

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

" . . . CONTINUE
IN
MY WORD . . . "

John 8:31,32

August 1958



HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

All the Trees	2
BIBLE STUDY	
Guarding Our Freedoms	8
Justice in Government	10
Justice to Minorities	12
Justice Among Nations	14
Temperance and Social Justice	16
Paul in Protective Custody—Part 2	
People of the Bible—Part XXXVI	45
CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE	
Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts	5
The Reward of Faith	18
The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist—Part 2	
Times and Signs Series—Article VIII	28
THE BRITISH SECTION	
To Prepare a Place	37
TALKING THINGS OVER	
Showers of Blessing in Ireland	52
YOUR QUESTIONS	60

ON THE RADIO • COAST TO COAST

AUGUST	3	"Heaven and Paradise"
	10	"The Fulness of Time"
	17	"The Judgment Day"
	24	"The Church"
	31	"Born of the Spirit"

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BRIEF REPORT OF BLOOMINGTON CONVENTION

The October issue of The Dawn will carry a brief report of the discourses given, and blessings received, at the General Convention, held in Bloomington, Indiana, August 2-8.

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DAWN PUBLICATIONS

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NEW JERSEY

All the Trees

"And He spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."
—Luke 21:29-31

I T HAS long been recognized by students of prophecy that the fig tree is used by Jesus as a symbol of the Jewish national polity. Shortly before the end of his ministry Jesus cursed a fig tree, indicating the calamity that was shortly to come upon Israel as a result of the nation's rejection of him as the Messiah foretold by their prophets. And now the disciples, having learned that he was going away and that the messianic kingdom would not be established until he returned, asked him concerning the signs of his return and the establishment of the kingdom of promise.—Luke 19:41-44; 19:11, 12; 21:7; Matt. 24:3

In reply to the disciples' inquiry, Jesus gave a number of signs by which his people would be able to identify the time of his second presence and the imminent establishment of his kingdom. Just pre-

ceding the "sign" mentioned in our text he is quoted as saying, "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh."
 --vss. 25-28

"There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars." Jesus explained what constitutes this sign, or "signs," by the statement, "The powers of heaven shall be shaken." This, of course, is figurative language, the "heaven,"

made up of the "sun," "moon," and "stars" being symbolic of the powers of religious control over the peoples of earth.

Today the moral and ethical standards set forth by the various religious bodies of the world are exercising less and less control over the minds and activities of the people. The standards of righteousness long taken for granted as proper are now being called in question. Recently in a panel discussion on television in the British Isles, a clerical representative of the established church was called upon to state why he believed that the difference between right and wrong as taught by the church was indeed correct. It would be difficult to imagine a discussion of this sort taking place fifty years ago.

But this is merely a "straw in the wind" which indicates the breaking down of moral and ethical standards the world over. Basically, this has much to do with the fear that fills the hearts of the people today, particularly those who are earnestly endeavoring to maintain a semblance of peace among the nations.

Jesus also said that there would be "upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity." He illustrated this "distress of nations" by likening it to the roaring of the "sea and the waves." How vividly this portrays the present state of men and nations! The sea is continuously restless, and often agitated.

And there is also the ebb and flow of the tides. One may stand on the shore and watch the tide as it comes in, wave upon wave until finally one becomes larger than the rest and bursts forth with tremendous force and a resounding roar. So today, throughout the earth, while on the whole chaos and deterioration are everywhere apparent, and age-old standards are breaking down, occasionally and in certain areas there is an uprising characteristic of the roar of a gigantic wave, the hue and cry for liberty and equality on the part of the people making itself felt.

For years the forward looking nations of earth have been struggling to attain and maintain a semblance of democracy as a form of government. The dictatorship of communism and fascism have been fighting this effort. The recent development in France is like one of those large "waves" which makes it appear as though the "tide" of world political dictatorship is "coming in." But this is not actually the case. Nor are we to suppose that representative government is to become triumphant and establish lasting peace on the earth. Such government is probably the best form that has been devised by man, but it comes far short of what the kingdom of Christ will be. However, the divinely directed increase of knowledge in this end of the age has awakened the people of all nations to desire and to strive for freedom from oppression, and

THE DAWN

for the right to enjoy their fair share of the earth's bounties.

In Psalm 97:1-5 we read: "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of Lord of the whole earth."

This prophecy is descriptive of trouble and distress in connection with the establishment of the Lord's kingdom. "Clouds and darkness are round about him," "a fire goeth before him," and "the hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord." Associated with the destructive trouble described by these highly symbolic statements is the fulfilment of the other figurative expression, "His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled."

The "lightnings" of the Lord bring enlightenment to the people, but the first effect of it is to cause the world to "tremble." With the people becoming enlightened in this "time of the end" when knowledge is increased, all sorts of demands are being made by groups and by nations. The hitherto small, backward nations of earth are demanding their place in the sun. Nations hitherto ruled by colonial powers

are demanding their independence, and in many instances have already attained at least a measure of liberty to govern their own affairs. Indeed, in recent years a number of new and independent nations have come into existence as a result of the general world-wide clamor for liberty and self-determination.

Of the greatest interest, prophetically, is the new State of Israel. Strong national and economic influences have contributed to the rebirth of Israel, but above these have been the providences of the Lord in the outworking of his design for this ancient chosen people. Prophecies concerning them had to be fulfilled, one of which is contained in our text which speaks of the "fig tree" putting forth its leaves. This, Jesus said, would be a sign that the kingdom of God was nigh at hand—that kingdom which will bring the summer time of God's favor. In this we rejoice.

And our text says that what would be true of the "fig tree" would be true also of "all the trees." Is it not the fulfilment of this prophecy which we see in the establishment of various small and independent nations in different parts of the earth? True, their motives are not the same as those of Israel, but the shooting forth of their leaves of nationalism is similar. God's providences are not over them in the same solicitous sense as they are over Israel, but they have been stirred up to demand their independence by the flash-

ings of Jehovah's "lightnings," and therefore what we see taking place in this connection is very definitely in fulfilment of prophecy and an evidence that the kingdom of Christ is at the door.

Jesus said that when his people could see these things beginning to come to pass, they should "look up, and lift up their heads," knowing that their deliverance would be drawing near. This does not mean that they would be delivered by any form of earthly government of imperfect men, or by any of the other proposed and attempted improvements in the forms of government devised by man. Rather, it means that the time would be at hand for the divine world government under Christ to come into power as the supreme rulership over the human race. This long promised kingdom of Christ will bring deliverance to the people of all nations, not only from economic insecurity, but also from the thralldom of sin and death.

First, however, there will come the deliverance of the remaining

members of the mystical body of Christ, the footstep followers of Jesus, those who are suffering and dying with him in order that they might live and reign with him. This is to take place in what is described in Revelation 20:6 as the "first resurrection." Verse 4 declares that those who participate in this resurrection will "live and reign with Christ a thousand years."

Every true follower of the Master looks forward to the realization of this glorious hope. That is why they "look up" and "lift up" their heads with confidence and rejoicing when they see the events taking place in the world which Jesus foretold would mark the time of his second presence and the near establishment of his kingdom. We do not rejoice in the world's troubles, but it is a joy to know that soon the kingdom of Christ will make an end to all trouble; for the Scriptures assure us that he must reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and that the last enemy to be destroyed will be Death.—I Cor. 15: 25, 26

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

AUGUST 7—"If a man contend in the games, he is not crowned unless he strive lawfully."—II Timothy 2:5-Diaglott (Z. '02-265 Hymn 279)

AUGUST 14—"It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call

them of his household?"—Matthew 10: 25 (Z. '03-13 Hymn 322)

AUGUST 21—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."—Matthew 6:33 (Z. '02-350 Hymn 108)

AUGUST 28—"Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season."—II Timothy 4:2 (Z. '03-189 Hymn 280)

THE DAWN

Following the resurrection of those who live and reign with Christ, the ancient prophets and other loyal ones who served God prior to the first advent of Jesus will be raised from the dead as perfect humans to serve as representatives of the spiritual and invisible Christ. In Hebrews 11:35, 39, 40 we are informed that they hoped for a "better resurrection," a resurrection that would be to perfection. We quote: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

The "better thing for us," the "called, and chosen, and faithful" of this age, is "glory and honor and immortality," as well as joint-heirship with Jesus in the spiritual phase of the messianic kingdom. (Rev. 17:14; Rom. 2:7; 8:17) The

worthies of the ancient past will not receive this "prize," but will be raised to human perfection, not to be "kings and priests," but to be made "princes in all the earth."—Ps. 45:16

Jesus said to "them that followed" and to the Gentile centurion who sought his help, that in the kingdom the people would come from the east, west, north, and south, and would sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets. (Matt. 8:10-13) This means that these princes will then be raised from the dead. A similar assurance is given us in Luke 13:28, 29

Thus the kingdom of Christ will begin to function, and all the manifold blessings of peace, health, and life which the Lord has promised to give the people through the administration of this kingdom will start flowing out to them. The first

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to receive these blessings will be the living generation of natural Israelites residing in the land which God promised to Abraham. But the blessings will not be limited to them, for the kingdom will extend its influence and control over every part of the earth. Isaiah wrote, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."—Isa. 9:6, 7

As the Israelites in Palestine, their eyes of understanding being opened, accept Christ as their Redeemer and Savior, and come into harmony with the laws of the kingdom, they will have the great privilege of co-operating in extending its blessings to others. In Revelation 22:17 we read, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come."

Christ and his church, the "bride," will be the fountain of the life-giving blessings then to reach mankind. The "pure river of water of life" will flow from the "throne of God and of the Lamb." (Rev. 22:1) The initial invitation to partake of these blessings will go out from the spiritual phase of the kingdom, communicated to the people through the ancient worthies.

The first to hear the message and to accept will also be the first to join in the proclamation, "Come. And . . . take the water of life freely." And the invitation will be to "whosoever will," until eventually Christ's rulership of righteousness, with its blessings of peace and life,

will be from "sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."—Ps. 72:8

If we think of "all the trees" referred to in our text as representing various nationalities of earth, we can rejoice in the assurance that their legitimate desires will be realized. Nationalism will then lose its importance in the eyes of the hitherto exploited and downtrodden people of earth. All will eventually be merged into one people, who, through faith and obedience, will become the earthly seed, or family, of Abraham.

Besides, they will be the Lord's people. In Revelation 21:1-5 we are given a beautiful symbolic picture of the kingdom of Christ. First, it is represented as "a new heaven and a new earth," and then as the "holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." To this graphic description of the kingdom John adds, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

Guarding Our Freedoms

GOLDEN TEXT: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." —John 8:31, 32

AMOS 7:10-15

IN ENTERING into covenant relationship with Israel, God promised to bless them in "basket and in store." (Deut. 28:5) He assured them of protection against the heathen nations with which they were surrounded. But the fulfillment of these promises was made contingent upon Israel's obedience to God as well as to the Law which formed the basis of the covenant which he made with the nation.

At the time Amos was raised up by the Lord to prophesy before his people, the nation of Israel was divided, and had been since the death of Solomon. It was then that ten of the tribes rebelled against King Rehoboam, Solomon's son and successor, and formed a kingdom of their own, under the leadership of Jeroboam—not, however, the Jeroboam of our lesson.

This ten-tribe kingdom, for purposes of ready identification, was known as Israel, while the two-

tribe kingdom, led by the descendants of David, was then known as Judah. From the outset the ten-tribe kingdom had flouted the law of God, and Jeroboam I set up idol worship at Bethel to lure his subjects away from the worship of Israel's true God at Jerusalem, the seat of the two-tribe government.

As one king after another came to the throne of the ten-tribe kingdom the situation did not improve. The people continued to be led deeper into sin and idolatry. But the Lord did not propose to permit this state of affairs to continue indefinitely, and he sent the prophet Amos to warn the people what awaited them if they did not reform.

The punishment to be inflicted upon the ten tribes was captivity in Assyria. In other words, they were to lose their liberty as a people; if, indeed, to be ruled by profligate kings could be called liberty. This was a hard message

to hear, and Amaziah, "the priest of Bethel," reported to the king concerning Amos that "the land is not able to bear all his words; for thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out their own land."—vss. 10, 11

Amaziah then ordered Amos to leave Israel, and to go into Judah "and there eat bread, and prophesy there. But prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court." (vss. 12,13) The foolish notion of Amaziah seemed to be that if Amos would stop prophesying against Israel, all would be well. But not so. The predicted calamity fell upon the nation, and the liberty of the people was lost.

Here was the case of a nation losing its liberty as a result of unfaithfulness to God's Law. But this was God's nation, and the people were subject to God's Law. As God had promised to bless them when faithful, he warned of punishment which would come upon them if they were unfaithful. This situation had never been true of any other nation, and is not now true of the kingdoms of this world. The Bible pertains to God's dealings with his own people, not with the world of mankind in general.

GALATIANS 5:1, 13-18, 25

This portion of our lesson pertains to freedom in Christ. Paul, in verse 1, is writing specifically concerning freedom from what he re-

QUESTIONS

How did the message of Amos to Israel relate to freedom?

Does God deal with all nations as he did with Israel?

What is the nature of the freedom referred to in our lesson by Paul?

How are we made free by the truth?

fers to as the "yoke of bondage," which was the Mosaic Law. This was a freedom which Judaizing teachers in the Early Church sought to take away from believers.

However, as Paul further explains, while in Christ there is freedom from the Law, this liberty should not be used as an "occasion to the flesh." "But," Paul adds, "by love serve one another." Through Christ we are free from the restraints of the Law; but if we appreciate this liberty we will not misuse it, and will place ourselves under voluntary restraint. We will gladly lay down our lives for the brethren. Walking thus, in the way of sacrifice, as bondslaves of Jesus Christ, we will "not fulfil the lust of the flesh."—vs. 15

To know the truth, as our Golden Text mentions, means to know Jesus and his place in the divine plan. This means the recognition of Jesus as our Redeemer from sin and death. Accepting this provision in keeping with the divine plan, we are made free from the condemnation of sin, and are no longer under bondage to it. The truth also makes us free from superstition and fear.

