Hymn 242)

AUGUST 5

Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.—James 1:4

THIS grace of patience smooths the way for every other Christian grace, because all must be acquired under the process of patient and continuous self-discipline. Not a step of progress can be gained without this grace of patience; and not one of the graces more beautifully adorns the Christian character, or wins the approval of the world's conscience, or glorifies the God of all grace whose truth inspires it. It is enduring meekness, striving to stem the tide of human weakness, and endeavoring with painstaking care to attain to the divine likeness. It is slow to wrath and plenteous in mercy; it is quick to perceive the paths of righteousness, and prompt to walk in them; it is mindful of its own imperfections and sympathetic with the imperfections and shortcomings of others.—Z '11-408 (Hymn 258)

AUGUST 6

This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.—John 15:12

THE love of Christ was a sacrificial love. So those who are invited to become members of Christ's body are to have this same love. It is not merely the love demanded by God's perfect law, which is incumbent upon all his intelligent creatures on whatever plane; but it is more. It is a love which will gladly lay down the life purchased for them by the death of Jesus. This life is laid down as a sacrifice with their Lord and Head. We lay down our lives in service for the brethren, and this sacrifice is acceptable because the merit of Christ is imputed to us, making us reckonedly perfect before God. As the apostle says, "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." The brethren could not demand this of us, nor we of them; but we should all do so gladly, as we have opportunity.—Z '15-72 (Hymn 325)

AUGUST 7

Fear not: . . . I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.—Genesis 15:1

DO HOSTS of foes oppose themselves—place obstacles in your way, hinder

your influence and seek to dishearten you by heaping upon you reproaches, and do circumstances seem to conspire against you to fill your heart with alarm and dread? Say to your soul, "Fear not," "Hope thou in God," and mark his loving providences as "through waves and clouds and storms he gently clears thy way"—until a blessed acquaintance with God through such experiences develops in the heart that perfect love that casteth out fear. Then shall you enter more and more fully into the blessed rest of faith, and like the eagle that soars above the storm cloud, live at such an altitude of Christian experience as to enable you to rejoice in the Lord always and in everything to give thanks.—Z '95-288 (Hymn 149)

AUGUST 8

He laid His hands on every one of them, and healed them.—Luke 4:40

THE Lord's followers, even the humblest of them, in proportion as they receive of his Spirit, may communicate it through his Word and bring to wounded and broken hearts peace and joy and blessing, regardless of physical conditions of discomfort, so that, as the apostle explains, they may rejoice even in tribulation, knowing what the tribulations are working out for them in the way of greater glory and blessing and association with the Lord in his kingdom. Would not he who has had the eyes of his understanding opened that he might see with clearness the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God esteem this blessing as of much greater value and importance than simply the restoring of natural sight? Who that has tasted that the Lord is gracious has not participated in a greater miracle than did those who tasted of the loaves and the fishes which our Lord so miraculously increased that they fed the five thousand? It is true indeed, then, that the Lord has made it possible for his humbler servants in the humbler walks of life and with few natural abilities, but possessing His Spirit and his Word, to do mighty works even today—"Mighty through God to pulling down of strongholds" of error and of sin.—Z '04-28 (Hymn 36)

AUGUST 9

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.—II Corinthians 7:1

THE Lord requires a demonstration on our part of activity against the motions of sin in our flesh, in our minds, as an indication that the new creature is alive to the responsibilities of its conduct as a soldier of the cross, and additionally because he has decreed that none shall be of the little flock of joint-heirs with his Son who do not in these respects of loyalty to the Father and to righteousness and opposition to sin demonstrate their heart likeness to Jesus. Whoever refuses or neglects the development of such a character likeness or copy of Christ's mind, disposition, is refusing or neglecting to make his calling and election sure to a place in the kingdom class. In view of this, how zealously we should strive to fulfil the urgent admonition of the apostle—to demonstrate and to increase to fervency our love for righteousness, for truth, for all the ways of the Lord, by opposition to sin, especially in our own bodies, cleansing ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit (mind).—Z' 07—136 (Hymn 78)

AUGUST 10

Speaking the truth in love, . . . grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.—Ephesians 4:15

WE ARE to exercise our function of ambassadorship—we are to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. And in telling the message of his grace we shall grow spiritually. "He that watereth shall himself be watered." As we proclaim the truth from an honest, earnest, loving heart we shall become more and more filled with it ourselves. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty"—to leanness of soul. As we give out to others, our own store of blessings is increased. We are to develop day by day this quality of love. Why is this? Because it will make

us like God, and that is the one thing to be desired—the one thing necessary.—Z' 15-202 (Hymn 165)

AUGUST 11

Be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee.—Isaiah 41:10

OUR attainment of the prize of our heavenly calling, based upon certain conditions which we are striving to meet, is not dependent upon our own perfection or anything that we could do. The basis of it is the knowledge of our own imperfection and our acceptance by the Father because of the merit of our great Advocate imputed to us. It was God who provided for the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; and it is God who has drawn us to himself and who gives us grace to follow in the footsteps of Jesus in the way of self-sacrifice. While with fear and trembling (with great carefulness) we work out our salvation, we realize the promised grace in every time of need; and we may be confident that our best efforts toward righteousness are acceptable to God only when presented through the merit of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by faith.—Z' 11-108 (Hymn 120)

AUGUST 12

Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.—Hebrews 12:3

IN PROPORTION as we are able to take our Lord's viewpoint in our experiences in life, we may be calm. If the Father permits trying experiences for our testing, or for the testing or proving of others, in ways we may not understand, it is for us to rejoice to have his will done. . . . If we faithfully endure to the end the reward will be ours. If we prove our loyalty and keep our faith that God is supervising our affairs, and that no good things will be withheld from those who are walking uprightly, we shall some day hear his "Well done, good and faithful servant."—Z' 11-121 (Hymn 152)

AUGUST 13

Great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.—Matthew 15:28

IT IS proper that we should draw

analogies from our Lord's conduct and that we should suppose that the illustrations of Scripture, showing the trials and tests of faith, should teach us something respecting the Lord's plan of dealing with those who approach him in prayer. During this Gospel age the Lord is seeking for those who can and will exercise faith. Some undoubtedly are so constituted mentally that they cannot do this—not that God created us without the ability so to do in him, but that the fall has distorted the original creation so that many today are unable to exercise faith in a proper and full degree. It is not for us to denounce such, but rather to learn from God's Word that he has a gracious plan, which is broad enough to include this class as well as all others in the mercy and forgiveness provided through the redemption at Calvary.—Z '06-170 (Hymn 174)

