

FAITH^{AND} VICTORY

Church of God Servant



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The Father's Hand



While through this changing world below
I would not choose my path to go;
'Tis Father's hand that leadeth me—
Then, O, how safe His child must be!

Sometimes we walk in sunshine bright;
Sometimes in darkness of the night;
Sometimes the way I cannot see
But Father's hand still leadeth me.

Why should I mind the way I go?
His way is best for me, I know.
He is my strength, my truth, my way,
He is my comfort, rod, and stay.

So on we travel, hand in hand,
Bound for the heavenly Promised Land.
Always through all eternity,
I'll praise His name for leading me.

—Selected by Katie Priem

Do You Have Genuine Salvation?



Not so long ago a man was dying, and though a church member, he had never experienced a change of heart; and had not been taught the absolute need of godly sorrow, and to repent of his sins. He became conscious of the fact that he had been deceived and was lost.

How sad, indeed, and yet this is the exact condition of multitudes of people who do not read or study the Bible. One seldom hears preached and reads but little in Christian literature concerning the fall and depravity of man; that all are guilty sinners in need of the pardoning grace and power of God to save them from the wrath to come.

It is surprising how little church-going people know what genuine heart-felt salvation really means.

It is most vitally important and needful for the unsaved to know the very first steps to take to be

converted. Untold numbers are testifying that they have found peace, joy and happiness to their souls when they heard the full gospel preached that revealed to them what genuine heart-felt salvation really is, and what to do to be saved.

The question is often asked, why don't ministers preach a full gospel? Do they dislike to tell people what they must do and stop doing to be saved? Are they in darkness concerning the fundamentals of Christian religion and cannot discern the true and only church and how one must be born again to be a member of it?

It is an important Bible commandment to read and study the Word of God for the spiritual good and welfare of mankind. Due to the lack of proper instruction and the preaching of a full gospel, the world is in darkness concerning the plain Bible way of genuine salvation.

Reforming, making new resolutions or joining church, is not salvation at all, for it possesses no power to transform the soul and change the heart and life of mankind.

Though one should live the highest standard of moral life possible all his days, it cannot save him without repentance.

The Lord God commands all men everywhere to repent, and for a man to think he is so morally good as not to feel his need of repentance, is to say he is self-righteous, and the Lord classes this kind of life low and contemptible, or as filthy rags in His sight.

When we are convinced and convicted of sin, godly sorrow enters the heart; for the Apostle Paul declares: "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation," and Jesus declares there can positively be no pardon without repentance. (Read Luke 13:3.)

A red light flashes across the pathway of mortal life, warning professors of religion who think that doing social and charitable work in the so-called church, without ever having been converted or born again, is salvation.

The saddest picture that can possibly ever be portrayed to mortal minds is recorded in Luke 13th chapter where Jesus Christ speaks of a certain class who shall be denied admittance to the realm of eternal

happiness, simply because they failed to meet the conditions of salvation as required of God in His inspired Word.

Natural or worldly sorrow is the result of an offense toward a friend, and the desire for forgiveness and one feels miserable and mean until he seeks forgiveness.

King David declared he was sorry, for he had transgressed God's law. So it is, when one becomes serious-minded, penitent, and meets the conditions of genuine salvation, the power of God automatically responds in supernatural power, then the pardoned soul undergoes a transformation, or a change of heart and life.

Being made a new creature, delivered from a death in sin to a life of righteousness in Christ Jesus, is to be born again, which act records your name in the Book of Life, for the burden of sin has been removed from the heart and a real experience of joy, peace, and happiness comes into this new life that no one can ever hope to realize until he learns and meets the condition of salvation.

Genuine heart-felt experience of salvation enables one to give a sound and reasonable answer to the skeptic or atheist of the hope that is in him, for the changed heart and new life bears witness to the truth and reality of a supreme Being and heavenly things.

Banish the idea from your mind that you have been so bad and sinful that the Lord does not consider you worthy of a place in His glorious kingdom, for He will most gladly grant salvation when you make your decision to forsake evil and seek the Lord.

There is no deception in the original and genuine, for Satan cannot make that decree of God void, therefore, dear mortal man, you positively cannot escape the wrath of God Almighty that shall be meted out in that day to those who have rejected Jesus and neglected this so great salvation.

For once in your lifetime, get serious, confess your sins to God through Jesus Christ, His Son, and pray for your salvation and this you can as easily do as the drowning man can beg for help in time of distress. It is too late when death overtakes you, which may be alarmingly close by.

To the unsaved, this important message is personally for you. It is no myth or fabled story, nor the theory of man's mind, but strictly sound Bible doctrine as revealed in the gospel of Christ our Lord.

—John H. Griffith

LETHARGY



These are the last days of this dispensation of God's grace, and the enemy of souls is wide awake. He would put such a lethargy on God's people that no one would be ready when Jesus comes, if he could. There is power in the Blood, praise God, power over all the powers of the devil. Keep filled with the Spirit so the devil cannot make you drowsy in your experience, nor in the work of the Lord. Jesus said, "Watch and pray."

