

FAITH^{AND}VICTORY

The EVENING LIGHT WATCHMAN



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Love Of The World

Adieu, adieu, old sinful world,
Your welcome from my life is hurled;
No more your ways beguile my soul,
No more my destiny control.

It's quite enough, the days that's past,
To prove I've naught with thee amassed
Of store to help that I get by,
Had I been called 'fore now to die.

Let others love thee all they want,
I'll seek for me a better haunt.
It hath been so, from days of old,
Thy substance always turns to mold

And leaves it's owner in distress
With little more—salvation less—
With care-worn brow and haggard face,
Devoid of Shiloh's love and grace.

I count the cost too great to pay,
As oft I've seen the rich go 'way,
Who spent their lives in worldliness,
Depart without a God to bless.

Thus, oh, the horde that's hastn'ing on
To only find when life is gone,
That all is lost that God designed—
All heaven's blessings left behind!

—J. H. Pierson

—oOo—

THE IMAGE TO THE BEAST

Rev. 13:11-15; "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make

an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

In this chapter we have a dragon mentioned, a beast, a second beast, and then an image to the first beast. For us to properly understand this chapter we will first have to understand the symbols mentioned. In this article I do not propose to go into a lengthy explanation, but shall just point out the meaning of the symbols for any one to study further. The first great conflict the church had was with the dragon, and there is only one dragon in the Revelation. This great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads, with a tail drawing the third part of the stars of heaven, set about to devour the man child (the converts of the early church) which the star-crowned woman, (the early church) brought forth. This dragon and the conflict is described in chapter 12. In chapter 13 we learn of a beast rising out of the sea and we are told in verse 2 that "the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." Then the second beast came forth as described above. And this second beast persuaded his followers to set up an image to the first beast. The inspired Word says, "And deceiveth them." Verse 14.

We have to turn to history now to find the fulfillment of these prophecies. All these symbols are fulfilled in the past. We find Rome under its heathen emperors persecuting the early church. The conflict with heathenism brought death to thousands and thousands of Christian converts. Their bodies were killed, but their souls were "caught up unto God." Heathenism was the GREAT RED DRAGON, actuated by the spirit of the devil. Then heathenism gave way to Roman Catholicism. Heathenism gave Catholicism its "power, and his seat, and great authority." When this false Christianity usurped the place of the star-crowned woman or real Christianity, both heathenism and real Christianity were in the background, no longer actively being displayed. The church was spoken of as being in the wilderness, and the dragon is spoken of as being bound in the bottomless pit. That left Catholicism supreme. Catholicism is the first beast. Then his-

tory tells of great awakenings after 1260 years of Catholic darkness and of reformers and reformations arising. Men began to see light on God's word that had been hidden. They began to preach against the evils of Catholicism. They arose against it. They separated themselves from it. But in their zeal and littleness of the light perceived they only advanced so far. It seems that the light was slow in coming. They stopped with the light they individually received, and many refused to accept light others received. In fact, they opposed others who went further than they did. They crystallized organizations around their individual beliefs and the period of sect making was on. This was the second beast, Protestantism. God worked with them to the extent of their light. He had to honor His word. And so fire came down from heaven, as it were. The reformers accomplished much good. Many souls got in touch with God. They lived up to the light they had and were saved and God honored them and their faith and their works. If the devil had not deceived them and caused them to create an image to the beast they would have advanced into all the light, and would thus have become the real, restored church of God. But in creating this image to the beast the devil got them side-tracked where he could get control of them. And thus Babylon came into existence. It was only after 350 years of sect making that the church of God was restored to its first purity.

Now with this little explanation, let us see just what this image to the beast (Roman Catholicism) is. What does Protestantism have in common with Catholicism?

The common denominator of Catholicism and Protestantism visible to all is ecclesiastical organization, or simply, man-rule. The Romish church is an organization of men, with the pope as chief. He is elected by the cardinals. He exercises power over the church, after his election as pope, that he could not exercise before his election. He loses this authority in case he is dethroned. However, during his rule as pope, his is the supreme authority in the church. He claims to be the vicar of the Son of God, after his election by men, not because he has been called to this office by the Holy Spirit. It is the same way down through the complex organization to the priest. Each exercises power in the organization after men have elected or appointed him to the place of authority. The office has the authority, not the man. When he has the office, he has the authority; no office, no authority. This is the way it is in our civil government. When a man is elected sheriff, by the people, he has the sheriff's authority. When the term for which he is elected expires, he no longer has a sheriff's authority. When we have this kind of church government, we are seeing man-rule and not Holy Spirit rule. The church of God is governed by the Holy Spirit—through men and women to whom He gives gifts or calls.

Let us look at the way the church of God is governed and ruled. 1 Cor. 12:4-12, 18, 28. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations [minis-

teries], but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the WORD OF WISDOM; to another the WORD OF KNOWLEDGE by the same Spirit; To another FAITH by the same Spirit; to another the GIFTS OF HEALING by the same Spirit; To another the WORKING OF MIRACLES; to another PROPHECY; to another DISCERNING OF SPIRITS; to another DIVERS KINDS OF TONGUES; to another the INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man SEVERALLY AS HE WILL. For as the body is ONE, and hath many members, and all the members of that ONE BODY, being many, are ONE BODY: so also is Christ. But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, AS IT HATH PLEASED HIM. And God hath set some in the church, first APOSTLES, secondarily PROPHETS, thirdly TEACHERS, after that MIRACLES, then GIFTS OF HEALING, HELPS, GOVERNMENTS, DIVERSITIES OF TONGUES."

Thus we see God, through the Holy Spirit, setting the members in the body. We see him first GIFTING some one, then setting them in the body, as it pleases HIM. Man has nothing to do with it, unless it be to "covet earnestly the best gifts."

In the church of God, a man's GIFT, which he has received from God, gives him only the place, or position, or authority that the GIFT provides. His authority extends only as far as his influence. He also has all the authority that the gift gives. His gift makes a place for him. He exercises that authority wherever he can prove his gift. It is not limited to a congregation, or a locality. Also, there is no end to his term of office. He has his gift as long as he is in the kingdom. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. 11:29. God's bestowal of gifts are not like the elections men hold. He continues the old gifts with the addition of others as they prove worthy and the Holy Spirit bestows. The authority comes from the Holy Spirit in the church of God, while the man-made organization bestows the authority by election of men, or by the appointment of men. Since men bestow the authority in sectism, they can also, and often do, revoke that authority. It is only held as long as man permits.

There are many kinds of man-rule. That is, it is manifested in many ways. Some elections are by the entire congregation. That is democratic, but it is the authority of man. Some are governed by elected representatives. That, too, is man-rule. Some are governed by one elected man. That, too, is man-rule. When there are committees, or boards, or groups holding spiritual authority in an organization, and that authority was bestowed by election or appointment of men, you have the IMAGE TO THE BEAST. In the church of God the pastors are called by the Holy Spirit. They are inspired to work in certain communities. The church feels and recog-

nizes that they are called to work there. They are not elected for a year, but stay until the Spirit directs elsewhere. The part of a congregation is to try the spirits and see whether they be of God. If a pastor is called to a community the congregation will recognize the fact.

If he is mistaken or an imposter they will recognize that also, and act accordingly.

At camp meetings where there are many ministers you generally find an elected group controlling the pulpit—deciding who is to preach, when he is to preach, and quite probably the subject he is to discuss. This is plainly the image to the beast. On the other hand, the Holy Spirit is capable of giving the message, the messenger, and the time of delivery. This throws the responsibility of being in the Holy Spirit's order squarely upon the individual minister. He must be close enough to God to hear His voice and know that voice. He must be close enough to God to get the leadings, and the other ministers must be close enough to God to know to sit still. If the Holy Spirit is not allowed free right of way, how can He accomplish His desire? Remember He works directly with the individual minister, as well as with the congregation. A spiritual congregation almost immediately discerns when a minister is out of God's order. A congregation discerning this fact is not out of order in requesting such a brother to sit down and let the minister with the MESSAGE have the pulpit. Many like the cut and dried program of the image makers. Such as are content with that should wake up to the fact that THE DEVIL IS DECEIVING THEM, and should flee the destruction to be visited upon Babylon. It is true there are times when an overzealous brother gets out of order, but the Holy Spirit has His way of dealing with such. He gives each minister, or saint, the privilege of helping such overzealous one to learn the VOICE OF THE SPIRIT. If such happens it is man's mistake. The system is right. If we get out of order, God chastens, and we are helped.

