

The DAWN

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The Son of Man

“Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” **WE WILL SOON ENTER THE** season of the year during which the hearts and minds of many devout Christians give special attention to the events leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Apostle Paul testified that these truths were of the greatest significance in all that he was commissioned to preach and teach. He states, “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.”—I Cor. 15:3,4, *English Standard Version*

In keeping with the vital import of these fundamental teachings of the Scriptures, in this month’s issue of *The Dawn* we will examine three themes associated with Jesus’ life and his example to those striving to walk in his footsteps. One of these is under the title, “Consider Him,” taken from Hebrews 12:3. Another is titled, “Daily His Delight,” based on the words recorded in Proverbs 8:30. The third article associated with this general theme appears in the following pages, under the above heading, “The Son of Man.” We trust that the consideration

of these subjects, centered on our Lord and his example, will provide blessings and encouragement to the reader.

MANY TITLES

Jesus had many titles, all of which were appropriate in that they either described him or his work in various ways. However, Jesus referred to himself most frequently as the “Son of man.” This phrase appears more than eighty times in the Gospels, and in every case it is used by Jesus to refer to himself. The word “man” in this title is translated from the Greek word *anthropos*, which simply means “a human being.”

Peter answered the Lord’s question as quoted in our opening text by stating that Jesus was the Christ. Jesus said that God had revealed this to Peter, and upon this statement of solid truth he would build his church. (Matt. 16:13-18) Thus the title “Son of man” expresses a concept that is vitally connected to the carrying out of God’s plan of the ages. Peter’s answer, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” is much more than a mere statement of words. Christ is the English equivalent of the Greek word *Christos*, which means “anointed,” and corresponds to the Hebrew word translated in English as “Messiah.” Christ, or Messiah, is the one foretold in the Scriptures whom God would anoint with his Spirit for the eventual purpose of leading the people back to him. (Dan. 9:25,26) The term Christ first applied to Jesus when, after his baptism in the Jordan River, he was begotten, or anointed, by God with the Holy Spirit.—Matt. 3:16,17; Isa. 61:1-3

John, in his Gospel, particularly emphasizes Jesus' prehuman existence as the "Word" [Greek: *Logos*], another of his titles. John explains, "In the beginning was the Word, ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father)." (John 1:1,14) The "beginning" mentioned in John 1:1 cannot refer to the beginning of God, for he is "from everlasting to everlasting." (Ps. 90:2) Instead, it refers to the beginning of God's work, which was the creation of the *Logos*, the Word. It can be said of Jesus in his prehuman existence as the *Logos* that he was God's only begotten Son. That is, he was the only one of God's sons, spirit or human, created solely by the Heavenly Father. All others were created through or by means of God's first begotten Son.—John 1:3; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:15-17

Jesus continued to be God's Son when born as a human, even as he had been in his prehuman existence. His conception in the womb of Mary did not come from a being of Adamic stock, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 1:18-20) God was his father and not Adam. At the age of twelve Jesus recognized his sonship in relation to God when he said to his parents, "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"—Luke 2:49, *ESV*

THE SON OF MAN

Let us now consider how the title "Son of man" relates to this arrangement. Adam was the first human son of God because he was created by God, jointly with the *Logos*. (Gen. 1:26; 2:7; Luke 3:38) Because of his disobedience, Adam was evicted from the Garden of Eden and condemned to death as a

willful sinner. He was, in effect, disowned by God and lost his sonship. Adam at the first was given dominion over the earth, but because of his transgression he lost this also. Those who descended from Adam—all mankind—have been born with inherited Adamic imperfection and therefore could not claim the relationship of being sons of God on the basis of normal human birth. The Apostle John points this out when he states that those who have received Jesus, by means of full consecration, enter into a special arrangement whereby they “become the sons of God.” This is not according to human conception. These, John says, are begotten, “not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:12,13) The point is that for any of Adam’s race to attain to sonship, intervention by God is required.

Jesus, on the other hand, although flesh, was not of Adam’s seed and therefore did not inherit Adamic condemnation. He was, however, as God’s son, the prospective second Adam, because he was born of a woman. “When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.” (Gal. 4:4; Luke 1:34,35) He did not simply materialize in human flesh like the angels who visited Abraham, as recorded in Genesis chapter 18, but Jesus was actually a human being through Mary. Thus, he was both a perfect Son of God in the flesh, as well as a son of man through his mother. Because he maintained his human perfection, Jesus could claim the inheritance lost by the first man Adam.

It was because of this that the Apostle Paul considered the eighth Psalm as prophetic. He noted that it pointed to Jesus as the “second” Adam—the

Son of man—who was qualified to receive the lost inheritance, and, by the sacrifice of himself, restore it to Adam and his offspring. The apostle’s interpretation of the Psalm is as follows: “One in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him [Adam and his race] a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him [due to man’s fall]. But we see Jesus [a perfect Son of man], who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death [as a ransom for Adam], crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” —Heb. 2:6-9

SON OF MAN TO RESTORE

Jesus spoke of his place in the divine arrangement for man’s salvation as both the “Son of man” and the “Son of God.” “No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man. ... And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”—John 3:13-17

Jesus illustrated how the work of restoration was to be accomplished by citing an experience of the nation of Israel. The people had become discouraged because of the difficulties of their wilderness journey. They began to murmur against God and against Moses, complaining about the material discomforts. As punishment, God sent fiery serpents among them, and many Israelites died. They cried out to Moses, and he interceded with God on their behalf. The Lord instructed Moses to fashion a serpent of brass and set it upon a pole, that everyone who was bitten could look upon the serpent and live. (Num. 21:4-9) Jesus, in recounting this experience, was illustrating that all of Adam's offspring have been "bitten" with Adamic sin and are condemned to die. Jesus, however, as the Son of man, was a corresponding price for Adam, and being "lifted up," he would provide the means whereby mankind could live. Jesus, always giving honor to the Heavenly Father, then shows that the entire arrangement was made possible because of God's great love for mankind and his desire to restore them to life.—see also John 8:28,29; 12:32,33

At the time of Jesus' earthly ministry the Jews generally believed that when Messiah came great changes would take place. They expected that Messiah would be a strong leader much on the order of David, who with God's help would conquer their enemies, release them from servitude, and re-establish Israel's kingdom. Jesus did not fulfill these expectations at that time. He was "meek and lowly in heart," a man acquainted with sorrow and grief. Because of this the Jews rejected him as their deliverer. (Matt. 11:29; Isa. 53:1-4) They overlooked the prophecies

which said that Jesus must first suffer and die and then come into his glory.—Luke 24:25-27

RETURN AND INVISIBLE PRESENCE

Though not understanding many of the details, the disciples came to accept the fact that Jesus must die and be resurrected the third day, and that as a glorified spirit being, he would be invisible. Just days before his death, they asked Jesus what would be the sign of his presence [Greek: *parousia*]. (Matt. 24:3, *Young's Literal Translation*) Upon his resurrection he would be a spirit being, unseen by human eyes, but the disciples expected that he would soon set up his kingdom. It would be to their advantage to know when he was present to accomplish this work. Thus Jesus proceeded to give them some signs that would mark his return and invisible presence.

In giving one of these signs, Jesus alluded to a prophecy about himself in Daniel 7:13,14: “Behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

Clouds are often foreboding, and from them frequently comes distress. This is the symbolic use of clouds in this prophecy. It is saying that when the Son of man would come again it would be a time of trouble and distress, and that this would be associated with the preparation for the establishment of his kingdom. The words of Jesus in alluding

to this prophecy are as follows: “Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”—Matt. 24:30

Jesus, when brought before the high priest, quoted this same prophecy from the book of Daniel. When asked if he was “the Christ, the Son of the Blessed,” Jesus answered, “I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”—Mark 14:61,62

THE SIGN OF THE SON OF MAN

The sign of the Son of man referred to by Jesus is the trouble and distress that comes upon the earth because Jesus, God’s “holy arm,” is breaking down and destroying the old systems of Satan. Then “all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.” (Isa. 52:10) Jesus described the reason for the distress and trouble, saying, “The powers of the heavens shall be shaken.” (Matt. 24:29) Paul later states that both “heaven,” symbolic of religious systems, and “earth,” symbolic of political and social systems, will be shaken. (Heb. 12:26) Jesus spoke of the present controlling power over these systems as Satan, “the prince of this world.” (John 14:30; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2) His evil rule must be destroyed before Christ’s Messianic kingdom can be established in the earth.