Justice in Government

GOLDEN TEXT: "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."
—II Samuel 23:3, 4

DEUTERONOMY 16:18-20
AMOS 5:12-15

THE words of our Golden Text were spoken by David, and they refer to the instructions which the Lord gave to him concerning his rulership over the nation of Israel. The government over which David was anointed to be head, or king, was typical of the kingdom of Christ, and therefore it was spoken of as the "throne of the Lord."—I Chron. 29:23

It was important that the principles which were to prevail in this typical kingdom of the Lord should reflect the justice of God's own rulership, of which we read, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face."—Ps. 89:14

David himself, with some exceptions, ruled Israel justly. But this was not true of all his successors, although there were a number of noble kings of the davidic line. However, the pattern established by the Lord was one of justice and

righteousness, and these ideal principles of government will actually prevail in the kingdom of Christ of which the throne of David was a type. Concerning this we read, "Of the increase of his [Christ's] government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9:7

Centuries before Israel became a kingdom, through Moses the Lord gave instructions concerning the importance of justice in overseeing the affairs of the people. Moses said, "Judges and officers shalt thou make in all thy gates, . . . and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous."—Deut. 16:18, 19

Hundreds of years later the Lord

said to the people of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel, "I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and turn aside the poor in the gate from their right." (Amos 5:12)

Thus it was that in matters of government as well as along other lines, in his dealings with Israel God demonstrated that fallen man, left to his own devices, would not adhere to his laws of justice and righteousness. It would have been the same with any other nation. The only way that divine righteousness can be established in the earth is through the kingdom of the Messiah, the antitypical David.

ROMANS 13:1-7

THE typical kingdom of Israel ceased to function in 606 B. C., when Zedekiah was overthrown and the nation was taken captive to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar. It was then that the Prophet Daniel, one of the Hebrew captives in Babylon, said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all."—Dan. 2:37,38

This grant of civil authority was given by God to Nebuchadnezzar as king of Babylon. Verses 39-43

QUESTIONS

To whom was our Golden Text addressed?

What place did Israel's kingdom have in the plan of God?

What did Paul mean when he wrote, "The powers that be are ordained of God"?

reveal that this arrangement was to be passed on to three other "kingdoms" or empires. History reveals these to be Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Rome was ruling when, as in our lesson, Paul wrote, "The powers that be are ordained of God." Later this was true of the divisions of the Roman Empire.

It does not mean that God sanctioned and blessed all that these governments did. The thought is, rather, that God permitted them to rule during the interim between the overthrow of his typical kingdom and the full establishment of the antitypical, or messianic kingdom. Their chief function from God's standpoint has been to maintain sufficient law and order to permit the spread of the Gospel, that through its drawing and transforming power a "people for his name" might be taken out of the world and prepared to live and reign with Christ.—Acts 15:14-17

Exhorting that prayers be offered for "kings, and for all that are in authority." Paul gives as the reason, "That ye may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." (1 Tim. 2:1, 2)

Justice to Minorities

GOLDEN TEXT: "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

—Hebrews 13:1, 2

LEVITICUS 19:33, 34
DEUTERONOMY 24:14, 15

THE "minorities" referred to in these scriptures were the "strangers" and the hired servants in Israel—particularly the hired servants who were poor and needy. The Israelites were to deal justly with these. In fact, concerning the "strangers" the Lord's instructions were, "Thou shalt love him as thyself." This simply meant that the requirements of the Law pertaining to their relationship toward one another were to govern their conduct toward "strangers" as well as among themselves. They were not to have one standard of conduct toward their own people and another toward non-Israelites.

This was right and just, and besides, it helped to teach that basically the entire human family is one family. Paul explained that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." (Acts 17:26) While God had made special promises to the people of Israel, he wanted them to realize that basically they

were no different from the people of other nations and races, and therefore that all should be treated alike.

The Lord gave to Israel another reason why they should love the "strangers" in their midst as they loved themselves. It was because they had once been strangers in the land of Egypt. In Egypt the entire nation of Israel was a minority, and a much oppressed minority toward the end of their sojourn there. The Lord graciously delivered them from their slavery, and now he wanted them to show their appreciation of this by treating minorities among them as they treated their own brethren.

The Israelites were told that they should "not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy." (Deut. 24:14) Leviticus 19:13 and Deuteronomy 24:15 indicate that servants were to be paid at the close of each day. Since this was the Law, it was to be strictly observed. Apparently the "poor and needy" of that time lived "from hand to mouth." Perhaps in many instances

they depended on the day's earnings to procure their evening meal, so a real hardship would result if they did not receive their wages promptly at the close of each day.

MATTHEW 9:9-13

IN THIS scripture we are presented with a minority in Israel of a different sort—not poor and needy hired servants, and not strangers, but a group which, on the whole, was probably financially better off than the majority of Israelites. Matthew, the publican, whom Jesus called to be an apostle, was one of this group. The feast which Jesus attended was probably arranged by Matthew to give him an auspicious opportunity to present the Master to his friends.

But from the standpoint of the majority in Israel, these were sinners, and as such were looked down upon. The Pharisees inquired of the disciples, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" Jesus' reply to this was that they which are "whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick."

In this reply Jesus acceded to the viewpoint of the Pharisees that the publicans were "sick" and that they were "whole." Jesus on other occasions referred to the Pharisees as hypocrites and "whited sepulchres," so, actually, it would seem that they were just as much sinners as the publicans.

Jesus' statement that he had not come to call the "righteous, but sinners to repentance," refers to

QUESTIONS

Who are the "minorities" referred to in the Old Testament portions of the lesson; and how were the Israelites to treat them?

Were the "publicans" actually more sinful than the Pharisees?

Who are referred to in Galatians 3:28?

Who are the angels referred to in the Golden Text?

those who claim to be righteous. Actually, all are sinners. There is none righteous. All have sinned and have come short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:10, 23) No one can have peace with God and receive life apart from repentance and a faith in God and in the redemptive work of Christ which leads to full dedication of one's self to the divine will. In "this present evil world" those who accept this call to repentance and consecration have always been a minority, misunderstood, and often persecuted.

GALATIANS 3:28

THIS text refers to the faith seed of Abraham, the spiritual Israelites of the Gospel age. These are called out of all nations, races, and groups, and are made one in Christ Jesus. They are to be associated with Jesus as the "Seed" through which all the families of the earth are to be blessed.

Our Golden Text refers to the time when Abraham entertained the angels who reassured him that Sarah would bear a son. He was richly blessed by the experience.

Justice Among Nations

GOLDEN TEXT: "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."
—Revelation 15:3, 4

MICAH 4:1-7

OUR lesson states, "Many nations shall come, and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord." Isaiah's prophecy of this same happy time in human experience says that "all" nations will indicate their desire to recognize the authority of Christ's kingdom, symbolized in both these prophecies by a "mountain," the mountain of the house of the Lord." (Isa. 2:2-4) As a result of the fulfilment of this prophecy justice will be administered among the nations, because the governing authority among them will be the kingdom of Christ.

The fulfilment of both Micah's and Isaiah's prophecies is explained to be in the "last days"—not the last days of time, nor the last days of human experience, but the last days of the reign of sin and death; the last days of Satan's empire. To begin with, these "last days" witness a "time of trouble such as

never was since there was a nation." Jesus describes the same period of international distress as a "great tribulation."—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21

This tribulation will leave the nations prostrate and helpless. Recognizing their failure to bring peace to the world, they will turn to the Lord for help and be willing to recognize the authority of Christ's kingdom, which by then will have begun to function. The Lord will "teach us of his ways," say the nations, "and we will walk in his paths." When this is true the result will be that they will "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Nothing but the authority of Christ's kingdom will bring about such a happy situation as this! Fallen man is too selfish, left to his own devices, to establish a world

government based upon justice and equality for all. But the Bible abounds with promises that Christ is able to do this, and will do it. And when he does, and when, as our Golden Text explains, "his judgments are made manifest," "all nations shall come and worship before" him.

ACTS 10:34, 35 EPHESIANS 2:13-16

IT WAS as a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, that Peter said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." It was given to Peter to witness the beginning of a new phase of the divine plan for human salvation. Prior to this, Gentiles had not been accepted by God unless they became Jewish proselytes.

When Jesus first sent his disciples into the ministry he instructed them not to go to the Gentiles. After his resurrection he lifted this restriction, and they were commissioned to go into all the world to preach the Gospel. James explains that the purpose of this was to take out from the Gentiles a people for the Lord's name; that is, to become his children, his ruling house of sons. (Acts 15:13-17) This opportunity was first offered exclusively to the Jewish nation, and many of them accepted. (John 1:11, 12; Rom. 11:5, 7) But there were not enough

QUESTIONS

What are the prophetic "last days"?

What will cause the nations to recognize the authority of Christ's kingdom?

Explain the change in the divine plan which took place at the time of Cornelius' conversion.

Explain the difference between God's work in the earth up until the present time, and in the Millennium.

of these to make up the foreordained number, so the opportunity was extended to the Gentiles, Cornelius being the first to benefit thereby.

Writing to Gentile believers, Paul said, "Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both [Jewish and Gentile believers] one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." The result of this is, as Paul further states, that Christ hath made in himself "of twain one new man." Christ's body members are therefore actually neither Jew nor Gentile; neither male nor female; neither bond nor free.—Gal. 3:27-29

Let us keep in mind that the work of God among his people in every age prior to the Millennium is preparatory. During the ages preceding Christ's first advent, the official personnel of the earthly phase of the kingdom were being developed. During this age the spiritual phase of the kingdom is being prepared. When the work of preparation is completed, then the kingdom will be set up.

Temperance and Social Justice

GOLDEN TEXT: "So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."
—Romans 14:12, 13

ROMANS 13:11—14:4, 15-21

IN THE first part of our lesson Paul stresses the fact that now is our salvation nearer than when we entered the Christian way. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand," he wrote. Paul is here referring to the long and dark night of sin and death; the "night" the Prophet David describes as being filled with weeping. The "day" in Paul's admonition is the day of Christ's kingdom. It was to the beginning of this "day" that David wrote in his expression, "Joy cometh in the morning."—Ps. 30:5

The night is "far spent," Paul wrote. In every age God has permitted his people, oftentimes even his inspired servants, to think that the "day" of the promised messianic kingdom, with all its marvelous blessings, was much nearer than it actually was. However, Paul was right when he said, "The night is far spent." There is reason to believe that the nighttime of human experiences was to last for approximately 6,000 years. In Paul's day,

more than 4,000 years, or two-thirds of the night, had already passed. How true, then, was the expression, "The night is far spent."

Paul admonished, "Let us cast off the works of darkness," and, "Let us walk honestly [margin, 'decently'] as in the day." The meaning of these admonitions is obvious. We are to "walk," that is, conduct ourselves as though we were already living in the "day," or in the time of Christ's kingdom. Since Christ will be the Ruler in that day, and Satan the "prince of this world" will be bound, justice and righteousness will prevail, therefore we should see to it that we practice justice and righteousness now.

We are to "put on the armor of light," and we are also to put on "the Lord Jesus Christ." The "armor of light" is the defense which the Lord has provided through the truth of his Word. It protects us specially against the attacks of the Devil, these attacks being upon our minds. The details of this armor are mentioned in Ephesians 6:10-18.

Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ is the full acceptance of him as our Head, the ruler of our lives. The only way we can have him as our Head is by being baptized into his death. Through the Apostle Paul He directs us to lay down our lives sacrificially, to be planted together with him in the likeness of his death. (Rom. 6:3-5) We cannot, therefore, make provision for the flesh, provision which, while pleasing to the flesh, would be withdrawing from the privilege of dying with Christ.

One of the evidences of a mature Christian, one who is living up to all his privileges as a member of the body of Christ, is his sympathetic understanding of fellow-members in the body who possibly have not advanced to the same degree of maturity as he. They had these immature brethren in the Early Church. One of the evidences of their lack of growth in grace was their belief that it was a sin to eat meat which had been offered to idols.

In view of this situation the mature in Christ were confronted with two just obligations. One was not to judge these weaker brethren and condemn them. As Paul explains, they either stood or fell before the Lord. God had called them into the truth, and into the Christian way, and was dealing with them. To condemn them would be questioning the wisdom of God.

Another obligation was not to put temptation in their way by eat-

QUESTIONS

What are the "night" and "day" referred to by Paul?

What did Paul mean by living "as in the day"?

What are Christians to "put on"?

What is the all-important thing in a Christian's life?

ing meat offered to idols in the presence of those who considered it wrong. This could stumble them in the sense of encouraging them to eat the meat—so as not to seem different from others—even though it was contrary to their conscience. The violation of conscience is a weakening of character.

"The kingdom of God," Paul wrote, "is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Every follower of the Master is running for "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14) The glorious hope of joint-heirship with Christ in his kingdom is held out to all who make their calling and election sure. (II Pet. 1:10) To prove faithful to our calling is the all-important thing in life.

How trivial, then, are such incidents as meat and drink! How glad we should be to forego any earthly advantage, or satisfaction, if by so doing we can be a help to a brother in Christ. Indeed, the spirit of sacrifice which makes it a delight to do this is the spirit of love which all must have who are to live and reign with Christ.

The Rewards of Faith

"The just shall live by his faith."—Habakkuk 2:4

FAITH is the ability to believe as true that which cannot be demonstrated to the physical senses. Faith in the existence of God is a good example of this ability. We cannot see God nor hear his voice. We cannot touch him. Nevertheless, when we think of the vast universe around us, our reason tells us that there must be a supreme Intelligent Creator. We accept the testimony of our reason and believe that God exists.

This is faith in its simplest form. But true Christian faith goes beyond this. We not only believe that God exists, but we have faith "in" God, in his integrity, his justice, his love, his wisdom, his power. And we have faith in the rightness of the divine plan as it pertains to ourselves individually and to his people collectively. We also have faith in the divine plan for the world in general. This is the minimum of faith which one must possess in order to approach God and receive blessings from him. Paul wrote, "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that

cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Heb. 11:6

We do not need to exercise faith in the existence of our next door neighbor; because we can see him. But if we are to enjoy a friendly relationship with our neighbor we must have faith in him, and he in us. We would have to know that he is truthful, honest, upright, and dependable; and he would have to be assured of the same concerning us. So if we are to enjoy a friendly relationship with the great God of the universe we must believe not only that "he is," but also that we can depend upon him to fulfil all his gracious promises. Or, as Paul stated it, that he is the "rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Adam was created in the image of God, and was physically and mentally perfect. Despite this, when temptation was presented to him he disobeyed God's command. Adam knew that Eve had sinned and would doubtless die. He probably felt that he could not live

without her. However, if he had exercised full faith in his Creator, he would have known that in some manner this tragedy would be overruled for his good, and he would have remained obedient. Thus, while various adverse influences were at work, basically it was Adam's lack of faith that led him into sin.