Truly there is government in the church of God and it is exercised by men—God-gifted men working together with other God-gifted men under Holy Spirit leadership. The difference is the source of this authority. Does it come from a gift of the Spirit or from an election by men or appointment by men?

Many fail to see that the church of God is organized. Truly it is organized. It is organized by the Holy Spirit however, and not by man, and there are not many people willing to allow the Holy Spirit to do His office work, believing that man can do better. That is why man attempts to organize the church. He feels he knows what to do. Things seem to run so smoothly when the program is planned in advance. But God is not pleased. They just organize themselves out of the body.

Let us speak in particular. God placed a gift, or burden, on Bro. Pruitt to publish a paper for the saints to read. He went to work at his calling. God prospered and supplied his needs. However that work is Brother Pruitt's. He owns the buildings, the presses, the Intertypes, etc. The church does not

control them. They can not take his calling away from him. They can not replace him as editor with some one of their own choosing. He is responsible to the One who called him, not to the church. His paper will be read and appreciated by the church however, only so long as he is in God's order. If he should let down the standard, or go against the truths of the Bible, all the church could do would be to break fellowship with him and his paper. How different this is from the sects. In them men choose editors, changing or replacing them at their will. The man for editor is selected by MEN and of course is responsible to MEN. He must please MEN to hold his place. Bro. Pruitt must please God, and unless he does, God will take his calling away from him. I feel that the Holy Spirit has arranged it thus for the saints of God. I am thankful that it is in divine order. It seems to have come about this way through the workings of the Spirit and not by chance.

Let us appreciate the Holy Spirit's work and be satisfied with it. Let us not fall into the traps the Devil sets for the saints of God. Our Organizer does not make mistakes. —C. C. Carver

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A MIGHTY VOICE

Yes, this voice that we want to call your attention to for a little while is a mighty voice. In Psalms 50:1-5, we read the following, "The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Dear reader, can you hear this mighty voice sounding? And it is calling His saints together. Only those who have spiritual ears can hear it. Oh, it is pitiful, that souls will not stop to catch the sound! This voice of the Lord, (Ex. 19) shook Mount Sinai and the people trembled. Today the voice of the Lord is shaking Mount Zion (Heb. 12:26). How many are trembling? How many feel the tremor? Wake up, O earth, awake! God told Paul near 2,000 years ago about this voice that was going to shake the heavens and he told us. Reader, it is to your eternal interest to repent, if you have not, for we are right in the midst of the last shaking by God's voice. God's voice literally shook Mount Sinai. Today his voice is not only shaking Mount Zion, but is blowing it to pieces (nominal Zion) and carrying it away as chaff with the wind (winds of false doctrine) (Eph. 4:14). Saints will have to loosen from this mortifying world and its compromise or they will certainly be shaken off. These are serious and awful facts. This old world is reeling to and fro under its awful weight of iniquity, and the end is near.

—J. H. Pierson

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This non-sectarian paper is edited and published each month (except August of each year, which is campmeeting month, and we omit this month to attend these meetings) by Fred Pruitt, assisted by Mary A. Pruitt, and other consecrated workers at FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 920 W. Mansur Ave., Guthrie, Okla.

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Its motto: Have faith in God. Its object: The glory of God and the salvation of men; the promulgation and restoration of the whole truth to the people in this "evening time" as it was in the morning Church of the first century; the unification of all true believers in one body by the love of God. Its standard: Separation from the world and entire devotion to the service and the will of God. Its characteristics: No discipline but the Bible, no bond of union but the love of God; no test of fellowship but the indwelling spirit of Christ; and separation from all human organizations—such are not authorized in the Word of God.

FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE

920 W. Mansur Ave., Guthrie, Oklahoma

The chapel where the church of God meets in Guthrie, Okla. is located on the corner of 6th St. and W. Warner Ave. Regular Sunday services are: Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; preaching services, 11 a.m.; young people's meeting, 6:30 p.m.; and preaching services, 8 p.m. Mid-week services are: prayer meeting, Wednesday, 8 p.m.; and Bible study, Friday, 8 p.m. All are welcome.

NOTICE TO THE SAINTS

On page 12 of the April issue of "Faith and Victory" paper there was a testimony from Bro. Bruce Jones who lives at Hartsville, S. Car., Rt. 4, Box 195. He is an invalid and is looking to God to heal him. He is also in need of financial aid as he is trying to get a little house built on a lot so that his aged mother and he can have a place to call home. His mother has been corresponding with us for many years and some of the saint preachers have visited them and we feel that they are worthy of our prayers and our love shown to them in a financial way. I intended to give his address and a little editorial note after his testimony in the April issue but because of the pressure of many duties, it was neglected and I didn't notice the oversight until the paper was printed.

—Editor

The saints of God in Kalamazoo, Mich., extend an invitation to all to attend services at 2607 Parkview Ave. Sunday School, 10 a. m.; Bible study, 11:00 a. m., and 7 p. m.; prayer meeting, Thursday, 7:30 p. m. Come and worship the Lord with us.

We expect to start a series of meetings April 22, and continue until some time in May, Lord willing. Bro. and Sister Key of Hammond, La. will be the evangelists.

Editorials

The saints at Guthrie observed Easter Sunday in memory of Jesus who was resurrected from the tomb by the mighty power of God and is alive forevermore. We had an all-day meeting and dinner was served in the dining hall. The morning message was very appropriate and was delivered by Bro. O. B. Wilson of Shawnee, Okla. He read scriptures pertaining to the resurrection of Christ, commenting on the same and showing how much greater it was for God to resurrect him to life after being in the grave for three days and nights than it would have been for him to come down from the cross as the Scribes and Pharisees jeeringly asked for, saying that they then would believe him to be the Christ.

Many saints came in to be with us on Easter Sunday from other parts of Oklahoma and Bro. Lawrence Allen and family came from Missouri to be in these services. It was surely a great day in Zion. In the afternoon we all observed the Bible ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Feet Washing, which Jesus instituted for the saints to keep. Bro. Sam Barton of Tulsa, Okla. officiated in this service and his teaching was instructive and wholesome to the souls of men. Nearly seventy-five happy saints took part in washing the saints' feet and partaking of the Lord's Supper, which He instituted and told his people to do in remembrance of His precious, atoning blood and broken body. He said, "Happy are ye if ye do" these things. The saints are a happy people.

Following the good spiritual feast which we enjoyed Easter Sunday, Bro. and Sister Wilson held a week's meeting at the chapel, which was edifying and upbuilding to the saints here at Guthrie. Their years of experience and trueness to God is greatly encouraging to God's saints who are lovers of the truth. Sister Wilson has been in the ministry for fifty-five years and Bro. Wilson nearly as long.

The prayer meeting following these meetings was well attended. Thirty-eight were present, and nearly all had a lively testimony for God and against the devil. Oh, the blessedness of a congregation of true saints together that are not of the world. We are looking forward to the Lord giving us exceptionally good campmeetings this summer.

We read in Matthew 22:14, these words, "For many are called but few are chosen." Jesus spoke this after He said the king had found one man at the marriage supper who did not have on a wedding garment. In Revelation 19:7, we read, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor 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 fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."

By these scriptures we positively know that those who are accounted worthy to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife, must be without spot and blame before God; their garments must not be spotted up with this old world but they must keep themselves separated unto God, being not of the world even as He is not of the world. We who are saved are called

to follow in the steps of Jesus, or, in other words, to be like Him in this world. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 2:21 what we who are saved are called to do, therefore we read, "For even hereunto were ye called: for Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps: who did no sin, [Professors of religion who sin are not following in His steps at all.] neither was guile found in his mouth."

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." 1 Thess. 4:7. In Second Timothy we read that God hath saved us and called us with an holy calling. In Eph. the 5th chapter, we read that Jesus Christ loved us and gave himself for us (the church, which is the bride the Lamb's wife) that he might sanctify and cleanse us with the washing of water by the word, in order to present to himself a glorious people, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that we should be holy and without blame.

Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, being filled with the Holy Ghost, prophesied and said, "The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our lives." How long did he say? "All the days of our lives."

These scriptures certainly make it plain to any sane person that the true children of God, the bride, the Lamb's wife is to be without sin, living holy before God. Brother John makes it very plain in the 3rd chapter and 10th verse of his first epistle that the children of God are manifested and known because they do not sin; and those who sin belong to the devil, and by committing sin manifest it. Professors of Christianity who acknowledge that they sin more or less every day are testifying that they belong to the devil. Although this may be an honest confession, yet folks in that state will never get into God's heaven for they will be barred out forever more. Such folks can have no hope of heaven until they become willing to die out to sin, forsake their worldly-minded associates, seek God and be saved and sanctified wholly, take their place with the despised few, become willing to always bear the reproach of the cross. Then God will be their Father and they can be His sons, and thereby go home to glory.



