

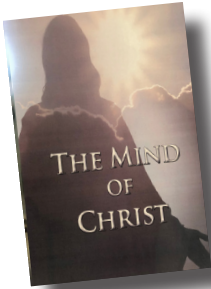
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Jerusalem—The Holy City

“I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”
—*Revelation 21:2*

THERE ARE SCORES OF cities mentioned in the Bible, and some of them are used symbolically in the sacred Word. One of these is Jerusalem. In the time of Abraham, Jerusalem, which means “habitation of peace,” was known by the name of Salem,

simply meaning “peace.” Melchizedek was then king of Salem, and in welcoming Abraham he “brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.”—Gen. 14:18

Centuries later, King David conquered Jerusalem and made it his capital. He called it the city of David. (II Sam. 5:4-9) Under David and his son Solomon, Jerusalem became the religious center of all the tribes of Israel. After the country was divided into two kingdoms, Jerusalem remained the capital of Judah, the two-tribe kingdom, where its successive kings reigned.

In the reign of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, Jerusalem was captured by Nebuchadnezzar, king

of Babylon, who destroyed it. (II Kings 25:1-10) After seventy years' captivity in Babylon the Jews returned to their land and Jerusalem was restored under the leadership of Nehemiah. (Neh. 12:26,27) Jerusalem continued to be the heart of the Hebrew revival after the captivity, until the Greeks later captured it, followed by the Roman Empire.

Thus at the time of Jesus' earthly ministry Jerusalem was under the rulership of the Roman Empire, although the Jews were allowed a great deal of religious liberty. The Roman government generally refrained from interfering with their worship as long as the Jews did not attempt to hinder the authority of their civil rulers. Because the Jewish religious rulers in Israel at that time desired to get Jesus out of the way, they were glad to appeal to the Roman civil rulers to help them. To procure this help they charged that Jesus claimed to be a king, which, if true, would have been treason against Rome.—Matt. 26:59-66; John 19:14,15

JESUS' PROPHECY

Just a few days prior to his death, Jesus said to that generation of Israel, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."—Matt. 23:37-39

In this prophecy Jesus uses the city of Jerusalem as representing the entire Jewish polity. "Your house

is left unto you desolate,” he said. The center of Israel’s religious worship had been located on the hill of Zion in Jerusalem, but this was now coming to an end. Within forty years, the desolation of the literal city of Jerusalem was brought about by the Roman army in AD 70-73.

Subsequently, for more than eighteen centuries, Jerusalem was occupied and came under the rule of numerous nations and peoples. Among these were the Romans, Arabs, Crusaders, Saracens, and finally the Turks. The Turks held Jerusalem until the British occupied it in 1917, during the First World War. Jerusalem then became the military headquarters of the British operation in the region. In 1920 the British civil administration was set up in Jerusalem, and this lasted until the reestablishment of Israel as a nation in May 1948.

However, at this time the city was divided. The Israeli government controlled only the new part of the city located outside the walls, while Arabs controlled the more ancient portion of the city within the walls. These two parts of Jerusalem remained separated for nearly twenty years, but were finally joined under Israel’s control at the conclusion of the Six Day War in June 1967. Today Jerusalem has a population of just under one million people, of which 62% are Jews, and 38% are Arabs. About 4% of the Arab population are Christians of various denominations.

THE NEW JERUSALEM

We can well understand the high regard the Jews have for the city of Jerusalem. Because of the unique circumstances associated with this particular city,

the Lord uses it as a symbol of what the Bible describes as “new Jerusalem.” We read, “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself 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.”—Rev. 21:2-4

Think of the many wars by which ancient Jerusalem has been ravished, with the consequent sorrow, pain and death. Moreover, these same evils have, through the centuries, afflicted the people of all nations and races. However, these “former things” are to pass away with the coming down out of heaven of the “new Jerusalem” of promise. God’s rulership over Israel, beginning with David, was exercised from ancient Jerusalem, and divine rulership over all mankind will come from the “new Jerusalem,” authorized and empowered by “God out of heaven.”

THE THRONE OF DAVID

When the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would be the mother of God’s promised Messiah, he explained that this great one would sit upon the throne of his father David. (Luke 1:30-32) The promise of God was that David’s ruling house would be established forever: “Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy

throne shall be established for ever.” (II Sam. 7:16)
This promise is to be fulfilled through Jesus.

Israel shared in the rulership of the kingdom of David, and could have gone on to share in the rulership of Jesus, the greater David, had they accepted him as a nation when he presented himself to them during his earthly ministry. A few did, and these were given “power,” or authority, “to become the sons of God” in the Christian age then dawning, and thus were made “joint-heirs with Christ.”—John 1:11,12; Rom. 8:17

THE KINGDOM TRANSFERRED

As a nation, however, Israel rejected Jesus. Just a few days before his death, he said to the chief priests and the elders of Israel “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” (Matt. 21:43) These are the fruits of humility and obedience which most Israelites of Jesus’ day failed to display. Therefore, as a nation, they lost the Messianic kingdom privileges of spiritual rulership as joint-heirs with Christ, and this was given to another nation.

Peter identifies this new nation to which the kingdom privileges were transferred. Addressing the followers of the Master, the apostle wrote, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God.”—I Pet. 2:9,10

In other words, the faithful followers of Jesus, regardless of national origin, comprise the “nation”

to which belong the kingdom privileges once possessed exclusively by the natural descendants of Abraham. Believing and faithful Jews can still share these privileges, but no longer exclusively so. Probably the larger proportion of this group will turn out to be Gentiles. The Apostle James said that God visited the Gentiles to “take out of them a people for his name.” This special group is subsequently depicted in the Scriptures as “the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”—Acts 15:14; Rev. 21:9

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

In Revelation 19:7,8 we read, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” Thus it becomes evident that the “bride, the Lamb’s wife,” is made up of his faithful followers who suffer and die with him, inspired by the hope of being united with him in glory, and sharing in his thousand-year reign which is designed for the blessing of all the families of the earth.—Rev. 3:21; 20:6; Gen. 12:3; 22:18

The work of God in the earth since the death and resurrection of Jesus, therefore, has been largely the gathering out from the world of this people who would share the Messianic throne with him. They are called by means of the Gospel, and the terms of their calling are a full dedication of themselves to know and to do God’s will. It is God’s will for these that they walk in Jesus’ steps of sacrifice even unto death—Rom. 12:1,2; II Tim. 2:11,12; Rev. 2:10

This “bride” class further makes herself ready by being emptied of self-will and being filled with the Holy Spirit. Under the Spirit’s influence they grow in grace, put on the whole armor of God, and produce the various fruits of the Spirit. (II Pet. 3:18; Eph. 6:13-18; Gal. 5:22,23) This is the work of a lifetime for each member of the bride class, and when the last one has finished this work, the bride will have “made herself ready” for the marriage.

Not until the marriage of the Lamb takes place, can the “holy city” come down from God out of heaven “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” This holy city, the new Jerusalem, is another of the Bible’s symbols of the Messianic kingdom. It will be when that kingdom of blessing commences that pain and death will begin to vanish from the earth. When the work of that kingdom is complete, there will be no more pain and death in the earth, for those “former things” shall have passed away.

TWO PHASES

Concerning the Messianic kingdom, Isaiah 2:2,3 states: “It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”

The explanation that “the law” will go “out of Zion,” and the “word of the LORD from Jerusalem”

suggests that there will be two phases to the kingdom of Christ, symbolized by Zion and Jerusalem. Zion was the highest point in ancient Jerusalem, and well pictures the spiritual, or heavenly, phase of the Messianic kingdom. Revelation 14:1 shows the Lamb, Christ Jesus, standing on Mt. Sion and with him those who follow him “whithersoever he goeth.” (vs. 4) This is the “bride” class—made up of both Jews and Gentiles—who will share in the spiritual rulership of the Messiah.