AUGUST 14

Lord, teach us to pray.—Luke 11:1

WHO has not noticed that all the great Bible characters used of the Almighty were accustomed to go to him regularly in prayer and to seek for guidance from him in respect to every matter? Even the great Redeemer, holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, needed to pray to the Father—needed his fellowship and communion—needed to be in touch with the Infinite One. Some may ask, Would the Almighty change his plans in answer to our petitions? Assuredly he would not. Indeed, on the contrary, we are cautioned in the Scriptures to ask only according to his will. We are warned that if we ask amiss our petitions will not be answered. Hence the necessity for studying in God's Word and being enlightened thereby respecting the divine program that we may ask in harmony with every feature of it and receive strength and encouragement through the answer to our petitions.—Z '11-411 (Hymn 239)

AUGUST 15

There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.—II Timothy 4:8

IT WAS the custom in olden times to have running races and to give a crown to the successful runner at the

end of the course. As it was not sufficient to enter a race, or start to run, but it was required that the race be run faithfully and perseveringly to a conclusion, so with this race which we are running as followers of Jesus, it is essential not only that we shall make consecration to the Lord, but that we persevere to the end, and our reward will be the crown of life in the sense that we will get life on the highest plane, inherent life, immortality. It will be a crown of righteousness in the sense that only those who are approved of God as righteous will thus be rewarded and glorified; and our hope is, therefore, that we may be accepted in the Beloved; that the righteousness of the Lord may be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit; and that the reward which God has promised to those who love him and serve him will be granted to us.—Z '03-189 (Hymn 291)

AUGUST 16

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Romans 6:23

WHILE the Heavenly Father may not be pleased to grant us either for ourselves or for our children immunity from pain, suffering, and death, nevertheless he has made a still grander and more glorious provision for us through our Lord Jesus Christ—a provision for our eternal life. But this gift is reserved for those who either now or in the future shall cultivate and exemplify generosity, faith, love toward God and man. Blessed are we whose eyes and ears of understanding are now open to know the grace of God, to appreciate the same—we who are now in the school of Christ to develop the fruits and graces of his spirit, the likeness of our Lord. For such is the kingdom, the joint-heirship and blessings and privileges not only of eternal life, but of joint-heirship with Christ. As for the world in general, it will be required of them during the millennial age that they also shall develop the fruits and graces of the Lord's Spirit if they would be accounted worthy of eternal life. Sonship implies likeness, and none are to have eternal life except those acceptable as sons.—Z '04-285 (Hymn 235)

AUGUST 17

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.—John 14:16

WHAT a satisfaction, what a comfort has come to the Lord's people through their privilege of being used by him and adopted into his family by the begetting of the Holy Spirit, the adoption of the Holy Spirit, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the holy influence, the blessing of the Father and of the Son, guiding our judgments, guiding our hearts, opening to us the Scriptures, causing our hearts to burn within us as we are brought to a still greater appreciation of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of our Father's glorious plan of salvation for ourselves and all the families of the earth! . . . Truly, as our Lord said, the Holy Spirit shows us things to come, and explains to us things that are past. How many of our blessings are along the line of appreciation of coming things—the millennial kingdom, the times of restitution, the uplifting and strengthening of all the families of the earth!—Z '08-139 (Hymn 91)

AUGUST 18

A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.—Proverbs 17:17

WELL has the wise man said that a friend loveth at all times. He who merely loves at a time when he thinks it will be to his own advantage to love knows not love. He who loves and is a brother in prosperity merely, and whose love and friendship wither under the heat of persecution and adversity, has never known love in its true sense, but merely a certain brand of selfishness—the love of the world. As God commended his love toward us and showed us that not through selfishness, but generosity, at a great cost to himself, he provided us release from our prison, and gave us privileges of sonship, so true love will be willing to sacrifice. Let us judge, then, of our love for others, for the Lord, for the brethren, for our families, for our neighbors, for our enemies even, by our willingness to sacrifice in their interest and for their highest welfare.—Z '08-249 (Hymn 23)

AUGUST 19

The entrance of Thy words giveth light.—Psalm 119:130

SIN cannot endure the light of truth; and those who continue to live in sin when a sufficiency of light has been received to manifest its deformity must inevitably lose the light, because they are unworthy of it. Ignorance and superstition must vanish before this light. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! We who have received the truth have awakened from that horrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken. The light has scattered our darkness. . . . Dearly beloved, having received this wondrous favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines, but bringing forth its blessed fruitage in our lives? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of the glorious light by our loyalty and faithfulness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling.—Z '14-229 (Hymn 315)

AUGUST 20

If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.—Romans 8:10

FROM the divine standpoint the body is treated as dead, but the spirit, or mind, is treated as alive. It is the new creature which God recognizes, to which he purposes to give a new spirit body in due time—in the first resurrection. It is necessary that this thought be clearly fixed in our minds, in order that we may continually realize our peace toward God and his favor and sympathy toward us in Christ. If we lose sight of the fact that God regards us from the standpoint of the will, if we get to thinking of ourselves and God's estimate of us as according to the flesh, we are sure to get proportionately into darkness and confusion and discouragement. But let us not forget, on the other hand, that the spirit, or will, is counted alive because of its righteousness, because it is in harmony with God. Let us, therefore, never be slack in respect to the will, or intention, governing the

conduct of our lives, but remember that any laxity will mean the proportionate loss of spiritual life. To will right is always possible to us, and nothing less than an absolutely loyal will could be acceptable to God in Christ.—Z '03-171 (Hymn 277)

AUGUST 21

A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.—Luke 12:15

UNDOUBTEDLY poverty is a greater aid to discipleship than wealth. The cost of discipleship is the surrender of every earthly ambition to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. The rich are disadvantaged because theirs would be the greater sacrifice; their wealth preserves them from many trials to which the poor are subjected. They have so many consolations and comforts now that the thought of sacrificing these to follow the Master appalls them and the kingdom glories seem to them less real and less attractive than to the disciple. The lesson for us is that if we would win the great prize and the kingdom we must not set our hearts upon earthly things, nor trust in uncertain riches. Contrariwise, we must realize that our all, much or little, is the Lord's and that faithfulness in sacrificing what we have will decide whether or not we shall share his glory.—Z '12-114 (Hymn 4)