In the third chapter of Ezekiel, God through His revealed word requires His watchmen or ministers to warn the righteous that they sin not and if they do not sin, they shall surely live. (Verse 21.)

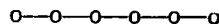
Sin is so deceitful that it creeps upon many righteous in such slow degrees that their souls become defiled and darkened, and many then put light for darkness and darkness for light, and the light that was in them becomes darkness and Jesus says, "How great is that darkness."

In First John 2:15, our beloved brother writes, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, If any man [or woman] love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." James says in 4:

4, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

Those saints or professed saints who are yielding to the lust of the flesh by compromising with the world in conforming to its fashions and fads and putting on adornments, mixing, as it were, the Spirit of Christ with the world, become spiritual adulterers. Literal adultery is going on in the world in a magnified manner but spiritual adultery is much more prevalent and is bringing eternal death to thousands of precious souls. This spirit of the world is subtle and cunning in its destruction of the soul. It just slowly poisons the soul and brings darkness of vision and finally death; and the compromising one goes on with a delusion, deceiving others into his way of thinking. Many preachers lean to their own understanding and reason themselves astray and all those that hear them. One who has a darkened soul will speak of the righteous as being legalistic or fanatic and will not heed the clear, plain teachings of the Bible; and, because he has not a love for the truth, God will send him a strong delusion that he may believe a lie and be damned. Read 2 Thess. 2:10, 11, and 12.

When a minister who has been clear in his soul, preaching the truth and enjoying the fellowship of the saints in light, begins to inbibe a compromising spirit of the world; he will first begin to notice that the real, clear-cut saints will not fellowship him as freely as they did, and he will begin to have more fellowship with those who have compromised. Then the devil suggests to him that these compromisers must be right since he has more fellowship with them. The more he yields to compromise the more fellowship he will have with the worldly-minded professors of religion and less with the real saints. When he has fully received this worldly spirit, the devil will tell him that the saints are so legalistic and fanatic that they will not fellowship him, and that they have driven him away. The devil will make him feel quite at home with the compromising, worldly group, so on he goes down the broad way with only a profession. How sad to look upon this throng.



By their actions and deeds, many who claim to be out in the truth of the full gospel are discerned as having dark vision as to what constitutes the church of the living God. They do not seem to see that the Bible description of the Church of God is a called-out, exclusive body of sanctified believers, a body of people separate from the world and churches organized by man. They do not seem to see that many of the great and powerful radio preachers are Satan's agents to deceive souls into sectarian churches, out of which God is calling His people in these last days. These great preachers who have so many to hear them belong to the world and are so prophesied of in the 11th chapter of 2 Cor., verses 13 and 14. In Rev. they are called "kings of the earth" because they have so much power and influence ov-

er so many precious souls.

Some preachers call themselves "Interdenominational workers" and are scattering precious souls into all the different sects out of which God is calling His children. Read the 34th chapter of Ezekiel. In the 12th verse we read that He will deliver His sheep out of all places wherein they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. The cloudy and dark day has reference to the time when His children were scattered in the hundreds of sects or man-made, organized churches which have filled the land. It is referred to by the prophet as being cloudy and dark because spiritual light was breaking but much spiritual darkness still existed. If an interdenominational preacher gets souls saved he will hand them over to the dark creeds of men to perish. They perish because millions of souls who do not know God are controlling the denominations, and the association with the world and other false teaching is so strong that the life of Christ is soon crushed out. The many sects and denominations are the gates of hell and interdenominational preachers are putting many precious souls in at these gates. The true Church of God is an exclusive body of "Born-again" souls that are clear from all denominational confusion and are walking in the light and liberty of the Lord, being not of this world even as Christ and the disciples were not of the world. The sect confusion is called Babylon by the sacred word of God, and God says, "Come out of her my people." Read Revelation 18:2, 4. Some brethren seem to think that if souls come out of the sects and denominations that they just make another sect. It is true that many do that very thing by forming themselves into a man-organized body, but the Church of the living God is not man-made and has no human organization. The body of believers, when out clear from all sects and the world, are divinely organized and held together by divine love in the heart and the leadings of His Spirit, and the whole Bible is their discipline.

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While these editorials are being written we have received word of the passing of Franklin D. Roosevelt, our President. Although he was chief of the most powerful nation in the world, literally speaking, no human skill or multitude of friends, wealth, or any other creature or earthly thing could keep life in the body when God said, "It is enough." In his case the scripture was fulfilled again as found in Eccl. 8:8 which reads in part, "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in this war." Man who is made of clay has no power to retain the spirit and he is always warring against death and yet with all that he can do the clay house keeps crumbling and going down, and finally death conquers. The truthful statement made in the 9th chapter of Hebrews which reads, "And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment," ought to stir every soul to make his peace with God and then so live before Him that His favor will continue upon him.

Prayer Requests

I have been crippled in my right hip for quite awhile, then on April 2nd, one of my ribs was torn from my breast bone and one fractured. I surely suffer. I know the dear Lord can and will heal if we live for Him and ask Him in the right way. He has healed me several times. Please pray for me earnestly.

—Mrs. Helen Click

Sister Oscar M. Barton has sent in an earnest request for prayer. She tells of her husband who once was saved and lived a true life before God, but now has left the path he then walked. Sister Barton told us of how her husband has left her for another—one unsaved. Let us all be agreed that the Lord will work in this matter and have His way; and especially pray that our sister will have grace and strength to stand and come through this trial and test with victory for Christ. "All things work together for good to them that love God."

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CONCERNING A CAMPGROUND IN OREGON

We feel it is God's design for the true saints to have a permanent camp ground for yearly campmeeting in Oregon. Bro. Noah White is donating freely the land necessary, one mile north of Jefferson, Ore. on Highway 99, which is easily accessible to all who wish to attend. In answer to the Lord's call we are erecting necessary buildings. All who feel that God wants them to help, may send free-will offerings as the Lord directs to Noah White, Jefferson, Ore.; or Sam Wilson, Box 41, Jefferson, Ore. All will be used for the necessary improvements on the grounds. We are not begging or asking for money for our God whom we serve still rules in heaven and earth and all the gold and silver is His. We know He will supply every need; but we feel that some would love to help, and would want to know about it.

The date of this year's campmeeting, perhaps about Aug. 1, will be announced later. Sister Busch of Scio, Oregon is treasurer of regular campmeeting funds.

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REVIVAL MEETING REPORT

The revival meeting which lasted ten days at Bakersfield, California, closed March 28th. The saints were encouraged and much rejoicing was manifested as seventeen souls claimed salvation and a good number were sanctified. Saints from other congregations were present to help and to enjoy the meeting. The Lord also verified His precious promises to the sick by doing some very definite healing. Perfect unity prevailed from the beginning to the end of the meeting.

Besides the home ministers, other California ministers present were: Brother L. E. Davy of Duarte; Brother Ira Stover of Pomona; Brother O. B. Wilson and Brother Eugene Harmon of Glendale; Brother E. J. Trotter of Fresno; and Sister McCoy of Pasadena.

This meeting has been a real source of encouragement to the congregation at Bakersfield, and the saints are deepening down into God as never before.

—Issac Chandler, Pastor

CAMP MEETING NOTICES

The 38th annual camp meeting of the Church of God will be held on the general Southern Camp Ground of Hammond, Louisiana, from June 29 to July 8, 1945 inclusive. It will be run on the free-will offering plan as heretofore. We trust God to supply all financial needs, also all spiritual needs through the ministers whom He sees best to send, and other precious saints.

The camp ground is easily reached, located one mile south-west of the I. C. depot, and buses come to Hammond from all directions. We also have excellent train service. We pray that the Lord will bless more than in times past in the different camp meetings for there is so much trouble in this world and there is great need of a real spiritual uplift among His saints. Send donations or for further information write to Brother and Sister Ray Key, Box 370, or Brother Max Williamson, Hammond, Louisiana.

Please bring your sugar and point ration books, also your straw ticks, bed linens, and towels. Straw will be furnished free, also sleeping quarters.

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The campmeeting at Hennessey, Okla., will begin June 22, 1945, and last ten days. All the dear people are invited to be with us. For information write to Sisters Ethel K. Miles or Ada Davis, Hennessey, Okla.