Since Adam became a sinner, his children were born in sin, with resultant condemnation to death passing on to his entire progeny. Because of this the Bible tells us that there is none righteous, no not one, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. However, among the fallen race there have been some who exercised faith in God despite their physical and mental imperfections. To some of these God has spoken and invited their co-operation. This has given them an opportunity to demonstrate their faith.

Abraham was one of these. The first record of this is found in Genesis 12:1-3. Abraham was asked by God to leave his own people and to go into a land that he would show him. Paul observes that when Abraham received this call he "obeyed, and went out not knowing whither he went." (Heb. 11:8) A wonderful promise was associated with this call, the promise that through Abraham's seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. Abraham believed this promise, and he demonstrated his belief, his faith, by his obedience.

And Abraham was richly rewarded for his faith. We read in Genesis 15:6, "He believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Paul quotes this in Romans 4:3, and in the 22nd verse adds, "It was imputed to him for righteousness." Clearly it was Abraham's faith itself that was reckoned, or imputed to him for righteousness.

Abraham, like all other members of the fallen and condemned race, was imperfect. It was impossible for him to live up to the divine standard of righteousness, yet he had strong faith in God and in the promises of God. His faith was so strong that had he been in the Garden of Eden and faced with the same test that came upon Adam, it is doubtful if he would have disobeyed God. So now God was willing to, and did, "count" or consider Abraham's faith as an evidence of his integrity. He knew that Abraham would serve him perfectly if he could.

Because of Abraham's faith, God accepted him as a friend. Here was a genuine basis for friendship. Abraham believed God, and because he did, God had confidence in him. Thus a beautiful friendship was established and maintained which continued throughout Abraham's lifetime. On various occasions God spoke to Abraham, reiterating and enlarging upon the promise he made to him on the "plains of Mamre" that through his seed he would bless all the families

THE DAWN

of the earth.—Gen. 13:18, margin; 14:13; 35:27

Abraham's faith in these promises caused him to look for a "city," a government, which would have foundations, whose builder and maker would be God. When put to the final test, Abraham's faith was such that he believed God would raise his son Isaac from the dead. And willingly giving up the boy as a sacrifice, Abraham did receive him in a figure from the dead.—Heb. 11:10, 17-19

"Cometh by Hearing"

In Romans 10:17 we read, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." The reference here is to an active, demonstrated faith which God is pleased to "count" as righteousness. There are doubtless millions who have the ability to exercise faith in God, and these do believe that he exists. But only when God reveals himself through his Word, and invites co-operation in his plan of salvation, is the opportunity given to demonstrate faith by obedience.

In the antediluvian world there were only a few whom God thus highly honored. Those mentioned in the Bible are Abel, Enoch, Noah and his family. Following the Deluge, in the patriarchal age there were Abraham, Isaac, Jacob—and their wives—Melchisedec, and probably Job. These were the called, or chosen, of that age.

Beginning with the death of Jacob, God chose his twelve sons

and their families as a nation. To these in due time he gave his Law. To these he sent his prophets, and through the prophets gave them an opportunity to know his plan as it was then due to be understood, and to co-operate therein. Only a few responded in obedience, and this was because they believed God.

The faith of these was so strong that it reached beyond their immediate surroundings and experiences. Some, of course, received marvelous evidences of God's favor. In Hebrews 11:32-35 Paul speaks of these, saying that they "subdued kingdoms," "wrought righteousness," "obtained promises," "stopped the mouths of lions," "quenched the violence of fire," "escaped the edge of the sword," out of "weakness were made strong," were "valiant in fight," and "turned to flight the armies of the aliens." "Women received their dead raised to life again."

Strong faith was essential in these victorious experiences, and it enabled them to see the overruling providences of God in connection with them. Take the three Hebrews, for example, who "quenched the violence of fire" through their faith. They defied Nebuchadnezzar, saying that their God whom they served was able to deliver them. But they also told the king that if their God did not deliver them, they would not bow down to the image which he had set up. Their faith was not that God would deliver them, But in God. They be-

lieved that whatever he did would be right. It is this sort of faith that God counts for righteousness.

In verses 36-38 Paul writes: "Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."

To pass through experiences such as these required a faith that could trust God even though there was no visible evidence of his care and protection. It was faith in the promises of God pertaining to the future that sustained them. They endured these things in order that they might obtain a "better resurrection." (vs. 35) Their concern was in the fulfilment of God's promises pertaining to the future. Like Abraham with respect to Isaac, they believed that God was able, and would raise them from the dead in his own due time. This was the faith that was counted to them for righteousness.

While the whole nation of Israel was called and chosen by God, only these few, the ancient worthies, made their calling and election sure to the position designed for them in the divine plan. They did this by their faith. It was a faith

that was demonstrated by their obedience under the most trying circumstances. Because they thus proved their worthiness, their "spirits," their heart intentions, will in the resurrection be given perfect human bodies through which they will be able to express their praises to God, and serve him perfectly as the "princes in all the earth."—Ps. 45:16

Faith in the Gospel Age

The quality of faith is unchanged from age to age in the plan of God. It was true in the past and is true now that "without faith it is impossible to please God." No one can enjoy God's friendship without having faith in him. Those who are able to exercise faith are rewarded with whatever blessings the Lord may be dispensing at the time.

The woman mentioned in Matthew 9:20-22 was cured of an "issue of blood" because of her great faith. Jesus said to her, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." The blind referred to in Matthew 9:29 were told by Jesus, "According to your faith be it unto you." They exercised faith and received their sight.

The Bible reveals that there are degrees of faith. The disciples had faith to believe that Jesus was their Messiah. But on the storm-tossed sea of Galilee they became fearful. (Mark 4:40) After Jesus rescued Peter from the sea he said to him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matt. 14:31) On another occasion, the disciples

THE DAWN

said to Jesus, "Increase our faith."
—Luke 17:5

In Romans 1:16, 17 we read, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; . . . for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." The Gospel of Christ is received by faith, but not instantaneously. It is revealed gradually as faith is able to receive and act upon it.

The apostles are good illustrations of this "faith to faith" revelation and receiving of the Gospel. Even before they heard of Jesus they knew something of the messianic promises and had faith in them. When they came into contact with Jesus and his wonderful ministry they believed that he was the Messiah, and left all to follow him. Thus upon the basis of their faith God was dealing with them.

In his prayer Jesus said to his Father concerning his apostles, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy Word." (John 17:6) These men were completely dedicated to God. They had faith in his Word, and were obedient to it. Prior to Pentecost they did not clearly understand the divine plan, but they believed and obeyed that which they did understand. Because of this God looked upon them as his people. "Thine they were," said Jesus. Like Abraham, they were God's friends. How richly their faith was rewarded!

Knowledge Necessary

The faith that opens the door to friendship with God is not a blind belief. It is faith in the plans and purposes of God to the extent that it is his will to reveal them. It was Abraham's faith in the promises that constituted the basis for his friendship with God. This was true of the apostles. It is still true today.

During the Gospel age God reveals his plans and purpose through his written Word. The purpose of this revelation, even as in the past, is to invite co-operation in the outworking of the divine plan. During the Gospel age this co-operation can be only through association with Jesus, and under his headship. But Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John 6: 44) This shows that there is a certain selection on God's part. He is not at the present time drawing the whole world, but only those whom he chooses.

God chooses those whom he knows are able to exercise faith in him and in his promises. In addition to their ability to exercise faith, these are also humble of heart and willing to learn. The first evidence of God's drawing power in their lives may well be in an experience, or series of experiences, which cause them to realize the futility and worthlessness of the material values so highly esteemed by the world in general.

Their hearts prepared, they are

brought into contact with the truth of the Word. This also is by the providence of God in the exercise of his drawing power. When they hear the Word, or read it, and their minds and hearts begin to respond to it, God is pleased, for this was the object of the exercise of his drawing power in their lives.

One of the first things learned from the Word of truth is the fact that all are sinners, members of a sin-cursed and dying race. If faith lays hold upon this fact, and the heart properly responds, the result will be repentance. Like the publican that went up to the temple to pray, those who repent will cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner."—Luke 18:13

And the Lord is merciful, for his providences have been working to bring about this very state of repentance. If God loved the whole world of sinners so much that he sent his Son to be the Redeemer, surely his love goes out much more to those who, when learning of his gracious provision through Christ, begin to respond to his drawing power and demonstrate their faith by repenting of their sins, and asking for forgiveness.

Just as no one can come to Jesus unless drawn by the Father, Jesus explained that only through him could anyone have access to the Father. (John 14:6) This means that the truth by which God "draws" points the way to Jesus, and to the redeeming merit of his shed blood.

During this Gospel age the only object of thus being drawn to God through Christ is to become disciples of Christ. To be a disciple of Christ means to follow in his footsteps of self-sacrifice. It means to deny self and to take up one's cross and follow Jesus into death. It means to be "planted together in the likeness of his death."—Rom. 6:3-5

The footstep followers of Jesus walk in a path that is difficult to tread. It is a "narrow way." To walk in this way means shame, ignominy, persecution, affliction, suffering, and death. In Revelation 20:4 it is described as being "beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God." And even though the word "beheaded" is thus used symbolically, it denotes suffering and the loss of life.

These are some of the hard facts that are revealed to those whom the Lord is drawing. After repenting of their sins, they realize that they are now faced with the necessity of making a decision as to whether or not they will accept the invitation to become disciples of Christ and share in his sufferings. The Lord wants them to weigh this matter very carefully. This is indicated by Jesus in his parable concerning the man who was to build a tower. This man would be very foolish, the parable teaches, unless he first of all sat down and counted the cost.—Luke 14:28-30

So counting the cost of discipleship is the will of God for everyone

THE DAWN

who is drawn by his love to the point of repentance. Just as God is pleased with the attitude of true repentance, he is also pleased with those who sit down and count the cost of full surrender to do his will as it is now revealed in the terms of discipleship.

There is no set length of time during which one may "count the cost." The Bible tells us that when Abraham was called of God he "obeyed." We need not suppose that Abraham obeyed without giving consideration to all that was involved. It seems reasonable to conclude that he took some time to "count the cost."

Since those whom God draws are invited to lay down their lives in his service, we may suppose that while they are counting the cost he encourages them, by his promises, to make the right decision. Counting the cost does not mean comparing the value of what is sacrificed with the worth of what God has promised in return. Those who have faith in the promises of God must realize at once that there is no comparison. There is nothing here that needs to be "counted."

The "counting" is the giving of consideration to whether or not the trials of the narrow way will be more than can be borne. This "counting" must be in the light of God's promises of grace and strength to help in every time of need. Thus the measure of faith in God and in his promises will

actually determine the decision that is made. Jesus asked James and John if they were "able" to drink of his cup and be baptized with his baptism. They replied, "We are able." So with all who "count the cost." If they have an unfaltering faith in the promises of God their decision will also be, "We are able."

Understanding Increases

Even before Jesus died as the Redeemer, James and John and all the apostles—with the exception of Judas—had reached the decision in their hearts, "We are able." Indeed, right from the beginning when they first became Jesus' disciples, they had given up all to follow him. There were many things which they did not understand, and could not understand until the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them at Pentecost. But their hearts responded in full obedience to the truths of the divine plan which they did understand.

No one who is drawn by God and responds through repentance and full consecration has, at first, a full understanding of the divine will. Just as the apostles needed the Holy Spirit to reveal the will of God more perfectly to them, so it is with all who dedicate their lives to the service of God. The only difference is that the apostles had to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit, whereas since Pentecost God has waited for the full surrender of those whom he has drawn before blessing them with

the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

At this point in God's loving dealings a whole treasure-house of riches is opened up as the reward of faith. From righteous Abel to John the Baptist, those who believed God and upon the basis of their faith were dedicated to the doing of his will were, symbolically speaking, taken into his bosom as friends. He loved them, he cared for them, He gave them a limited vision of his loving messianic purpose. He promised them a resurrection. But so far as the present life was concerned, they remained under the condemnation to death which, through Adam, had come upon the whole world.

This was a necessity, for the price of redemption from sin and death had not yet been provided. It is true, of course, that God's dealings with the ancient worthies were because of his great plan of redemption through Christ. He who speaks of things that are not, as though they already were, was pleased to take to himself as friends those whom he knew would qualify to receive life through the blood of Christ, when raised from the dead and made "perfect" in the "better resurrection" for which they endeavored to prove worthy.

But beginning with the Gospel age a new feature of the divine plan began to operate. This is the age of sacrifice, the "better sacrifices" mentioned by Paul in Hebrews 9:23. Jesus was "made flesh,"

"crowned with glory and honor" of perfect human nature in order that he might give himself in death a "ransom for all." (I Tim. 2:3-6) And now his followers are invited to suffer and die with him. Their bodies also are presented in sacrifice.—Rom. 12:1

It is possible for these to offer an acceptable sacrifice to God only because they are made free from adamic condemnation through the merit of the blood of Christ. Paul speaks of their bodies being offered a "living sacrifice." This can be only because, through the merit of Christ's blood, they are no longer under death condemnation, but through faith have been made alive in Christ.

What a glorious reward of faith! From God's standpoint it is as though, through accepting Jesus as our Redeemer, we had been restored to perfection of life such as the world will enjoy at the close of the "times of restitution." Thus, through faith, we have a reckoned perfect life to offer in sacrifice, even as Jesus did. This is a reward of faith which the ancient worthies did not enjoy. But think of what it means to us! It means that we are co-sacrificers with Jesus, and, in a manner acceptable to God are laying down our lives both for the brethren and in the interest of the whole world of mankind.