AUGUST 22

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.—Matthew 13:43

WITH the completion of the elect class—chosen because they were found to be lovers of righteousness and haters of iniquity, and because they were willing to walk in the narrow way and to follow the Lamb through evil and through good report and to walk by faith and not by sight—shall ultimately come the blessing of the Lord in the first resurrection, and they shall be made partakers of glory, honor, and the divine nature. Then, the Scriptures assure us, they shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father—shine for the blessing of all the families of the earth, shine for the scattering of all the ignorance

and superstition and clouds and darkness which now enslave the race, shine that all the blind eyes may be opened and all deaf ears unstopped, shine that the knowledge of the glory of God may fill the whole earth, shine out that the willing and obedient of the world may see the right way and be drawn by the light of grace and truth of God along the highway of holiness to the end thereof, life eternal, through the merit of him who loved the world and bought it with his own precious blood.—Z '05-79 (Hymn 320)

AUGUST 23

Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.—Psalm 119:11

IT IS necessary that we do more than know about the Scriptures and have an appreciation of their teachings. We must get their truths into our hearts. There are certain points which underlie the divine law and all of its regulations bearing upon us, and these points cannot be comprehended at once. Day by day as we persevere in the study of the truth, as we meditate upon God's Law by day and by night, we come to clearer views of these great principles of truth—justice, love, and wisdom—which underlie all of the divine government. In proportion as we attain this attitude of heart and mind we know the Lord not only in the sense of appreciating his glorious character, but in the sense that we are enabled to put those points into operation in our daily lives—in our deeds, our words, our thoughts. Whoever does not attain to this heart appreciation of the divine arrangements will be sure to sin against the Lord, to keep his covenant of consecration imperfectly, and those who so do will fail to gain the highest prize, if indeed they be accounted worthy of eternal life upon any plane of being.—Z '09-171 (Hymn 49)

AUGUST 24

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the Word of God with boldness.—Acts 4:31

SO LONG as the apostles could reasonably, properly find hearers for their Master's Word, they preached it. And so it must be with us. We must not

be intimidated. While obedient to the powers that be respecting every earthly way, we, like the apostles, cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. To keep the message secret, to put our light under a bushel, would mean our own failure to progress, the dwarfing of our new nature, and ultimately disobedience to our Master; and obedience to earthly powers along this line would mean to us failure as respects a place with Jesus in his throne. It is overcomers whom the Lord is now seeking! There could be no overcomers if there were no trials and tests and character development. Let us, then, while obedient to every earthly law and regulation, feel perfectly free to do the Lord's will in every matter, even the smallest, even to the extent of bringing upon ourselves the disapprobation of the world and the worldly, even though it bring us stripes, imprisonment. We have not the crown yet, but the cross, and whatever will help us to take it up and bear it faithfully will be a cause for thanksgiving.—Z '09-25 (Hymn 261)

AUGUST 25

Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.—John 15:3

THE Lord announced himself as the true vine and his Father as the true Husbandman who planted the true vine, and his followers as the true branches of that vine. The expression "true vine" suggests a false vine, and this thought is accentuated and elaborated in our Lord's last message to his people in the symbols of Revelation. There he speaks of the gathering of the fruitage of the "vine of the earth," and the casting of the same into the winepress of the wrath of God at the end of this age. (Rev. 14:19) There was, therefore, a deeper meaning in our Lord's words, "true vine," than the apostles could have possibly gathered from them. We who are living at a time when both the true vine of the Father's planting and the false vine of the earth, earthly, have developed, have opportunity for noticing also that the vine of the earth is a counterfeit of the heavenly vine. In proportion as we see this matter clearly it will assist us not only in the under-

standing of the Lord's parable, but also in our application of it in our daily lives. We will be in less danger of misunderstanding, misconstruing and being deceived by the false vine, as by the false branches and the false principles represented in connection with its development, for it is not under the divine Husbandman's care.—Z '05-121 (Hymn 70)

AUGUST 26

Deliver us from the evil one.—Matthew 6:13, R. V.

THE trial of this day shall try the work of every man (in the church) of what sort it is. It will be so severe that if it were possible the very elect would be deceived; but this will not be possible, because the Lord will specially care for these. Nevertheless the Lord will be inquired of by his people in respect to these matters which he has already promised, and as they pray, "Deliver us from the evil one," they surely will labor in the same direction. It is our expectation that very shortly now the forces of evil will gain much greater strength than at present, with all deceptableness of unrighteousness; and meantime the Lord is staying the adverse forces that his true people may put on the armor of God and be able to stand when the evil day shall come.—Z '04-121 (Hymn 183)

AUGUST 27

Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.—Luke 18:1

PRAYER is a privilege. Jesus did not command his disciples to pray, nor did he even give them a form of prayer until they requested it. "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." The Lord's people must feel their need of divine grace and help in order to appreciate the privilege of approaching the throne of heavenly grace. The trials and difficulties, the sorrows and temptations of life frequently impel God's children to prayer. It marks a better, a higher Christian development when they love to come to the throne of grace, not only in their sorrows, but also in their joys, to give thanks, to praise, to worship, to adore.—Z '12-150 (Hymn 298)

AUGUST 28

Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.—I Peter 3:15

EVERY Christian should be "fully persuaded in his own mind"; that is, he should exercise his mind in the study of God's revelation, so as to know just what he believes, and the scriptural reason for his belief. Thus the Apostle Paul responded and testified concerning "the kingdom of God, persuading men concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the prophets," assisting the willing ones to make up their minds, and to recognize in Jesus the crucified, the One typified in the sacrifices of the Law, and referred to by the prophets—the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world—putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself, being delivered for our offenses, but raised for our justification, in which risen and glorified condition he shall soon fulfil all the prophetic declarations of glory and blessing.—Z '84-4 (Hymn 15)

AUGUST 29

If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed.—I Peter 4:16

THE apostle was not ashamed of his sufferings, because he realized that they were endured for Christ's sake. Any man or woman would feel and should feel deeply pained at a public arrest and imprisonment as a felon, as a violator of the law. But when these things are experienced, and we can realize that they are coming to us because of our faithfulness to the Lord, in following in his footsteps, we may rejoice in ignominy, rejoice in things which otherwise would be shameful and detestable. If, therefore, in the Lord's providence, arrest or imprisonment or scourging should come to any who read this article, and if they can directly or indirectly trace their tribulation to faithfulness to the Lord and his truth, let them not be ashamed; let

them glorify God on this behalf, rejoicing that they are accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and remembering that even thus also it was with our Lord Jesus. He was placed under arrest; he was bound; he was scourged; he was publicly insulted; he was even crucified as a blasphemer against God.—Z '03-140 (Hymn 13)