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The Church of God state Camp meeting at Guthrie, Oklahoma will be held on the former camp ground just east of the saint's meeting house on 6th and West Warner Streets beginning on Friday, August 3rd and closing on August 12th inclusive.

We are expecting the Lord to make this meeting an unusually good meeting as the true saints are clearing more and more from all the rubbish of the world and sinking deeper and deeper into God.

A full notice of the meeting will be inserted in the "Faith and Victory" paper later.

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1945 NATIONAL CAMPMEETING

The National Campmeeting of the Church of God will be held this year, the Lord willing, July 20 to 29 inclusive, on the saint's campground at Monark Springs, Missouri, which is five miles east of Neosho, Missouri.

A cordial invitation to attend this national gathering of God's people is extended to all lovers of the truth. It is held for the saving of the sinner, sanctifying of the believer, divine healing of the sick, and the edifying of the church in general.

Brother Sam Barton, whose address is Route 8, Box 119, Tulsa, Oklahoma, is business manager of the meeting, and Sister Barton is supervisor of the dining hall, etc.

Each individual and congregation should have a special fund for the National campmeeting. You may send your offering to Brother Barton, or to the undersigned. Further information will be given later.

—L. D. Pruitt, Secy.-Treas., 1005 West Mansur, Guthrie, Oklahoma.

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An Open Letter

Written in California to a sick lady in Oklahoma.

Dear Lady, I received a letter from mother yesterday saying you wanted my prayers for your sick body. I was so glad to know I could take your burdens to my blessed Jesus.

Well, sister, I am talking from my God-given heart; without Jesus we are nothing. I do love my Lord with all my heart, soul, and mind. He is a wonderful Saviour. When we have Him we have peace, joy, and love in our heart and soul, inasmuch that we do not want this world or anything in it. I do hope and pray you know the Lord. I went on my knees for you last night and told Him about you. He says He cares for His children if we will only

do the will of God. The only thing I want to do in this life or the life to come is to do his wonderful will. When we sell out to this old world and empty out for God, then he comes in with all his fulness and I tell you, sister, you don't know the wonderful blessing we have and it doesn't leave if we walk in the Spirit and live in the Spirit. You know, I am always afraid I am not pleasing my Saviour, and in having that feeling I try that much harder to go straight and do his will. I know I was just a weak sinner, but now I am saved by grace. When he hung on the cross, it was for the sins of us poor, sick, lost, undone people. We were dead and still are, if we don't know Jesus. Do you know Him? If you don't, please let me tell you where to find him. If you will look up with a melted heart, tell Jesus you are sorry you have ever sinned against him, and you want him to save your soul, God will hear that prayer. Now believe on Him, doubting not. Jesus will be right at your side, and then you can have peace and happiness in Christ. He is by your sick side with his arms stretched out, saying, "I will bless you. I want you for my loving child. Will you come?" He can fill your soul so much you will say, "Jesus is all I ever want."

Just let Him have His way with your body and life. You know you can not do any thing; but He can, and He wants to.

Well, Sister, I do love you and love all the poor souls that are out of Christ, and I pray for all who are living for Him, that they may live closer. We can not be proud and feel like we are any better than those lost ones, only in Jesus. If we say we are good, it is Jesus that made us good. We do not have a thing to boast about, only our Saviour. He says to always be ready for Him; He is coming soon. I am looking for Jesus. If we miss being ready at His coming, we miss everything worthwhile, so let's look for Him and be ready.

I will be praying for you and asking God to stay close to you. There is so much I could tell you about my only life (Jesus).

From a friend in Christ, Dorothy Swafford

oOo

REPENT

John the Baptist came crying in the wilderness of Judaea, saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 3:1. He was Christ's forerunner. Jesus came with the same message. He said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." If God's message to man through both Christ and John was, "Repent"; then that is God's message to sinful man now.

True repentance is to feel sorry that one has sinned and disobeyed God's commandments. God has no pleasure in the lives of sinners. "God is angry with the wicked every day." Psalms 7:11. If we see ourselves as God sees us and become sorry for our sins and want to be forgiven, God is merciful and forgiving. He will pardon us and set our captive souls free from the ways of sin and death.

It is God's Holy Spirit working upon our hearts that causes us to see ourselves as God sees us and as He wants us to see ourselves. When the Holy Spirit strives with our hearts we should seek God for pardon. No one can come unto God unless the Holy Spirit draws him; so when God's Spirit is working, we should humble our hearts and seek God for pardon, for it is the only time that we can get right with God. We cannot put off SALVATION until we are ready, we must get saved when God is working with us and showing us our sinful condition. When God pleads, it is time to surrender.

By right of creation, all mankind belongs to God. "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die." Ezek. 18:4. But Satan has control of man because of the fall. Man is now a captive in Satan's control. Man cannot help himself without God's mercy. Man cannot serve God, even though he wishes to do so, unless God delivers him from his sins. But because of Christ's sacrifice of himself, man can be delivered if he repents unto God. It matters not how deeply one has gone into sin, if he truly REPENTS, God will FORGIVE.

Because of the love of God a way was conceived in the mind and heart of God for our redemption that man might be set free from the law of sin and death; and a way was made that man might become a SAINT OF GOD. Some people say that there are no SAINTS upon earth, but they claim to be sinners saved by grace. No, I say, we must be SAINTS after being saved by grace. If one professes to be a Christian and also claims to be a sinner, how much better is he than the man who claims that he is a sinner without claiming to be a Christian? God saves man from his sins and gives him the VICTORY OVER SIN. This is why the news which Christ brought for and to a lost world is called the GOSPEL, which means GOOD NEWS. It is because man finds pardon and deliverance through the BLOOD OF CHRIST and is made free and happy in the Savior, and is taken into the fold of God.

Repentance toward God is our first step heavenward. If we truly repent, we will confess to God and to those whom we have wronged while we lived in sin. The devil makes this seem hard to do, but God will give grace, if we are determined to please Him. When we meet all of God's requirements in true repentance, then it will be natural for us to believe. Yes, we believe the good news that God for Christ's sake has forgiven us and has adopted us into His Kingdom, or family, and claims us as His SAINTS. One loves the name SAINT when God gives the name. One who truly belongs to God in heart and soul is glad to be numbered with the saints in light, and he is not ashamed of the title, for one must be a saint if he is born again, and as a saint he is heir with Jesus Christ.

The living children receive inheritances in this world; and so it is, also, with the children of light: those who keep themselves in the love of God without committing sin are partakers of the blessings of the kingdom. Anyone who is still a sinner after

conversion has lost out and needs to do the first works over again—even preachers, if they are still in their sins. —I. E. Kriebel

— oOo — GOD IS CALLING

God is calling for your service, O ye, His people! The reason He is calling is because He does not have it—that is, all of it. God is calling for all—all of your money, all of your possessions, all of your heart, all of your time, and all of your affections. Some have much reserved. God wants that reserve because He is wanting to work mightily in waking up His people and those who are willing to become His people. One reason the Lord wants to work mightily is that it will take that to draw and gather souls out of the darkness and unbelief into which some have fallen so deeply. God can not work mightily through you who have reserve and will not go and do heartily all that you can possibly do for God. But if He has control of all your heart, and you prove it by serving Him with ALL your mind, soul, and strength twenty-four hours per day, then He can work mightily through you, and you are pleasing Him. Those who become indifferent to spiritual things and let their minds become absorbed too much in the things of the earth are pleasing the father of worldlings, the devil, and fail to please God. We must bear in mind that the scripture instructs us to love God with all of our soul, mind, and strength, and this whole-hearted service must be given every moment of every day, and not just part of the time.

People who are ready to meet Jesus are serving Him whole-heartedly. What if Jesus should come while some are engaged in some thing which they are not doing to glorify Him, having forgotten that God wants them to serve Him with all of their hearts all of the time? These people would not be proving their love to Jesus, and would not be glad to see Him when He comes.

We all have the opportunity to serve Him with all our hearts. If we love God and our hope is in His coming to take us to dwell forever with Him, then we will serve Him, love Him, and do our best for Him while we are here. One can not possibly love God in truth and reality and hope in His coming, yet be indifferent about pleasing Him or serving Him.

Suppose a certain man should promise to come to your house some time in the future whose purpose in coming would be to freely give you all you need in this life at his coming, and you knew that during the days which pass before his appearing he needed some work done very badly that no one could do but you. Do you believe you could really love him and hope in his coming (except as a selfish matter) if you did not put forth effort with your whole heart to do that which he so badly wanted done, or which would be a great loss to him if it were not done? I am sure you could not.