The faithful servants of God who lived prior to Jesus’ death and were proven faithful, whom we often speak of as the “Ancient Worthies,” will be the perfect human representatives of the divine Christ. (Heb. 11:35,39,40; 12:23) These are well represented by “Jerusalem” in Isaiah’s prophecy. These intermediaries, while not “kings,” will be fully the representatives of the Messiah upon the earth as “princes” and will be recognized as such by mankind. (Isa. 32:1; Ps. 45:16; Luke 13:28; Matt. 8:11) In the resurrection they will be restored to human perfection, which will enable them to communicate by some method with those in the spiritual phase of the kingdom, even as God communicated with Adam in some manner before his fall from perfection.—Gen. 1:27-30

A prophecy referring to the position of the Ancient Worthies in the kingdom reads, “I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.” (Isa. 1:26) While the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21 pictures more particularly the heavenly phase of the Messianic kingdom, the earthly representatives of that symbolic

city are appropriately referred to by the prophet as a “city of righteousness,” not another government or ruling authority, but the human representatives of the one glorious Messianic kingdom.

Isaiah’s prophecy refers to these human representatives of the kingdom as judges and counselors. Since they will be perfect, their judgments will be just and their counseling wise. The people of all nations will quickly recognize the superior qualities of these faithful ones of old and will be glad to fall in line with their instructions, for it will be discerned that they are speaking and acting on behalf of Christ. Thus, the Messianic kingdom will indeed be an administration of righteousness, with the laws originating in Zion and the word of the Lord going forth from Jerusalem.—Isa. 2:3

THE TEMPLE

John observed that the “holy city” which he saw in vision come down from heaven had no temple in it. (Rev. 21:22) The temple and its services were an important part of ancient Jerusalem, beginning with the reign of Solomon. However, that was merely a symbol of a much better arrangement, in the form of the city which comes down from heaven. John explains that God and the Lamb are the “temple” in this city. Yet another picture of this government is a throne—“the throne of God and of the Lamb.” —Rev. 22:1

This New Jerusalem is not a city made up of literal buildings and walls. We remember Jesus’ reply to the woman of Samaria concerning the proper place to worship. He said, “The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at

Jerusalem, worship the Father. ... But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”—John 4:21,23,24

The New Jerusalem is a beautiful picture of the Messianic kingdom arrangements. All those arrangements, and the personnel associated with them, spiritual and human, will direct the people of all nations to worship, not in a particular city nor in a literal temple, but to revere and honor, in their places of abode and from their hearts, God and his beloved Son. The Lamb will be the light of that city, and its brightness will guide the nations into the true worship of God, that “they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.”—Rev. 21:23; Zeph. 3:9

The Messianic kingdom is not of human origin and is not established by human wisdom and strength. It is God’s arrangement for the blessing of the sin-cursed and dying race. This arrangement calls for the exercise of divine power in the resurrection of the dead—first, Jesus, and at this end of the present Gospel Age, those who are brought forth in the “first resurrection” to “live and reign with him a thousand years.”—Rev. 1:5; 20:6

Then, as previously noted, there will be the “better resurrection” of the Ancient Worthies to perfection of human nature to be the representatives of the divine Christ. (Heb. 11:35,40) Finally, there will be the resurrection of all the dead, Jews and Gentiles. (John 5:28,29; Acts 24:15; I Cor. 15:22) Those Jews at various times who saw their sacred city of

Jerusalem pillaged and destroyed will be awakened and learn that there is now a “new Jerusalem,” an invisible city, or government with Jehovah and his Son, the Lamb which was slain for their redemption, to give them light, guidance, health and life.

With the establishment of the Messianic kingdom will come the fulfillment of Revelation 22:17—“The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” It is interesting to note that all who hear and respond to this invitation to partake of the water of life will have the opportunity of relaying the invitation to others. We believe that to begin with many of those who hear and respond will be the Jews who are restored to their land of promise. However, it will not stop with them, for these blessings of life have been provided for “all families of the earth.”—Gen. 12:3; 22:18

Meanwhile the events taking place in Israel today are among the strong indications that Messiah’s kingdom is near. How enthusiastic the Israelites will be when they realize that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets are in their midst to govern and guide them toward a full restoration of health, peace, blessings and everlasting life! Thank God, also, that this joy will quickly spread to the people of all nations. Let us even now rejoice as we look forward to this glorious time of blessing for all. ■

*“The works of the LORD are great, studied by all
who have pleasure in them. His work is
honorable and glorious, and his
righteousness endures forever.”*

—Psalm 111:2,3, New King James Version

If We Only Understood

*Could we draw aside the curtains
That surround each other's lives,
See the naked heart and spirit,
Know what spur the action gives—
Often we would find it better,
Purer than we judge we would;
We would love each other better
If we only understood.*

*Could we judge all deeds by motives,
See the good and bad within,
Often we would love the sinner
All the while we loathe the sin.
Could we know the powers working
To o'erthrow integrity,
We would judge each other's errors
With more patient charity.*

*If we knew the cares and trials,
Knew the efforts all in vain,
And the bitter disappointments—
Understood the loss and gain—
Would the grim, external roughness
Seem, I wonder, just the same?
Would we help where now we hinder?
Would we pity where we blame?
Ah, we judge each other harshly,
Knowing not life's hidden force;
Knowing not the fount of action
Is less turbid at its source.
Seeing not amid the evil
All the golden grains of good,
Oh, we'd love each other better
If we only understood.*

—Poems of Dawn

The Word Was Made Flesh

Key Verse: *“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*
—John 1:14, New King James Version

Selected Scripture:
John 1:1-14

THE FOUNDATION OF

Christian faith is encapsulated in our Key Verse. All hope for the salvation of humanity lies therein. Jesus, the “Word” or mouthpiece of God, was made flesh, born of a woman, into a world with whose creation he was intimately involved. “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” (John 1:3, NKJV) Doubtless he had great delight in the creation, as well as

loving compassion for the human race—groaning under the bondage of sin and death. It was for the purpose of saving our race that Jesus came. He dwelt among us, and then he died for us.

Why was it necessary for God’s Son to leave the heavenly courts and come to Earth? Could he not accomplish the salvation of mankind through some remote method? The answer lies in the doctrine of atonement. To bring the human family back into divine favor it was necessary for Jesus to be made flesh. Hence he said, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life

of the world.”—John 6:51, *NKJV*

Father Adam, a fleshly man, had disobeyed God and so forfeited his life. In God’s plan it was necessary to redeem him through the atoning death of an obedient man, the “man Christ Jesus.” (I Tim. 2:5,6) “Since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”—I Cor. 15:21,22, *NKJV*

Jesus “emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”—Phil. 2:7-11, *New American Standard Bible*

We draw attention to two words in the preceding paragraphs—“all” and “every.” As we often state in the pages of this journal, the power of Jesus’ atonement will benefit all mankind. This broad manifestation of God’s love guarantees a full opportunity for all to attain eternal life. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”—John 3:16,17, *NKJV*

“If by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.”—Rom. 5:17,18, *NKJV* ■

Healing the Nobleman's Son

Key Verse: “*So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, Your son lives. And he himself believed, and his whole household.*”
—*John 4:53, New King James Version*

Selected Scripture:
John 4:46-54

He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.”—*John 4:45, NKJV*

Accounts of Jesus' wondrous abilities had reached the nobleman's hearing. Perhaps the one who recently changed water into wine and accomplished astounding miracles in Jerusalem could also save his son's life. We well imagine that he hurried the several miles from Capernaum to Cana, perhaps thinking all the while about what he would say to Jesus. Arriving in Cana and, likely, with overwhelming emotion, “he implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.”—*vs. 47, NKJV*

Jesus' initial reply must have been disheartening.