AUGUST 30

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.—I John 3:14

EACH one who is united to Christ feels a special interest in, and sympathy for, each fellow member, so that, as the apostle says, if one member rejoice all are glad, and if one member be in trouble or affliction or sorrow all are sympathetically affected. This will be noticeable in proportion as the law of love develops and abounds in each member. The little love in the beginning of Christian character, will expand and deepen, filling all the avenues of the heart, and sanctifying them in a pure, unselfish, holy love.—Z '03-124 (Hymn 267)

AUGUST 31

Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.—Hebrews 10:35

THE very ones whom God will approve are those who walk by faith. The rewards are for those who hold the faith even unto death. We must beware of everything that tends to weaken or destroy our faith. The Lord deals graciously and generously with us. He will do for us whatever is right. Knowing this we can have confidence in God, even though the decision of divine justice should bar us out of divine favor. Those whose hearts are right are submissive to the divine will. The Lord wants us to have a faith that will continue in sorrow and in sunshine; that will trust where it cannot see, that will continue under all the leadings of divine providence.—Z '12-279 (Hymn 266)

"Our imperfections are accounted as imputed to the Redeemer, while his perfections are accounted as imputed to us."—REPRINT

Comfort for the Strong

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?—Jeremiah 12:5

What is the lesson intended for us in this text of Scripture?

JEREMIAH proclaimed God's message fearlessly, even though it was unpopular. We cannot avoid noting the remarkable similarity of Jeremiah's position to that of the Lord's people today, who are enlightened with the truth of the kingdom. As he saw in his day, we now see efforts being made to save this civilization through human efforts. We know that these efforts, no matter how well intentioned, will fail. We cannot disguise or withhold the prophetic fact that the time of trouble in which we live will increase in intensity until the present "order of things" is destroyed. At the same time, Jeremiah-like, we present a reason for real optimism; that the kingdom will soon come when God's will is done in earth as it is in heaven. Jeremiah heard the words of the Lord saying, "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully," and so do we.—Jer. 23:28

Jeremiah had been discouraged and ready to quit, as is told us in the texts preceding the one quoted in our question. The way of the wicked had prospered and brought forth fruit, while his prophecies seemed to wait for fulfillment. Then God answered him in the words of our text, "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?" His answer to Jeremiah, is an answer to those of his people today who would quit through discouragement. It is a challenge to the sincerity and completeness of our consecration to God. It is as if he said, "Why do you complain about your providences? What you have endured so far for the truth's sake is as nothing to what you may be called upon to endure in order to prove your complete submission to the Father's will, as you enter further into the time of trouble."

Such comfort is only for the strong in the Lord; but what comfort it is! Of the Apostle Paul our Master said, "For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:16) The one who is a Christian in name only has avoided this requisite of discipleship through inactivity. Those consecrated to God find the echo of these words deep down in their own lives, stirring and challenging them to speak his word faithfully, even as did Jeremiah.

What About Suicides?

I have been greatly comforted by your message of the kingdom. I now daily pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," knowing that some day it will be answered. Because of ill health my brother, who was an unbeliever, took his own life—a suicide. What hope may I have for him in the kingdom?

SUICIDE should be considered a very serious crime, unless it be the act of one whose mind is deranged. But the theory that all suicides are eternally lost is not scriptural. If death ends all hope of salvation then, of course, those who die outside of fellowship with God, from whatever cause, would have no opportunity for future life.

An understanding of the Bible should make us sympathetic. Adam was disobedient and sentenced to death and, as his children, all of us have been born mentally, morally, and physically imperfect in varying degrees. God's provision for the redemption of Adam, through the death of his Son, also affects all of us, as it is written, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—I Cor. 15:22

Life is a gift from God, and all should appreciate the privilege of living, even among imperfect conditions. Christians, especially those in the light of present truth, appreciate the privilege of living at a time when prophecy is being fulfilled, knowing that the time is near when the promise of the greater gift of eternal life will be

realized. These have found the complete antidote for all the hurtful vicissitudes of life; for the promises of God's Word enlighten their dark hours: "The Father himself loveth you." "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." These, and many other assurances of his love are a constant source of comfort in days of sickness and discouragement.—John 16:27; I Pet. 5:7; Rom. 8:28

Those who are of the world do not have this source of comfort, "having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12) Sometimes unrealized ambitions and failure to attain the foolish aims of their pride, or perhaps after attainment of their goal, to find that it has not brought the happiness they sought, have led some to rash actions. Others who have suffered bodily or mental pain and anguish, which seem to them beyond human endurance, are led to suicide without learning of the kingdom nor the goodness of God.

But these will come back from death in that day when "all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth." (John 5:28, 29) And how different they will feel. Then the "little flock" of the Gospel age will be complete and with her Lord to live and reign with him for the purpose of establishing the earthly kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth. (Luke 12:32; Rev. 20:4, 6) The thin line of demarcation between those who have died

from physical ills, or from over-indulgence in any one of a number of ways, or who have been killed by accidents of their own carelessness, or who have been suicides, will be forgotten: "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts 17:31

Under the favorable conditions of Messiah's kingdom, by obedience to the divine Law, the willing and obedient will be lifted above their physical, moral, and mental imperfections to enjoy the blessings of perfection of human existence. They will bow their knees and with their tongues will confess to the glory of God and the blessings of everlasting life through Jesus Christ the Lord. If your brother, under these favorable conditions, accepts our Lord as his Savior and does according to his will, you may have assurance from the Scriptures that he also will "obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. 35:10; Rev. 21:4) "Godliness with contentment is great gain."—I Tim. 6:6

Predestination

As a child I heard my parents discuss the doctrine of "Predestination." My father a Presbyterian, believed it; my mother, a Methodist, did not. I have often wondered which one was right. Today, no one seems to know much about this doctrine. In your opin-

ion does the Bible teach "Predestination"?

YES, we understand the doctrine of predestination is taught in the Scriptures. This doctrine has been the cause of a great deal of controversy among religionists, but if we observe the law of order in "rightly dividing the word of truth" on this subject we should have no difficulty in learning what the Bible says concerning it.—II Tim. 2:15

That which is known as the "Calvinistic view" of predestination we believe to be unscriptural. It holds that "God is all wise, that he knows the end from the beginning and all his purposes will be accomplished, that there are only a very few being saved compared with the many who are not; therefore, he never could have intended to save more than a few. These few individuals are saved, it is held, because God has elected or predestinated them for heaven; all others have been predestinated to be lost and go to a hell of eternal torment for 'known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.'" (Acts 15:18) We disagree with this view because justice, mercy, and love are lacking in this conception of our Heavenly Father's plan. It seems inconceivable that a God of love would have a plan wherein the majority are damned to torment even before they are born.