No Condemnation

In II Corinthians 5:14, 15 Paul reminds us of how we were con-

THE DAWN

strained by the love of Christ to dedicate ourselves fully to the divine service. He speaks of those who have taken this step as being "in Christ," or members of his mystical body. (vs. 17) In Romans 8:1 he writes that to those who are "in Christ Jesus" there is "no condemnation." "No condemnation"—what a glorious reward of faith!

But to continue enjoying this "no condemnation" standing before God it is necessary also to walk "not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Paul adds that "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. 8:2) How wonderful to realize that we are no longer under "the law of sin and death."

In verses 14-17 Paul further explains, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption [or, of sonship], whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

How rich is the reward of sonship with our Heavenly Father! This also has come to us through faith. Abraham received the reward of friendship because he be-

lieved all the truth of the divine plan which was then revealed and due to be understood. We receive the reward of sonship through our belief in the more complete revelation of the divine plan that has come to us.

In this further unfolding of God's plan we see the truth concerning Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all. We see his death upon the cross as the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. We see him raised from the dead, giving evidence that the Heavenly Father was well pleased with his sacrifice, and proving also God's ability to fulfil his promises pertaining to the resurrection of the dead.

By faith we accept these advanced truths. We believe that Jesus was raised for our justification to life, and that he ever liveth to make intercession for us. Believing this, we go boldly to the "throne of grace" there to "obtain mercy" and to find "grace to help in time of need." This is another reward of faith.

"Peace with God"

Again Paul wrote, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1) Abraham, and all the ancient worthies, had "peace" in the sense that they were God's friends. Their faith in God's promises removed fear and anxiety from their hearts. But to have "peace with God" referred to by

Paul, implies separation from the condemned and dying family of Adam. It implies that "peace with God" is the heritage of those who belong to the family of God. And now, through faith in Christ which is demonstrated by "works" of full consecration, we may enjoy this rich reward of faith.

"By whom also," Paul continues, "we have access by faith into this [further] grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." (vs. 2) Yes, faith has opened the door into this glorious hope of the divine nature, and of sharing the glory of God. "And not only so," Paul adds, "but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience hope. And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."—vss. 3-5

Since without faith it is impossible to please God, the reverse is also true. Through the exercise of faith in God and in his promises, the flood gates of his love and favor are opened wide for consecrated believers. In our text we read that "the just shall live by his faith." In the New Testament this is quoted in various contexts, revealing that through faith we receive justification to life; and also that through faith in the promises we receive strength to continue on in the way of sacrifice.

Paul quotes this statement in

Hebrews 10:38, saying, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Living by faith, as mentioned here, means that faith in God and in his promises is a way of life. It is the only way that a Christian can live day by day rejoicingly, at peace with God, and enjoying the peace of God.

Living by faith, the abundant mercy and love of God are our daily portion. Living by faith is to live free from condemnation. Living by faith is to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Living by faith we triumph in tribulation. Living by faith we are led by the Spirit of God and enjoy the blessings belonging to the sons of God.

Living by faith we can go boldly to the throne of grace to receive strength for our every time of need. By faith we know that all things work together for our good because we love God and are called according to his purpose. By faith we know that nothing can separate us from the love of God, or the love of Christ, that since he is for us, nothing can be successfully against us.—Rom. 8:31, 35-39

By faith we dwell in the "secret place of the Most High," and by faith we are sheltered under the "wings," of the Almighty. Truly the just do live by faith, and the Lord finds pleasure in them as they lay hold more and more firmly upon his promises, zealously devoting themselves to the doing of his will.

The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist—Part 2

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)."
—Matthew 24:15

THE expression, "abomination of desolation," is another prophetic description of that unholy counterfeit of Christ's kingdom to which the name Antichrist also applies. Certainly the great Antichrist system of iniquity foretold in the prophecies is an "abomination," an abomination which indeed proved to be a "desolation" of God's truths, and also a desolating, destroying power among the Lord's people themselves.

In our text Jesus speaks of this "abomination" as having been foretold by the Prophet Daniel. Turning to the Book of Daniel we find it referred to twice. The first reference is found in chapter 11, verse 31; and the second in chapter 12, verse 11. Jesus' reference to this desolating abomination is in the prophecy which he gave in reply to the disciples' question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming [presence], and of the end of the world [age]?"—Matt. 24:3

In this prophecy Jesus not only outlined signs by which his people would know of his second presence and the end of the age, but also foretold important developments throughout the age which would be related to, and the concern of, his followers. The "abomination of desolation" is one of these.

Various titles and expressions are used in the Bible to describe the many aspects of the true messianic kingdom, each of which emphasizes some particular aspect or work of the kingdom, some,

even its preparatory stages. This is also true of the great Antichrist system foretold in the prophecies. It also is given a variety of names, and is described from different standpoints. As we have seen, it is called a "man of sin," "the son of perdition," "the mystery of iniquity," and other names. It is also, as in our present text, an "abomination of desolation." Daniel speaks of it as the "abomination that maketh desolate."

One of the principal ways the Antichrist has been an abomination which maketh desolate has been in its wanton taking away of the truth of God's Word from the minds and hearts of God's professed people. The foundation of all the truths of the divine plan is the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ—that ransom for all, which is to be testified to all in "due time." (I Tim. 2:3-6) This basic truth of the divine plan, stated in other words, is the fact that Jesus gave his flesh, his humanity, in death as a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam and his race; that he did this "once for all"; that it is a continuing, ever efficacious sacrifice on behalf of all mankind.

In both of Daniel's references to the "abomination that maketh desolate," he associates with it the taking away of what the King James Version describes as the "daily sacrifice." Here the Hebrew word translated "daily" actually means "continual," and is so translated in the Revised Version. It is not a reference to the daily typical sacrifices, under the Mosaic Law, but to the great sacrifice "once for all," which was designed to serve continually as a propitiation for the sins of the church during the present age, and for the sins of the world in general during the age to come, the Millennium.—Heb. 10:10; I John 2:2

In a subtle, deceptive manner this "continual sacrifice" was taken away, or set aside, by the Antichrist, and substituted in its place was the doctrine of the "mass," that unholy, superstitious notion that by intoning a few Latin words over a wafer of bread and a glass of wine, they are transformed into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ. Not only is the claim that the body and blood of Jesus are thus re-created and re-sacrificed fictitious, but the theory completely destroys the glorious truth of the Bible concerning the ransom, the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

While biblical language is frequently used by the Antichrist in

THE DAWN

theological expositions, such as references to the shed blood of the Redeemer, Jesus' death on the cross, and so forth, this language is given an entirely different meaning than that presented in the Word of God. In the Scriptures the shedding of blood symbolizes the giving up, or pouring out, of life. Jesus "poured out his soul unto death," wrote the Prophet Isaiah. (Isa. 53:12) But the Antichrist does not believe that Jesus died! To the theologians in this iniquitous system, Jesus was God, and surely God could not die.

No, their erroneous theory is that God came to earth incarnate in flesh and gave an exhibition of suffering, pretending to die on the cross. The theory is that sins are expiated by suffering. But it was not sufficient that God suffer once on the cross, so they cause him to suffer over and over again through the sacrifice of the mass. But even this is not enough, for after death the individual for whom the masses are said must go to purgatory and continue to suffer—the length of time depending on how favorably he may be remembered by his friends still on the earth.

But this is only one of the abominable aspects of the Antichrist. In Daniel's expression, "abomination that maketh desolate," the Hebrew word translated "desolate" literally means to "stun," having as an overtone of meaning that the stunning, or rendering helpless, is by means of surprise, or astonishment. How accurately this describes the desolating work accomplished by the Antichrist once its combined ecclesiastical and civil authority and power could not be successfully challenged!

In Daniel 8:11, this unholy Antichrist system, under the domination of Satan, is referred to as "the prince of the host"—the "host" being the great mass of professing Christians—by whom the continual sacrifice was taken away. And the marginal translation of verse 12 explains that the "host" was given over to the "prince" "for the transgression against the daily [or continual] sacrifice; and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered."

In verses 24 and 25 of the same chapter we read further concerning the Antichrist, "His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power [but by the civil power of the various kingdoms of Europe]; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand;

and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace [margin, prosperity] shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes [Christ]; but he shall [eventually] be broken without hand."

Another revealing prophecy of this same desolating abomination is found in Daniel 11:31-33: "They shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by the flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days."

From these various prophetic word pictures we get a very clear view of the "abomination that maketh desolate." In addition to taking away the daily, or continual, ever efficacious sacrifice of Christ, substituting in its place the blasphemous doctrine of the mass, it "cast down" essentially all God's "truth to the ground."

The truth concerning one true and living God of the Bible was "cast down," and a triune god set up in his place.

The truth concerning man being mortal was "cast down," and an immortal man invented instead.

The great truth that the "wages of sin is death" was "cast down," and for it was substituted torture—eternal in hell for the wilfully wicked, such as heretics; and long centuries of torment in purgatory for the less than wilful sinners.

The truth that Christ would return and with his faithful followers establish a kingdom on the earth, was "cast down," the unholy church-state rulership being substituted, with the pope claiming to be the vicar of Christ.

The true baptism into Christ's death, with its symbol of water immersion, was "cast down," and infant sprinkling established as a substitute.

Justification by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ was "cast down," with purchased "righteousness" through indulgences and the mass taking its place.

The truth concerning the restoration of paradise during the "times

THE DAWN

of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," was "cast down," and the falsehood adopted that "time" would one day end, and then the earth would be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-21

We might continue to name one after another of the details of truth, and we would find that the "abomination that maketh desolate" has been guilty of casting them all down to earth, and substituting others in their places. One of the most astonishing aspects of all this is that the Bible itself was relegated to a secondary place, and the authority of the pope exalted above the authority of the Bible. This means that a "thus saith the Lord," through his inspired Word, had little or no weight in the minds and hearts of those who had been "stunned" by this abominable system.

We are glad that in the prophecies concerning this evil system there is such a clear-cut distinction made between the "host," the great mass of nominal believers, and the holy ones, "the people that do know their God." (Dan. 8:13; 11:32) Of necessity those who did know God were few in number. One reason was that this is not the age in the divine plan for the conversion of the world. One of the evil practices of the Antichrist was the forcing of its brand of Christianity upon virtually the entire population of the nations at the point of the sword. Obviously this did not make the people Christians.

During this age there is only one way to know God, and that is through the truth of his Word, and Bibles were extremely scarce during the Middle Ages. They all had to be written by hand; and then, in addition to this, the Antichrist banned their use. Many people were burned at the stake, their only "crime" being that they possessed or read the Bible. It would of course be true then, even as now, that a large percentage even of those who had access to the Bible, and who read it, still would not know their God.

Daniel foretold that those who did know their God "shall be strong, and do exploits." (11:32) These were strong in the Lord, and without question stood up valiantly in defense of the truth, but it was against overwhelming odds. Knowing God, they did their best to instruct others, probably even pointing out the evils of the great system of iniquity that was growing up around them.

"Yet," Daniel continued, "they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days."—11:33

It has been estimated that during the reign of the Antichrist it was responsible for the death of fifty million people. And the death penalty was often inflicted by this desolating abomination in the cruelest of ways, such as burning at the stake; on the torture rack; tongues were cut out and molten lead poured into mouths of the victims—all of this in the name of Christ, but contrary to every principle set forth in his teachings and by his example. Church historians, both Protestant and Catholic, verify the facts of these atrocities.

In this twentieth century the civilized people of the world have been horrified by the cruelties imposed upon minorities by the ruthless dictators of our times, both fascist and communist. But none of these cruelties has been more devilish nor more widespread than the tortures of the Holy Inquisition. And yet these were but the natural result of the God-dishonoring teachings of the Antichrist, particularly those doctrines relating to hell-fire and purgatory. Once the supporters of this system concluded that a person was a sinner according to their standards, they supposed that God would torture that individual eternally in more fiendish ways than their twisted minds were capable of imagining. So why not copy God, and inflict as much torture upon the poor soul as possible ahead of time?

No wonder the Bible describes a system capable of such ungodly practices as an "abomination of desolation." The astonishing manner in which this unholy system departed from the true doctrines of the Word of God and the practice of justice and love which they inculcate, truly did "stun" the professed Christian world throughout the Dark Ages. And while there were a few who knew their God, and stood out valiantly against the errors which engulfed them, the vast majority succumbed, and as generation after generation passed, these hideous doctrines and practices became accepted by the rank and file of the people as genuine Christianity.

True, great Reformers finally began to take their stand against the evils of the "abomination," and doubtless they accomplished much good. But so far as God's love for his creatures is concerned, the Reformers protested against the only doctrine of the papacy

THE DAWN

that reflected any degree of mercy at all; namely, purgatory. It could be argued that a suffering soul could be released from purgatory, perhaps, but when the Reformers abolished purgatory, only eternal torture was left for those not worthy of going to heaven. And with the great Protestant systems which are the outgrowth of the Reformation, this is still true.

Seemingly all were so "stunned" by the Antichrist that even though some could no longer endure its bondage or tolerate its corrupt practices, they could not return to normal thinking and to a sane study of the Word of God; for they continued to hold to the major errors taught by papacy, with the exception of purgatory and the mass. The inherent immortality of the soul; the trinity; the destruction of the earth; union of church and state—all of these errors continued to be upheld by nearly all the Reformers.

And in many instances these false doctrines led to ungodly practices similar to those which they induced under the jurisdiction of the desolating abomination. John Calvin burned Servetus at the stake because he spoke out against the doctrine of the trinity. Latimer and Ridley were burned at the stake in England for the "crime" of endeavoring to give the people the Bible. The spirit of cruelty and persecution followed the false doctrines of papacy into the Protestant sects, and only restricted opportunities prevented it from being just as widespread as in the Dark Ages.

The "Beastly" Kingdom

A "beast" is another of the prophetic symbolisms used in the Bible to emphasize certain characteristics of the Antichrist. This symbolism is introduced in the 7th chapter of Daniel, where we are told of four beasts, each representing a kingdom. Most students of prophecy agree that these four beasts represent the four successive empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. There were two phases of the Roman Empire—pagan and papal.