THE MIRACULOUS EVENT

associated with our Key Verse must have been life changing for the nobleman, father of the perilously ill son who was at the point of death. Losing a child is one of the most difficult experiences imaginable. There was a rumor, however, of a possible hope. The captivating teacher, Jesus, had entered the region of Galilee. “When He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things

“Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.” Moved by fatherly love, he remained undaunted regarding his purpose. The nobleman said to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies!” With compassion our Lord Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives. So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.” The nobleman believed the “word” Jesus spoke—that was enough. Not seeing any “signs and wonders,” he demonstrated that faith alone guided his heart and motive, and his faith was rewarded. —vss. 48-50, *NKJV*

Journeying home to see his son, the nobleman was soon met by his servants. We sense the joy they felt as they rushed to meet him with the news, “Your son lives!” After the great relief he felt, he thought of Jesus and his words. “Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, Your son lives. And he himself believed, and his whole household.”—vss. 51-53, *NKJV*

We are instructed by this event. Faith in the living Word, the Bible, is the basis of our belief. We do not need to see miraculous signs and wonders. “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”—Rom. 15:4, *NKJV*

Thomas stated that he would not believe that Jesus was raised from the dead unless he could see the wounds inflicted by the crucifixion, even to the point of placing his hand in Jesus’ side! “Jesus said to him, Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” (John 20:29, *NKJV*) Jesus spoke of this further, “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word.” (John 17:20, *NKJV*) May we, like the nobleman, have faith that is deeply rooted in Jesus’ words. ■

The Light of the World

Key Verse: *“I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.”*

—*John 12:46, New King James Version*

Selected Scripture:
John 12:44-50

meaning from it. The Creator focused his attention on bringing light out of darkness on day one, perhaps to demonstrate its relative importance. “Then God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.” (Gen. 1:3-5, *NKJV*) The first day of creation brought the clarity of brilliant light to earth.

We know that long periods of darkness, even gray skies, tend to make us feel a bit down, but light cheers us up again. We need light in order to live, not only physically but also spiritually. Of that necessity the prophet Isaiah wrote, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.”—*Isa. 9:2, NKJV*

The “great light” of which Isaiah wrote was Jesus. When he came to Capernaum, in the regions of Zebulun

WE WELCOME THE ASSUR-ance, given in our Key Verse, that belief in Jesus delivers us from darkness. This is, of course, not literal darkness, but the darkness of mind, character, and behavior which is prevalent in our conflicted world. Although we believe in the literal account of the creation in Genesis, we may also derive an allegorical

and Naphtali, the Gospel account states that it fulfilled that “which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”—Matt. 4:13-17, *NKJV*

The message of the kingdom of heaven illuminates many hues in the spectrum of divine love—in particular mercy, compassion, forgiveness and repentance. “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” (John 8:12, *NKJV*) This is a great benefit that we who believe in Jesus enjoy in the present time. We have the light of life. Even when darkness surrounds us, as trials and difficulties arise in our lives, we enjoy the light of Christ’s love.

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” (John 1:4,5, *NKJV*) How wonderful this world would be if all could comprehend the true light. What peace would prevail, and what love and care for our brothers and neighbors would guide society. That day is not yet, but soon Jesus will enlighten the world in the kingdom of God. Even the darkest corners will receive the great light that will heal and bless. Isaiah spoke of the magnitude of this saturating knowledge of God in the kingdom. “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.”—Isa. 11:9, *NKJV*

May we render honor to Jesus, the “light of the world,” by living according to his teachings. “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.”—Eph. 5:8, *NKJV* ■

The Resurrection and the Life

Key Verse: “*Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.*”

—**John 11:25**, *New King James Version*

Selected Scripture:
John 11:17-27,38-44

in the grave will be freed from its bonds, and come forth.

One of the first insinuations of the resurrection in Scripture is found in the words of the psalmist, as he revels in the vastness of God’s infinite knowledge and omnipotence. “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell [Hebrew: *sheol*, the grave], behold, You are there” (Ps. 139:7,8, *NKJV*) There is no escaping God’s awareness of us or his influence over us. The last part of verse 8 is intriguing. If one is to make their bed in “*sheol*” [the grave], God is there! He is there for the purpose of seeing to their resurrection when the appointed hour comes, and none shall be left behind.

THE WORDS OF JESUS

in our Key Verse break through the gloom and dread of our certain mortality and give us hope. Our Lord assures us that, though we may die, we shall live, through the means of the resurrection of the dead. Most assuredly, death shall be conquered. All who are

Jesus spoke of this time. “I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ... Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.”—John 5:25-29, *English Standard Version*

Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and earth. (Matt. 28:18) “For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.” (John 5:22, *NKJV*) How marvelous that the time is coming when all in their graves will hear Jesus’ voice and come forth. He is the resurrection and the life! Those who have done good, rendering obedience to God, come from the grave and are rewarded with life. Those who have done evil receive a resurrection of judgment—that is, a resurrection involving a process of education in what is right and wrong, and the application of discipline to cause a change in behavior.

The context of our Key Verse recalls Jesus’ interaction with Martha. Her brother Lazarus had recently died. “Now Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You. Jesus said to her, Your brother will rise again. Martha said to Him, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”—John 11:21-25, *NKJV*

Life after death, the universal desire of mankind, is no ephemeral wish. As surely as Jesus died on the cross and was raised the firstborn from the dead, so surely will all mankind be blessed through his loving sacrifice. Love compelled Jesus to die for us. Love will be victorious over death. Jesus is rightfully epitomized as “the resurrection and the life.” ■

Jesus Promises a Helper

Key Verse: “*I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever.*”
—*John 14:16, New King James Version*

Selected Scripture:
John 14:15-29

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”—*John 14:1-3, English Standard Version*

The disciples wondered, Where he was going? What was he going to do? How long would he be gone? Who would guide them in his absence? Who would help them along day by day? To calm their concerns Jesus promised another Helper, “the Spirit of truth.”—vs. 17

As their discussion furthered, Jesus emphasized to his disciples the importance of keeping his commands. “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. ... If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and

IN OUR LESSON, JESUS was preparing his disciples for his departure, although they still did not seem to be able to grasp that prospect. Jesus had told them, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me. These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."—John 14:21-26, *NKJV*

Now the identity of the Helper is clear. It is the Holy Spirit, which works in our hearts and minds to understand Scripture, to remember Jesus' commands, and to work within us "both to will and to do" God's good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13) We live on a higher plane of enlightenment because of the Helper's influence upon us. Our lives are blessed indeed because of the Holy Spirit's presence.

This Helper was given at the appropriate time in the divine plan—on the Day of Pentecost. Miraculous manifestations of the Spirit's presence were provided and boosted the faith of the disciples. Peter, in the first great public witness of the Christian church, attributed the conferring of the Holy Spirit to Jesus, now resurrected from the dead.

"This Jesus God has raised up," Peter said, "of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. ... Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:32-38, *NKJV*) May we treasure the gift of the Holy Spirit—our Helper from the Heavenly Father. ■

God's Covenants

“The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.”

—*Psalm 25:14*

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, the Hebrew word translated “covenant” means a solemn compact, or agreement. Its Greek equivalent in the New Testament is also translated “covenant” and sometimes “testament.” These words are not in themselves biblical doctrines, nor are they used exclusively in the Scriptures to describe God’s attitude toward, or relationship with, his people. However, when they are used with respect to God and his human creation, they convey the idea of being in harmony with him, in contrast to being alienated from him.

Addressing Ephraim and Judah through the Prophet Hosea, the Lord said, “They like Adam have transgressed the covenant.” (Hos. 6:7, *American Standard Version*) From this it is evident that God considered himself in covenant relationship, or agreement, with Adam. The reasons for this are obvious. Adam had been created in the image of God. His whole being would naturally be in harmony with God. Knowing and doing God’s will would be the joy of his life.—Gen. 1:26,27

There were certain details of the divine instructions which needed to be spelled out for Adam. As a test of his obedience, God placed a restriction on his freedom. He was forbidden to partake of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” (Gen. 2:16,17) This constraint was a part of the covenant, or agreement, between the Creator and Adam. God, as Creator, had the right to dictate all the terms of the agreement; and Adam, being created in the image of God, would naturally accept these terms as being just and good, and in his own best interests.