Oh, that people would awaken and see what manner of persons they ought to be! —T. V. McMillian

Young People's Section

Thankful

I thank the Lord for David;
I thank the Lord for Paul;
I thank the Lord for all the Saints
That dwell upon this ball.

I'm thankful in November,
I'm thankful in the spring;
I'm thankful for the trials
And the blessings He doth bring.

Now should I fail to thank Him
For all that comes my way;
I'd be deserving of His frown
On that great Judgment Day.

—Erle Forbes

Editorials

In this gospel day there is a very close relationship between God and His people. In prophecy God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Heb. 8:10. He now becomes real and personal to each of His children regardless of age or position in the body of Christ.

By His Spirit He dwells in each member, teaches and guides them in the way of truth, hears and answers their prayers, and is a present help in every time of need. Thank the Lord for this personal contact with the God of all creation, brought about through Christ's atonement and redemptive work for man.

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In Paul's epistle to the Hebrews we read, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb. 10:35-37. God has made many good promises to His people, and it is by exercising faith and patience that we receive them. One promise is that He is coming again to receive His own unto Himself. So after we have done the will of God, we must with patience wait for this fulfillment, knowing that we "have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."

God made a promise to Abraham, and Paul says, "And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." Heb. 6:15. Likewise, Paul exhorts us that we should be "Followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Thank the Lord for the "hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

Brothers Hyrum Ray and Clark Jr. Porter arrived here on Easter Sunday from the C. P. S. camp at Colorado Springs, Colorado. During their week's furlough, they were privileged to attend the meeting which was held here by Brother and Sister O. B. Wilson of Shawnee, Oklahoma.

Brother Clifford W. Wilson, formerly of the Ft. Collins, Colorado, C. P. S. camp, has been transferred to detached service, and is now working on a dairy herd testing project in the state of Iowa. Remember these boys in prayer, and also our boys who are in non-combatant service in the army—some in camps in this country, others in Europe, India, and the islands of the Pacific. "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

We wish to express our thanks and appreciation to the saints who contributed to the fund for the support of our boys in Civilian Public Service camps. Last week we sent \$231.21 to the National Service Board for Religious Objectors, Washington, D. C. This is the agency composed of representatives of the so-called "historic peace churches," which supervises and maintains the camps for conscientious objectors where they do "work of national importance" as provided by the Selective Service Act.

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Brother and Sister Vada McMillian and baby daughter recently moved to Guthrie from Neosho, Missouri. These young saints feel their call to the gospel work, and their fervent desire to serve the Lord is an encouragement to the congregation. Considering the goodly number of young ministers and workers whom the Lord is calling and qualifying, surely the Lord intends to perpetuate the truth in the earth and give ample warning to the world to flee from the wrath to come.

—L. D. Pruitt

Sin Destroys Man

"For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 7:19, 24, 25.

We read here the conditions of Paul, when he was in sin and it had dominion over him. Sin influenced his will and life until he could not do the good that he wanted to do. There was a greater power within him causing him to do the wrong and as this conflict continued within him, he became a wretched man. He cried unto the Lord to deliver him from this conflict or this body of death that was destroying him. The Lord graciously came to his rescue and he found as he accepted Jesus into his heart he had power to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh.

Sin destroys man. Sin breaks your will power. I have heard so many say, "I don't want to drink, but

when I'm with some one who does, I can't resist it." or, "I want to quit gambling, but it has such a hold on me I can't," and some have told me they would like to get saved but can't quit smoking. Some just love to fix themselves up pretty, as they call it, and can't give it up. One dear girl came to me broken in will power to resist wrong of any kind and begged me to help her.

Oh dear ones, my heart goes out to you. I know you don't want to do these things, but I realize the devil causes you to go on in sin. Some who may not have gone so far in sin that their will power is broken to such an extent, may say that would never happen to them, but every day you linger in sin, the devil is little by little binding you with the chains of bondage and in sins. Every day you stay away from Jesus, your heart is getting harder.

Come to Jesus and He will set you free. "Who [God] hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Col. 1:13.

Come to Jesus with a broken and contrite heart and He will deliver you from the power of darkness and sin and give you power to live for Him and do the right. Jesus has power over the devil and as we accept Him into our lives He will give us power over sin.

—A. Marie Miles



New Mexico—Dear Brother Pruitt and all the workers in the one Spirit and body of Christ,—Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. It is with much love and an humble spirit I send in my testimony.

I am happy in my soul tonight because of the plan of salvation that all who are tied down by the heavy chains of Satan might be set free. Jesus came to this earth and died upon the cross so that we could be free from sin so that we would sin no more in spirit nor in flesh.

Many people believe that after one is saved he will sin more or less, and some believe they will continue to sin in the flesh. I am glad that the salvation that Jesus died for does not have any sin in it of any kind. 1 John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Jesus condemned sin in the flesh. Rom. 8:3. In Galatians 5:24 we read, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Read 1 John 2:16, 17.

We are isolated with no congregation within hundreds of miles. We have none of the saints to call upon to pray for us when we are sick or when trouble and trials seem almost to overcome us. We have no one to come into our home and pray with us and talk words of encouragement to us. However we have been privileged to have some of God's children in our home two different times. If they knew how much encouragement they have been to us and knew how glad we felt when we knew of their coming and how heavy our hearts were at their parting and knew how the blessings and happy memories lingered upon our minds many weeks and months hence, they would know what a great blessing they brought to us. We truly thank God for their presence and the soul food they brought with them and pray much for God to send some more of His children in this direction this summer. We believe there is a rich field with golden grain out here.

Rom. 8:35, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" We

are separated from the saints but not from their love and God's Spirit.

A brother in Christ,

Edwin Weir

CORRESPONDENCE

Oklahoma—Greetings to all the dear saints. I am still going on to the time when I can lay my armor down. I want to hear my Saviour say, "Well done."

I want to say to all the dear ones who put forth an effort to help in supplying the Monark campmeeting with extra quilts or blankets, that I am so thankful and I just hope you each get the joy out of sending these things as I get out of receiving them. Truly it is a pleasure to know others are concerned about the work of the Lord. I want to tell just how God is helping us in our efforts.

Granite and tin plates, knives, forks, and spoons and one sugar bowl (I have 16 now) have been sent in. Saints in Louisiana are sending eight quilts; Missouri, two quilts and one blanket; Oregon and Washington, eight quilts; Oklahoma, five quilts and several blankets; and California, some quilts. I have also received tea towels and eight aprons from different places. Just feel free to send any thing that can be used at a campmeeting. I feel sure that when I arrive at the camp ground, I shall have a very pleasant surprise when I see what the dear saints have sent to use. The Lord says that He knows our needs before we ask.

Much work has been done at the camp grounds, for which we thank the care taker and the Neosho saints. Truly God's people are the chosen vessels of God and this gospel work has to be carried on by unity. I desire to do my part so long as I can.

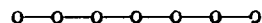
All who can should bring bedding, pillows, and straw ticks for their own use when they come to the campmeeting, for we do not have enough for all.

Send everything which you are donating to the Monark Springs campmeeting to James E. Morris, Neosho, Missouri, Route 3, c. o. Monark Camp Ground.

We had a good day in the Lord the eighth here. We observed the ordinances. About forty took part. We had some visitors.

Remember us in prayer, as neither of us are well in body.

—Brother and Sister Barton



North Carolina—Dear Brother Pruitt,—Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. These few lines are to let you know I am still in the battle and going forward as a true, bold, and fearless soldier against all sectarian works of man and every thing of the devil. I am preaching the truth every where I go, and through strong opposition, persecution, and fiery trials, I am winning victory. I praise God He has never lost a battle yet. I am fully determined to stand true at all cost, and preach the Word. I have been using all the papers you send me and they are doing a lot of good here. I am working day and night to put the truth before the people. It's a hard battle here, but Jesus and His disciples found it hard wherever they tried to show the people God's way instead of man's way. Yes, the battle is getting harder every day, but we must endure unto the end. I suppose I have told you in past letters about all the sects here turning against me. They are doing all they can to hinder me in the work for God I am doing. I have been arrested again for teaching and preaching the truth. Some sect members got a hold of a few of the "Faith and Victory" papers I left

in a bus station and tore them into pieces. I was cursed by a policeman.

Every Saturday in my big evangelistic services in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina, the sectarian preachers, police, and untold numbers of sect members try to interfere and stop my preaching. It's a battle, but praise God there's not enough devils in hell or on earth to stop me as long as God permits me to live and preach. I will never give way to the devil.