We believe that we are in the midst of this time of shaking, and that the Son of man is invisibly present directing the issue. Soon the distress and trouble will be brought to an end, and earth’s long weary night of sin and death will be over. Then the

kingdom for which the world has so long prayed will be established. God said, through the Prophet Haggai, that he would “shake all nations,” but that immediately thereafter “the desire of all nations” would come.—Hag. 2:7

We have considered only one of the several evidences Jesus gave his disciples which would mark his return and invisible presence. Additional signs are mentioned throughout the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew. The concluding act which relates to his presence and the work he is to do as the Son of Man is recorded in Matthew 25:31-46, from which we quote in part: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”—vss. 31-34

JUDGING THE WORLD IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

This “coming” of the Son of man mentioned in the foregoing verses refers to another phase of the work Jesus is to accomplish during his invisible presence. The time setting is after the destruction of Satan’s evil systems of this present world. It also follows the completion of Jesus’ “body,” the church, because they are to be part of the Christ class which will help in the work of judging the world in righteousness. Earlier in his ministry, Jesus said, “Ye

which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel,” symbolic of the world of mankind.—Matt. 19:28

The word “judging” in the above text is translated from the Greek word *krino*, which conveys the thought of a trial and then a judgment. This meaning seems to be expressed in the following prophetic statements: “When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” “With righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.” (Isa. 26:9; Ps. 98:9) In the prophecy quoted from Matthew, the thought expressed of separating the people one from another, as a “shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats,” is the same. These references describe a process of the “good shepherd” gathering his sheep into “one fold.” (John 10:14-16) This will be accomplished by writing God’s law in the hearts of the people. Those who heed the good shepherd’s voice will “inherit the kingdom” prepared for them by the Father.

In summary, the title “Son of man” serves to identify Jesus as the great kinsman of mankind, the one who had the power to redeem them and release them from the bondage of sin and death. However, the meaning attached to this title does not end there. The concluding work of the Son of man will be that of elevating the world of mankind back to perfection during the time of his Messianic kingdom. It will be only then that dominion and life will be restored to Adam and his “sons,” the entire human race, who, when perfected, will once again be crowned with “glory and honour.”—Heb. 2:7,8 ■

Pressing on in Christ

Key Verses:
“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”
—*Philippians 3:13,14*

Selected Scripture:
Philippians 3:8-14

THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS one of the most zealous, single-minded individuals recorded in the Bible. He testified to King Agrippa, “All Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, ... that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.” (Acts 26:4,5, *New American Standard Bible*) Defending the only faith he had ever known led Saul, the apostle’s former name, to persecute the followers of Christ.—Acts 7:57-60; 8:1-3

It was this same zeal and strength of conviction, however, that was exhibited by Saul when he saw a vision of Jesus in his resurrected glory on the road to Damascus. His response was honest and instant: “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:3-6) His zeal would now enable him to be a “chosen vessel” to bear the name of Jesus before Gentiles, kings, and the Jews.—vs. 15

Upon receiving the Holy Spirit, Paul dedicated himself to serving the Gospel of Christ for the rest of his earthly life. The sentiments of our Key Verse express

the apostle's sole desire to be faithful to his consecration vow. Paul similarly exhorted the brethren in Rome to zeal and faithfulness: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."—Rom. 12:1,2

This process of pressing "toward the mark" and being "transformed" requires leaving earthly things behind. Wealth, position, honor and all other earthly treasures are to be considered of little or no value compared to spiritual things. Paul lost his position of leadership amongst the Jewish community, but it now meant nothing to him. In fact, it resulted in personal suffering at the hands of those he once represented and defended. We should likewise expect to suffer trials of ridicule, even to the point of persecution, if we are standing up for the Truth.—I Pet. 4:12-14

Paul's goal was to "win Christ," and to "know him, and the power of his resurrection." (Phil. 3:8,10) The "mark" he refers to in order to accomplish this can be properly thought of as the sum of all the Christian graces—perfect love. Jesus attained this mark, and set it for us, telling us to love even our enemies, and thus be perfect, or complete, as is our Heavenly Father.—Matt. 5:44-48

The pressing and transforming of ourselves into the image of Jesus is a lifetime work. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) We may be prone to discouragement at times, but our lesson encourages us to keep our eyes fixed on the goal. Paul testified that he did not count himself to have yet attained the "mark for the prize" at this point in his life. Let his witness be an encouragement to us that we can be faithful with the Lord's help. ■

A God to Be Praised

Key Verse: *“This God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.”*
—*Psalm 48:14*

Selected Scripture:
Psalm 48:1-3,9-14

American Standard Bible) Paul also says that the law given to Israel by God was a “shadow of good things to come” with regard to the ordinances of the priesthood, the Tabernacle, and the various animal sacrifices “offered year by year” to keep the nation in covenant relationship with God.—Heb. 10:1

One of the requirements put upon Israel was that three times a year, all males should come to the place which God would choose, with offerings to be presented “before the LORD.” In addition, these three annual gatherings provided an opportunity for the Israelites to commune together as God’s chosen people, and to praise him for all of his blessings.—Deut. 16:16,17

Today’s lesson, from the Psalm 48, has Jerusalem as its setting during the days of David their king. Although at this time the Temple was not yet constructed, David had set up a temporary tent, or tabernacle, on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. (I Chron. 15:1; 16:1) In the “midst of the tent” he placed the Ark of the Covenant. This signified

THE APOSTLE PAUL TELLS

us that Israel’s experiences as God’s chosen people were for our benefit. “Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” (I Cor. 10:11, *New*

the special presence of God in Jerusalem, as well as with the people, when they came there to present their offerings and sing praises unto the Lord.

The importance of this setting in Jerusalem is evident in the psalmist's description of the city, its structures, mount Zion, and the temple soon to be built. "We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple." (Ps. 48:9) "Walk about Zion," continues the psalmist. Take note of the towers, the bulwarks, the palaces and buildings so they might be told to successive generations. (vss. 12,13) Then comes the call for praise in our Key Verse, and the acknowledgment of God "for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."

We find Jesus in this same setting at Jerusalem as he neared the close of his earthly ministry. Jesus had just come out of the Temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him and pointed out all its buildings and grandeur. "Do you not see all these things?" he asked. "Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down." (Matt. 24:1,2, *NASB*) With these words Jesus explained that Israel's literal Temple would not stand forever. Rather, as Paul later pointed out, it was a picture of the Gospel church, made up of the followers of Christ. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."—I Cor. 3:16,17

The Apostle Peter also describes this symbolic temple. He first speaks of Jesus as "a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God." "You also," he continues, "as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (I Pet. 2:4,5, *NASB*) Thus it is our privilege to sing this psalm, and render praise to our God. ■

The Great Works of God

Key Verse: “*Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands.*”
—*Psalm 66:1*

Selected Scripture:
Psalm 66:1-9,16-20

BIBLE COMMENTATORS

have expressed differing thoughts as to the application of Psalm 66. There can be no doubt that, on one level, it applies to the many great works of God on behalf of his people Israel. Verse 6 clearly refers to God’s deliverance of the Israelites at the Red Sea, and later when they crossed the Jordan River and entered into the land of Canaan. “He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him.” (*English Standard Version*) While the psalm definitely makes mention of Israel’s experiences, it also seems to have a general application, that all people are called to praise the works of God.

The phrase “joyful noise” in today’s Key Verse comes from a Hebrew word meaning “to shout for joy.” To make a joyful noise unto God does not require a large choir nor the sounds of musical instruments, though these provide much in the way of beautiful melody to the ear. The thought, rather, is that all should praise the Lord in their hearts, and by their life of devotion to him. This suggests the inclusion of all people, and is in harmony with God’s promised plan to bless all the families of earth, by which all mankind will “shout for joy” in praise to their Heavenly Father.

Turning again to Israel as an example of those who were exhorted to praise the works of God, we recall the words of David following the defeat of the Philistines and the return of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. “Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.”—I Chron. 16:8-12

In the closing verses of today’s lesson the psalmist’s thoughts turn inward. He thanks God for his own personal experiences and for the answer to his prayers. This personal application is of special importance to those at the present time who are striving to be followers of the Master. The Apostle Paul spoke to this point in his encouraging words to Timothy: “Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.”—II Tim. 1:8,9, *New International Version*

We are to expect suffering for the Gospel now so we might share in the glorious future work of bringing mankind back into harmony with God. Peter said, “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial that you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.” (I Pet. 4:12,13, *NIV*) Let us take full advantage of our privilege to praise the great works of God which will ultimately bless all the families of the earth in his promised kingdom. ■

The LORD Is Our Refuge

Key Verse: *“He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.”*
—*Psalm 91:15*

Selected Scripture:
Psalm 91:1-16

WE ARE LIVING IN TROUBLED times. The words of the prophets and apostles warn of the turmoil which engulfs mankind today. The advent of social media provides opportunities for people to communicate more with each other, but also emboldens some to spew hate and evil ideologies, which might have previously been suppressed in the public forum. The increasing desire for instant gratification has spawned an environment of sadness, and often anger, among those who feel deprived of the wealth which they see around them. Daniel speaks of our day saying, “There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time.” (Dan. 12:1) To this Jesus adds, “Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.”—Matt. 24:22

With such conditions all around us, we call to mind these promises. “The Father himself loveth you.” “My peace I give unto you. ... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee.” (John 16:27; 14:27; Isa. 41:10) While the world flounders in a sea of despair and

perplexity, the child of God has assurance of the overshadowing wings of divine protection.