The foreknowledge of God cannot be denied. (Acts 2:23; Eph. 1:4, 5; I Pet. 1:2) His plan of salvation was known to him "before the foundation of the world." In this plan, the election or choice of

the church had been predetermined on God's part, not as an unconditional election of certain individuals, but rather, he predestinated that there would be a church class, that some would be given special favor and, through becoming copies of his Son, would be accepted into the spiritual family of God as joint-heirs with their Lord. (Rom. 8:16, 17, 29, 30) The class, or family, was predestinated, not necessarily the individuals.

Those who will be of that favored class must exercise their own volition as free moral agents in choosing the way of salvation. They, as individuals, must consecrate themselves to God and do his will, and Peter assures us in these words, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. . . . Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—II Pet 1:4, 10, 11

"For whom he did foreknow; he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8: 29) This text emphasizes that the foreknowledge of God predestinated a class to be conformed to the image of his Son. The election or selection of the individuals who

will constitute this class has been in progress during the Gospel age, for they are the true disciples who are willing to deny themselves, and take up their cross, and follow him.—Matt. 16:24

We believe many have made the mistake of believing that all the non-elect will be damned to eternal torment. This is not so! The election of the church during this age is for a purpose. They will live and reign with Christ a thousand years, during which Christ's kingdom will cause God's will to be **done on earth** as it is done in heaven. The grace of God will then extend freely to the non-elect of this age; and his plan to bless all the families of the earth will be accomplished, for Christ died for all, not merely for a few. How marvelous and beautiful the Bible message! How unreasonable Dark Age theology!

His Will

Whate'er my God ordains is right,
His will is ever just;
Howe'er he order now my cause,
I will be still and trust.
He is my God,
Though dark my road,
He holds me that I shall not fall,
Wherefore to him I leave it all.

Whate'er my God ordains is right;
My Light, my Life is he,
Who cannot will me aught but good;
I trust him utterly;
For well I know,
In joy or woe,
We soon shall see as sunlight clear,
How faithful was our Guardian here.

TRUTH LITERATURE ON TIMELY TOPICS

CHOSEN PEOPLE: This booklet has recently been brought up to date and republished in convenient pocket size. It treats the Jewish question from the standpoint of the new State of Israel, tracing the fulfilment of prophecy in the experiences of the Jews, from ancient times until now, pointing out from the Scriptures what the future holds for them. It is not detailed enough to be tiresome, yet sufficiently comprehensive to be convincing. Sixty-four pages, 10 cents each; twelve for \$1.

THE TRUTH ABOUT HELL: The subject of hell has been brought to the front by the Pope's request that the Catholic clergy preach the hell-fire doctrine more energetically. This timely booklet has been brought up to date in this respect, and is now available in attractive pocket size. Sixty-four pages, 10 cents each; twelve for \$1.

SPIRITUALISM: This is a republication of the booklet originally entitled, "As Angels of Light." It contains a comprehensive and scriptural answer to the question, Can the living talk with the dead? This question is in the minds of many, and you will find this booklet useful in your witness work. Thirty-two pages, pocket size, 5 cents each; twenty-five for \$1.

THE DAWN

East Rutherford

NEW JERSEY

Fellowship of Kindred Minds

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."—PSALM 122:1

ONE of the great joys of the Christian life is that of fellowship with others of "like precious faith." (II Pet. 1:1) There is a blessed bond of unity among those enlightened with present truth which makes them long for association, and they are glad to make sacrifices in order to enjoy as frequently as possible the privilege of fellowship with kindred minds. There is, indeed, a blessed kinship among the Lord's people. Through the begetting of the Holy Spirit they have all been made children of God, hence members of the royal family of heaven, over which Jesus is the Head and Elder Brother.

As sons of God we all have the same hope—the hope set before us in the Gospel, the hope of "glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) We also share the hope of joint-heirship with Jesus in that glorious kingdom through and by which all the families of the earth are to be blessed. With this great joy set before us we strive together to attain the "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14) As we do so our trials and testings are found to be similar, hence these, too, we share in common with one another. Besides, having been anointed by the Holy Spirit to be ambassadors for Christ we all share the same privilege of making known to others the glad tidings of the kingdom.

So it is that all things in the Christian life, which are worthwhile and of real interest to us as new creatures in Christ Jesus, we have in common. We have a common heritage of peace and joy in the Holy Spirit now, and we have a common hope of glory for the future. It is no wonder, then, that we are glad when the opportunity presents itself to go "into the house of the Lord," that is, to associate with our brethren, to enjoy that sweet fellowship of kindred minds which "is like to that above."

Some of the Lord's people are so situated in life that they are entirely alone so far as association with the brethren is concerned. It has been observed, and many of the isolated ones have testified, that the Lord makes up to these in some special way the encouragement and joy which others receive through fellowship. This indicates that the Lord is not limited in ways of providing grace and strength for his people, that his hand is not shortened. Nevertheless, for those to whom the privilege of association with the brethren is possible it is essential to their spiritual health and growth that they forsake not the assembling of themselves together, "as the manner of some is," that they meet for the purpose of exhorting one another, "and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."—Heb. 10:25

To assemble with others of present truth does not imply the necessity of a large gathering. The Lord is with the twos and threes even as he is with the larger assemblies. No matter how small or how large the gathering, when the saints of God mingle their hearts together in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," studying and meditating together on the great truths of the divine plan for them and for the world, their love for the Lord and for one another is increased and they are stimulated to make greater sacrifices in his service.

Among the opportunities for going into the house of the Lord are the many conventions which are held, not only throughout America, but in many other parts of the world as well. Right now we are in the midst of the convention season and thousands of the Lord's people are taking advantage of the opportunity to attend one or more of these. Some are quite local in character—"Home Gatherings" these are frequently styled in Great Britain. Others might be considered as district conventions. And then there is the General Convention, which this year is being held at Bowling Green, Ohio.

Two district conventions were held over the week-end of July 2-4, one at Los Angeles, California, and the other at Detroit, Michigan. The experience of the brethren at both of these gatherings was made rich by the blessing of the Lord. The Los Angeles Convention, which is an annual gathering, serves several hundred brethren who find this the only convention of the year which they can attend. The joys of the Los Angeles Convention were increased this year by the presence of many new faces, some of whom have

recently become interested in the truth, while others were those who had long known the truth but for one reason or another had lost contact with their brethren.

Brethren at the Los Angeles Convention received reports of conventions which had recently been held in Poland and Germany. Opposition arose against the brethren in Poland, and before their convention was over the home of one of them was raided by a mob, and the brother who owned the home, as well as several of the friends who were his guests, were killed, and a number of others seriously injured. Reports of this nature help us here in America to appreciate our privilege of being able to meet in peace and to enjoy our fellowship at conventions and in our class meetings without the fear of being molested. May we show our appreciation by availing ourselves of every opportunity we have of associating with the brethren.