Brother, please have all the saints every where to pray for me. I am on the front line against the strongest legions of demons and evil sect spirits I have ever faced in all my 15 years of preaching. Please always remember me in prayer.

I will start a revival meeting soon with Brother Vannoy. It may be the first of June before the meeting begins, but please remember it also.

I will stand true at any cost.

Your brother in Christ,

—Evangelist Charles A. Keyes, Jr.

Brother Charles A. Keyes, the bold evangelist, is desiring to purchase a tent in order to further advance the cause of God. A tent is a very needful thing for any evangelist in reaching the masses of the people with the gospel. He and Brother Vannoy of Reddies River, North Carolina, will make good use of the tent. Those of our readers who want to help him purchase this tent can send their offerings direct to him at Route 1, Rural Hall, North Carolina.

(Editor's Note)

Missouri—To all the dear saints scattered abroad,—I am still saved and enjoying God's priceless salvation, and I am in perfect health. God is blessing unworthy me with everything that I need to serve Him and live as His Word teaches us. He has promised to supply all our needs, according to His riches in glory, and I can truly say that He has certainly made good on all His precious promises in my case. I could not ask Him to do more for me than He has already done and is doing every day and hour of my life. It is a wonderful blessing to have God to sustain us at this, the most critical and perilous time in all history, when men's hearts are failing them for looking at the things that are coming on the earth. God's true children have nothing to fear. Trust God and He has promised to see us through.

Your saved, born-again brother in Christ, E. M. Wood

California—Greetings to the faithful saints,—Grace be unto you and peace from God our father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Week before last, I was thinking of inviting the saints to bring their work and spend the day with me. When I began to plan what I would cook to serve, the Lord began to talk to me. He said, "Why not have a day of fasting, prayer, and reading the Word?" When I told them Sunday night at meeting, they agreed that we needed just such a meeting. So last Wednesday and this Wednesday, the saints came to our home and we were blessed with the reading of God's Word. The Spirit led us to Romans the eighth chapter the first time and the twenty-seventh chapter last Wednesday. Praise His name!

Just before time to go to prayer meeting Wednesday night, I felt ill in my body. I requested prayer and while Sister Wilson was praying, the Lord touched my body. Yesterday evening I began to feel ill again. I felt like I was taking the flu, and had some fever. My daughter,

who is now saved, and I were alone. We prayed and the Lord healed me; praise the Lord.

I am so thankful that the Lord is my Saviour, my sanctifier, and healer. He suffered for us and by His stripes we are healed. It seems that I can not get the victory over the muscular rheumatism in my right arm. Pray for me that the Lord will bless me in my soul and body which belong to Him. I want nothing between my soul and my Saviour. I am so thankful the Lord has led me out of darkness into His marvelous light and into the mysteries of God that the world cannot see.

Grace be with you all.

Your sister in Christ,

—Esther Dott Henry

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California—Dear Bro. and Sis. Pruitt,—In Jesus' dear, sweet name I greet you. I just feel led to tell you dear ones some things that are on my heart. I just want to tell you how I appreciate you for your work and labor of love and just how I do thank God for you so often. I am really counting on you and I know God is too, and I truly believe we always can unhesitatingly, and will with all confidence recommend you and the work to all. I do not say these things to flatter, but I do believe in giving our flowers while you are living and while I am living to give them. We can never appreciate and love and encourage our faithful brothers and sisters too much. As you know I have been in your home many times and have closely observed how godly your home is. A sister and I were talking the other day speaking of a brother that it seems had not always shunned the appearance of evil. I told her that one thing I could say about Brother Pruitt—there were always girl workers there and how careful he was with no lightness or teasing, just business and godliness. And Sister Pruitt is such a sweet mother to them all. Oh, I do so truly thank God that I can say these things to all who want to know of the work there and our publishers and I know God will bless it whatever storms may arise. This work must never go down. It is the only literature I give out. You have my full co-operation and prayers. It seems I never have much money to help, but I don't fail to tell others and to pray for you and please tell the dear girls I send my love and appreciate their true-ness to God and their self-denial and sacrifice to work for Jesus.

We shall soon be leaving here now, Lord willing. The saints here hate to see us go, but we truly do want to carry this precious truth to every soul we can. Lord willing we shall go to Glendale Sunday and begin a meeting. We shall hold a few meetings in this part of California this month. We shall then start north and work for the dear Lord in northern California, Oregon, and perhaps Washington all summer and fall. Please pray that God ever direct us and we do all we possibly can for Him who has done so much for us.

Tell Brother Lawrence I surely liked the "Challenge to the Church."

Your sister,

—Essie Wilson

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Missouri—Dear saints and workers at the print shop,—Greetings. Be encouraged, for you are doing a good work. I believe the dear Lord is pleased with your work. I have been so afflicted all winter. I told the Lord if He would heal me I would publish it. I am so much better, praise His dear name! I had such a cold, and it so much better. It will be all right in a few days, for which I will give the Lord all the praise. Please

pray for me that I may always do His will, and pray for my unsaved family, and for my mother that she will have more strength and live closer to the Lord.

Yours for the Lord, —Mrs. Ellen Sanders

Oklahoma—Dear Saints,—Greetings in Jesus' dear name. I truly enjoyed reading "A Challenge to the Church" in the April "Faith and Victory." I have three brothers and two of them were called to the army but failed to pass. Both of them are unsaved. My baby brother will be called in May. He is saved and free from sin. When he is called to go, I want the saints to get under the burden with me that he will not be taken to the Army. I don't know you personally, but in Spirit and truth. I know the good Lord is able to keep my saved brother from going to the Army. I am not doubting Him on any line. I mean to be faithful and true no matter what comes against me.

Remember me at all times in your prayers. Whatever the Lord says, my heart says, "Amen."

Your sister in Christ, —Bertha Wheat

Texas—Dear Ones,—Greetings of holy love to one and all. Just recently I had the toothache very badly. I went into the back room and prayed, asking God to let the tooth fall out. I said, "Lord, I believe in you and I believe you can just do any thing. Lord, if you will just let this tooth fall out, I will write a testimony about it." The tooth didn't fall out just then but God does hear and answer prayer. A few nights ago my mind wandered back to my teeth and I began to feel the old teeth with my tongue, and just thought, "Would it not be nice if they would just come out?" I said, "Lord, I am just trusting you and you ought to bless me." So, praise God the old tooth I had prayed for came loose all but a little corner of it. It was not, neither had been loose until just then. I had forgotten about my prayer and promise to God until I walked into the room where I had prayed, and the Spirit said, "You promised to write a testimony about it." Sister Myrtle Grice is a witness to it as she was here when the tooth fell out, praise the good Lord. He does want us to stay true to Him and trust Him for everything. Come out from among them (sinners) and be ye separate and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you.

Love in Christ, —Essie Moore

Oklahoma—Dear Brother Pruitt,—We are all well and getting along fine. The Lord truly is good to us. We have much to thank Him for, for all the blessings He does bestow upon us. When we think of Jesus, what He suffered and bore for us, then we at our very best will not be able to repay Him for all His goodness.

May the Lord bless you in the great work you are doing, and may the Lord bless you with the wisdom that comes from above, for I know you truly have a big responsibility.

Your brother in Christ, —Waldo D. Eck

Michigan—Dear Saints of God,—In Jesus' dear name I am writing you just to tell you since I moved last fall I have not had a "Faith and Victory" paper, and I am, so hungry for the messages and those lovely testimonies. When I think of what I have missed in that time and how my soul has been robbed of the pure bread of life, the tears stream down my old face because I've neglected this matter. May God bless you and the dear saints and workers at the print shop at Guthrie.

Your brother in the one body, —Wm. Colegrove

Louisiana—Dear Bro. and Sis. Pruitt,— We send greetings of holy love in Jesus' precious and holy name. May God richly bless you dear ones, and all the workers there at the office and keep each one encouraged to press on in this high and holy way and fight the good fight of faith that you might receive the crown of life that lies at the end of the race. We trust the dear Lord will supply your every need, and will bless the truth as it goes forth through the printed page.

I have had a real test of faith here lately. I have been sorely afflicted with rheumatism or something in my back. I surely suffered for over three weeks and I could hardly go, especially in the early morning when I would first get up. I thank the Lord that He came to my rescue and healed me, and I just give Him all the glory, honor, and praise. Praise the Lord. There have been several afflicted ones among the saints so we had a day of fasting and prayer for the sick and afflicted a week ago last Sunday and the Lord came to my rescue and healed me. On Monday morning the old devil surely tried to impose it back on me as bad as ever, but I knew I was healed and I just had to hold a real rebuke in my soul against the devil and the affliction and the devil had to flee. Jesus says in His precious Word to "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." The Lord completely healed me of rheumatism in my limb and knee last winter.