Perhaps no other chapter in the Bible gives more assurance of God's watch care over his people than Psalm 91. If we fear the entrapments of Satan, verse 3 says it is God who "delivers you from the snare of the trapper." (*New American Standard Bible*) If we fear unforeseen trials that may come to us, let us take refuge in the words of verses 10 and 11, wherein the psalmist promises, "No evil will befall you, Nor will any plague come near your tent. For He will give His angels charge concerning you To guard you in all your ways."—*NASB*

Some of the most expressive illustrations of divine love and care employed in the Bible are taken from the natural realm. For example, the beautiful figure of a bird protecting her young under her wings is employed in the Scriptures as a picture of God's sheltering love. Verse 4 of our lesson describes the protective refuge we find in our Heavenly Father: "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust."

We find this illustration spoken of in even greater detail in Psalm 36:7-9: "How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light." With joy we note that the refuge described here brings us satisfaction, life and light.

Our Key Verse says that God will be with us, deliver us, and honor us. The previous verse indicates, however, that we will only receive this promise if we set our love on him, and if we know his name. (Ps. 91:14) Therefore, let us daily render this testimony: "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people."—Ps. 116:13,14 ■

Man's Eternal Home

“The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD’S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.”
—Psalm 115:16

THE CREATOR OF THE universe designed the earth to be the eternal home of his human family. When God created our first parents he said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth

and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”—Gen. 1:28, *English Standard Version*

The Bible states that the Creator prepared a special garden home for Adam in the eastern part of Eden. “Out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. ... And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayst freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—Gen. 2:8,9,16,17

These divinely inspired statements of the Bible clearly show that man was created to live on the earth. He would find everything on the earth adapted to his needs, comfort and joy. However, the continued enjoyment of this earthly home, and dominion over it, depended upon his obedience to the Creator's commandments. He was warned that if he disobeyed he would die. The record is that man did indeed disobey the divine law, and that he was sentenced to death. God said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." —Gen. 3:17-19

It is important to observe that in pronouncing the sentence of death upon Adam the Lord said nothing about man being transferred to another part of the universe. The sentence clearly implies that man was to be deprived of continued life on the earth. In the garden which the Creator had specially prepared for our first parents there was a "tree of life." The Hebrew word here translated "tree" can be rendered just as correctly in the plural as "trees," and is so translated many times throughout the Old Testament. (Gen. 3:2,8; 23:17; Lev. 19:23; 26:4,20) In this case, there were many trees in the garden, the fruit of which would sustain life continuously. Thus, we believe it would be proper to refer to them collectively as "trees" of life. However, our first parents were driven out of the garden so that they could not have access to these life-giving trees. The

reason for this drastic action on God's part was, as he explains, so that man would no longer be able to access these trees in order to "eat, and live for ever." —Gen. 3:22-24

This shows further that God's original design was that man should live forever on the earth, and that every necessary provision had been made to enable him to do so. It was not God's purpose for man to live here for a few short years, and then to be taken to heaven or to some other place for eternity. He did not tell our first parents that if they obeyed they would one day go to heaven, or that if they disobeyed they would be consigned to a place of torment.

THE TRADITIONAL VIEW

One wonders how the truth so clearly set forth in the opening chapters of Genesis could become so terribly distorted, but so it has been. As human traditions developed, the professed Christian world came to believe that dying and death are a natural and inevitable part of human experience. Most have concluded that it is God's plan for man to live but temporarily on the earth, and that during this short earthly life span he has an opportunity to prove worthy of an eternity of bliss in heaven. If unworthy, he will suffer everlasting separation from God, and possibly even physical torture and torment continuously for eternity.

The traditions of men attempt to lend support to the thought that human experience on earth is limited by the additional claim that at some time in the future God will destroy the literal earth. Then, it is claimed, all the remaining "worthy" ones on the earth will be taken to heaven at once, and all the

unworthy sent to a place of torment or, at a minimum, to a place of eternal separation from God. That, says tradition, will be the “end of the world,” and the end of planet Earth.

We cannot over-stress the fact that these unreasonable, even revolting views, are without support in the Word of God. Nothing of this sort was even hinted to Adam by the Creator. As we have seen, he was told to multiply and fill the earth. The earth was given to him as his home, and he was to have dominion over it. If disobedient to divine law, he was to forfeit all these blessings, and in death return to the elements of earth from which he had been formed. If human tradition be true, then God was false in his dealings with our first parents.

We know, without question, that Adam did disobey divine law, and was sentenced to death. However, this did not change God’s eternal purpose concerning his human creation. More than three thousand years later the Prophet Isaiah wrote, “Thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited.”—Isa. 45:18

The declaration that God did not create the earth in vain, but formed it to be inhabited, clearly implies that his purpose as originally stated to Adam is still to be carried out. The Lord assures us that he has “established” the earth. He did not create it as a temporary dwelling, or as a place where he could merely experiment with a human creation. He designed the earth as a home for man, and its creation was “not in vain.” It is yet to be inhabited—not by a sinful, dying race, but by a righteous, living human race.

A few verses later in this same chapter of Isaiah the Lord says further: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." (Isa. 45:22,23) Two important thoughts appear in these words: (1) that salvation is provided for all those who look to God, and (2) that eventually every knee shall bow and every tongue confess allegiance to him.

Because of disobedience to divine law, man lost life. "In Adam all die," wrote the Apostle Paul. (I Cor. 15:22) However, this rebellion against God and against his authority in the earth is to be put down. Those who return to obedience to the Lord are to be delivered from the sentence of death which came upon Adam, and, through him, upon all mankind.

This program of salvation from death is accomplished through Christ Jesus, the Redeemer and Savior of mankind. Paul further wrote in the foregoing verse that just as all die through Adam, all who come into "union with Christ," whether now or in God's coming kingdom on earth, will "be made to live again." (I Cor. 15:22, *Williams New Testament*) Additionally, God's statement through the Prophet Isaiah that unto him "every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear," is quoted in the New Testament by the Apostle Paul and applied to Jesus. (Phil. 2:8-11) Thus the Scriptures show that the redemptive work accomplished by the death of Jesus is the Creator's provision for the salvation of all mankind. This, in turn, means that God did not

create the earth in vain, but that it will yet be inhabited by the redeemed and restored human race.

FURTHER ASSURANCES

Numerous Bible statements inform us of the fact that the earth is to abide eternally. In the Old Testament we are told that God “hath established for ever” the earth, and that the “earth abideth for ever.” (Ps. 78:69; 119:90; Eccles. 1:4) In the New Testament, Jesus said, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matt. 5:5) This promise to the meek would be worthless if the earth is one day to be destroyed.

Another false, man-made tradition is that the death of Jesus as the Redeemer of the world did not provide the hope for the awakening of the dead to human life under the arrangement of a righteous kingdom to be established on the earth. The associated claim is perhaps made that if this was to be so, since Jesus died nearly two-thousand years ago, we should have expected such a kingdom and the supposed earthly resurrection to have at least begun long before now. However, this is a mistaken position due to the inability to understand the “due time” aspects of God’s plan of salvation.

In Hebrews 2:6-10, Paul reveals the manner in which the plan of God for human salvation is being accomplished. First, he quotes from the Psalm 8, in which David reminds us that man was created to be king of earth, and that all earthly things were put under his dominion. Then Paul adds, “But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and

honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

Here Paul explains that while we do not now see man as king of earth, enjoying the dominion given to him when created, we do see that the plan of God for man's recovery from sin and death is moving forward. “We see Jesus,” and we see that he “by the grace of God” tasted death for every man. Jesus' suffering and death were a very vital part of God's plan for mankind's restoration to life and earthly dominion.