This change over from pagan to papal is represented in Daniel's prophecy of the four beasts by a little horn that grew on the head of the fourth, or Roman beast, replacing three of its ten horns. This "horn," like the others, is interpreted to be a "king," or kingdom. In the description of its characteristics we are given another definite identification of the Antichrist. We quote: "And he shall

speaking great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”—Dan. 7:25

This prophetic time measurement, “time and times and the dividing of time,” is actually a period of three and one-half symbolic years. These are Jewish, or lunar years of three hundred and sixty days, with each day representing a literal year. The entire period, therefore, would be 1,260 years. This same measurement is referred to in Daniel 12:7, where it is given as a period reaching to the end of “these wonders,” one of the “wonders” being the “abomination that maketh desolate.”—vs. 6

In Revelation 11:2 this time measurement is described as “forty and two months,” which again is three and one-half symbolic years. Here it is assigned to a period during which the “holy city,” the embryo kingdom class, is trodden “under foot.” This, too, was one of the accomplishments of Antichrist, the counterfeit kingdom.

In Revelation 11:3 the identical period is again mentioned, and described as a “thousand two hundred and threescore days.” In this prophecy we are told that the Lord would give his two witnesses power to prophesy during this period, even though “clothed in sackcloth.” Evidently this is a reference to God’s Word, his greatest of all witnesses in the earth, the Old and New Testaments making up the “two” witnesses. During this long era of papal supremacy these two witnesses had their testimony limited by the “sackcloth” of dead languages.

In Revelation 12:6 the “woman”—God’s true covenant people—are said to flee into the wilderness for a “thousand two hundred and threescore days.” There was a place prepared for the “woman” by God, a “place” of protection where she could be cared for and fed during the reign of the Antichrist. This is again mentioned in the 14th verse of the chapter, the time measurement being referred to as a “time, and times, and half a time,” as in Daniel 12:7.

Finally, in Revelation 13:5, this same time measurement is assigned to the reign of the “beast.” Beginning with verse 4 we read, “And they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to con-

THE DAWN

tinue forty and two months. . . . And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."—Rev. 13:4-7

Note the similarity of this last quotation with Daniel 7:25, particularly with respect to the "great words" which would be spoken by the "beast." In Daniel's vision, while these blasphemous words are said to be spoken by the "horn" on the head of the Roman beast, the thought is that this "horn" dominates the beast, the change in its status from pagan to papal having been made.

History indicates that the reign of papacy lasted throughout the entire period of the Dark Ages, and in these prophecies we are given its exact length from God's viewpoint; namely, 1,260 years. As we have seen, the Antichrist is described in the Bible as having various characteristics, represented in different names given to it. As the Antichrist, it ruled. It was the counterfeit kingdom of Christ. As a "beast" it reigned also, and had great power, and it is the taking away of this power which the prophecies show was to take place at the close of the 1,260 years.

Historians generally, secular and religious, agree that the sovereign ruling power of papacy was shattered by Napoleon in 1799. Instead of going to Rome to be crowned by the pope, Napoleon insisted that the pope travel to France, and even then he did not permit the pope to crown him, but placed the crown on his own head, with the pope present, thus heaping humiliation upon him. The pope was permitted to continue with his religious activities, although for a time he was made prisoner by Napoleon. But not since then has he been recognized as having the right, or authority to crown or uncrown the kings of the old Roman world.

True, this "mystery of iniquity" was not completely destroyed by Napoleon, nor did the prophecies state that it would be. What Daniel foretold would take place at the end of the 1,260 years was that the dominion of the "beast" would be taken away. And this, the prophecy indicates, was to prepare the way "to consume and to destroy it unto the end." (Dan. 7:25, 26) Not until the true kingdom of Christ is fully established, and its power being wielded world-wide, will the last vestige of the unholy Antichrist be removed and its corrupting influence wholly destroyed.

(To be continued)

To Prepare a Place

THE words of Jesus recorded in the opening verses of the Gospel according to John, chapter 14, are among the most cherished by all who love the Master, for they contain two precious promises. First the Lord says, "I go to prepare a place for you." And again, "I will come again and receive you unto myself." But precious as these promises are, they become even more so when we notice the circumstances under which the words were spoken and the events which led up to their utterance.

In the closing verses of chapter 13 we find the Master alone with the eleven in the "upper room." He had given his final testimony to the Jews, declaring their "house" left unto them "desolate." He had given the sop to Judas, thus marking him out as the one who should betray him, and Judas had gone out to commit his wicked deed. The door which shut Judas out in the darkness of the night and with the world, closed Jesus in with the eleven. This was Jesus' last meeting with them before he suffered. He knew this, and we cannot help but feel that they also must have sensed that great events were about

to take place, although how great they did not know.

A last meeting of friends who know they are soon to be separated is always a sad one, but this one was particularly so in that "upper room" on that Passover night. Jesus knew that very soon he would finish his course on earth, and that soon these disciples whom he loved would be scattered every one to his own, and be bewildered and amazed. This would be his last opportunity to tell them of his near departure and to bequeath unto them his tender message of farewell.

We cannot help but admire the composure of our dear Master on this occasion, and note his love and devotion to those whom the Father had given him. He knew that in a few hours the great purpose of his life on earth would be accomplished—his death on Calvary. It would be natural, then, for him to be very much preoccupied with that event and all that it was to cost him in suffering and in pain. It would have been natural for him to have been so taken up with his own affairs as to forget about these eleven men, who indeed, but a little time before this had been quarreling about which of them should be the greatest. But not so with the Lord. Having loved

THE DAWN

his own who were in the world he loved them to the end, even to the extent of being unmindful of his own sufferings.

So, although his heart was feeling the awful weight of becoming the world's Sin-bearer, he addressed these eleven men with affection and tenderness. "Little children," he said, "yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say unto you." (John 13:33) Then he gave unto them the new commandment, "Love one another as I have loved you." He had been a pillar of support and strength to them, but now he was going away and they could still show to the world that they were his disciples by now leaning upon each other, confiding in each other and loving each other even as he had loved them.

What a beautiful phrase the Lord used with reference to his decease—he was "going away." He was "going away," back to the Father, and while the finishing of his earthly course still weighed heavily upon him, we may be sure that his heart leaped in anticipation of once again being in the actual presence of the Father whom he loved so dearly. Indeed, this "going away" was so sure and so real to the Lord that he wished that these eleven could share this joyful anticipation with him. He said, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father." (John 14:28)

No greater joy could have filled his heart, and had the disciples realized the oneness existing between Father and Son they would have rejoiced with him, even if they had considered it a personal loss to themselves.

It was only a little earlier in this conversation that Simon Peter had asked the Lord the question, "Whither goest thou?" The Lord's reference to his going away had evidently agitated Peter's mind. Coming to earth for a few short years of rejection was not Simon's idea of Messiahship, and he may have wondered whether the Lord had any special meaning attached to these words, "going away." Was he speaking plainly, or was it in the form of a parable? We do not have any doubt about Peter's sincerity and love for the Master, but how little did he, or any of the others, know about the real purpose of our Lord's first advent, or how it was necessary for him first to die and ransom the world ere he would come to bless them. Probably Peter's mind was also troubled by the Lord's previous statement, "Whither I go, ye cannot come."

It would have been easy for Jesus to have told Peter at this point that he was simply going back to the Father—back to heaven from whence he had come—but this would not have been a full answer to the question. True, he was going back to the Father's heavenly home, but his pathway to that home

must be the way of death and the grave. Here was a great truth, so precious to the Master himself, but one which he could not share with any other person on earth, because none could enter into it. It was forbidden ground to the fleshly mind, and as yet Peter and the rest of the disciples had only fleshly minds.

Sin and death were the twin monarchs who up to this time had reigned over the human race and had separated them from God. Full well our dear Lord knew, as he conversed with his disciples in that "upper room," that the great purpose for which he had come into the world was to become Sin-bearer, and this by going into death to become the One who would abolish death and bring "life and immortality to light through the Gospel." (II Tim. 1:10) We can readily appreciate, therefore, that a full answer to the question, "Whither goest thou?" would have involved an explanation of this entire matter, and this was a great secret which would have to remain closed to these disciples until the great transaction was over, and until Jesus, as the mighty Conqueror, had appeared in the presence of the Father for them.

Nevertheless the Lord gave Peter an answer to his question. With what lowly grace and unassuming simplicity those words then fell from the lips of their Teacher, "Whither I go, thou canst not fol-

low me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." Thus the Lord told Peter that it was impossible then to follow him, no matter how anxious he was to do so. And why was this? Because sin and death had separated man from God and at-one-ment would have to be made. Our Lord Jesus was the one appointed to effect this atonement and it was for this purpose that he was "going away," going into death and thence into the presence of God, there to present the merit of his sacrifice. So we see how impossible it would have been for Peter to follow the Lord on this journey until first the Lord had done something for him; until first he had appeared in the presence of God for him and for his justification.—Rom. 4:25

But Peter desired a fuller explanation. As yet he had only a human mind with which to view the matter and so it was impossible for him to see it as Jesus did. He insisted, "Why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." Or, as Luke records it, "I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death."—Luke 22:33

Poor Peter! How little he knew of the weakness of his flesh and of how unavailing it would be in this great conquest upon which the Master had entered! Actually he had proposed to follow Christ into death. But the Master knew that he must needs go first and rise a

THE DAWN

victor o'er that dark domain, ere Peter could follow. Hence the Lord's reply, "Thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards."

Here we might pause and note how many made a similar mistake since that memorable night when this conversation took place. How many have attempted to accomplish in their own strength what the Lord has accomplished for them! Then, instead of accepting by faith the Lord's offer of righteousness and life as a free gift from him, they spend their time in attempting good works and great works in an effort to earn the same. In the carrying out of these great works some have, indeed, shown willingness to go into prison and to death. But we must keep clearly in mind that such works of themselves can profit us little or nothing. Our hope must be on "nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness," and then we may follow the Lord, as Peter afterwards did, even unto death.

The conversation between Jesus and Peter relative to his "going away" and the impossibility of the disciples immediately following him, must have troubled the hearts and minds of the entire eleven. This was not what they had expected. They were still wedded to the idea of an earthly kingdom under a conquering Messiah subjugating the world under him, and under them as his chosen minis-

ters. Now he was about to leave them with nothing accomplished, so far as they could see, toward this great goal. Were they to be left as orphans in a hostile and ridiculing world? The thought of it troubled their hearts greatly.

And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, immediately addressed himself to the task of weaning them from their earthly ambitions and their thoughts of an earthly kingdom under him as an earthly Messiah. He had something far higher and worthier in mind for them, even a new relationship with God as their Father also. And although he knew that the full understanding of this new relationship could not be fully theirs until he had suffered, yet we can see how, before his departure, he began to speak to them from this new standpoint, endeavoring to draw their minds away from earthly hopes and get them centered on heavenly prospects. So he said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Yes, up to this time they had believed in God. God had been the object of their worship and they had believed in him fully, although they had never seen him with the natural eye. Now they were to have another object of worship in heaven, even Jesus, and he asked them to believe in him, just as they had believed in God, although he also would soon be no longer visible to the natural eye. What could have

been more beautiful than this, and how conducive it would be to getting their minds off Jewish hopes which were entirely earthly, and getting them fixed in heaven—on “things above” where the One they loved was soon to sit with his Father!

Then Jesus referred to Peter’s question again, “Whither goest thou?” He told them he was going to his Father and that in his Father’s house there would be, not only a place for him, but a place for them also. What a revelation! What a wonderful talk this was! What different prospects were being held out from what the eleven had been expecting! Earthly ambitions of kingdom honors were now on the wane, as wonderfully new and unthought of hopes came upon their horizon.

But Peter’s question was not yet fully answered. The Lord had told them that he was going back to the Father, and that in that heavenly sphere there would be room for them also, but why could they not follow him immediately? To this he replied that although there was a place for them there, it must first be “prepared,” and the immediate object of his departure was to prepare that place for them. (John 14:2) How this must have comforted them and how they must have felt that heaven would now be much more real to them because he, their Friend with whom they had walked and talked, would be there. How blessed the assurance

that one day they would follow him to that heavenly abode.

But let us pause and consider how much was contained in those words, “I go to prepare a place for you.” As our dear Lord uttered them he, too, may well have paused as he quickly contemplated what that work of preparation was soon to cost. For the only way in which a place could be prepared for them was by his going into death, by his resurrection out of death by his Father’s power, and by his ascending into heaven, there to deposit in the hands of Justice the redemption price, his precious blood.

It is never out of place for us to meditate on the great cost at which this heavenly place has been prepared. The darkness, the anguish, and the drops of blood at Gethsemane were part of the price. The “contradictions” in the high priest’s judgment hall; the cruel ridicule of Herod and his men of war; the awful scourgings by Pilate’s mocking soldiers; the unbearable weight of that cross of wood; the agony of the driven nails as the cross was hoisted between earth and heaven; the anguish of soul as the loving Jesus hung thereon, forsaken by God, a Sin-bearer. All this was part of the price. Oh, we never can plumb how deep were the waters which overflowed him as he entered death. What a simple assuring statement that was, “I go to prepare a place for you,” but not a word is said about the cost!

THE DAWN

Not only was Jesus to be the object of their worship, but during his absence he was also to be the hope of their hearts. This hope he gave them in the words of the promise, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Again we can see how the Lord was weaning them away from their human conception of an earthly kingdom and putting before their vision the spiritual phase of that kingdom and their place in it. His eternal home was not to be on earth. He was going back to be with the Father and the promise was that they would be with him wherever he would be. This must have been wonderful indeed to the listening disciples.

Up until then he had spoken several times of his departure, and also of the hope of his return in the glory of the kingdom, but not until now had they entertained any thought of leaving the earth and being with him in the abode of the Heavenly Father, yet this was exactly what the Lord was now promising them. He was coming back again, it was true, but not to rejoin them and establish an earthly throne. Instead, his return would be to receive them unto himself and place them by his side in the heavenly phase of his kingdom.

To what extent these early disciples were able to grasp such mighty truths we may not surely know, but we do know that for us

who live at this end of the age they are very wonderful, very precious, and very real indeed. The promise, "I will come again," has now been actually fulfilled. Our dear Lord and Saviour, having at such cost prepared the place for us, has come again, true to his promise, and is now engaged, we believe, in "receiving us unto himself."