Dear old Sister Williamson has been poorly with flu for the last few days, but she is much better and able to be up now. Brother Wiggins is having quite a time with that shortness of breath. He was a lot better for quite a while but it has come back on him again.

Sister Key had a real bad choking spell about two weeks ago, the worst spell she has ever had. Bro. Earnest Forbes was passing by going to work and saw her on the porch and he woke Brother Hilbun and went for Bro. Williamson. They had prayer and the Lord came to her rescue and gave her relief. Since the day of fasting and prayer, she says she has been resting a lot better at night. We all believe it is that goiter on her neck that is causing her to have those choking spells. You dear saints there get under the burden and pray for her complete healing. She needs a well, strong body to go out and work and labor in God's service. She is staying with Sister Williamson at night since she had that bad spell.

We had a real high day in Zion Sunday. We had a precious service in the morning. Brother Perry brought a good message on "Christ's Resurrection," then we had dinner on the grounds and ordinance service in the afternoon. Most of the congregation from Oak Grove came out and some of the Kentwood saints came. We trust you saints out there at Guthrie had a glorious time in the Lord also. We trust the saints are all well out there and are rejoicing in this great salvation to go all the way with Jesus.

I am glad I am still saved and happy in the Lord, still determined to press on and fight the good fight of faith. We have real precious services and the work is moving on nicely. Sister Lela Bailey from the Loranger congregation has bought and moved right here by us. We sure do have some good, spiritual prayer meetings here. It will not be so long now till camp meeting time again. We trust the Lord will see fit to send you back again.

May the Lord bless you all and keep you faithful and true till death. —Arlrey Baumgartner

"Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright."—Psalms

Pennsylvania—Dear Bro. Pruitt,—Holy greetings to you all in the name of Jesus, the One who has done so much for us all. Oh, how could we live without Him? He is a wonderful Saviour to me. I want to thank Him for that peace and joy I have in my heart which the world can not give nor take away, praise God. I do love the one strait and narrow way. The Bible way of salvation is so plain. Let us not listen to what man teaches, but to what God says. The Bible is our only guide to heaven. If only the sectarian world could see that there is just one way to the pearly gate! Dear ones, let us make sure we are on that one strait and narrow way. How sad it would be to be deceived. I want to do more to bring lost and deceived souls to a loving Christ who is the only one and true way, praise His most holy name forever. Let us pray much for one another and also our poor soldier boys and this awful war-torn world of sin and wickedness. We have no time to waste, for we have no promise of tomorrow.

God bless you all at the Lord's Print Shop. I always pray for you dear ones. I trust that this testimony may be used to God's glory. —Sister Krause

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Indiana—Dear Brother Pruitt and Saints everywhere: Praise God for every one of you, and for all you are doing to help each of us.

I just laid down the April "Faith and Victory" paper which came today. It has much food for the soul and much for thought. Brother L. D. Pruitt's article on the "Challenge to the Church" is very good, and should have been stressed much earlier and much oftener than has been. I was in the First World War draft and was the father of two children. I did not know the truth of the Church of God as taught by the saints, but was saved, thanks to the Lord. I did not have any teaching on the subject but the Lord planted in my heart that which caused me to know what was wrong. So I did some praying and when I came up before the Board they asked me if I wanted to be exempted. I said to God, "Help me, Lord." Then the answer to the Board came out, "I am a Christian man, and do not want to kill any one, but I am at your mercy. I know I can not fight the government alone, but I am determined to follow the Bible as close as I can." They said I would be exempted for awhile. Then the day before the Armistice was signed, I was called. That night I went to God in prayer again and He assured me I would not need to worry. The next day, November 11, 1918, when the word came, I certainly was happy. But now if all the young men who are reared in Christian homes were taught against war, and knew the rights that are given by the constitution and laws, and they would live before people so they could have confidence in them and God could answer prayer, I am sure there would be much less war. If there is no one to fight and nothing to fight with I am sure we who are saved would soon be taken home to glory, or there would be some real prevailing with God, because of the heavy persecutions that would come upon the church. I am convinced that too little persecution is as bad or worse than too much, for it is through trials and persecutions that the man of God is brought to earnest, fervent, effectual prayer. We, as saints, have it too easy. We are being lulled to sleep or should I say, have been?

I am the father of five boys, and four of them were of the age for draft when this war began. Three out of four have gone. One will never come back. The fourth could not pass the examination. The one who will not come back was a Staff Sergeant on a big four-mo-

tored plane. These boys were taught against war, also against ungodliness, but were out in sin and all past twenty-one years of age, yet if they could have gotten out of war, they would.

While we are about it we should as a church not only take a stand against military training but all the worldly teaching and training our children are subject to in public schools, for we teach righteousness and the public schools teach contrary to what we teach, which causes a question in the child's mind. After we have reared our children, we can see many things we left undone and did things we would better have not done. I only pray that God will help others in the next, or this generation to have more thorough teaching by the church than some of us have had. Bring up a child in the way he should go. How can you when the ungodly teachers, worldly churches and public schools all work at the job and teach carnal things, while you teach spiritual things? It looks to me as though we need schools owned and controlled by the church. If our children were under saintly teachers and saintly parents, do you not think we would have much better results? I am not trying to criticize, but point out the need.

Yours for a pure life and victory over sin,

—Wm. Pearson

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BIBLE STUDY

Order Sunday School supplies about two weeks before the beginning of new quarter. The price of the Primary Picture Roll is \$1.15, and the Lesson Cards are 4 cents per set. Each set contains cards for one pupil for each Sunday in the quarter. These sets cannot be broken. Send order to Genevieve Capps, 920 W. Mansur, Guthrie.

THE HEBREW MONARCHY AT ITS HEIGHT

Sunday, May 6, 1945

Daily Readings and Meditations

April 30 to May 5.

- M. The first king 1 Sam. 10:9-13.
- T. How Saul failed 1 Sam 15:13-22.
- W. David's lament 2 Sam. 1:17-27.
- T. David's sweet song Psa. 23:1-6.
- F. The wise king 1 Kings 4:29-34.
- S. The temple dedicated 1 Kings 8:22-30.

Printed Portion1 Kings 9:1-7, 26; 10:26-28; 11:4, 11.

1 Kings 9:1. And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do,

2. That the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon.

3. And the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

4. And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments:

5. Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father,

saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.

6. But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them:

7. Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people:

9:26. And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Eziongeber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.

10:26. And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem.

27. And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycomore trees that are in the vale, for abundance.

28. And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

11:4. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God as was the heart of David his father.

11. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

Golden Text: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. Psalm 33:12.

Practical Truth: Wise and good leaders are of great importance to the welfare of any nation.

Comments and Application

Last Sunday we reviewed the portion of Israel's history when they were ruled by Judges. Today's lesson is a review of the contents of the Books of Samuel and Kings. The period of the Judges extends over into this lesson. The printed portion gives only a brief review of the reign of King Solomon, which was near the end of the period.

Here are some questions which will help the class to review the events which took place between last Sunday's lesson and today's printed portion: Who were the last two judges? Do you learn an important lesson on the subject of "Child Training" from the account of God's rejection of Eli's sons and His acceptance of Samuel? Where was the tabernacle in the days of Eli? How did the Philistines come into possession of the ark of the covenant? What was the result of its being in their country? What lesson do you learn from the account of the destruction of the idol Dagon when the ark of God was placed in his temple? What happened at one of Samuel's prayermeetings? Why was God displeased when the Israelites desired a king? Who was the first king? What characteristics about Saul pleased the Lord when he was chosen as king, and what change took place which caused his rejection?

David is a well known Bible character. His life may be divided into three portions for discussion: 1. His youth before his introduction to the court of Saul; 2. His relations with Saul; 3. His reign. In his humanity he made serious blunders, but he continued to have faith in God and

would always repent at God's reproof. His literal reign over literal Israel is a type of Christ's spiritual reign over spiritual Israel, which is the saved people of today.