In a report presented to the Los Angeles Convention of a convention held recently in Dresden, Germany, mention was made of the blessings being enjoyed by the German brethren through German translations of various publications of *The Dawn*. This is an encouragement to all those in this country who are co-operating so faithfully in helping with this overseas service. Food and clothing are still needed in the Russian Zone of Germany, and in Berlin, and the brethren are continuing to furnish this as they can.

The closing discourse at the Los Angeles Convention was on the subject of prayer, and in the course of his remarks, the speaker, Brother Russell Pollock, reminded the brethren of Jesus' admonition to pray that the Lord might send forth more reapers into the field. He said that there are opportunities for service today on every hand, not only in this country, but also abroad. Truth literature is now being made available for use in many European countries. Even in India the brethren need all the help we can give them.

Over the week-end of July 9, 10, a two-day gathering was held in Oakland, California. Here again the Lord manifested his blessing upon his people. Two more conventions are scheduled for the West Coast. These will be held over the Labor Day week-end—one in Seattle, Washington, and the other in San Diego, California. Both of these gatherings will bring convention blessings to many who otherwise would not be able to enjoy them.

Conventions are being arranged in a number of other places for the Labor Day week-end period. Thus far we have been ad-

vised that the brethren of the Minneapolis, Minnesota, Ecclesia will hold their regular convention at this time; and the same is true of Saginaw, Michigan; Brooklyn, New York; and Cincinnati, Ohio. These many district conventions, together with the one day local gatherings, serve thousands of the Lord's people in many parts of the country. How good the Lord is to shower his blessings so richly upon us!

By the time this issue of The Dawn is in the mails, the Bowling Green, Ohio, General Convention (August 7-14) will be only a matter of days away. Thousands of prayers are being offered asking for the Lord's presence and guidance as the brethren come together for this week of holy communion with one another and with him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift.

To make the Bowling Green Convention even more general, and in order that its blessings may radiate to all the brethren, a report will be published in a special issue of "Bible Students News." These are to be sent free to all Dawn Subscribers. Additional copies will be available for all who can use them. These also will be free. We believe that this issue of "Bible Students News" will be a timely piece of literature for distribution among those who once knew the truth, but for one reason or another or in one way or another, have not held fast to the profession of their faith; or who, perhaps, have been neglecting to associate themselves with others of like precious faith. We suggest that you give some thought to this, and determine how many extra copies you can use, and place your order ahead of time. This will help us to determine the size of the issue.

How wonderful it is that the Lord has favored us with a knowledge of his plans and purposes, and that he permits us to enjoy this blessing together through our fellowship in our class meetings and at conventions! And besides, we have the use of the printed page. This is a medium by which all can be more or less in contact with one another, even the isolated. The "house" of the Lord in the days of ancient Israel was their typical temple; but now it is wherever and however we can associate ourselves as consecrated followers of the Master to seek divine guidance and strength, and together rejoice in the good things of his Word, the exceeding great and precious promises by which we are made partakers of the divine nature. And surely we are glad now, more than ever before, when they say, "Let us go into the house of the Lord."

A Message of the Hour

AS REPORTED in the "Highlights" section of this issue, an effort is now being made to revive the preaching of hell-fire. We believe that this affords an opportunity for the brethren to use every means possible to present to the public the truth about hell—what the Bible actually says on this important topic. In order to help facilitate a wider witness of the truth along this line we will furnish the article appearing in the "Highlights" section in tract form for general distribution.

We have observed in recent months that the public responds very well to subjects pertaining to the hope of life after death—probably more so than in times past. Because of this we have prepared a special Kingdom Card on this subject, "Where Are the Dead?" These also are available for general distribution. They may be had in any quantity desired. If ordered in lots of 1,000 they will be printed with a coded address. Thus, when a card is returned requesting the booklet offered, we will be able to forward it to the person responsible for its distribution. This enables the brethren to follow up any interest which may develop as a result of their efforts.

Many will remember the thought suggested in *The Dawn* more than a year ago, that the distribution of an average of only three cards a day puts 1,000 of these messages of truth into circulation in one year. So here is an opportunity in which all can have a part. We suggest that you send for a supply of tracts, "The Truth About Hell," and, or, a thousand of the Kingdom Cards, "Where Are the Dead?"

A Message from Berlin

NOW that the Russian-imposed blockade of Berlin has been lifted, packages of food and clothing are beginning to reach our brethren there. These are especially appreciated for the need is great. We have received a very encouraging letter from Brother Reinhold Severt, in which he says:

TALKING THINGS OVER

"At the announcement of the arrival of your gift packages there was great rejoicing among the brethren; and for these I wish to thank you on behalf of the Berlin Ecclesia. It was to all of us an indication that the body of Christ, though of many members, is joined in love, and that when one member suffers all other members suffer also. You have provided a great joy for the brethren here, for they have much need. . . . Our Berlin Ecclesia is happy in the Lord. There are eighty to one hundred members. More and more of the free brethren are coming to us. We are hoping that some will come who can help us serve as there are many classes surrounding Berlin which need help. Because of conditions here it is difficult to get to even the nearby classes. Sometimes I travel as much as five hours to reach them."

In his letter Brother Severt tells of a class of twenty just north of Berlin which has been recently formed, these brethren having found their way out of bondage to the human "channel" in which they were held. Surely we can all rejoice with these. And what a privilege it is to extend them a helping hand along both material and spiritual lines. The brethren here will be glad to learn that a new German edition of the "Daily Heavenly Manna" has been shipped to Germany in sufficient quantity to supply all the brethren.

THANKFULNESS

*Unthankful, Lord?
In haste I travel on my way,
Perhaps forgetting every day
To lift my heart in prayer, and say
"I'm thankful Lord."*

*Ungrateful, Lord?
My human flesh is oft so weak,
Perhaps my own too much I seek,
And fail to come to thee and speak
My gratitude, O Lord.*

*I thank thee Lord!
That I'm thy child, and thou dost know
How truly doth my heart o'er flow,
How gladly would I always show
My gratitude, O Lord!*

Another Visitor From America

BROTHER E. H. HERRSCHER, of Phoenix, Arizona, U. S. A., will arrive in England on the 19th of August. He will be en route to serve our French speaking brethren in Switzerland, France, and Belgium. On his way to visit these brethren he will remain in England for the week-end of August 21.