However, Adam transgressed the covenant, not because he was out of harmony with it, but because he yielded to temptation. Yet, he had the ability to resist temptation, so his transgression was not due to weakness. Thus, he forfeited the blessings provided by the covenant, the chief of which was life. He was expelled from his garden home into the unfinished earth to eventually die. God and Adam were no longer in agreement, in covenant relationship. Adam had alienated himself from his Creator. —Gen. 3:17-24

RECONCILIATION

Although Adam’s transgression of the covenant brought upon him and his progeny condemnation to death, God did not cease to love his human creation. He had a plan for their reconciliation that would lead to their redemption from sin and to restoration of life. A very general statement of this plan is in the familiar words: “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John 3:16

The Apostle Paul presents a similar thought. He wrote, "For through the Messiah, God was reconciling the world to himself." (II Cor. 5:19, *International Standard Version*) Through Christ, the Messiah, Adam and all his progeny are to have an opportunity to return to harmony with God, and to receive the blessings originally provided in God's covenant with Adam, including everlasting life.

In his dealings with Abraham, God began to reveal certain details of his plan for reconciling the world to himself. He promised Abraham that through his seed "all families of the earth" would be blessed. (Gen. 12:3; 22:18) This promise was repeated on various occasions, and finally God bound, or secured, it by his oath. This was after Abraham had proved his implicit trust in God by his willingness to offer his son Isaac in sacrifice. —Gen. 22:16-18; Heb. 6:13-17

Abraham did not realize the tremendous scope of God's plan of blessing as it was contained in the promise that through his seed all families of the earth would be blessed. Indeed, none of the ancient servants of God fully understood all the implications of the promise God made to Abraham. It was only after the First Advent of Christ, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon his apostles at Pentecost, that the meaning of the Abrahamic Covenant became more clearly comprehended.

For example, Paul wrote, "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." (Gal. 3:16) How could Abraham know that the promise God made to him did not apply to his son Isaac, nor to his grandson Jacob,

but to one who would be born into the world thousands of years later? Jesus was, through his mother, a natural descendant of Abraham. However, this fact alone did not qualify him to be the seed that was to be developed in fulfillment of the covenant God made with Abraham that he bound by his oath.

Paul makes clear this point by expressing his regret over Israel's failure to accept Christ, and their consequent loss. The apostle wrote concerning them, "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. 9:4-8

Paul then refers to God's dealings with Abraham as an illustration of the point he is making. He states, "This is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son." (vs. 9) Earlier in his epistle Paul enlarged upon this, showing that it was through Abraham being "strong in faith ... and fully persuaded" that Isaac, the promised seed, was born. Isaac was a child of faith, for God honored Abraham's faith and by a miracle enabled Sarah to conceive and bear a son.—Rom. 4:18-22

We understand then, from Paul's reasoning, that the true seed of Abraham must, like him, exercise obedient faith in the promises and covenants of God. That this was true of Jesus there can be no doubt, and it was his faith and obedience that qualified him to be the seed of promise. The right of becoming sons of God belonged to all the natural descendants of Abraham, but it was incumbent upon them, through faith and obedience, to prove themselves worthy of this birthright. Jesus did thus qualify and became the "author [Greek: chief leader] ... of our faith," the first true spiritual seed of God's agreement, or covenant, with Abraham.—Heb. 12:2; Rev. 1:5; Acts 26:23

FELLOW MEMBERS

In Galatians 3:16 the Apostle Paul, referring to the promise made to Abraham, explains that it implied "one" seed, and that seed was Christ. However, in verses 27-29 he explains further that those who "have been baptized into Christ," and thus "have put on Christ," are also "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." This is because, as he explains, "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

It is clear, then, that the truly consecrated followers of Jesus, those who are baptized into his death, are a part of the one seed of Abraham, through which all the families of the earth are to be blessed. These also, together with Jesus, are the faith offspring of the covenant which God made with Abraham, for as Paul wrote, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."—Gal. 3:26

HAGAR AND SARAH

In Galatians 4:22-31 Paul presents an "allegory" in which he uses Hagar, or Agar, a "bondmaid,"

and Sarah, a “freewoman,” to help us understand our relationship to the covenant which God made with Abraham. In Paul’s day many in the church were Jewish converts, and it was difficult for some of these to free themselves entirely from the Law that was given to the nation of Israel at Mt. Sinai. Some of these were even endeavoring to persuade Gentile converts that they should subscribe to and practice certain features of the Law. (Gal. 4:10; 5:1-4) It was to help these to a better understanding of the matter that Paul presented this allegory.

He reminds us of Abraham’s two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. The two mothers, he explains, represent two covenants, “the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar,” the bondwoman and mother of Ishmael. Isaac, on the other hand, born to Sarah, was “of the freewoman ... by promise.” Continuing, Paul writes, “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise”—that is, the “seed” promise made to Abraham.—vss. 23,24,28

In this lesson on the covenants, Paul quotes from a prophecy recorded in Isaiah 54:1, which speaks of a barren woman who finally was blessed with many children. Sarah, we know, was barren, and had become too old to bear children. Yet God rewarded the great faith of Abraham and Sarah, and by a miracle, Isaac was born. However, Isaac merely pointed forward to Christ, the promised seed of blessing. Like Sarah, God’s covenant with Abraham remained barren for many centuries. Finally, it gave birth to the promised seed, Jesus, who became the Head of this faith offspring and “took on him the seed of Abraham.”—Heb. 2:16

THE LAW COVENANT

Meanwhile God made another covenant. It was made with the natural descendants of Abraham, the nation of Israel. This is the covenant referred to by Paul in Galatians 4:24 as being the one established at Mount Sinai. This covenant in no way took the place of, nor interfered with, the functioning and fulfillment of the covenant God made with Abraham. Paul asserts that it could not “disannul, that it should make the promise [to Abraham] of none effect.”—Gal. 3:17

“Wherefore then serveth the law?” Paul asked. He answered, “It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.” (vs. 19) The phrase, “to whom the promise was made,” is significant. It reveals that at the time God made the promise to Abraham, he knew the covenant would remain barren for a long time. Therefore, when the natural descendants of Abraham became a nation, the Law Covenant was made with them to hold them together as a people until the time came in his plan for the true “faith seed” of Abraham to be developed.

Those composing the true seed of Abraham are to be God’s instrument of blessing to mankind. Abraham’s natural descendants were given the first opportunity to qualify for this high position in the plan of God. Their obedience to the terms of the Law Covenant would have prepared the nation of Israel to accept Christ when he came, and, through faith, together with him, become the seed of promise. To them God had said, “If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then

ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” —Exod. 19:5,6

In God’s covenant with Israel, they agreed to keep his Law, the essence of which is summed up in the Ten Commandments. (Exod. 20:1-17) On God’s part he promised to bless them in “basket” and in “store” in proportion to their faithfulness. (Deut. 28:5) If they would fully obey, he promised to give them life. (Gal. 3:12) As we have seen, they were also to be made a “kingdom of priests and an holy nation.”

Israel did not keep the terms of the Law Covenant to which they had agreed, so they lost all three of these promised rewards of faithfulness. A final test was the coming of Jesus to be their Messiah. Their rejection of him caused Jesus to say that the kingdom would be taken from them. (Matt. 21:43) They were driven from their land and scattered throughout the earth, and through the centuries they have been a persecuted people. Certainly, none of them has gained life through the Law. Like all the remainder of the world of mankind, they have continued to die.