There is something very precious about the word "receive" which the Lord chose to indicate the manner in which he would gather his own at his return. The Greek word is *paralambano* and according to the analytical Greek Lexicon means, "to take to one's side." And our Lord is just now doing this very thing, for by the harvest message he has been gathering his own and placing them by his side. He has been bringing them very near to himself, into very close communion with himself. He has spread a rich feast of truth, has girded himself and has come forth to serve them. What a glorious thought this is! Our departure from the sects and ways of men has not been to join another sect, as some have supposed, but rather that we might be placed by the side of our returned Lord, just prior to our "going away" with him to enter that place he has prepared for us.

The closing words of John 14:3 have always been very precious to the Lord's children, but especially so now as the increased light of this harvest time shines upon them.

They are, "Where I am, there ye may be also." Without a doubt this refers to the place of our future abode, but may not these words also contain the thought of position? Jesus always had a very unique position with the Father. He was daily the Father's delight. (Prov. 8:30) Twice while he was on earth his Father testified "This is my beloved Son." What a testimony! And now, he was going back to the Father, to continue to enjoy this close place in the Father's affection.

In John, chapter 17, we listen to Jesus talking to his Father and there the veil is drawn back and we get a glimpse of the closeness of fellowship and communion which exists between Father and Son. In harmony and purpose they were so much at one that not an iota of difference is discernable in their

minds. The Father loved the Son with a love that permitted no comparison. The Son loved the Father above all else. Together they had brought man into existence; together they agreed on the plan of redemption and recovery; and together they were engaged in the outworking of that plan.

What a fellowship! What a place the Son enjoyed! And astounding grace, the Lord says, "Where I am there ye may be also"! Yes, even now we are the objects of the Father's love because we are in the Son. And when we have reached the place prepared for us, and are sat down to share in the throne of the Son, we, too, shall enjoy that blessed oneness, union, harmony, and love which the Father bears toward the Son. What a blessed assurance and glorious prospect are ours!

Encouraging Letters

Comforting

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I have received your booklet, "When a Man Dies." It is comforting to know that when our friends die they go to a place of peace and rest. I should very much like your booklet, "God and Reason," and the book, "The Divine Plan of the Ages." Thanking you in anticipation.—England

Impressed

"Dear 'Frank and Ernest': I was rather touched by your talk on the radio this evening, and on many other evenings also. I am a Wesleyan Methodist, and I have a friend who is a Catholic. We are both thoroughly impressed by your message. My friends would not miss your broadcast for anything. We wish you all the rich blessing of the Lord in your holy work. Please send me your booklet, 'Hope Beyond the Grave.' Your friends."—England

THE DAWN

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

A. BOYCE			
Letchford	Sept.	7	
C. A. CORNELL			
Luton	Sept.	14	
E. HALTON			
Liverpool	Sept.	7	

J. LESLIE MC KEOWN			
Belfast	Aug.	17	
J. H. MURRAY			
Guildford	Aug.	24	
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E. TERRY NADAL			
Southend	Aug.	10	
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Paul in Protective Custody-Part 2

PAUL proved to be a problem prisoner to each of the Roman governors before whom he appeared for a hearing. Festus offered the apostle an opportunity to return to Jerusalem to appear before his accusers, but instead of doing this, he appealed his case to Caesar. Being a lawyer, he knew that as a Roman citizen this appeal could not be denied, and Festus, glad to be free from further responsibility with respect to Paul, replied, "Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go." —Acts 25:12

Actually, Festus had no alternative. Even so, after assuring Paul that he would be taken to Rome, he realized that he still had a problem on his hands; for, while he was planning to send Paul to Caesar, so far as the Roman law was concerned, there was no charge against him. Before there came a convenient opportunity to send Paul on his way to Rome, King Agrippa and his sister Bernice "came unto Caesarea to salute Festus."

Festus took this opportunity to tell Agrippa about his problem prisoner, and Agrippa asked to see and hear Paul. Festus gladly consented, thinking, no doubt, that this additional hearing might furnish him with some information that he could send on to Caesar that would be in the nature of a charge against him. Festus knew that Paul had committed no crime worthy of death, and said so to Agrippa when presenting him to the apostle. "It seemeth to me unreasonable," said Festus, "to send a prisoner [Paul], and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him."—vs. 27

If, when the knowledge of the Lord fills the earth as the waters cover the sea, the restored world of mankind looks back through the pages of history during the reign of sin and death, they will find much that is unreasonable, particularly in the areas of human relationship where religion has been involved. When created, man was endowed with the desire and ability to worship his Creator. This

THE DAWN

was a priceless heritage, but it is an endowment which Satan has been very successful in distorting and misdirecting.

Loyalty to the Creator is essential to all who would be pleasing to him, and usually it is a very strong and determined attitude. But when it is misguided, and takes the form of prejudice, intolerance, and persecution there is nothing that makes one more unreasoning. Festus, judging solely from the legal standpoint, saw that it was most unreasonable to demand that a man die simply because he held a religious viewpoint different from that of his enemies. He believed that Caesar would feel the same way; yet the Jewish religionists who were seeking Paul's life believed that if they could kill Paul they would be serving and pleasing the God of Israel.

If we are inclined to rejoice that the days of religious persecution are past, let us not be too sure. Here is a matter in which it might be well to examine our own hearts. How tolerant are we toward those who disagree with us religiously? How do we feel about those in our own fellowship who may not use our exact phaseology to express the doctrines of the truth? Do we try to understand them, or do we start rumors about them? Every consecrated child of God should be willing to die for the truth. But loyalty to God and to the truth does not call for intolerance and slander

against those who are equally loyal but who may not use the same form of words that appeals to us.

When the opportunity came, Agrippa said to Paul, "Thou art permitted to speak for thyself." (ch. 26:1) Paul replied, "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently."—vss. 2,3

Knowing all the circumstances involved, Paul certainly must have realized that nothing he could say to Agrippa would change the status of his case, so here we find the great apostle "happy" simply because he was to have an opportunity to witness for the truth. He knew that Agrippa was well acquainted with the viewpoints and customs of the Jews. In fact, although not a Jew himself, Agrippa's family for several generations back were believers in the Jewish religion.

First Paul recounted his pre-conversion manner of life as a Pharisee. The Jews at Jerusalem, his persecutors, knew this. "If they would testify," he told Agrippa, and tell the truth, they would have to say "that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." "And now," Paul continued, "I stand and am judged for the

hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews." —vss. 5-7

The Hope of the Resurrection

Paul left no question in Agrippa's mind regarding what "hope" it was to which he referred. It was the hope of the resurrection of the dead. The Jewish sect known as the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, but the Pharisees did, and since Paul had been an ardent Pharisee, there seems little doubt but what, in the years prior to his conversion, he had been an able protagonist of this glorious doctrine of the Scriptures. His contemporaries would know this.

How logical then, and to the point, was his question, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" he asked Agrippa. Certainly it should not have been considered "incredible" by Paul's former associates, the Pharisees. But he was not so much concerned with this now, as he was in presenting an effective witness to Agrippa personally.

The doctrine of the resurrection is, of course, thought to be "a thing incredible" by practically the whole world even to this day. Of all the religions of the earth the Christian religion is the only one that

teaches the resurrection. And even here, the satanic falsehood of inherent immortality has voided the pure truth of the resurrection in the minds of nearly all professed Christians.

Certainly the teachings of the resurrection should not be thought "a thing incredible," not when we take into consideration that it is the great Creator of all life who has promised to raise the dead. But for some reason it seems to be easier for most people to believe that a person doesn't really die at all when he seems to die, than to accept the reality of death, and believe that the great God of the universe will restore life.

Doubtless every Pharisee in Israel at the time would have loudly reaffirmed his belief in the resurrection of the dead. Not one of them would have said that it was "a thing incredible." Their animosity toward Paul was aroused by his teaching that the God of Israel had raised Jesus from the dead.

This was more than the religious rulers of Israel could tolerate. They had hated Jesus, and persecuted him unto death. They professed to believe that he was an outcast from divine favor. They considered him to be a blasphemer of God. Certainly their God, the great Jehovah of Israel, would not raise a blasphemer from the dead. With them, as it often happens, it was a case of one erroneous viewpoint leading to another; and the

THE DAWN

jealousy and hatred in their hearts had led them from one degree of darkness to another until they had become completely blinded.

Yes, the Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead, but as Peter discovered, they were unwilling to accept the fact that Jesus had been raised from the dead, and that through him all would be resurrected. When Peter preached his sermon on "restitution," and declared that it had been foretold by all God's holy prophets since world began, the religious rulers and Sadducees were grieved that he "preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead."—Acts 3:15—4:2

Paul Also Persecuted

Paul related to Agrippa how, as a Pharisee, he had persecuted the disciples of Jesus. He said, "Being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." (vss. 9-11) Here we are reminded of the possibility of being wrong, yet sincere. Just being a Pharisee did not make one insincere. Nicodemus was a Pharisee and he sought earnestly to know the truth concerning Jesus, risking his reputation to do so.

Paul was a Pharisee according to the "most straitest sect" of the Jewish religion, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, as it were, and he was sincere. He verily thought he was serving God by persecuting the disciples of Jesus. Being a Pharisee and a student of the prophecies,

he would thoroughly believe in the coming of Israel's Messiah, but he did not believe that Jesus was that Messiah.

Born in Tarsus, Paul was brought up and received his religious education in Jerusalem. While the Bible does not clearly indicate, traditionally Paul was approximately the same age as Jesus. Whether or not he was in Jerusalem during the time of Jesus' ministry we do not know. But even if he was, there is little likelihood that he ever saw the Master. Paul's father was a Pharisee, and he received his religious training from Gamaliel, during which time he would be kept well sequestered from outside influences

Under these circumstances, whatever he heard about Jesus would not be good. Having confidence in his elders he would naturally believe what he heard, so his zeal in persecuting these "heretics," as he understood them to be, is understandable. In his case it was not jealousy, but a genuine belief that this was his duty toward his God, the God of Israel.

He related to Agrippa his never-to-be-forgotten experience on the Damascus road, when he saw that blinding light, and heard Jesus asking, "Saul. Saul, why persecutest thou me?" and learned that the One speaking to him was Jesus of Nazareth. Perhaps to Paul one of the most surprising aspects of this experience was that having mis-

takenly been a persecutor of the followers of the Messiah, he should at once be commissioned to represent him. As he related it to Agrippa, the resurrected Jesus said to Paul:

"Rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee. Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."—vss. 16-18

Paul then added, "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." (vs. 19) Not being "disobedient," Paul had witnessed to the Gospel of Christ, as he explained to Agrippa, in "Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."—vs. 20

"For these causes," Paul explained, "the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me." (vs. 21) Paul was absolutely guiltless of any wrongdoing. He was hated and persecuted only because he espoused the cause of Christ; and Christ had done no wrong.

Jesus had spent his life doing good—preaching glad tidings and healing the sick—but he was put to death, so now Paul was threatened with the same punishment and for the same "crime."

To make it still more apparent to Agrippa that his persecutors were moved against him by blind prejudice, Paul explained that his message of the Gospel consisted only of those truths which had been set forth by the Old Testament prophets, the very truths which his enemies professed to believe. But again Paul came to the real point of the issue, when, explaining the essence of the message of the prophets, he said it was the fact that "Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."—vs. 23

With this, Festus, who was sitting with Agrippa, could no longer restrain himself, and "said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." (vs. 24) During the reign of sin and death fallen human nature does not improve. Often today those who have a definite belief in the Word of God and its teachings, and are fearless in proclaiming their faith, are considered something less than mentally normal. They are called religious fanatics, or "cranks," and should not be listened to seriously.

"I am not mad, most noble Festus," said Paul "but speak forth

THE DAWN

the words of truth and soberness." (vs. 25) Paul was not a man to be carried away with emotion. He was not a religious fanatic. He had always been a zealous servant of God, but his service was based on reason and conviction. This was true even before his conversion. His difficulty then was that he did not have all the facts upon which to base his reasoning. But now he did.

His experience on the Damascus road was a fact. The witness of the Holy Spirit in his life since then was a fact. The marvelous manner in which the Lord had directed him in his service of the truth was another fact. That he should be testifying before kings was in itself a confirmation of his position, for the Lord had foretold that this should be among his experiences. (Acts 9: 15) No. Paul was not "mad." He was factual and fearless.

As if to add weight to the truthfulness of his presentation, Paul then declared that the "king," referring to Agrippa, knew of the things whereof he spoke. In the opening of his speech Paul had complimented Agrippa on being "expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews," and apparently he had reason to believe that this knowledge included the issues in his own case, and the experiences through which he had passed. "None of these things are hidden from him," Paul said, "for this thing was not done in a corner."—vs. 26

But Paul was not nearly so in-

terested in vindicating himself as he was in presenting an effective witness to Agrippa. So, addressing the king directly and personally, he inquired, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." (vs. 27) The king's full name was Herod Agrippa. He was the great grandson of Herod the Great. While this family was not Jewish it held to the Jewish faith. Knowing this, Paul took full advantage of it in his effort to reach Agrippa's heart with the Gospel.

And Agrippa was impressed. He replied to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." (vs. 28) The word "almost" is a translation of a compound of two Greek words which the Revised Version renders, "with but little." In Paul's reply he used the same Greek compound, saying "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."—vs. 29

Since Paul thus uses the expression, "almost," in the sense of degree in comparison with "altogether," it would seem that what Agrippa replied to Paul was that to a certain extent, or in some respects, he had been persuaded to accept Christ. This was not satisfactory to Paul, hence his reply that he would like to see the king accept the Gospel, not partially, but "altogether," and give himself unreservedly to Christ. But this was a greater step than Agrippa was prepared to take.

The fact that Paul's presentation influenced Agrippa to the extent that it did, suggests that he had previously given some serious thought to the circumstances associated with the coming of Jesus into the world. Being the great grandson of Herod the Great he would certainly know of the decree to slaughter the infants of Judea in order to destroy Jesus; and he would know that the effort failed.