Brother Herrscher will remain on the Continent for about a month, and then will return to Great Britain, where he will be available for serving the brethren during the latter part of September, through October, and over the first week-end of November. His schedule is now being planned, and with the thought of having him fellowship with as many of the British brethren as possible.

We are looking forward to Brother Herrscher's visit among us, and let us all pray that our mutual fellowship may contribute to the strengthening of our faith and to the increase of our zeal for the Lord and for his people. We feel certain that we express the general sentiment of the British brethren when we say that we are happy that another brother from America is able to spend some time with us, and that we welcome him in our midst. Truly, there are no boundary lines of national prejudices to

separate the people of God. As Paul wrote in his day, there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond or free, for we are all one in Christ Jesus. We are confident that Brother Herrscher's sojourn, both on the Continent as well as here in the British Isles, will serve to strengthen the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.

CONVENTION BLESSINGS

IN A letter reporting some of the blessings enjoyed at their gathering in West Wickham, July 2, 3, Brother C. W. Scholefield, secretary of the ecclesia, explains, "This was the first convention ever to be held in the district." As a matter of fact, the present ecclesia at West Wickham has not been established a great while, but the brethren are earnest, and determined to press on faithfully in the narrow way, and to run diligently for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We are glad that they wish to share their joys with others, hence arranged for this convention.

CONVENTION

SOUTHAMPTON, ENGLAND, August 21—One day convention in the Old Pear Tree Parish Hall, Portsmouth Road, Woolston, Southampton. It is expected that Brother E. H. Herrscher, of U. S. A., will speak before proceeding to the continent. For information write the secretary, Mr. F. Coote, 145 Manor Road, Woolston, Southampton. This convention is sponsored by the Southampton Ecclesia and all believers in the ransom are cordially invited.

THE BRITISH SECTION

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

W. CLARKE		
Eastleigh	August	21
Oxford		23
C. E. DICKINSON		
Leigh (Afternoon)	August	14
Warrington (Evening)		14
E. H. HERRSCHER		
Southampton	August	21
J. E. HUMPHREY		
Portsmouth	September	18
F. LINTER		
Leigh (Afternoon)	August	28
Warrington (Evening)		28
J. H. MURRAY		
Gateshead	September	4
W. E. PAMPLING		
Southampton	August	21
Liverpool		28
Luton	September	25
R. J. PHILIP		
Leigh	September	11

C. W. SCHOLEFIELD

Oxford	September	11
A. SPAIN		
Anerley	August	19
Ipswich	September	11
F. TRING		
Maidstone	September	11
P. WATTS		
Anerley	September	18
Aldersbrook Ecclesia Appointments		
W. R. CHANDLER		
Oxford, Oxford.	August	7
A. W. PARKER		
Birmingham, Warwick. ..	August	28
D. P. VAUGHAN		
Kettering, Northants.	August	21
T. W. WATSON		
Beckenham, Kent.	August	14
West Wickham, Kent.	August	21

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Wilmington, Del. (Morn.)	August	7
Philadelphia, Pa. (Afternoon)	...	7
Orlando, Fla.	21
W. A. BAKER		
Seattle, Wash.	..... September	3-5
W. T. BAKER		
Shawnee, Okla.	..... August	2, 3
Ada, Okla.	.....	4, 5
Stigler, Okla.	.....	7
Ft. Smith, Ark.	.....	8
Little Rock, Ark.	.....	9, 10
Monroe, Ark.	.....	11
Marianna, Ark.	.....	12
Jonesboro, Ark.	.....	14, 15
Paragould, Ark.	.....	16
Cape Girardeau, Mo.	.....	17
St. Louis, Mo.	.....	18
Mattoon, Ill.	.....	19
Champaign, Ill.	.....	20, 21
Canton, Ill.	.....	22
Clinton, Iowa	.....	23, 24
Albany, Ill.	.....	25
La Salle, Ill.	.....	26
Chicago, Ill.	.....	28
Gary, Ind.	.....	29, 30
J. BEDNARZ		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
Groton, Conn. (Evening)	.....	20
Groton, Conn. (Morning)	.....	21
New London, Conn. (Afternoon)	.....	21
F. A. BRIGHT		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
C. CHUPA		
Minneapolis, Minn.	.. September	3-5
D. H. COPELAND		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
J. COPELAND		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
Seattle, Wash.	..... September	3-5
S. C. DE GROOT		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
O. D. DEIFER		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
E. FAY		
San Diego, Calif.	..... August	7
Minneapolis, Minn.	.. September	3-5
T. FAY		
Santa Ana, Calif.	..... August	28
I. C. FOSS		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
Riverside, Calif. (Morning)	.....	21
Pomona, Calif. (Afternoon)	.....	21
E. L. FOWLER		
Seattle, Wash.	..... September	3-5
E. H. HERRSCHER		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
Rutherford, N. J. (8 P. M.)	.....	16
Brooklyn, N. Y. (8 P. M.)	.....	17
W. J. HOLLISTER		
Paterson, N. J.	..... August	7
C. W. JANKE		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
G. O. JEUCK		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
P. KOLLIMAN		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
R. A. KREBS		
Chatham, Ont., Can.	.... August	2
Bowling Green, Ohio	.....	7-14
Columbus, Ohio	.....	15, 16
Newark, Ohio	.....	17
Alliance, Ohio	.....	20, 21
Wadsworth, Ohio	.....	22
Cleveland, Ohio	.....	23
Elyria, Ohio	.....	24
Toledo, Ohio	.....	25
Jackson, Mich.	.....	26
Covert, Mich.	.....	27, 28
Grand Rapids, Mich.	.....	29, 30
Beaverton, Mich.	.. Aug. 31-Sept.	1
R. J. KRUPA		
Bowling Green, Ohio	.... August	7-14
A. H. KRUMPOLT		
Wallingford, Conn. (Morn.)	Aug.	28
Hartford, Conn. (Afternoon)	....	28
H. A. LIVERMORE		
Seattle, Wash.	..... September	3-5
L. P. LOOMIS		
Lancaster, Pa.	..... August	21