A NEW COVENANT

God foreknew the failure of Israel as a people, and through the Prophet Jeremiah promised to make a “new covenant” with them in due time. (Jer. 31:31-34) Here then, is another of God’s covenants, the promise being that it would be made “with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.” At the time this promise was made, the nation of Israel was divided (*Continued on page 36*)

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(Continued from page 31) into ten tribes and two tribes, referred to as Israel and Judah in I Kings 11:29-37. The Lord included both segments of the nation in the promise of the New Covenant.

Introducing his promise of the New Covenant, the Lord says: "It shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the Lord. In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge."—Jer. 31:28-30

In principle, the "sour grape" illustration may be properly applied to the entire human race. Adam ate the sour grape of sin, and all his progeny have suffered the consequences, for all in Adam die. (Rom. 5:12; I Cor. 15:22) The "sour grape" picture also has an application to Israel as a nation. Those who rejected Jesus and were responsible for his death said, "His blood be on us, and on our children." (Matt. 27:25) Thus, Israel's scattering and suffering since is the result of the "edge" set upon their teeth.

As the Lord's promise assures us, however, this was not to continue forever. (Ezek. 18:1-9) "The days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although

I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD.”—
Jer. 31:31,32

It is important to notice that this New Covenant is made with those who broke the old, or Law Covenant. It is made following the scattering and punishment of Israel, as well as after their subsequent regathering. Another point important to note is that the New Covenant is “not according to the covenant” which God originally made with Israel at Mount Sinai.

This “not according” aspect of the New Covenant is explained in verses 33 and 34, which read, “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

In Part 2 of our lesson, to appear in the August issue of *The Dawn*, we will consider further comparisons between the old Law Covenant of Israel and the New Covenant. We will also recall Moses, Israel’s deliverer, as he points forward to Jesus, the great Deliverer of Israel and all mankind. Finally, we will discuss the important matter of the shedding of blood, without which there can be “no remission” of sins.—Heb. 9:22 ■

*“He has remembered his covenant forever,
the word which he commanded
to a thousand generations.”*

—*Psalms 105:8, New American Standard Bible*

Not by Might or Power—Only by God's Spirit

*“Not by might, nor
by power, but by my
Spirit, saith the
LORD of hosts.”
—Zechariah 4:6*

ZECHARIAH WAS A prophet of the Lord who, along with the Prophet Haggai and a group of other Israelites, returned from

Babylonian captivity to rebuild the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. This was in response to God's provision made through the proclamation of King Cyrus found in Ezra 6:3-14.

While most Old Testament prophets date their writings according to the reign of a king in Israel, both Haggai and Zechariah's prophecies are dated in conjunction with the reign of Gentile kings, thus indicating that the "times of the Gentiles" had begun. (Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1; Luke 21:24) Part of Zechariah's mission was to encourage Zerubbabel and all who labored in the rebuilding of the Temple, and who had been beset by many oppositions and difficulties.—Ezra 4:1-5; 5:1,2

WORDS OF THE PROPHETS, MESSAGES FROM GOD

There are two general views respecting Zechariah's prophecy, as well as others found in the Bible. One view, favored by the "higher critics," is that the prophets exhorted the people with merely their own thinking, reasoning and vision of what would be helpful to the general populace.

The other view respecting Bible prophecies, stated by the Apostle Paul, is that "they are written for our admonition." Peter similarly said that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," recording things which were not their own ideas, but rather messages from God. This view of their prophecies gives the glory to God and makes their words, therefore, authoritative and reliable. —I Cor. 10:11; II Pet. 1:21

Prophecies recorded in the Scriptures often have different meanings besides merely an application to the time in which they were originally written by the prophet. They also contain important principles and lessons for the followers of Christ today. Examined from this standpoint, it permits us to appreciate the true force, value and beauty of Bible prophecy.

A PECULIAR PEOPLE

Several centuries prior to Zechariah's day, God had promised the Israelites, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people." Later, Moses said, "Thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the

nations that are upon the earth.” (Exod. 19:5; Deut. 14:2) Similarly, the Lord has promised to those at the present time who accept the heavenly calling, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.”—I Pet. 2:9

Out of those Israelites who had been taken captive to Babylon—first of the ten tribe kingdom and later of the remaining two tribes—only a relative few had a strong enough faith and zeal in God’s promises to respond to the opportunity to return to Jerusalem. (Ezra 2:64) Many Israelites had become comfortably settled in Babylon, socially and financially, and their interest in these things outweighed their faith in the promises which God had previously made to their nation.

In this manner God sifted the Jewish nation. The mixed group from all twelve tribes of Israel who returned to Jerusalem included only the most loyal ones among the people. In like manner, not many have responded to the heavenly call during the present Gospel Age, only a “little flock.” (Luke 12:32) The Apostle Paul writes: “Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, ... That no flesh should glory in his presence.”—I Cor. 1:26-29

Loyalty to the Lord and faith in his promises are costly. Thus, he proves his people during the present Gospel Age, separating those who are believers, in name only, from those who are fully dedicated,

selecting to himself his “peculiar people.” The Apostle Peter writes, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people [“people for a purpose,” *The Emphatic Diaglott*]; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which has not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”—I Pet. 2:9,10

BEGINNING OF THE WORK

The beginning of the work in laying the foundation of the literal Temple in Zechariah’s day, we believe, corresponds with the establishment of the Gospel church at Pentecost. The joy and zeal associated with the rebuilding of the Temple was followed by a period of slackness, which was the result of opposition from their Samaritan neighbors, who employed every technique at their disposal to discourage the Jewish rebuilding and to cause an interruption of the work. As a result, several years elapsed before the rebuilt Jewish Temple was finally completed.

Similarly, not long after the founding of the Early Church by our Lord and the apostles, and the great season of refreshing associated therewith, there came a period of fierce opposition and persecution from Satan and his blinded servants.

DIFFICULTIES

The returning Israelites reached Jerusalem, only to find difficulties. Very few of them had ever seen the city before, and the few who did had only seen it through the eyes of childhood. After seventy years of the land being “desolate,” Jerusalem’s

wall and Temple lay in ruins. (II Chron. 36:17-21) Surely this must have been a great trial of faith to those of the Israelites who had returned.

The Lord also permits our faith and zeal to be tested, not to destroy these qualities, but rather to deepen and fix them in our character. As with natural Israel then, so it is now with the Lord's followers. All such trying experiences, under God's providence, will work out to our advantage if we persevere in faith, love and zeal. The Apostle James writes, "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."—James 1:12, *New International Version*

A GOLDEN CANDLESTICK

God gave Zechariah different visions to encourage the Israelites in the rebuilding work of the Temple. In the vision recorded in chapter 4 of his prophecy, the prophet saw a "candlestick all of gold," having a "bowl upon the top of it," and "seven pipes" leading to "seven lamps." (Zech. 4:2) Zechariah was likely familiar with such a candlestick, since it corresponded in some ways to the one made by Jehovah's direction, which was placed in The "Holy" compartment of the Tabernacle and later in Solomon's Temple. This candlestick was the only source of light in The Holy. (Exod. 25:31-37; Num. 8:2) The vision given to Zechariah was an illustration to show that God would be the source of their wisdom and strength in the work of rebuilding the Temple.

Zechariah also perceived that the candlestick in the vision represented in some manner divine favor,

enlightenment and blessing in connection with the promises which God had previously made to Israel. However, the candlestick in this vision differed from the one in Solomon's Temple and the Tabernacle, in that there were also "two olive trees" connected to it with golden pipes. (Zech. 4:3,11,12) The oil flowed from these "trees" to the lamp, which then generated light. Thus was indicated that the supply of oil for this candlestick, and therefore the supply of Israel's light, did not come from a human source. Rather, it was from God, and represented an inexhaustible supply of his favor and enlightenment.