The apostle also explains that through his suffering Jesus was trained to be the “captain” of our salvation. In the plan of God many “sons” are brought to “glory” through suffering, just as Jesus was. Thus we are reminded of the great truth of the divine plan that Jesus will have associated with him a group of “joint-heirs,” called and chosen from among mankind. (Rom. 8:17; Rev. 17:14) These will share the work and glory of his kingdom, during which salvation will be brought to the remainder of mankind. The high reward of this called out class, attained through faithfulness in sacrifice and suffering, is described by Paul as the “great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord.” Jesus is the “captain” of those who will attain this “great salvation.”—Heb. 2:3

An entire age is set aside in God's plan for the calling and training of those who prove worthy to be exalted to glory with Jesus their captain. These have the privilege of suffering and dying with him.

They follow in his footsteps which lead to death. Because of this, when they accept Christ and dedicate their lives to follow him, they are not restored to perfection of human life. Rather, through the merit of Christ's blood, what is left of their imperfect and dying humanity is made acceptable as a sacrifice, which leads to death with Jesus.—Rom. 6:3-6; 12:1,2

The restoration of mankind in general to perfect life on earth as humans must wait until this sacrificial work of the present age is completed. That is why we do not as yet see any of the human race being restored to health and life. However, we have the assurance of the Word of God that this loving provision of his plan of salvation through Christ will, in his own due time, be accomplished. As Paul says, we see that Jesus “by the grace of God” has tasted death “for every man,” not merely for the called ones of the present age. The justice of God remains sure, and nothing can stand in the way of his almighty power in the accomplishment of his loving purposes. Thus we can be confident, even as the Creator himself has affirmed, that the earth was not created in vain, and that it will yet be inhabited by the restored human race.

The Apostle Peter locates the time for this work of restoration as following the second coming of Christ. He describes that period as “times of restitution of all things,” and declares that it was spoken by God through “the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”—Acts 3:20,21

SOCIAL UPHEAVALS

Efforts have been made to find support for all the many traditional misconceptions of God's plan

of salvation. This has been done with respect to the idea that at the second coming of Christ the earth is to be destroyed. The apparent support found in the Bible for this tradition has come through a misunderstanding of the prophecies in which the words earth, world, and fire are used symbolically to illustrate the great upheavals of human society which would occur as a result of Christ's return, when he would overthrow Satan's empire and establish his kingdom.

Using plain language, the Bible describes the passing away of the rule of sin and selfishness under the direction of Satan, the "god of this world," as a "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." (II Cor. 4:4; Dan. 12:1) Jesus quoted from Daniel's prophecy, and applied it to the time subsequent to his return, using the expression "great tribulation" instead of "time of trouble."—Matt. 24:21,22

Jesus explained that this tribulation would be so severe that unless those days were shortened, no flesh would survive—that the entire human race would be destroyed. He gave assurance, however, that he would not permit this to happen. Since this is Jesus' assurance concerning the time associated with his return, it means that the traditional idea that then the earth would be burned up and the human race completely destroyed cannot be true. Jesus promised that all flesh will not be destroyed. "Those days shall be shortened." (vs. 22) The "end of the world" foretold in the Bible is the end of Satan's world, his evil dominion over earth and its inhabitants, mankind. Hence, all who love righteousness, and seek the eternal welfare of

mankind, should look forward to and desire with joyful anticipation the end of such a sin-cursed and dying world.

The Apostle John wrote, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”—I John 2:15-17

It is very evident that the Apostle John is not here writing about the literal earth, but of a social order which exists upon the earth. This is the “world” which Christians are not to love. Referring to the same thing, Jesus said to his disciples, “I have chosen you out of the world,” after which he reassured them, “Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” (John 15:19; 16:33) It is this world which, John explains, “passeth away.” It is not the earth at all, but the evil conditions to be found everywhere in human society. These are to be supplanted by the establishment of God’s authority through the agencies of Christ’s kingdom. This is in keeping with Jesus’ prayer, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”—Matt. 6:10

SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE

The word “earth” is often used in the Bible to denote the association of mankind upon the earth. We read, “Let the earth be glad;” “Give ear, O earth;” and “Let the earth hear,” to cite but a few instances. (Ps. 96:11; Isa. 1:2; 34:1) We might continue to quote these examples of the figurative use of the

word earth, for there are many of them. Students of the Bible in reading these texts have no difficulty in understanding them, except when the passage refers to the destruction of the earth. Then, being influenced by the misconceptions of human tradition, they insist on a literal interpretation, and maintain the belief which calls for the earth to be destroyed, something which God's Word has assured us will never happen.

Psalm 46 prophetically describes certain conditions appertaining to the time of great tribulation foretold by Jesus. In this prophecy we are told that kingdoms would be "moved," and the "earth melted." (vs. 6) However, in the final picture presented in the prophecy we read, "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" (vs. 10, *ESV*) Thus we find that after the symbolic earth "melts," the literal earth, the scene of the great time of trouble, still exists, and that God's name is exalted in it.

In order to help us understand more vividly the different aspects of the tribulation by which Satan's social order is destroyed, various expressions are used symbolically in the prophecies. The "time of trouble" is likened to a flood, to a storm, to winds, to an earthquake, and also to fire. (Nah. 1:7,8; Isa. 28:2; I Kings 19:11,12; Zeph. 3:8) All of these expressions are to be understood as symbols which denote and emphasize various circumstances associated with the demise of Satan's world.

Fire, in particular, is very devastating, and is used often in the Bible to symbolize destruction. Peter writes of the "fiery trial" which comes upon Christians to assist in the destruction of the fallen, sinful

tendencies of their characters. (I Pet. 4:12) Paul speaks of heaping “coals of fire” upon our enemy’s head by doing good unto them. (Rom. 12:20) No one would ever suppose that the “fire” in these various references is literal.

However, to claim scriptural support for human traditions, when fire is used in the prophecies to symbolize the destructive effects of the time of trouble in the earth, many insist that it must be literal fire. This has helped to keep alive the tradition concerning the burning up of the earth. Thus it has blinded many to the real plan of God for the restoration of the human race from death. In that glorious plan, all will have an opportunity to accept the provisions of redemption through Christ, obey the laws of the Messianic kingdom and live forever in the earthly home which God intended for them from the very beginning.

What glorious conditions will ultimately abound here on the earth! The prophecies tell us that “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” They promise that sickness and death will be destroyed. They further assure that the righteous shall no longer suffer persecution, as has been the case during the reign of sin and death, that the “rebuke” of God’s people shall be taken away from the face of the whole earth.—Isa. 11:9; 25:6-9; 33:24

The psalmist wrote: “God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people

righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.”—Ps. 67:1-6

When our first parents transgressed God’s law and were driven out of their garden home in Eden, the Lord said, “Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.” (Gen. 3:17,18) This “curse” is to be removed, and as the psalmist wrote, the earth will “yield her increase.” John the revelator states the matter plainly, “There shall be no more curse.” (Rev. 22:3) How reassuring are these promises of God!

God informs us, through the Prophet Isaiah, that while heaven is his throne, the earth is his “footstool,” and he will make the place of his feet—his footstool, the earth—glorious. (Isa. 66:1; 60:13) It will be then that the beautiful promise of God recorded by John, when he saw in vision “the new earth,” will have its fulfillment upon this very planet. “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 shall 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.”—Rev. 21:1,3-5 ■

“Daily His Delight”

*“Then I was by
him, as one
brought up with
him: and I was
daily his delight,
rejoicing always
before him.”
—Proverbs 8:30*

THE WORDS OF OUR

opening text speak of Jesus, the Son of God, during his prehuman existence, as he joyfully labored together with his Father in the great creative works preparatory to man’s dwelling upon the earth. In this setting, we note that Jesus was a “delight” each day to his Creator. This relationship between the Son and the Father has continued, including the time of Jesus’ earthly life and ministry, and subsequent to that as the resurrected and glorified Christ.

The Son of God, throughout his existence, has deemed of utmost joy and his highest motive the privilege of being a daily delight to his Father, and of bringing honor to his name. For the Christian, seeking to follow in the Master’s footsteps, daily devotion to the Heavenly Father should also be of highest importance, and a similar privilege. In our lesson, we will examine seven aspects of our walk

with God, in which we might be considered “daily his delight.”

DAILY BREAD

The first of these “daily” aspects of our Christian life is referred to in Matthew 6:11: “Give us this day our daily bread.” Bread is used, in both secular and sacred writings, to cover all the necessities of life. We speak of one going forth to earn his bread, meaning to provide the necessities of life for himself and for those dependent upon him. In the Bible, we find similar use made of the word bread. In Genesis 3:19, we have the words spoken by God to Adam: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” In other words, only by laborious toil would man provide for his necessities. The word bread is used to cover all the basic needs of this life.