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

J. Y. MAC AULAY			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
Gary, Ind.		16	
Cicero, Ill.		17	
Rockford, Ill.		18	
Waukesha, Wis.		19	
Milwaukee, Wis.		20, 21	
Minneapolis, Minn.		22	
Winnipeg, Man.		24	
Prince Albert, Sask., Can.		25	
Saskatoon, Sask., Can.		26	
Tarnopol, Sask., Can.		27, 28	
Calgary, Alta., Can.		30	
Spokane, Wash.	September	1	
Seattle, Wash.		3-5	
E. R. MAC JILTON			
Monessen, Pa.	August	28	
J. A. MEGGISON			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
Minneapolis, Minn. ..	September	3-5	
A. MISKAWITZ			
Minneapolis, Minn. ..	September	3-5	
M. C. MITCHELL			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
New Haven, Conn. (Morning) ..		21	
Waterbury, Conn. (Afternoon) ..		21	
N. MOLENAAR			
Oakland, Calif.	August	7	
J. H. MOORE			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
Cleveland, Ohio		15	
Erie, Pa.		16	
Tonawanda, N. Y.		17	
Rochester, N. Y.		18	
Syracuse, N. Y.		19	
Binghamton, N. Y.		21	
Wilkes Barre, Pa.		22, 23	
Hazleton, Pa.		24	
Mahanoy City, Pa.		25	
Shamokin, Pa.		26	
Lehighton, Pa.		28	
Reading, Pa.		29	
Allentown, Pa.		30	
Easton, Pa.		31	
D. J. MOREHOUSE			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
E. MURRAY			
Bowling Green, Ohio ...	August	7-14	
L. H. NORBY			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
Indianapolis, Ind.		16	
Quincy, Ill.		17	
St. Joseph, Mo.		19	
Kansas City, Mo.		21	
Topeka, Kans.		22	
Albuquerque, New Mex.		25	
Phoenix, Ariz.		28	
Yuma, Ariz.		29	
San Diego, Calif.	September	3-5	
W. N. POE			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
G. R. POLLOCK			
Seattle, Wash.	September	3-5	
G. P. RIPPER			
Whittier, Calif.	August	21	
B. F. ROSE			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
A. L. SMITH			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
C. A. SUNDBOM			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
J. I. VAN HORNE			
Duquesne, Pa.	August	7	
Bowling Green, Ohio		8-14	
Washington, Pa.		21	
F. S. WASSMANN			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
C. R. WEIDA			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
Easton, Pa.		21	
G. M. WILSON			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
Minneapolis, Minn. ..	September	3-5	
W. N. WOODWORTH			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
Paterson, N. J.		21	
E. G. WYLAM			
Bowling Green, Ohio	August	7-14	
H. L. YOUNG			
Allentown, Pa.	August	28	
C. W. ZAHNOW			
Indianapolis, Ind.	August	1	
Richmond, Ind.		2	
Dayton, Ohio		3	
Cincinnati, Ohio		4	
Columbus, Ohio		5	
Bowling Green, Ohio		7-14	
Springfield, Mass.		16	
North Brookfield, Mass.		17, 18	
Worcester, Mass.		19	
Boston, Mass.		20, 21	
Portland, Me.		22, 23	
Halifax, N. S., Can.		25	
Glace Bay, N. S., Can.		27, 28	
Sydney, N. S., Can.		29	
St. John's, Nfld.		31	

CONVENTIONS

For Mutual Fellowship, Edification, and Service

BREMERTON, WASH., August 7—Home Gatherings at R. W. Valentine's, R. F. D. 5, Box 988. Opens at 11 a. m. The Valentines will appreciate knowing how many can come so arrangements can be made for meals and transportation from Bremerton. Phone Silverdale 8397.

BOWLING GREEN, OHIO, August 7-14.

SILOAM, TEXAS, August 12-14—All sessions will be held in schoolhouse. For details, write Mrs. H. E. Hillhouse, R. F. D. 2, Box 20, Gustine, Texas.

ORLANDO, FLA., August 21—All day gathering in the Sorosis Club, 108 Liberty Street. Convention opens at 9:30 a. m. For details, write the secretary, Mrs. Stanley W. Jeuck, 1910 Hillcrest, Orlando, Fla.

CHICAGO, ILL., August 28—910 North LaSalle Street.

DETROIT, MICH., August 28—Macca-bees Building, Woodward Avenue.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., September 3-5—To be held in the usual church auditorium, 104 Clark Street, near the St. George Hotel. Convenient to all subway lines. An immersion service is being arranged, and the secretary will appreciate hearing from any who contemplate symbolizing their consecration at this convention. All inquiries for room accommodations should also be addressed to the secretary, Mr. Michael Kelly, 99-41 64th Avenue, Rego Park, L. I., N. Y.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, September 4, 5—Services Sunday morning, September 4, and Monday morning and afternoon, September 5, will be held at 616 Walnut Street, (Fourth Floor) Cincinnati, Ohio. Place of meeting Sunday afternoon will be announced during the convention. For other details and reservations, write the secretary, Mrs. W. N. Poe, 2128 New Linden Rd., Newport, Ky.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., September 3-5—Annual Labor Day gathering to be held in I. O. G. T. Hall, 2922 Cedar Ave., beginning 1:30 Saturday after-

noon, and continuing through Monday until 4:00 p. m. An immersion service is being arranged. For details and reservations, write Miss Ruth Norby, 6804 Third Ave., S., Minneapolis 19, Minn. Local brethren will be glad to entertain friends as far as possible.

SEATTLE, WASH., September 3-5—All sessions will be held in Norway Hall, 2015 Boren Avenue. An immersion service is being arranged and any desiring to symbolize their consecration will please notify the secretary. For reservations, address Mr. Sam Clement, 846 W. 63rd Street, Seattle 7, Wash.

SAN DIEGO, CALIF., September 3-5—Silvergate Masonic Temple, 3795 Utah Street. Convention opens at 9:30 Saturday morning. All regular sessions will be held in the street-floor hall. A baptismal service may be arranged. Reservations may be made through the secretary, Mrs. Marjorie Rice, R. F. D. 1, Box 491, Spring Valley, Calif.

SAGINAW, MICH., September 3-5—All sessions will be held in the Y. W. C. A., 215-217 South Jefferson Avenue. For further details and reservations, write the secretary, Mrs. C. A. Sundbom, 207 Alice Street, Saginaw, Michigan.

KINGWOOD, PA., September 11—All day gathering in Kingwood Grove. For details as to plans for the day and information how to reach the Kingwood Grove, write the secretary of the Connellsville, Pa., Ecclesia, Mrs. Raymond Siesky, R. F. D. 2, Box 191, Connellsville, Pa.

MILWAUKEE, WIS., September 18—The convention will be held the third Sunday in September in the Modern Woodmen of America Hall, 734 North 26th Street, Milwaukee. For additional information, write the secretary, Mrs. Edward Conrad, Route 2, Box 485, Hales Corners, Wis.

Waterbury, Connecticut, October 2; Grand Rapids, Michigan, October 15, 16; Pomona, California, October 16.

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