It was Herod Agrippa I—father of the Agrippa before whom Paul appeared—who ordered the execution of James, and directed the same treatment of Peter. (Acts 12 1-10) While his father succeeded in having James put to death, Agrippa II must have known of the miraculous circumstances in connection with the deliverance of Peter from prison and from execution.

Agrippa would also know of the confident claims of the disciples that their Master had been raised from the dead, which Paul reminded him should not be thought a thing "incredible." So, professing to believe the Jewish faith, this background of circumstances concerning Jesus and his followers had doubtless given Agrippa cause for serious reflection; and then, hearing Paul's eloquent testimony, he became somewhat convinced.

Unlike the Jewish religious leaders, Agrippa held no hatred in his heart for the followers of Jesus, and could see no reason why Paul should be put to death simply be-

cause he had espoused the cause of Christ, and because his conscience would not permit him to be "disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

The hearing ended, Festus, Agrippa, and his sister Bernice went aside with the "chief captains, and principal men of the city," who also heard Paul's "defense." (Acts 25: 23) They held a conference and decided that Paul was not guilty. Then Agrippa, for whom the hearing had been called, said to Festus, "This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar."—vs. 32

There were certainly many disadvantages and hardships involved in being held a prisoner. Without doubt Paul took this into consideration before appealing to Caesar. He knew that the way to Rome as a prisoner would be a difficult one; but he also realized that if he undertook to make the journey without the protection of Roman soldiers he would probably be ambushed and killed by his enemies.

Paul knew that the Lord wanted him to go to Rome, and to Rome he would go. His consecration to the Lord was so complete that not only was he willing to go where the Lord wanted him to go, but also in the way the divine will was indicated to him. Just as he was willing to die at Jerusalem, so now he was willing to continue on to Rome as a prisoner.

(To be continued)

Showers of Blessing in Ireland

"His merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever."
—Psalm 117:2

THIS text was displayed on the program of the third annual convention of Bible Students held in Portrush, Ireland, May 24-26. Judging from the report sent to us, the "merciful kindness" of the Lord was surely manifested toward those who gathered for this joyous occasion. The convention was served by Brothers T. R. Lang and J. Leslie McKeown of the Londonderry Ecclesia; E. G. Roberts and E. Halton, of the Manchester, England Ecclesia; C. A. Cornell and E. Terry Nadal, of the Aldersbrook, England Ecclesia; W. E. Pampling, of the Brentwood, England Ecclesia; J. H. Murray, of the Grays, England Ecclesia; T. E. Davies, of the Liverpool, England Ecclesia; and W. N. Woodworth of the Greater New York City Ecclesia. We are very happy to publish a synopsis of the report which we have received of this blessed time of fellowship when showers of spiritual blessing fell so refreshingly upon the brethren assembled.

The Report

"This was the annual united gathering at Portrush, where 'they were all with one accord in one place.' The convention was sponsored by the Londonderry Bible Students (friends of 'Frank' and Ernest') These 'friends' have long been zealous brothers and sisters in the Lord, holding high the banner of present truth and joyfully co-operating with 'Frank and Ernest' in the proclamation of the true Gospel of the kingdom.

"In addition to the goodly number of brethren from Northern and Southern Ireland, it was very gratifying to meet so many from

different parts of Great Britain; some of these having crossed the Irish Sea for the first time. We were also very happy to have Brother and Sister Woodworth in our fellowship. It was grand to meet those who had long been in the truth, and an equal joy to meet those who had not had so many years of this blessed experience. Whether it was with those who had first heard the truth nearly fifty years ago or who had only recently listened to 'Frank and Ernest' over the radio, this season of fellowship in the Spirit was very precious. One sister who had heard the truth for the first time only a few months before, traveled a long distance to make this contact with the brethren.

"There was abundant evidence that all had come to be built up in our 'most holy faith,' and to strengthen one another in the narrow way of sacrifice. Above all, they desired to honor and glorify the Lord. It was clearly evident that those present had brought the beloved Master's spirit with them. By his grace we all waited before the Lord to receive the rich spiritual blessing which he would provide, and we were not disappointed. The whole convention proved to be a most sacred and memorable occasion.

"The convention opened on Saturday evening, May 24, with an address of welcome by Brother T. R. Lang. His words were expressive of the sincerity and warmth of Christian love so characteristic of the brethren in Ireland. Then followed a very helpful prayer, praise, and testimony meeting, with Brother T. E. Davis in the chair. At this session, also, greetings from various brethren and ecclesias in England and Continental Europe were read. Besides, various ones who came to the convention brought the greetings of their home ecclesias. At a later session of the convention greetings brought from The Dawn Staff by tape recording were presented, and much appreciated by the brethren. The greetings of Christian love from so many and from such widely scattered places, were most encouraging, binding our hearts closely together with that 'blest tie' that binds.

"This was truly a present truth convention. In the opening discourse the speaker said, 'The fundamentals of our faith include the fact of our Lord's second presence. We have more evidence of Christ's second presence than the early disciples had of his first advent. This conviction has a vital bearing upon how we live,

THE DAWN

and how we serve the Lord. A failure to appreciate the church's share in the "better sacrifices" of this age, the sin offering; and a misconception of God's great covenants also affect how we live and how we serve.

The Second Day

"The first discourse on Sunday, May 25, was given by Brother E. G. Roberts. He spoke on the subject of prayer. 'Prayer to the child of God,' he said, 'is a priceless heritage, a supreme privilege of family relationship. Prayer is no ritual of creed or tawdry trapping of ceremonious worship; no muttering and mumbling of incoherent phases in dead languages; no unctuous and ostentatious utterances which spring from pride of heart and a desire to be seen and applauded of men.'

"Brother Roberts further said, 'Paul's introduction to his great work for God was through prayer—"behold he prayeth." (Acts 9: 11) Our Lord also was led into the wilderness after his baptism at Jordan, and we are told that he fasted forty days and forty nights. That time undoubtedly was spent largely in prayer and meditation upon the work which his Father had assigned to him. (Matt. 4: 1-11) It should be so with all of us. Our work is God's work. We are workers together with him. The issues are vital and eternal. We cannot touch them unaided. We must seek continual guidance through prayer.'

Lord, I'm afraid to touch
Things that involve so much;
My trembling hand may shake,
My unskilled hand may break;
Thine can make no mistake.

"Brother W. E. Pampling spoke on the topic, 'Cannot Be My Disciples,' from the text in Luke 14:26. 'We cannot be Christ's disciples,' Brother Pampling said, 'unless we are willing to sacrifice every earthly hope, aim and ambition in accordance with his will. The Bible also says, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." (1 John 5:21) An idol may be impersonal in that we may be in danger of putting too large a proportion of our love upon such things as art, music, home garden, business, and so forth. The idol may be personal in that we may be in danger of putting too large a proportion of our love upon our kindred. If there be

anything or anybody connected with this life which would be a cause of stumbling, even though it be as precious to us as an eye, or as useful as a hand, we should be ready and willing to pluck it out, to cut it off. Otherwise, said Jesus, we cannot be his disciples. Can we pass this examination?"

"Brother C. A. Cornell spoke on the topic, 'One of the Twelve Patriarchs,' Joseph being the one in question, as mentioned in Acts 7:8, 9. 'To our understanding,' said Brother Cornell, 'Joseph was a type of Christ. Various episodes in his life seem to be distinct pictures of the experiences of the Lord Jesus. (1) Joseph was hated without a just cause, yet he was beloved by his father. So it was with Christ. (2) Joseph was cast into the pit by "his own," just as Jesus went into the pit of death because of the hatred and jealousy of his own people. (3) Joseph's life was sold into servitude to the Egyptians, and this ultimately became the means by which his own people were preserved, as well also as the life of the Egyptians; for Jesus gave himself a ransom not only for his brethren, but for all mankind. It will be during the Millennium that Christ will furnish the bread for all mankind—to all who famish for it. (4) Joseph was sent to prison despite his purity; so our Lord Jesus Christ even though "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," was treated as a transgressor and went into the prison-house of death. (5) Bitterness, jealousy, and hatred were heaped upon Joseph; and this also was experienced by Jesus. (6) Joseph did not return evil for evil; and it was the same with Jesus, who "when he was reviled, reviled not again." (7) Joseph was delivered from the prison in due time, and made an associate of the king upon the throne of Egypt. So our Lord Jesus was raised up from the prison-house of death by the power of the Heavenly Father to be set at his own right hand on the throne of God to reign for the blessing of "all the families of the earth."'

"Brother J. H. Murray addressed the convention on the topic, 'The Lord's Jewels,' using as his text, 'They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.' Brother Murray explained that these jewels are the saints of the Gospel age who, if faithful, will form part of a wonderful spiritual and heavenly structure named in the Bible the 'New Jerusalem.' (Rev. 21:1-5) It is through this completed New Jerusalem, with its holy and al-

THE DAWN

mighty power descending from God out of heaven that the long-prayed-for kingdom in the earth will be established.

“ ‘Before the Lord’s jewels can have their heavenly setting in that holy Jerusalem they must—on this side of the veil—be prepared. This is illustrated by the manner in which earthly precious stones need to undergo a process of preparation before receiving their final setting in a royal crown or diadem. Let us endure patiently whatever experiences may be necessary in order to prepare us for our place in the kingdom arrangements. Very beautiful indeed will be the Lord’s jewels, the completed church, the bride of Christ in kingdom glory.’ ”

The Third Day

“The first discourse on Monday, May 26, was given by Brother T. R. Lang. He spoke on the topic, ‘This Mind in You,’ from the text, ‘Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.’ (Phil. 2:5) Brother Lang said:

“ ‘The mind, will, spirit, which Jesus had was one which led him in a path of loving sacrifice. In this pathway he did not do his own will, but the will of his Heavenly Father. This is the pathway in which we are to tread. We follow in the steps of Jesus. His words are, “Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.” and again, “Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.” It was because Jesus humbled himself and walked in the way of sacrifice faithfully even unto death that God highly exalted him and gave him a name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. If we have his mind and maintain faithfully the spirit of humility and self-sacrifice even unto death, we, too, shall be exalted to live and reign with Christ. May our desire and prayer ever be, “Not my will, but Thine be done.” ’ ”

“Brother Terry Nadal spoke on the topic, ‘Sonship.’ Brother Nadal said in part:

“ ‘Sonship in the divine family is a very precious heritage. Adam, although created a son of God, through disobedience lost this relationship to his Creator. Sonship today is possible only at the cost of the world’s friendship and the honors bestowed by the worldly. Paul writes of these who now become sons through the

begetting of the Holy Spirit, that the evidence of their sonship is that they are led by the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit does not witness to us through our emotions or feelings, but through the unchangeable truth of God's Word.

" 'In our response to the revelation of the plan of God, we must see to it that the glorious kingdom theme takes first place in our lives. Is our "first-love" enthusiasm continuing to inspire us with a self-sacrificing devotion to God and to his people? Are we fulfilling the terms of our consecration by laying down our lives in the kingdom service? Or have we allowed other things to crowd the kingdom enthusiasm out of our lives?

" 'Some have been tempted to close the door to the high calling, claiming that those now coming into the truth should not expect a heavenly reward. Satan is ever alert to delude the Lord's people. He would like to make us believe that God cannot accept our consecration. He tries to persuade us that our witnessing efforts are all futile. He quotes the Scriptures in his effort to turn us aside from the narrow way. He did this to Jesus, but misapplied the Scriptures. How alert we must be to distinguish between clear, irrefutable teachings of the Bible and the speculations of men.

" 'One way in which the Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are sons of God is by the privilege we have of suffering with Christ. And yet some may feel that they are doing very little suffering with him. But suffering with Christ does not imply the necessity of being cast into prison, or of enduring extreme hardship along other lines, such as bitter, painful persecution every step of the narrow way. Some are called to suffer in one way, some in another. Hebrews 10:33 speaks of some who suffer by being "companions" of those who are so used. Have we been inspired by the precious promises of our Father's Word continually to surrender ourselves to do his will? If so, we have the witness of the Spirit in our lives confirming to us that we are the sons of God.'

"In the afternoon of the last day, Brother E. Halton gave the first discourse, his topic being, 'The Word.' He read the account in Numbers, chapter 4, of God's provision for covering the holy things of the tabernacle with badger skins before they were moved by the Levites. From this he drew the lesson that the spiritual truths of God's Word are hidden from those who are not dwelling in the

antitypical 'holy,' and are not of the antitypical priesthood.

"When Jesus preached in his own city of Nazareth, and asserted that the spirit of God was upon him, the people could not understand, and said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" He spoke in the Spirit; they interpreted with the human mind. The natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God. They are foolishness unto him.—I Cor. 2:11-16

"Jesus said to the people, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Notice the way it was received—"How can we eat this man's flesh, and drink his blood?" But there was an inner meaning which Jesus disclosed to his disciples—"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "The flesh profiteth nothing," Jesus said, meaning that it would do no good to eat his flesh in a literal sense. There are many instances throughout the ministry of Jesus when the words which he spoke were taken literally by his hearers because of their human mindedness—hidden by "badger skins," the flesh.'

"Brother Leslie McKeown gave the closing discourse Monday afternoon. His topic was, 'David's Orchestra and Its Antitype,' taken from the 150th Psalm. He explained that the instruments mentioned in this psalm were used in the temple service. Brother McKeown said in part:

"The Israelites were a musical people, especially when they were victorious; but when carried away captive to Babylon, they hung their harps on the willows, saying to those who asked them to sing, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (Ps. 137:4) Like the Israelites of old we cannot truly sing the Lord's song unless we are in a state of victory. We now live in a very special time. Our Lord has returned, and what a joy is ours as we examine the rich spiritual blessings which have come to his consecrated people during his "presence." We have indeed entered into a condition of victory, and we burst into song.

"Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: . . . praise him with the timbrel and dance,' wrote the Psalmist. He also mentions the psaltery, harp, stringed instruments, organs, and cymbals. Viewing the antitype, we realize that with us there must be harmony and rhythm. Literally, the whole orchestra and dancers "move together" as required by the conductor. When we praise God at

prayer, testimony, discourse, and study meetings, and in our various labors of love for the Lord, we all move together. We do not do this of ourselves, nor because we are under a dictator, but because each one is so filled with the truth and its spirit that automatically all move in unison.