Looking at Matthew 6:11 more closely, it is a special kind of bread that is spoken of here. The verse speaks of “us” and “our,” denoting that this bread belongs especially to the Christian, as the children of “Our Father” who is in heaven. This thought is seen by referring to verses 5 and 7. Jesus is teaching his disciples how to pray, and he makes a distinction between them and others. He says: “When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites. ... When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen.” The children of God, taught here by Jesus how to pray, are contrasted with the world in general. It is not the bread of all men for which we are taught to pray. It is for “our” bread, the children’s bread. This covers all the needs of the consecrated life, especially that which is needful to us as footstep followers of Christ Jesus.

The words “daily bread” are also of great importance in our Lord’s words. In an earthly family the children daily sit down to the table, yet they do not ask their parents how they obtained the means to feed and clothe them. They do not fret when they awaken in the morning, wondering whether their parents have made provision for them. Thus, we are taught to recognize God as the provider of all that we need, and go to him in prayer each day, in confidence, for the supply of our daily bread. In so doing, let us lay greater stress upon our spiritual needs, knowing that if we “seek first” the kingdom of God, all other needful things will be provided to us.—Matt. 6:33

DAILY CROSS

In Luke 9:23, these words of Jesus are recorded: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” Taking up our cross “daily” is another important part of each day for us as Christians. A critical step in following the Lord is designated in the Scriptures as sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1) The cross symbolizes this sacrifice, which will not terminate until death.

It is the sacrifice of our wills which is at the core of cross-bearing. Our wills must be given joyfully, and without reservation, else our sacrifice will not be acceptable to the Lord, and all subsequent cross-bearing will not be to our advantage. Our Master’s expression respecting the daily surrender and sacrifice of his will to do the Father’s will is found in these prophetic words: “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”—Ps. 40:8

We, too, must delight to have God's will done in us, and delight to surrender, or sacrifice, our own wills. Let us see clearly that if there is anything lacking in respect to the sacrifice of our wills, it must receive our first attention. Those who have completely sacrificed their will to do the Lord's will have gained a great victory at the start, and are enabled to faithfully "take up" their cross daily, as they tread the narrow way.

The Master's cross-bearing did not consist of fighting the weaknesses of the flesh, for he had none. It involved the day by day doing of his Father's will under unfavorable conditions. In doing the will of our Father in heaven we, like Jesus, will have opposition. In letting the light of truth shine out as our Master directed, we, too, will endure persecution.

Our cross-bearing comes when we find that the Truth, so beautiful and so beneficial to us, is doubted and denied by others. It draws upon us their ridicule and opposition, just as it did upon the Master. Faithfulness in bearing our cross daily includes not compromising the Truth under any circumstances, and our willingness to defend it, meekly but firmly. We must be prepared to do this, whatever the cost.

Cross-bearing is made necessary because we are living in this "present evil world." (Gal. 1:4) The spirit of the world, under the control of Satan, is contrary to the Spirit of the Lord and his righteousness. Having consecrated our all to God, with the sentiments of our hearts finding expression in the words, "I delight to do thy will, O my God," let us continue to bear our cross day by day. If we do this we shall, in due time, be found faithful, for it is

written: “If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. 8:17

DAILY SEARCHING

Another “daily” privilege we have is that of searching the Scriptures. Particular reference is made to this in Acts 17:10,11: “The brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

True nobility implies reasonableness and readiness, as opposed to prejudice. Paul and Silas were pleased to find the Jews in Berea ready to receive the Truth. They were “more noble” than others because they had been searching and studying the Scriptures daily, to examine, investigate and see whether or not the things they heard were in harmony with the prophetic statements respecting Messiah and his work.

Professing to believe all that was written in the law and the prophets, and thus looking for Messiah, they welcomed the servants of God, who sought to draw their attention particularly to the things written aforetime. With readiness of mind, they began to search, to see how well Paul’s presentation was supported by the testimony of the sacred text.

All of us are leaky “earthen vessels.” (II Cor. 4:7) Unless we are imbibing the Word of God day by day, we leave ourselves more open to the attacks of the Adversary. The Christian course is not covered by fits and starts, but by “patient continuance.” (Rom. 2:7)

The same is true with our study of the Truth. It is not to be done sporadically, only once a week, or perhaps even less often. Daily, rather, we should search, examine, investigate and meditate upon the Scriptures.

As we do this, we obtain clearer insights and a deeper appreciation of God's wisdom, justice, love, and power. Let us daily meditate upon these eternal truths, and come more into harmony with them. By so doing they will become an essential part of our existence. As we read in Jeremiah 15:16, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

Something more, however, is necessary than merely a readiness of mind to hear and understand the Truth. Jesus refers to some who receive the Word gladly, but who have no depth nor root. Consequently, when the heat of tribulation arises, they wither, losing their Christian vitality. (Matt. 13:20,21) It is not always those who receive the Truth most favorably that continue to hold it and bring forth fruit. Trials and tests will often cause a line of demarcation to be drawn between those who have depth, and others who do not—between those who really love the Truth, and those who merely have a dutiful head knowledge thereof. Let us day by day search the Scriptures, so that we might have a proper appreciation that the divine Word is to be a "lamp" to our feet, and a "light" to our daily path.—Ps. 119:105

DAILY DYING

The fourth aspect of our subject, daily dying, is referred to by the Apostle Paul. He says, "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our

Lord, I die daily.” (I Cor. 15:31) In another place, Paul shows the kind of dying being mentioned: “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.” (II Cor. 4:10) It was the daily dying of Jesus for three and a half years, pouring out his soul unto sacrificial death, to which the apostle refers.

The whole world is dying, but, in general, mankind does not die “in Christ Jesus.” There is a vast difference between being dead in Adam and being dead in Christ. Quoting again the Apostle Paul, we read, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” (Rom. 6:3) Jesus’ death was a sacrificial one, and not the result of any inherited imperfection or sin from Adam.

Henceforth, if we are “in Christ,” from the divine standpoint, we are counted as “new creatures.” The “old things” of our human nature have passed away, and through the begetting power of God’s Holy Spirit we have “become new.” (II Cor. 5:17) We have new and heavenly hopes and aims. We also have the privilege, day by day, of “bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.” (II Cor. 4:10) Thus we share in the likeness of his death.

Concerning our Master and pattern, we read in Acts 10:38: “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good.” Jesus laid down his life daily in doing good, and in proclaiming the message of truth. The Christian’s life is to be the same. We, too, are to lay down our lives in the same manner, going about doing good, and proclaiming the Gospel.—John 15:13; I John 3:16; Gal. 6:10; Matt. 24:14; Rom. 10:15

We are to do this, whether the time of our ministry be three and a half years, thirty years, or whatever the Lord might provide. We are to do this until the Father's due time for the end of our earthly sojourn. Let us, then, continue in this daily dying, knowing that if we are dead with Christ now, we shall live with him in the future.

DAILY RENEWING

Daily renewing is also spoken of by Paul. Referring to the Christian life, he states, "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (II Cor. 4:16) The Greek word here translated "renewed" means to "make new" or "renovate." The apostle explains the matter further in Romans 12:2: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing [making new, or renovating] of your mind." The reason for this is that we "may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

While it is true that our consecration to God might be considered an act of a moment, yet the proving of what is good, acceptable, and in harmony with the will of God, is a gradual work. Indeed, it is a life work, going on day by day. It is the daily bending heavenward of that which naturally bends earthward. The Apostle Peter alludes to the contrast between that which is heavenly and the sinful elements currently in the earth. He says that it is by God's "exceeding great and precious promises" that we can become "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world."
—II Pet. 1:4

The daily renewing of the mind, from earthly to heavenly thinking, is the beginning of the change of nature referred to by Peter. Our old nature would have us be conformed to this world by submitting to its influences and its spirit. Let us, rather, submit ourselves to the will of God, to the Holy Spirit, and thus be transformed by the heavenly influences emanating from the Word of God. We should ask and answer the following question: To which influences am I submitting? We know that the daily renewing of our minds leads to sacrifice, but the end result will be glorious.

We call to mind a few phrases from the third chapter of Colossians: “Seek those things which are above.” “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” “Mortify [put to death] therefore your members which are upon earth.” “Put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication.” “Put off the old man.” “Put on the new man.” “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.” “Above all these things put on charity [love].”—vss. 1,2,5,8-10,12,14

No wonder the apostle wrote in another place, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Phil. 2:12) It is a life’s work, made up of daily renewing. Daily there is to be a renewing of the mind; of setting our affections on things above; of putting off the old man and putting on the new; and above all, the putting on of the quality of love.