The prophet, along with those who heard concerning his vision, drew considerable blessing and encouragement from it. It indicated the Lord's continued favor with them, regardless of the persecutions and difficulties which were present in every direction. It is likely that they interpreted the two olive trees to represent in some manner the offices represented by Zerubbabel the governor and Jeshua [sometimes translated "Joshua"] the high priest. (Ezra 2:1-36; 3:8,9; Hag. 1:1,12-14) They were God's special representatives related to the Temple rebuilding work in Jerusalem.

HIGHER SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VISION

We believe that there is also a greater significance to Zechariah's vision to be found in the New Testament. Here we find not only a golden candlestick, but also two olive trees mentioned about six hundred years later, in the revelation God gave to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos. (Rev. 1:12; 11:4) We believe this is an indication that the vision

given to Zechariah had a deeper meaning beyond merely the encouragement of the builders of the Jewish Temple in his day.

In the Book of Revelation, the last message given to the Christian church, our Lord explains that the “seven candlesticks” represent seven stages or periods of the church during the Gospel Age, symbolized by the seven congregations in Asia which existed in John’s day. (Rev. 1:20,11) In the Bible, the number seven often represents completeness. We believe the light of the seven golden candlesticks in the Book of Revelation pictures the daily conduct and devotion of the true followers of Christ. Jesus used the symbol of a candlestick, stating, “Ye are the light of the world. ... Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”—Matt. 5:14-16

In the future, the glory of the completed spiritual temple in heaven, the glorified church, will “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom.” Together with her Lord and head, Jesus Christ, these faithful ones of the present age will bless and uplift the world of mankind.—Matt. 13:43; Mal. 4:2

SPIRITUAL TEMPLE BEING BUILT

Just as there was the work of rebuilding the literal Jewish Temple in Zechariah’s day, so also there has been another “temple” being built during the present Gospel Age. This temple is not a physical building made with hands, but rather it is a spiritual one, symbolized by those who faithfully

follow in the sacrificial footsteps of Jesus during the present time.—Rev. 2:10

The Apostle Paul writes concerning the building of this spiritual temple, stating: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? ... For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” “Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (I Cor. 3:16,17; II Cor. 6:16-18) Thus we understand that this spiritual temple, now in the process of being built, consists of all those who have accepted the heavenly call and are developing the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The “foundation” of this spiritual temple is “the apostles and prophets,” with “Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Eph. 2:20-22) The Apostle John recorded what Christ said concerning this spiritual temple, stating, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.”—Rev. 3:12

“SHINE AS LIGHTS”

Applying the lesson of the spiritual temple, we understand it relates to the development of the church as a whole during the Gospel Age, when the

“living stones” for this symbolic temple are being shaped, chiseled and polished. (I Pet. 2:5, *International Standard Version*) Related to this lesson is that God is supplying to us the light of truth, through the power of his Holy Spirit, in the midst of the surrounding darkness of the world. God supplies this light to us by the two olive trees, the “two witnesses,” which we believe symbolize the Old and the New Testament. (Rev. 11:1-4) From these two sources of instruction, the “sons of God” are to be filled with his spirit and thereby “shine as lights in the world.” (Phil. 2:15) As Paul wrote to Timothy, “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 every good work.”—II Tim. 3:16,17, *Diaglott*

We should not expect that our participation in the building of the spiritual temple will result in worldly success. Instead, we are to expect that the Lord will furnish us with his supply of “oil,” the Holy Spirit, and light because we are his people, as long as we are continually striving to do those things which are pleasing to him.—I John 3:22-24

BY GOD’S SPIRIT

The angel of the Lord then explained to Zechariah, “This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Zech. 4:5,6) The Israelites were reminded that the success of their Temple rebuilding work was not by the might, influence and favor of the Persian monarch to whom they were subjected, nor by their own power

and ability as laborers. They were to learn that the success of their efforts should be attributed to God alone, whose Holy Spirit, power and influence would guide and control their affairs.

Similarly, the Lord's church during the Gospel Age has not been established through Crusades, nor through large organizations combining with worldly systems and powers, nor by uniting with wealthy groups. The spiritual temple which the Lord is building, is to have a beauty, honor, and dignity—not in its construction, nor in the value of its individual stones, but by reason of its completion and then being filled with the glory of the Heavenly Father.

Christ Jesus was the foundation laid for God's spiritual temple. (I Pet. 2:6,7) Together, they will complete the building work, and it shall be acclaimed glorious. (I Pet. 5:4) Christ is "chief Shepherd," and although we may, at times, be discouraged and feel that we have not made adequate progress in transforming our character into his image, yet we should be of good courage and remember that our victory will not come through human might, popularity or influence. It will neither come by our own power and abilities. Rather, victory will come only by the Lord's spirit of holiness. The Apostle John writes, "Every one who is begotten of God doth overcome the world, and this is the victory [Greek: *nike*, the means of success] that did overcome the world—our faith."—I John 5:4, *Young's Literal Translation*

MOUNTAINS TO BECOME A PLAIN

The angel continued his message to Zechariah, stating, "Who art thou, O great mountain?" (Zech.

4:7) This probably referred to the mountain of difficulties which stood in the way of the Temple rebuilding work in Jerusalem and was preventing its completion. The Lord's assurance was that these difficulties would be removed and "become a plain." This "great mountain" is also a fitting symbol of the "present evil world" which is ruled by the great Adversary, Satan, the god and "prince of this world," and which has the appearance of being an immovable obstacle to mankind. (Gal. 1:4; II Cor. 4:4; John 12:31) However, during the present great time of trouble there will be "the removing of those things that are shaken"—that which is sinful and contrary to God's will. Eventually only the things "which cannot be shaken," and are in harmony with God's kingdom of righteousness, will remain. This will leave a smooth "plain," called the "way of holiness," on which the world of mankind will have the opportunity to return to full harmony with God under the great Priest and King, Christ and his bride, the church.—Heb. 12:26-28; Isa. 35:8; 11:1-10

The prophecy then states that just as Zerubbabel "laid the foundation of this house," his hands would "also finish it." (Zech. 4:9) So too, our Lord Jesus, as the Father's representative, began the building of the spiritual temple at Pentecost, and will in due time complete the work, seeking those who are his and operating in them through the Word of God. Paul wrote to the brethren at Philippi, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform [complete] it until the day of Jesus Christ." —Phil. 1:6

THE “PLUMMET”

Israel was also exhorted in this prophecy not to despise the “day of small things”—that is, the small beginnings, the seemingly little progress, and difficult conditions with the rebuilding work. Instead, they were to “rejoice,” and see “the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel.” They were to realize that God’s wisdom and power was with them and would oversee the work until its completion.—Zech. 4:10

The “plummet” refers to a small weight which was attached to the end of a string, or line. Such a “plumb line” was used while building a structure as the standard for insuring a correct straightness in the vertical direction. The Prophet Amos used a similar expression, writing, “The Lord stood upon a wall, ... with a plumbline in his hand.”—Amos 7:7,8

The angel explained to Zechariah that the plummet represented “the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.” (Zech. 4:10) Thus is indicated to us that God’s perfect and much diversified wisdom is necessary in preparing the living stones and building the spiritual temple. Peter assures us that “the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous.” God notes our sorrows and joys, our trials and victories, and he cares for all our interests. The apostle then further encourages us: “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”—I Pet. 3:12; 5:7

We are to recognize the plummet is in the hands of our loving and all-wise Heavenly Father—squaring, straightening, proving, and testing—both our faith as well as our character. Only those who are sufficiently developed under the tests permitted and

directed by God will ultimately constitute the living stones in his glorious temple.

In addition to our own development, let us also strive to edify our fellow body members, building one another up in our “most holy faith.” (I Thess. 5:11; Heb. 10:24; Jude 20) Let us use the “plummet” with love and kindness, encouraging one another with the assurance that, ultimately, the glorious plan of God shall be accomplished through the small things, the seemingly insignificant experiences of life. Let us seek to be more and more filled with the Holy Spirit and remind ourselves that as the light of the golden candlestick of the Lord, we are to shed the light abroad at the present time, whether others hear or disregard.