Under Solomon's reign the Hebrew kingdom became the greatest and wealthiest nation of the world. This was because at the beginning of his reign he humbled his heart before the Lord and acknowledged his need of His help and implored for wisdom from Him. This pleased the Lord insomuch that He granted his request and gave him wealth and honor besides. But in spite of all his wisdom, he yielded to the ungodly influence of his idolatrous wives, and at the end God's displeasure rested upon him. Young people who desire to serve the Lord should let this be a warning to them when choosing a life companion.

The most important act of Solomon's life was the building of the temple.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM

Sunday, May 13, 1945

Daily Readings and Meditations

May 7 to 12.

M. The kingdom divided 1 Kings 12:16-24.

T. Jeroboam's sin 1 Kings 12:26-33.

W. Elijah on Mount Carmel 1 Kings 18:36-39.

T. The Widow's oil 2 Kings 4:1-7.

F. Jehu's reforms 2 Kings 10:23-28.

S. The fall of North Israel 2 Kings 17:5-8.

Printed Portion1 Kings 12:26-30; 19:1-4, 13b-18; 2 Kings 17:7, 8.

1 Kings 12:26. And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:

27. If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.

28. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them. It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

29. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan.

30. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.

19:1. And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

2. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.

3. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

4. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

19:13b. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

14. And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

15. And the Lord said unto him, go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus; and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria:

16. And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.

17. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

18. Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

2 Kings 17:7. For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt and had feared other gods.

8. And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

Golden Text: O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. Psalm 34:3.

Practical Truth: Sin brings trouble to nations as well as to individuals.

Comments and Application

Because Solomon permitted the people to forsake the Lord and serve idol gods, God said to Jeroboam through the prophet Ahijah, "I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: . . . Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes."

The people were dissatisfied with Solomon's policy of oppression so when his son, Rehoboam, became king they asked him to reduce the burden, but he arrogantly refused; whereupon the northern tribes rebelled and chose Jeroboam for their king. Today's lesson is a review of the history of the northern kingdom. We shall consider the southern kingdom next Sunday. The northern kingdom was called Israel, and the southern, Judah.

An idea of the unsettled conditions in Israel may be gathered from the fact that during the 215 years of its existence it had altogether nineteen kings, belonging to nine distinct dynasties. Many of these kings were assassinated and some killed by foreign invaders.

The decline and fall of Israel can easily be traced to its spiritual condition. God says, "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." God promised Jeroboam that he would be with him and establish his kingdom IF he would keep his statutes and commandments. But Jeroboam did not have enough faith in God to believe He would do what he promised so he began to try in his own strength to make his kingdom secure. He feared that if he allowed the people to continue their yearly pilgrimages to Jerusalem for worship that their hearts would eventually be turned from him and they would return their allegiance to the house of David, so he set up two golden calves in his kingdom for the worship of Jehovah to keep them from going to Jerusalem. This displeased the Lord, so the steps which Jeroboam took to insure the permanence of his kingdom were the very things that brought about its ruin. Do we see anything like this in the religious world today?

Christ established His kingdom and prayed that his people would all be one. Later religious leaders who desired preeminence, set up churches of their own making (golden calves), and made the people believe that it

was more convenient to worship the Lord through them, lest the people set them aside and return their allegiance to the house of David (spiritually speaking), which is the church of the living God. God's displeasure rests upon these modern golden calves and He has threatened to destroy them as He destroyed Jeroboam's altars.

Not one of Israel's kings endeavored to turn the hearts of the people fully to the Lord, so the declension of the worship of Jehovah continued and reached its climax in the days of Ahab, the seventh king. His infamous wife, Jezebel, introduced Baal worship into the country and it spread rapidly under royal support. It is likely that the people would have forgotten God had it not been for the faithfulness of God to them in sending prophets to warn them. At one time Elijah challenged them to prove Baal and God and serve the one who answered by fire. The class can read the outcome in 1 Kings 18:19-46. Part of our printed portion follows this event.

The city of Samaria, the capital of Israel, was taken by the Assyrians in 722 and many Israelites were carried away captives.

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THE DEFEAT OF THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM

Sunday, May 20, 1945

Daily Readings and Meditations

May 14 to 19

M. Rehoboam's folly 1 Kings 12:1-5, 12-14.

T. Hezekiah, a good king 2 Kings 18:1-6.

W. Helping each other Jer. 38:7-13.

T. Visiting a pottery Jer. 18:1-10.

F. Life or death Jer. 21:8-14.

S. The fall of Jerusalem 2 Kings 25:1-9.

Printed PortionJeremiah 18:1-10 15a, 17a.

Jer. 18:1. The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying,

2. Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

3. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

4. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

5. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

6. O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord, Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

7. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it;

8. If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

9. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it;

10. If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

15. Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity.

17. I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy.

Golden Text: Come, and let us return unto the Lord. Hosea 6:1.

Practical Truth: God's rewards and punishments extend to nations, in accordance with their deeds.

Comments and Application

In connection with this lesson, study 1 Kings 12;

1-17; 2 Kings, chapters 11 to 25; and Jeremiah, chapters 18 to 39.

God permitted Judah as a nation to stand longer than Israel because the true worship of Jehovah did not decline in Judah as fast as in Israel. Perhaps this was partly due to the fact that they could go to the temple at Jerusalem to worship where they could sacrifice to the Lord and hear the law read, and partly because a few of the kings of Judah served the Lord to the extent the people were influenced by them—Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. But it is written concerning Judah, "They also built them high places and images and groves on every high hill and under every green tree," and served "strange gods." It was during the wicked reign of Manasseh that God pronounced judgment upon Judah and His prophet foretold the destruction of Jerusalem. God was long suffering with them, but in spite of His efforts to make of them a nation in which he could realize His ideal, they were as clay which "marred in the potter's hands," so He scattered "them as with an east wind before the enemy."

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem. He tore down and burned the walls and ruined the city. Everything of any value that could be moved was carried away, and all of the best people except Jeremiah were carried captives into Babylon.

Do you wonder why God has preserved the history of His dealings with the Hebrews for us? If our spiritual eyes are open we can receive many valuable lessons from it. "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard," for if they were punished for every transgression and disobedience, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Notice especially what wonderful things the Lord could accomplish through only one man who would serve Him; and on the other hand, what great damage was done to the cause of God by the disobedience of only one person.

THE RETURNED EXILES AND THEIR WORK

Sunday, May 27, 1945

Daily Readings and Meditations

May 21 to 26

- M. A gracious king Ezra 1:1-6.
- T. Temple builders encouraged Hag. 2:1-9.
- W. Working together Neh. 4:15-23.
- T. Nehemiah's return Neh. 2:1-8.
- F. Reading the law Neh. 8:5-8.
- S. Sabbath laws enforced Neh. 13:15-22.

Printed Portion Nehemiah 8:1-4a, 5, 6, 8, 12; 9:1-3.

Neh. 8:1 And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel.

2. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.

3. And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

4. And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose;

5. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up;

6. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

8. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

12. And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

Neh. 9:1. Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.

2. And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

3. And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Lord their God.

Golden Text: Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13.

Practical Truth: Revivals of religion are attended with a study of God's Word.

Comments and Application

The 137th Psalm describes the heartbroken condition of the Jews in Babylonian captivity: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion." Read all the Psalm. From other accounts in the scriptures it does not seem that they were slaves; but, especially those who were true to the religion of the Lord, could not content themselves in a strange land away from the holy temple. Under the guidance of the prophet Ezekiel they were made to realize that they needed to repent of their former sins and partake not of the sins of their fathers in forsaking the observance of the law of the Lord. Hopes of restoration to the Promised Land were kept alive.

The books, Daniel and Esther give accounts of some things which the Jews went through while in captivity.

When Cyrus captured Babylon he gave the Jews permission to return to their native land. A number of them returned. The glories of the city of Jerusalem had remained in their memories while in captivity so when they returned and saw their city in ruins it was very disheartening to them. But they erected an altar to the Lord and laid the foundations for a new temple. They met with opposition and much discouragement, but they finally completed it.

Later, Ezra, the scribe, obtained permission to return to Jerusalem with a company of Israelites. He started a religious reform, requiring them to separate from the strange wives whom they had married and in other ways measure to the laws of God which they had neglected to obey. Soon Nehemiah came to help rebuild the walls and Jerusalem again became a walled city. To the multitude who assembled from far and near to attend the dedication, Ezra read the law of Moses. As he read, the people would shout back, "Amen, Amen!"

If the class has a knowledge of New Testament church history they can see how the history of literal Israel has almost repeated itself with spiritual Israel.

Watch for types and shadows. Notice how the Jews refused to let their heathen neighbors have any part in the building of the temple. Do sinners have any part in the building of the church of God?