DAILY EXHORTATION

Let us now consider our sixth daily responsibility—exhortation. This is referred to in Hebrews 3:13,

where we read: "Exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." The word here translated "exhort" is the verb form of the Greek word *parakletos*, meaning a comforter, helper, or strengthener. Daily we are to exhort, comfort, help and strengthen one another. Here is a form of service in which all Christians can be engaged.

There is a false idea about exhortation, in which it is thought to be divorced from doctrine. Indeed, we can hear exhortations concerning the moral and devotional truths of the Bible spoken by ministers of the various churches and denominations. However, do we hear them speak of the Abrahamic Covenant or of God's purpose to bless all the families of the earth through the long-promised seed of Abraham, Christ and his church? Do we hear the teachings concerning restitution, based upon the ransom sacrifice of Jesus? Do we hear the discussion of prophecies that speak of the ransomed of the Lord returning, coming to Zion to obtain joy and gladness, their sorrow and sighing having fled away?—Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:16,29; Acts 3:20,21; Isa. 35:10

Many of those who exhort, speak and write about the moral and devotional truths of the Bible have sorely missed the foregoing clear teachings of the Scriptures concerning God's plan of salvation. The Apostle Paul emphasizes the vital importance of considering all the teachings given in the Word of God, including doctrine. He says, "All scripture, divinely inspired, is indeed profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for that discipline which is in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly fitted for ever good

work.” (II Tim. 3:16, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*) We cannot properly exhort one another as Christians apart from true doctrine. Neither can we speak of the doctrines of the Bible without exhorting one another. Hence, we cannot divorce exhortation from doctrine.

In this, as in all things appertaining to the Christian life, we have Jesus as our example. We recall the wonderful discourse Jesus gave to those two disciples on the way to Emmaus: “He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”—Luke 24:25-27

That was a doctrinal exhortation, proving from the Scriptures that Christ must suffer, and then enter into his glory. We know the condition of those two disciples before Jesus spoke to them. They were saddened, because they thought that Jesus of Nazareth, who had done mighty things, would be the one to redeem Israel. However, he was crucified, and although there were rumors that he had been raised from the dead, they could not confirm that such had happened. (vss. 17-24) Were these sorrowful disciples exhorted, comforted and strengthened by the doctrinal talk Jesus gave them? Hear their joyous response: “Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”—vs. 32

Some today may say that we should have unity, and ignore doctrine, suggesting that it does not really matter what we believe. The Scriptures clearly teach

otherwise. Jesus prayed that his followers would be sanctified, or made holy, by the truth, not by error. (John 17:17) Paul instructed Titus to “speak thou the things which become sound doctrine,” and to hold fast “the faithful word,” that “by sound doctrine” he would be enabled to exhort others. (Tit. 2:1; 1:9) It is only the truth of God’s Word by which we can daily exhort, comfort, and strengthen one another as we journey towards our heavenly home.

DAILY PAYING OUR VOWS

Our seventh and last consideration is that of daily paying—or performing—our vows to the Lord. This is referred to in Psalm 61:8: “So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.” The carrying out of our vows to the Lord is of utmost importance. God’s law to Israel stated: “When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee.” (Deut. 23:21) Surely, if God required natural Israel to pay their vows to him, how much more will he require it of spiritual Israelites.

More than a century ago, a “faithful and wise servant” of the Lord penned the words which became known as “My Morning Resolve.” Many Christians continue to daily consider its sentiments, using it as a help and encouragement in the fulfillment of their consecration vows. We herein quote its meaningful and guiding words:

My Earliest Thought I Desire Shall Be: “What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord [for grace to help].

I will pay my vows unto the Most High.”—Ps. 116:12-14

Remembering the Divine call, “Gather My saints together unto Me; those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice” (Ps. 50:5), I resolve that by the Lord’s assisting grace I will today, as a saint of God, fulfil my vows, continuing the work of sacrificing the flesh and its interests, that I may attain unto the Heavenly inheritance in joint-heirship with my Redeemer.

I will strive to be simple and sincere toward all.

I will seek not to please and honor self, but the Lord.

I will be careful to honor the Lord with my lips, that my words may be unctuous and blessed to all.

I will seek to be faithful to the Lord, the Truth, the brethren and all with whom I have to do, not only in great matters, but also in the little things of life.

Trusting myself to Divine care and the Providential overruling of all my interests for my highest welfare, I will seek not only to be pure in heart, but to repel all anxiety, all discontent, all discouragement.

I will neither murmur nor repine at what the Lord’s providence may permit, because “Faith can firmly trust Him, Come what may.”

Let us, then, keep these seven “daily” aspects of our walk ever in mind, that they might find their outward expression in our lives each day. May we always remember that our hearts have responded to the love of God in Christ Jesus, so that we receive not this grace of God in vain. Finally, let us faithfully carry out our vows of consecration, day by day, to know and to do the will of God. Thus we will be “daily his delight,” both now and forevermore! ■

Consider Him

“Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

*—Hebrews 12:3,
New International
Version*

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

begins with these words: “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through prophets, ... but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.” (Heb. 1:1,2, *NIV*) Jesus never claimed to be the origin of what he taught, but rather he said, “I do nothing of

myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.”—John 8:28

In the second chapter of Hebrews we are told: “We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.” (vs. 1, *NIV*) If, by way of example, a boat starts to drift away from where it is docked, at first it may be hardly noticeable. However, when it becomes obvious that the boat has gone away from the dock, it may be much more difficult to regain control and bring it back to its mooring.

A CORRESPONDING PRICE

During his First Advent nearly two-thousand years ago, Jesus was “made a little lower than the

angels for the suffering of death, ... that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man.” (Heb. 2:9) The death of the perfect man Jesus provided the ransom—an exact corresponding price—for the first perfect man Adam, who had disobeyed God and was sentenced to die. In order for God’s justice to be satisfied in providing the ransom, the death of a perfect human being—Jesus—was required as payment for a perfect human life forfeited—Adam. Thus, the entire human race, which was still “in Adam” when he sinned, could be redeemed. In the Messianic kingdom which will soon come on earth, every human being that has ever lived will be raised from the dead and given an opportunity to learn and obey God’s principles of righteousness. All those who obediently follow God’s ways will be given everlasting life.

“Therefore, it was necessary for him to be made in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. Then he could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. Since he himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested.” (Heb. 2:17,18, *New Living Translation*) The suffering and testing of Jesus came to him not because he was a sinner, but because he was faithful to God, and because our Heavenly Father wanted to test and prove the loyalty of his only begotten Son, even unto death.

Next we are told: “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” (Heb. 3:1) To “consider” means to “observe fully.”

Thus we are to observe and study carefully the scriptural record of Jesus' life, his actions and teachings. At first it may seem odd to consider Jesus as an Apostle. However, the word translated "Apostle" in this verse means "an ambassador of the Gospel." (*Strong's Greek Dictionary*) Indeed, Jesus was the greatest of all ambassadors of the Gospel message, which will reach all mankind in due time.

Continuing, we read: "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. 3:5,6) Here a comparison is made between Moses, who was a faithful servant of God, and God's only begotten Son Jesus, who was faithful and who has been given a spiritual household of footstep followers.

LEARNING OBEDIENCE FROM SUFFERING

Later in the book of Hebrews we are told that though Jesus was God's Son, "he had to prove the meaning of obedience through all that he suffered." (Heb. 5:8, *J. B. Phillips New Testament*) The sufferings of Jesus included many experiences. The subtle and deceptive temptations which came upon him while in the wilderness, the continual contradiction of sinners against himself, his earthly poverty, his loss of friends, the bitter and relentless persecutions which undeservedly came upon him, were all part of his suffering. Finally, his betrayal by Judas, and his dying agony on the cross, climaxed his life of affliction. Truly, Jesus proved the meaning of obedience by all that he suffered.

From the scriptural record we understand that divine wisdom saw the necessity for Jesus to first be tested and proven faithful during his life here on earth before God would highly exalt him to the divine nature. Likewise must all those who respond to the heavenly calling during the present Gospel Age be thoroughly proven before God will exalt them to be with their Lord and Master, Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul explains this, saying, “If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.” “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.”—II Tim. 2:11,12; Rom. 8:17

FAITH

Faith is described in the book of Hebrews in this way: “Now faith is a well-grounded assurance of that for which we hope, and a conviction of the reality of things which we do not see.” (Heb. 11:1, *Weymouth New Testament*) By contrast, “credulity” is defined by Webster’s dictionary as “readiness or willingness to believe, especially on slight or uncertain evidence.” Often, credulity is simply believing what someone tells us, with little or no evidence for support. Faith, however, is much more than mere credulity, because it is based, as the above verse says, upon “well-grounded assurance” and “conviction” in the promises of God.