"In the antitype of David's orchestra we all have a part to play. Our Heavenly Father has given us various gifts, abilities, talents; and also various opportunities of service. We should be willing to play the part in the orchestra which the Lord has assigned to us. If we do, then there is glorious harmony among us because each and all are under the guiding control of the Holy Spirit."

The Last Session

"The closing session of the convention was in the evening, and was a public meeting held in the Town Hall. There was a good attendance of the public, and the visitors were encouraged by the assurance of life beyond the grave through the fulfilment of God's promises to restore the dead to life in the resurrection. The brethren also rejoiced to hear the precious truths of the divine plan presented. They rejoiced in their own knowledge of the truth, and especially that others were having an opportunity to hear the glad tidings.

"So the third General Convention at Portrush, Ireland, came to an end, except as the sweet memories of the blessings received linger in the hearts and minds of those who attended, and as the influence of these blessings extend to those who were not able to attend. Many are already looking forward to next year's gathering."

"What a horse is without a rider, or a hot spurred rider without an eye, or a ship in a high wind and swelling sail without a rudder, such is zeal without knowledge. Knowledge is the eye of the rider, that chooseth the best way; the bridle in hand, to moderate the pace; the rudder in the ship, whereby it is steered safely. It has been said that discretion without zeal is slow-paced, and zeal without discretion is strong-headed; let therefore zeal spur on discretion, and discretion rein in zeal."

No One Knew

What did Jesus mean when he said to his disciples, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father"? —Mark 13:32

THIS statement by Jesus is contained in his reply to his disciples when they asked him about the time and signs of the end of the age, and his return and second presence. (Matt. 24:3) In this reply Jesus outlined many "signs" by which his people would be able to discern the fact of his return and presence. But as for the time, he explained, as in our question, that no man knew, that the angels did not know, and that he did not know himself, hence could not answer that part of his disciples' question.

However, many have read more into this statement by Jesus than he really said. What he said was true at the time he said it, but we are not to suppose that it remained true concerning Jesus. He did not say that he would never know, nor did he say that his faithful followers would never know. Following his resurrection Jesus said to his disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

(Matt. 28:18) We may safely assume that he then knew the time of his second advent.

After Jesus' resurrection his disciples asked him, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus' reply was, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me." (Acts 1:6-8) In the 12th chapter of Daniel's prophecy various time measurements in the plan of God are mentioned, but Daniel was told that "the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end," and that in the "time of the end" "the wise shall understand."—ch. 12: 9, 10

In this prophecy it becomes evident that while there are definite time measurements in God's plan, the understanding of them is withheld from the Lord's people until their revelation serves a definite purpose in the divine arrangement. We could say that there is a "due time" for the understanding of the time features of the divine plan. It was not the due time in the days of the Early Church for them to know all the details of the time features, but they did have a clear conception of the general outline.

For instance, the Apostle Paul (I Thess. 5:1-5) writes, "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. . . . But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." See Dan. 9:2, 25-27; Luke 3: 15. We are now living in the "time of the end," and much concerning the details of the time prophecies of the Bible is now understood.

The Ransom

Would the world of mankind have been redeemed by Jesus had he died of old age instead of shedding his blood?

CERTAINLY not! Had Jesus died of old age it would have proved that he was not a perfect man, that he was tainted by the sin of the fallen, dying, human race. This means that Jesus would have died as a sinner condemned to death, rather than as a perfect man, free from sin and condemnation, and taking the sinner's place in death.

We speak of people dying a "natural death." Actually, so far as humanity is concerned, there is no such thing as "natural death." Death of humans is most unnatural. It is the result of sin, and because the "wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23) Adam was created to live, not to die. Death came only because

he disobeyed divine law. Some live longer than others. Some grow "old" before others, but apart from sin there would be no "old age."

In Timothy 2:3-6 Paul speaks of Jesus giving himself a "ransom for all." Here the word "ransom" means a corresponding price. That corresponding price is for Adam and his race which, when he sinned, was yet unborn. It was a perfect man that sinned, not a man decrepit with "old age." So it required a perfect man to provide the ransom, or corresponding price. It was for this reason that Jesus was "made flesh," and by divine overruling was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."—John 1:14; Heb. 7:26

On Baptism

I was baptized when I joined the church. Now that I have received a knowledge of the truth I realize that I did not then really understand what I was doing. Should I be baptized again?

IF YOU did not understand the significance of water baptism at the time you were baptized, then we would advise that you be immersed again when a suitable opportunity affords. There is no efficacy in water immersion itself, nor does the one who administers it give it any merit. Its value is based upon the understanding of the one who is baptized.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

HENRY E. ANDERSON

New Brunswick, N. J. August 24

SAMUEL BAKER

Bloomington, Ind. August 2-8
Cincinnati, Ohio 10
New Albany, Ind. 11
Madisonville, Ky. 12
Dawson Springs, Ky. 13
St. Louis, Mo. 14
Kansas City, Mo. 15, 17
St. Joseph, Mo. 18
Oklahoma City, Okla. 19, 20
Tucson, Ariz. 22
Phoenix, Ariz. 24-26
Yuma, Ariz. 27, 28
San Diego, Calif. Aug. 30-Sept. 1

JOHN BARACOS

Washington, Pa. August 17

NICK BARACOS

Duquesne, Pa. August 3

KING BARRETT

Bloomington, Ind. August 2-8
Dayton, Ohio 10
Piqua, Ohio 11, 12
Nelsonville, Ohio 13
Coshocton, Ohio 14
Steubenville, Ohio 15
Pittsburgh, Pa. 17
Connellsville, Pa. 18, 19
West Newton, Pa. 20
Monessen, Pa. 21-24
Newark, Ohio 25
Chicago, Ill. 27
Milwaukee, Wis. 28
Minneapolis, Minn. Aug. 30-Sept. 1

WALTER BLICHARZ, JR.

London, Ont. Can. August 17

EUGENE BURNS

Catawissa -Quakake, Pa. . . . August 17

JENS COPELAND

New Haven-Waterbury, Conn. August 17
Allentown, Pa. 24

L. PAUL DAVIS

San Francisco, Calif. August 24

EDWARD E. FAY

San Jose, Calif. August 10

THOMAS C. FAY

Santa Ana, Calif. August 24

THEODORE HACK

Gary, Ind. August 17

GEORGE O. JEUCK

Lakeland, Fla. August 10

EDMUND M. JEZUIT

Milwaukee, Wis. August 10

GORDON F. JUDSON

Groton-New London, Conn. . . August 16, 17

ARTHUR H. KRUMPOLT

Wallington-Hartford, Conn. August 17

RAYMOND J. KRUPA

Baltimore, Md.-Philadelphia, Pa. Aug. 17

LUDLOW P. LOOMIS

York-Lancaster, Pa. August 24
Lewistown, Pa. 25
Ebensburg, Pa. 26
Pittsburgh, Pa. 27
South Bend, Ind. 28
Minneapolis, Minn. Aug. 30-Sept. 1

EDWARD G. LORENZ

Fresno, Calif. August 10

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

JOHN Y. MAC AULAY

Winnipeg, Man. Can.	August	3-5
Bismarck-Heil, N. Dak.		8-10
Lockhart, Minn.		12
Parkers Prairie, Minn.		13, 14
Fergus Falls, Minn.		15
Minneapolis, Minn.		17
Withee, Wis.		18
Wausau, Wis.		19
Plover, Wis.		20
Appleton, Wis.		21
Milwaukee, Wis.		22
Chicago, Ill.		24
Gary, Ind.		27, 28
Saginaw, Mich.	Aug. 30-Sept. 1	

CLIFFORD E. MILES

Sonora, Calif.	August	10
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MARTIN C. MITCHELL

Pottstown, Pa.	August	17
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N. MOLENAAR

Whittier, Calif.	August	17
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HOWARD E. OSTRANDER

Chico, Calif.	August	3
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WILLIAM E. PAMPLING

Bloomington, Ind.	August	2-8
Chicago, Ill.		10
Jackson, Mich.		11
Grand Rapids, Mich.		12
Detroit, Mich.		13, 17
Saginaw, Mich.		14, 15
Muncie, Ind.		18
Cincinnati, Ohio		19
Dayton, Ohio		20
Piqua, Ohio		21
Toledo, Ohio		22
Cleveland, Ohio		24
Rochester, N. Y.		25
Syracuse, N. Y.		27
Pulaski, N. Y.		28
New York, N. Y.	Aug. 30-Sept. 1	

HARRY PASSIOS

Akron, Ohio	July	27
New York, N. Y.	Aug. 34, 30-Sept. 1	
Waterbury, Conn.		25
Norwich, Conn.		26
Somersworth-Dover, N. H.		27

G. R. POLLOCK

San Diego, Calif.	August	10
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RAYMOND RAWSON

Toledo, Ohio	August	17
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FRED W. RICE

Riverside-Ontario, Calif.	August	17
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BERT E. ROSE

Adrian, Mich.	August	10
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MICHAEL A. STAMULAS

Paterson, N. J.	August	17
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GEORGE M. WILSON

Bloomington, Ind.	August	2-8
Pittsburgh, Pa.		10
Cleveland, Ohio		17
Detroit, Mich.		24
New York, N. Y.	Aug. 30-Sept. 1	

HOWARD YOUNG

E. Liverpool—Steubenville, Ohio	Aug.	10
Monessen, Pa.		24

CHRISTIAN W. ZAHNOW

Bloomington, Ind.	August	2-8
Muncie, Ind.		10
Indianapolis, Ind.		11
Champaign, Ill.		12
Aurora, Ill.		13
La Salle, Ill.		14, 15
Albany, Ill.-Clinton, Iowa		16, 17
Cedar Rapids, Iowa		18
Ostrander, Minn.		20
Minneapolis, Minn.		22, 24
Spokane, Wash.		26, 27
Wenatchee, Wash.		28
Seattle, Wash.	Aug. 30-Sept. 1	

CONVENTIONS

Full information concerning programs and room reservations can be obtained by writing to the name listed. An asterisk (*) indicates an immersion service is being planned.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, August 10—I. O. G. T. Hall, 2922 Cedar Avenue. Mrs. C. R. Newham, 678 40th Avenue, N. E.

SAGINAW, MICHIGAN, August 10—Woman's Club, 311 North Jefferson Street. Mrs. C. A. Sundbom, 207 Alice Street. Speaker: Brother Otis R. Barrall.

CLEVELAND, OHIO, August 17—YMCA Building, Prospect Avenue and East 22nd Street. Mrs. Ian Cipperley, 1539 Genessee Road, South Euclid, Cleveland 21. Speaker: Brother George M. Wilson.

SALEM, OREGON, August 17—2339 State Street. Mrs. Jerry Andrus, 3745 June Ave.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, August 24—912 North La Salle Street. Mr. Albert Sheppelbaum, 5739 South Normandy Ave.

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, August 24—Maccabees Building, Woodward Avenue at Putnam. Mr. Daniel Kaziak, 20171 Binder Avenue. Speakers: Brothers D. J. Morehouse and George M. Wilson.

NORTH BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, August 24—The Junior-Senior High School, Oakham Road. (After Esso Station at end of Main Street.) Miss Helen Waytina, School Street, North Brookfield. Speakers: Gilbert E. Kemp; R. J. Krupa; Lyman B. Snow; and John Zytkeiwicz.

MONESSEN, PA, August 24—The West Newton and Monessen Ecclesias will sponsor this convention. Mr. Mike Balko, 501 Pittsburgh Street, West Newton, Pa.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, August 24—2174 Market Street. Speaker: Brother L. Paul Davis.

***MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, August 30-September 1—2922 Cedar Avenue,** Mrs. C. R. Newham, 678 40th Avenue, N. E.

Speakers: Brothers: King Barrett; Bertram Cooper; T. Smith; I. C. Foss; L. P. Loomis; Daniel Kaziak; and Leo Post.

***NEW YORK, NEW YORK, August 30-September 1—Henry Hudson Hotel,** 353 W. 57th Street. Mr. Russell Dean, 166-05 89th Avenue, Jamaica 32, New York. Speakers: Brothers O. R. Barrall; Charles M. Chupa; Jens Copeland; O. D. Deifer; Levi Jacobs; Everett Murray; Adolph Obenland; W. E. Pamplung; E. K. Penrose; Bert Rose; A. L. Smith; C. R. Weida; George M. Wilson; and E. G. Wylam.

***SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, August 30-September 1—Temple Beth Israel,** 2512 Third Avenue. Mrs. Gilbert Rice, 4202 60th Street, San Diego 15. Speakers: Brothers Samuel Baker; L. Paul Davis; Emile Herrscher; Harry Herrscher; John Hull, Jr.; Edward G. Lorenz; Adam Miskawitz; N. Molenaar; Kenneth Nail; G. R. Pollock; Fred W. Rice; George P. Ripper; V. E. Samuels; and August Swanson.

***SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, August 30-September 1—Norway Center,** 300 Third Avenue, West. Miss Mary Stevens, 2317½ North 45th Street, Apt. 12, Seattle 3.

SAGINAW, MICHIGAN, August 30-September 1—Mrs. C. A. Sundbom, 207 Alice Street. Speakers: Brothers W. M. Ellis; J. Y. MacAulay; D. J. Morehouse; Roy E. Poland; Kenneth Rawson and Albert Sheppelbaum.

GUSTINE, TEXAS, September 5-7—Mrs. C. R. Westmoreland, R. F. D. 1, Gustine, Texas.

DENVER, COLORADO, September 27, 28.

WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS, September 27, 28.

BUFFALO, NEW YORK, October 4, 5.

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, October 4, 5.

VICTORIA, B. C. CANADA, October 11, 12.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, October 12.

LONDON, ONT. CANADA, October 19.

NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT, October 19.

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LITHUANIAN: "Behold Your King"—25¢. Daily Heavenly Manna—50¢. Spiritualism—5¢.

GREEK: The Divine Plan of the Ages; The Time Is at Hand—50 cents. "Behold Your King"—25 cents. Hymns of Dawn, without music—25 cents. God and Reason; Hope Beyond the Grave; Creation—10 cents

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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, though which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—I 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; I 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.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II 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