The spiritual temple will soon be complete. After the last member has been proven “faithful unto death,” “the glory of God” will fill the spiritual temple. (Rev. 2:10; 21:9-11) Then will be the shout, “Grace, grace unto it!” (Zech. 4:7) Finally, the great work of blessing and uplifting all the families of the earth will begin. The blessings shall flow from the throne of the spiritual temple—“a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal,” for the healing of all nations and people.—Rev. 22:1,2 ■

Please, Lord!

*Lord, endow me with strength to face
Life's biggest griefs and ills,
And give me also grace to bear
Life's little cares and chills.
Oh, make me patient, loving, kind—
Please grant me, Lord, a quiet mind!*
—C. K. Hindle

Our Spiritual Focus

*“I can do all things
through Christ
who strengthens
me.”*

*—Philippians 4:13,
New King James
Version*

THIS SOUNDS LIKE A BOLD statement, “I can do all things,” especially when we compare it to other Scriptures such as, “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” (I Cor. 10:12) We

realize, however, that Paul understood it was only “through Christ,” who strengthened him, which made it possible for him to do “all things” that God desired him to do. Indeed, it was “the power of Christ” that rested on Paul during all his experiences as he spent his life in service to the Lord.—II Cor. 12:9

It is important to remember that, just as it was with Paul, God, through his Son Christ Jesus, will strengthen and equip all those who focus on him and depend upon his grace in every aspect of their lives. The psalmist wrote, “It is God that girdeth me with strength.” (Ps. 18:32) Relying upon the divine help promised to us, we should then humble ourselves “under the mighty hand of God,” in all our service to him.—I Pet. 5:6

OUR FOCUS

We can define the word “focus” as the center of one’s interest or activity, the development of a clear mental vision and perception of those interests, and the actions which spring forth from them. Concerning our spiritual focus, these words of Paul come to mind: “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.”—Eph. 1:18,19

We might state briefly that in our efforts to be in the divine service and to focus on doing “all things through Christ,” three daily goals must be striven for:

(1) A careful and continual study of God’s Word. Jesus said that these things had been hidden “from the wise and prudent,” but revealed only “unto babes,” those of a humble character who desired to be taught of God.—Luke 10:21

(2) A realization and appreciation of the leading and illuminating of our hearts and minds by the power and influence of God’s Holy Spirit.—John 16:13

(3) Growth in fervent zeal for the accomplishment of all God’s plans and purposes, and therefore being “zealous of good works.”—Titus 2:14

The accomplishment of these goals requires that we daily focus as much of our time, energy, and talents as possible upon spiritual activities, realizing the seriousness of our walk with God. Gaining a complete victory is not an assured thing, and we must be daily vigilant in all aspects of our Christian life.

Concerning himself, Paul wrote, “If, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.”—Phil. 3:11,12, *NKJV*

As he did with Paul, the Lord has “laid hold” of us, having called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. (I Pet. 2:9) God has “saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” (II Tim. 1:9) Our Heavenly Father desires that we keep our hearts loyal to him, and through character development and sacrifice make our “calling and election sure.”—II Pet. 1:10

IMPORTANCE OF FAITH

Confidence in God and reliance upon his promised grace helps us maintain humility and meekness in our experiences. At the same time, it gives the needed courage so that we may say as Paul did, “Our sufficiency is of God.” (II Cor. 3:5) Here the word “sufficiency” is from the Greek word *hikanotes*, and denotes “ability.” Such divine sufficiency comes in the form of God’s many providences and the daily assistance of our Advocate, Christ Jesus, which make us spiritually stronger as we continue our earthly sojourn.

It is evident that the words spoken by Paul, as recorded in our theme text, demonstrate the great faith that he had. We note some of the many instances in which the apostle spoke of faith’s great importance. “The life which I now live in the flesh

I live by the faith of the Son of God.” “We walk by faith, not by sight.” “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” (Gal. 2:20; II Cor. 5:7; Heb. 10:22) Faith is an especially important aspect of our spiritual focus.

By faith, through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, we can enjoy the privileges and opportunities associated with knowing our Heavenly Father and his dear Son. At the same time, however, we realize that at present there are certain glorious things of the future which we see only obscurely. “For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.” (I Cor. 13:12, *NKJV*) We are assured, though, that if faithful, we shall be like our Lord, and will see clearly, know perfectly, and understand fully, all things pertaining to the divine arrangements. In the meantime, faith is indispensable to attaining victory: “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”—I John 5:4

The development of faith as a critical part of our spiritual focus is a gradual work. It starts with a faith begotten of reverence for our all-wise Creator, and for Jesus, “the author and finisher of our faith.” (Heb. 12:2) From this starting point faith must progress to greater heights. We are reminded of these words of the prophet: “They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” (Isa. 40:31) Consecrated believers who “wait upon the LORD” in faith, are not to walk as most in the world do, which is by sight. Rather, as the Bible points out in numerous places, “The just

shall live by faith.”—Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb.10:38

The Apostle Paul expressed the powerful results of a deep faith in God with these words: “He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” “Wherefore ... let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.”—II Cor. 4:14-18; Heb. 12:1,2

“ALL THINGS”

When Paul says in our opening text, “I can do all things,” he is hearkening back to the previous two verses, in which he says, “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.” (Phil. 4:11,12) We are to be ready to “suffer need” and to “be abased” from time to time. These are necessary for our discipline and for maintaining proper humility of character.

If we fret under such circumstances, let us beware, for we are likely not as fully developed spiritually as we should be. If, on the other hand, the Lord gives

us a little exaltation today, a little encouragement of success in his service, we are to receive it joyfully, but remember our own unworthiness and insufficiency apart from God. Let us learn how to be in need, and yet not to desire anything beyond what the Lord sees best to give.

“THROUGH CHRIST”

It is only “through Christ” that we can do all things. Our Master is the personification of the wisdom which comes from above and is one of the cardinal attributes of God. (James 3:17) Through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, divine wisdom is imparted to us through an understanding of God’s Word, as well as through his providential direction of all our experiences. If we are attentive to the receiving of divine wisdom, we are sure to get understanding of whatever truth or teaching is necessary to our development and progress in the narrow way.

“Through Christ” and his example we also are instructed as to a proper character, summed up in unselfish love. It is indeed a critical part of our daily walk to develop and put into practice the actions of love, and by so doing have it make its indelible imprint upon our character. We find this expressed for us in these words of Paul: “As those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, bearing with one another, and forgiving each other.”—Col. 3:12,13, *New American Standard Bible*

We note that the foregoing words are addressed to those “chosen of God.” At the present time the Heavenly Father is choosing a select group from the world of mankind, a “little flock.” (Luke 12:32)

To these have been given the opportunity to be “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. 8:17

“PUT ON THE NEW MAN”

Paul says in Colossians 3:2, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” Along with this, the apostle tells us in verses 9 and 10 to “put off the old man with his deeds,” and “put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge.” The “old man” is our fallen, fleshly nature, and the “new man” is the new will and mind being developed in us through the power and influence of God’s Holy Spirit. Thus, Paul states further, “Be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And ... put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”—Eph. 4:23,24

Putting on Christ requires that we transform our minds through dedication, sacrifice and service to the divine cause. (Rom. 12:1,2) Bringing about this transformation also involves much in the way of special testings. At times, God may even allow fiery trials to test our faith and the depth of our consecration. In all of these experiences, however, as Paul has reminded us, “ye are dead” according to the flesh, but “your life is hid with Christ in God.”—Col. 3:3

Putting on the “new man” should also have this effect, as stated by the Apostle Peter: “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” (I Pet. 3:15) We note that Peter indicates it is not only important that we tell others of our hope, but that we

additionally give “a reason” for it to those who ask us. This, too, is part of putting on the “new man.”