The next verse continues, stating that faith is “what the ancients were commended for.” (vs. 2, *NIV*) Throughout the rest of the of Hebrews chapter 11, various individuals from Old Testament times are listed. These not only believed in the promises

of God which they received, but also took action based upon their faith in those promises. Thus we see that faith includes taking action based upon our belief in God's promises.

THE SIN THAT SO EASILY ENTANGLES

In the opening verse of chapter 12 we are admonished: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."—Heb. 12:1, *NIV*

We believe that one of the sins which often "easily entangles" us is the sin of unbelief, or a lack of faith in God's promises. Hebrews chapter 3 speaks about the sin of unbelief, saying, "Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day." Although God led the Israelites out of the land of Egypt at the time of the Exodus, their unbelief and resulting disobedience were displeasing to him. As a result, "they were not able to enter" the land which God had promised to them.—Heb. 3:12-19, *New American Standard Bible*

"CONSIDER" JESUS

How very important it is that we should be "looking away to the leader and perfecter of the faith, Jesus, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, disregarding the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:2, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*) The expression "looking away" means to "consider attentively." The *NIV* translation expresses it with these words: "Let us

fix our eyes on Jesus.” The “right hand of the throne of God” refers to the position of chief favor and power next to the Heavenly Father.—Eph. 1:20-22; I Pet. 3:22

Following Hebrews 12:2, our opening text admonishes us to “consider” Jesus, who endured much opposition, so that we do not become weary and discouraged. (vs. 3) The word “consider,” in the original Greek, means “think over, ponder, contemplate.” A similar thought in the English language would be expressed by the word “analyze.”

When someone analyzes something or someone, they do not do so casually or quickly. For example, when going to a doctor for a physical checkup, usually the examination includes taking a sample of blood, which is sent to a laboratory to be analyzed. In performing such an analysis, does the laboratory just casually look at the vial filled with blood and say either “it looks good,” or “it looks like there is a problem?” Certainly not. Rather, the sample is carefully tested using numerous methods, in order to determine various aspects of the person’s health.

A person who analyzes something, whether a medical doctor, or some other type of professional, does three important things. First, he spends a great deal of time and effort gathering all available information about that which he is analyzing. Second, he examines in detail, and from all necessary perspectives, the information which has been gathered. Oftentimes this will include comparing the information with normal or abnormal measurements. Third, the one doing the analysis will draw key conclusions.

When we consider Jesus we are, in essence, analyzing his life, teachings, behavior, and motives. We

do this in order to draw important lessons and conclusions, so that we may better follow his example and strengthen our faith structure.

LEST WE BE WEARY

Our Heavenly Father knows that those whom he calls to be part of the body of Christ during the present Gospel Age may at times “grow weary and lose heart,” as our opening text states, because of various experiences and difficulties which God permits in our life. Here too, we are counseled to “consider him” who endured such great opposition from those among whom he lived. Let us reflect upon some of the things which Jesus endured.

Have we ever been falsely accused or criticized by others when we have done something good or proper? Perhaps when we have tried to share some of God’s wonderful truths which are stated in the Bible, we were ignored or rejected, or even considered to be part of a cult. Let us, then, consider how Jesus, who was a perfect man, was falsely accused on many occasions by imperfect men.

On one occasion there was a Jewish festival, and many people were looking for Jesus. They asked, “Where is he? Among the mass of the people there was much muttered debate about Him. Some said, He is a good man. Others said, Not so: he is imposing on the people. ... When the Festival was already half over, Jesus went up to the Temple and commenced teaching. The Jews were astonished. How does this man know anything of books, they said, although he has never been at any of the schools? Jesus answered their question by saying, My teaching does not belong to me, but comes from Him

who sent me. If any one is willing to do His will, he shall know about the teaching, whether it is from God or originates with me. The man whose teaching originates with himself aims at his own glory. He who aims at the glory of Him who sent him teaches the truth, and there is no deception in him.” Many in the crowd rejected Jesus’ words and falsely accused him of being possessed by a demon.—John 7:11-20, *Weymouth*

On another occasion, after Jesus had explained what it meant to truly be considered a son of Abraham, he was again falsely accused. “Are we not right, answered the Jews, in saying that you are a Samaritan and are possessed by a demon? I am not possessed by a demon, replied Jesus. On the contrary I honour my Father, and you dishonour me. I, however, am not aiming at glory for myself.”—John 8:48-50, *Weymouth*

After performing the miracle of healing a man born blind, Jesus took the opportunity to share some important truths with the people by giving the parable of the good shepherd. The account continues: “Again there arose a division among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, He is possessed by a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to him? Others argued, that is not the language of a demoniac: and can a demon open blind men’s eyes?”—John 10:19-21, *Weymouth*

Consider how Jesus patiently and meekly endured such insults and false accusations. The Apostle Peter, who had witnessed these very things, describes it, saying, “When He was reviled, He did not answer with reviling; when He suffered He uttered no threats, but left His wrongs in the hands of the

righteous Judge.” (I Pet. 2:23, *Weymouth*) Jesus warned his followers to expect similar mistreatment during the Gospel Age, saying: “The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. 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 [*Thayer’s Greek Definitions*: prince of evil spirits], how much more shall they call them of his household?”—Matt. 10:24,25

Have we ever felt overlooked or forgotten by others? Consider Jesus, who on another occasion entered a village where ten lepers called out to him from a distance. They cried out: “Jesus, Rabbi, take pity on us. Perceiving this, He said to them, Go and show yourselves to the Priests. And while on their way to do this they were made clean. One of them, seeing that he was cured, came back, adoring and praising God in a loud voice, ... thanking Him. He was a Samaritan. Were not all ten made clean? Jesus asked; but where are the nine? Have none been found to come back and give glory to God except this foreigner? And He said to him, Rise and go: your faith has cured you.”—Luke 17:11-19

Do we sometimes feel alone in our Christian walk—at our job, at home, in times of ill health or in the midst of other difficult experiences? Consider the many occasions when Jesus was all alone, with no other human being beside him, and what he did to sustain himself spiritually.

After his baptism in the Jordan River, it is recorded that Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness, where he remained forty days. While there, he was “with the wild beasts.” (Mark 1:12,13)

He had no contact with other human beings during that period, yet he took great advantage of it. We believe Jesus spent those forty days meditating upon the Old Testament promises, prophecies, types and symbols, much of which was vital for his understanding.

Another way Jesus sustained himself when he was alone was by praying to his Heavenly Father, no doubt asking for help and guidance. Consider the following examples of this, as recorded in the Scriptures. “He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there, all alone.” “In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying.” (Matt. 14:23; Mark 1:35) Thus we see how important prayer was to our Master in order to find comfort and strength during his ministry. Prayer is also vitally important to all those who are striving to follow in Jesus’ footsteps. We are never alone when in prayer and supplication with our Heavenly Father.

When Jesus was with the Apostles at Gethsemane, he took Peter, James, and John a little further into the garden. As they went, Jesus began to be very distressed, and said to them, “My soul is crushed with anguish to the very point of death; wait here, and keep awake with me. Going forward a short distance He fell on His face and prayed. My Father, He said, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep.” Two more times Jesus went to pray, and each time when he returned, he found the three sleeping. (Matt. 26:36-44, *Weymouth*) The Luke

account tells us that God answered Jesus' prayer, sending an angel to strengthen him.—Luke 22:43

NEVER FORSAKEN BY GOD

In the Scriptures, we are promised that our Heavenly Father will never leave nor forsake his people. God made this promise to various faithful ones during Old Testament times. His promise to Jacob was, “Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” (Gen. 28:15, *NASB*) Moses' words to all the Israelites were: “Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.” (Deut. 31:6, *NASB*) God said to Joshua following the death of Moses: “Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you.”—Josh. 1:5

Similarly, King David reminded his son Solomon: “Be strong and courageous, and act; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you until all the work for the service of the house of the LORD is finished.” (I Chron. 28:20, *NASB*) The psalmist recorded the promise: “The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.” (Ps. 118:6,8,9) If our Heavenly Father promised to not leave these faithful ones of the Old Testament, surely he will fulfill the promise given in the New Testament to all those who have dedicated themselves to follow in the footsteps of his Son. As

we are told: “He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper.”—Heb. 13:5,6

GOD SUPERVISES OUR EXPERIENCES

When trials came to Jesus, he did not consider them as being merely from the individual who was used to convey the experience. He saw them, rather, as being under the supervision of God. When he was arrested in the garden of Gethsemane, the Apostle Peter pulled out his sword and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his ear. However, Jesus said to Peter, “The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”—John 18:10,11

A few hours later, when Jesus was on trial, the Roman governor Pilate asked Jesus: “Where are You from? But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to Him, You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You? Jesus answered, You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above.” (John 19:9-11, *NASB*) In proportion as we realize that all our experiences are under God’s supervision, we will recognize better the lessons which our Heavenly Father wishes us to learn in order to develop our faith and character-likeness to the Master.