Jesus said, “Ye are the light of the world. ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:14,16) The complete desire of our hearts and minds should be to serve the true and living God. As Paul expressed, “Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the sight of God and our Father. Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.” (I Thess. 1:3,4) Let us, therefore, continue to daily have the tracing of the character likeness of the Master written in our hearts, minds, words and actions.

“ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW”

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (II Cor. 5:17) The new life that we have, together with all its new hopes and prospects, is only found “in Christ.” This means that we are to think, speak and act as he did, to the extent of our ability while still in this fallen fleshly condition. The mind is the most critical area of development, and so the apostle emphasizes this when he writes: “Let this mind be in you, that was also in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 2:5) In the prior verses Paul tells us about the Christlike mind: “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but

in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” —Phil. 2:1-4

Another aspect of the mind of Christ is the desire to tell the glad tidings to others. As his consecrated followers, we are commissioned to be his ministers. Thus, we are exhorted, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. . . . Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.” (II Tim. 4:2,5) Preaching the word of truth should be done with patience, gentleness, forbearance—that is, it should always be “in season” for the hearer, even if it may be “out of season” for us.

When Paul was converted on the Damascus road, many things became “new” to him. Now, instead of persecuting Christians, and thus persecuting Jesus himself, he fully accepted the privilege to die with Christ and for his cause. We recall his testimony: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Gal. 2:20) The apostle’s resolve is also an exhortation to us: “I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”—I Cor. 2:2

Paul’s spiritual focus was unwavering following his conversion and enlightenment. “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.” Then, as a reminder to all the consecrated,

he adds, “Let us therefore, ... be thus minded.” (Phil. 3:13-15) The apostle’s experiences should serve as an example for us, and they should help us in applying ourselves to the one focus we should have: “For me to live is Christ.”—Phil 1:21

“WHO STRENGTHENS ME”

The last part of our opening text speaks of Christ, “who strengthens me.” Jesus invited his followers, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28) Our Lord also assures us that when others may revile or persecute us, or falsely say “all manner of evil” against us, we should “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.” (Matt. 5:11,12) Paul’s conclusion was, “Since God is on our side, who can be against us?”—Rom. 8:31, *New International Readers Version*

“All things are yours; ... And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.” “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” “Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.” (I Cor. 3:21,23; John 15:7; Col. 1:11) In the strength of these promises, and many others found in the Scriptures, we receive courage, and can “do all things” which the Lord asks of us. At one time, we were “without strength,” but in “due time Christ died,” giving us the opportunity to live in him and in his strength.—Rom. 5:6

Those who faithfully lay down their lives daily in sacrifice and service and do “all things” through Christ who strengthens them, will be granted a share with him in glory as his joint-heirs. Together,

Christ and his body members, the church, will comprise the great royal priesthood which will lift up the world of mankind in the coming Messianic kingdom, for which mankind has so long prayed, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth.” —I Pet. 2:9; Matt. 6:10

As the body of Christ is now being developed, all who have been accepted as probationary members can attest to the Lord’s strengthening influence in their lives as he waits for the completion of his Bride. Thus, may we each be spurred on to greater fervency in our sacrificial walk by the glorious promise of being associated with Christ Jesus in helping to restore mankind to perfection and everlasting life, when all tears will be wiped away, and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, because these former things will be passed away. (Rev. 20:4,6; 21:4) Let this joyous prospect be our spiritual focus each day until the end of our earthly sojourn. ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

JULY 7—“Behold the Lamb of God!”—John 1:36 (Z. ’99-14,15 Hymn 177)

JULY 14—“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, ... and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.” —Ephesians 4:31 (Z. ’99-71 Hymn 256)

JULY 21—“To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.”—John 18:37 (Z. ’99-123 Hymn 259)

JULY 28—“If ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye.”—I Peter 3:14 (Z. ’99-166,167 Hymn 307)

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

O. B. Elbert

Prince Albert/Saskatoon, SK
July 2,3

R. Goodman

New Brunswick, NJ July 2,3

K. Humphreys

Prince Albert/Saskatoon, SK
July 2,3

J. Parkinson

Prince Albert/Saskatoon, SK
July 2,3

D. Rice

Prince Albert/Saskatoon, SK
July 2,3

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Maria Kaminska, Chrzanów, Poland—May 16.
Age, 96

Sister Sonia Butiniello, Lentini, Sicily, Italy—May
27. Age, 38

Brother Mirosław Modrzewski, Warsaw, Poland—
May 27. Age, 81

Sister Alicja Szopa, Świdnik, Poland—June 9. Age,
63

Brother Kazimierz Jończy, Andrychów, Poland—
June 19. Age 90

MOVING?



If you are moving, please let us know six weeks before you move so that we can change the address on your Dawn subscription.

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, PO Box 521167, Longwood, FL 32752-1167

NEW BRUNSWICK CONVENTION, July 2,3—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact D. Lucas. Email: eeglewing@aol.com

PRINCE ALBERT/SASKATOON CONVENTION, July 2,3—IN PERSON AND BROADCAST ONLINE—Siwak Farm, RR 1, Prince Albert, SK, Canada S6V 5P8. Contact B. Siwak. Phone: (306) 960-5526 or Email: bswk77@gmail.com

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 16-20—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact E. Kuenzli. Phone: (407) 670-4189 or Email: ekuenzli@cfl.rr.com

SOUTH AFRICA CONVENTION, August 12,13—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact J. Isife. Phone: +2348035220141 or Email: johnisife@yahoo.com

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 15-19—Beskidzki Raj Hotel, Zawoja, Poland. Contact M. Davis. Email: lmkdavis@earthlink.net

SEATTLE CONVENTION, September 2-5—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact J. Christiansen. Email: jrchristiansen@comcast.net

NEW YORK CONVENTION, September 3,4—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact G. Passios. Email: gpassios11@verizon.net

COLUMBUS, INDIANA HARVEST CONVENTION, September 17,18—IN PERSON AND BROADCAST ONLINE—New location—Harvest Hall, 2620 Valley

Branch Road, Nashville, IN 47448. Contact S. Ledwinka.
Phone: (812) 350-6791

GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, September 24,25—IN PERSON AND BROADCAST ONLINE—Little Pine Island Camp (Salvation Army Facility), 6889 Pine Island Drive NE, Comstock Park, MI 49321. Contact T. Malinowski. Phone: (616) 304-7691 or Email: TJM@gmail.com

AUSTRALIAN QUEENSLAND CONVENTION, September 30-October 2—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY—Contact R. Charlton. Email: rand-scharlton@gmail.com

LAGOS/IKORODU NIGERIA CONVENTION, October 1—Contact I. Ashiegbu. Email: ikechukwuashiegbu@yahoo.com

WEST NEWTON FALL CONVENTION, October 8,9—IN PERSON ONLY—West Newton Lions Club, 507 Pittsburgh Street, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact L. Mlinek. Email: lisa.mlinek@aol.com

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 29,30—IN PERSON AND BROADCAST ONLINE—South Seminole Lodge, 122 Triplet Lake Drive, Casselberry, FL 32707. Contact J. Kuenzli. Phone: (321) 442-1862 or Email: jkuenzli@cfl.rr.com

*Let my cry come before you, O LORD; Give me understanding according to your word.
Let my supplication come before you; Deliver me according to your word. Let my lips utter praise,
For you teach me your statutes. Let my tongue sing of your word, For all your commandments are righteousness. Let your hand be ready to help me,
For I have chosen your precepts. I long for your salvation, O LORD, And your law is my delight.
—Psalm 119:169-174, NASB*

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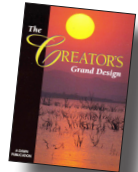


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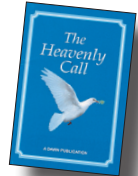
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To us the Scriptures clearly teach . . .

THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD

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

THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING AND POLISHING

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

THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

lies in the fact that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5,6

THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH

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

THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH

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

THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD

lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 55