We find this thought expressed in these verses from Hebrews chapter 12: “It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons, for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?” “[God] disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet

to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”—Heb. 12:7,10,11, *NASB*

Nothing can happen to us without the knowledge and permission of our Heavenly Father, who is working all things for our spiritual welfare. “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” “For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”—Rom. 8:28; II Cor. 4:17,18, *NIV*

We will soon enter the Memorial season. As we do so, let us renew our efforts to consider Jesus often, both in private meditation and study, as well as in our meetings and fellowship with the brethren. As we are admonished: “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.”—Heb. 3:1 ■

2019 MEMORIAL SUPPER DATE

The proper time for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after sunset on Thursday, April 18, 2019.

A complete Memorial Service is available for any who wish to have it. CD or DVD versions can be purchased for \$6.00. Please send your request to:

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Please place your order by April 3, if possible.

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

FEBRUARY 7—“Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”—Romans 13:10 (Z. '98-201 Hymn 267)

FEBRUARY 14—“By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”—Matthew 12:37 (Z. '96-32 Hymn 198)

FEBRUARY 21—“Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for Thy name’s sake, lead me, and guide me.”—Psalm 31:3 (Z. '02-249 Hymn 12)

FEBRUARY 28—“Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”—Philippians 4:6 (Z. '03-8 Hymn 115)



OBITUARIES

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

Brother Taze Barton, Salem, OR—December 7. Age, 98

Brother Ron Sheetz, Los Angeles, CA—December 31. Age, 92

Brother Michael Buckner, Headland, AL—January 5. Age, 88

Sister Antoinette Ozorowski, Bruay, France—January 6. Age, 96

Sister Ethel Krasonic, West Newton, PA—January 14. Age, 83

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

GRIER'S ALMANAC

DawnBible: Praise God! You learn something new everyday!

I came across *Grier's Almanac* while visiting my parents in Louisiana for Christmas 2018.

I was super surprised by the information inside of the Almanac. I will be placing my order. God Bless!—TX

OUR LORD'S RETURN

DawnBible: I am reading the September 2018 issue right now. I am blessed with the Highlights of Dawn—"Our Lord's Return."

It clearly explains that the Lord Jesus died in the flesh, and was resurrected in the spirit.—Philippines

BIBLE STUDY

DawnBible: Blessed morning. I would like to take part in Bible study.—Namibia

PRAYER REQUEST

DawnBible: Praise the Lord for your beautiful website. It has truly blessed me.—LA

RENEWING SEARCH FOR UNDERSTANDING

DawnBible: My wife, and I were Dawn Bible students in Florida. My wife passed away in 2010 from cancer.

I'm retired now, and wish to renew my biblical searches for understanding. She and I were both baptized during our time with the Dawn. May God bless and keep all of you safe.—KY

RENEWING SUBSCRIPTION

DawnBible: Renewing my subscription with your Association.

In 2010, I registered with you when I was in the Netherlands for my studies. Thank you in advance.—Ghana

THIS IS THE TRUTH

DawnBible: I was exposed to the Dawn Bible Students way back in early 1973, when I worked with another young friend at a power station. We were fellow workers.

He shared the Truth with me, but I ignored this, thinking this was wrong biblical info. I went off into traditional Christian beliefs.

Now its 2018. And I know that this is the Truth. God drove me back home. I now enjoy

the *Frank and Earnest* radio and look forward to hearing the old broadcasts on the Internet.

I hope to find a Dawn group some day in Florida. Praise God for the Dawn Bible Students.—FL

FREE BOOKLET

DawnBible: Hi, I am interested in the book *Israel In History and Prophecy*. Do you still have this free booklet?

I haven't been on your site before. I am going to check it out.—Canada

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”—Matthew 7:7

Why should the Lord wish us to ask before he would give his blessing? For a wise purpose, we may be sure! He would have us feel our need, he would have us appreciate the privilege, he would have us look for the response, and in all these experiences he would develop us as his sons of the new creation. Therefore we are to ask and seek and knock if we would find the riches of God's grace, and have opened to us more and more the wonderful privileges and mercies and blessings which he is so willing to give to us as we develop in character and in preparation for his mercies.

—*Songs in the Night, February 26*

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

M. Balko and B. Keith

Australia:

Melbourne February 1-4

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

N. Austin

Sacramento, CA
February 15-17

G. Balko

Sacramento, CA
February 15-17

B. Dutka

Sacramento, CA
February 15-17

O. B. Elbert

Sacramento, CA
February 15-17

L. Griehs

Sacramento, CA
February 15-17

B. Jakubowski

Sacramento, CA
February 15-17

B. Montague

Sacramento, CA
February 15-17

R. Niemczyk

Sacramento, CA
February 15-17

J. Trzeciak

Sacramento, CA
February 15-17

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CONVENTIONS

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

SACRAMENTO CONVENTION, February 15-17—Holiday Inn Express, 2224 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821. Contact hotel for room reservations. Phone: (916) 923-1100. Specify “Bible Students” to receive special rate of \$98.00. Rate good until January 20. For other information, contact K. Freer. Phone: (916) 879-4657 or Email: winnerwear@aol.com

NIGERIA CONVENTION, February 22-24—Uzi Obudi Agwa Owerri Imo State, Nigeria. Contact C. Egbu. Phone: 2348033339949 or Email: egbucaje@gmail.com

FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 2-4—Holiday Inn Orlando International, 5750 T. G. Lee Blvd., Orlando, FL 32822. Contact hotel for room reservations. Phone: (407) 851-6400. Specify “Orlando Bible Students” to receive special rate of \$131.00. Online booking code: SBO. For other information, contact E. Kuenzli. Phone: (407) 670-4189 or Email: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com

SYDNEY AUSTRALIA CONVENTION, March 8-10—Contact R. Tazzyman. Email: rtazzyman@dodo.com

NEW ORLEANS CONVENTION, March 9,10—Holiday Inn Gulfport/Airport, 9515 Highway 49, Gulfport, MS 39503. Room price, \$99.00/night, available until February 9. Hotel Phone: (228) 679-1700. Other information, contact M. Costelli. Phone: (228)861-2822 or Email: michael@simpkins-costelli.com

HIGHLAND PARK CONVENTION, April 6—Double Tree by Hilton, 789 Connecticut Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06854. Contact S. Koterba. Email: sandykoterba@gmail.com

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 13,14—Quality Inn Troy, 2537 Rochester Court, Troy,

MI 48083. Contact P. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588 or Email: nemeshfp@aol.com

ALBUQUERQUE CONVENTION, April 19-21—Sheraton Albuquerque Airport Hotel, 2910 Yale Boulevard SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. Contact S. Thomassen. Phone (505) 268-8170 or Email: srbt@juno.com

AGWA, NIGERIA CONVENTION, April 20—Agwa Ecclesia place of fellowship. Contact V. Ekeh. Phone: +2348080205812 or Email: abiblestudecc@yahoo.com

HARTFORD CONVENTION, May 5—New Location—Mandell Jewish Community Center, 335 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT. Contact J. Slivinsky. Phone: (860) 289-0116 or Email: djslivinsky@sbcglobal.net

WEST NEWTON CONVENTION, May 5—Sewickley Grange Hall, West Newton, PA. Contact L. Mlinek. Email: lmlinek@verizon.net

VANCOUVER CONVENTION, June 8,9—Aldergrove Kinsmen Community Centre, 26770 29th Avenue, Aldergrove, BC, Canada. Contact B. Smith. Phone: (604) 576-6070 or Email: bas@telus.net

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 20-25—New Location—University of Idaho, 709 Deakin Avenue, Moscow, ID 83843. For information, go to the General Convention website: BibleStudentsGeneralConv.org. For reservations, contact E. Kuenzli. Phone: (407) 670-4189 or Email: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com

*“There is one God, and one mediator between God
and men, the man Christ Jesus;
Who gave himself a ransom for all,
to be testified in due time.”
—I Timothy 2:5,6*