Have You Received the Holy Ghost Since You Believed?

(Acts 19:2)

(A Message To Believers)

Before Jesus went away He made this wonderful promise to His disciples: "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever . . ." (John 14:16, 17). ANOTHER COMFORTER! The best gift possible to believers, a gift according to the need of the human heart. The Father shall give you another Comforter! And He shall abide with you, and be in you! A most holy and satisfying experience! A closer fellowship with Christ than when He walked with them along the pathways of life. Something altogether supernatural and divine. Something that would set their hearts aglow with holy love and devotion. Jesus had been with His disciples in bodily form ever since they had forsaken this world to follow Him. He had been their Leader, and Teacher, and constant Companion. But He was going back to His Father. And their hearts were filled with sorrow. They would be left as sheep without a Shepherd. From whence would come their help? To whom could they go? And how would they be enabled to carry on without Him? Jesus gave them the answer. The Father would send someone to take His place, even the third person of the Godhead. And that new Comforter would be the sanctifying, Christ-revealing Spirit of the living God. For Jesus said: "He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you" (John 16:14).

Again we read: "And thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead . . . that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name . . . but tarry ye . . . until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:46-49). BUT TARRY YE! For no person, however zealous to serve God, nor however well-instructed in Bible doctrines, is fully qualified to minister in Christ's stead without the promised spiritual endowment. It is a necessary preparation for every one that would truly represent our glorified, all-powerful Redeemer and Lord. And the lack of that divine unction is the chief cause of the cold formality and futility in the activities of the so-called church today.

But Jesus said: "Tarry ye . . . until." And as they tarried in the upper room on the day of Pentecost it came to pass that the promised endowment came like a mighty rushing wind, and with tongues of fire, and the waiting disciples were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues (languages) as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-4). A marvelous manifestation of the power of the risen, glorified Christ. And since that first outpouring, the Holy Ghost baptism has been a blessed reality to unknown numbers of believers all down through the centuries. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38, 39).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem . . . and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). WITNESSES! Motivated by a constraining, God-given urge to take the message of salvation to the perishing multitudes of earth. The apostle Peter was thus moved on the day of Pentecost, and he began right then and there to deliver a tremendous gospel sermon that resulted in the conversion of about three thousand souls.

Also the Holy Spirit has another function to perform. "That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ . . . in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession . . ." (Eph. 1:13, 14). A seal and an earnest! It is the seal of God's ownership and the earnest of an eternal inheritance. And that inheritance has been described in 1 Pet. 1:4 as "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Something belonging to God's own heavenly country. A foretaste of the perfect delights of the world to come.

The Holy Spirit is also likened to the oil where-with our lamps are kept burning in this extremely dark and dangerous midnight hour. Precious God-provided oil! Just a few more years, or perhaps months, and this world may be shaken with the agonizing convulsions of earth's last awful spiritual conflict. And not long hence the midnight cry may be sounded to the remotest boundaries of the church. The wise virgins will be found ready to meet the descending Bridegroom. It will be because they have trusted in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and because they have made sure of oil in their vessels with their lamps. The foolish virgins will discover to their great sorrow and dismay that their lamps are gone out. What a fearful awakening! And what an uttermost loss! For they that were ready went in to the marriage, and the door was shut (Matt. 25:1-13).

Someone may ask, What are the requirements in order to receive the Holy Ghost? They are very simple if there is no unconfessed sin in the life. (1) An assurance of salvation through faith in Christ and His shed blood. (2) An open and honest confession of need. (3) A willing and receptive heart. Not too difficult unless made difficult by unbelief, or prejudice, or misunderstanding. The promise is to the sincere seeker. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke 11:13). Why not seek God's best? Why not invite the Holy Spirit to come in and take control? It will pay throughout time and eternity.

—Cora L. Vinal

If you have been born only once, you will die twice. If you have been born twice, you will die only once—the physical, which is just the passage into the Glory world.

Give Attention to Your Child

It takes but little to wound the tender feelings of a child. It is not the angry look and cross word only that sends the little one away in tears; but oftentimes it is neglect. What may seem to us as a very little thing, or small achievement, may be a very great thing to the child, and a notice and an encouraging word has a good and lasting effect. Your little boy has done a piece of work, and done it poorly enough to be sure, but to him it is done in the most artistic style. Do not depress his spirit by showing your disapproval, but encourage him by telling him that it does very well for a child; then kindly help him to see how he can make it still better.

You should not become so absorbed in your occupation that you cannot stop to notice the newly drawn picture. If the child's interruptions are too frequent, in kindness teach him that papa is not to be interrupted now. By all means show a deep interest in your children. Help them to see that you delight to make things pleasant for them. Do not make them feel that they are servants. Have pleasant conversations with them. Read some good story to them, or better still, tell them one; not a "fairy-tale," but something real. We have seen parents who scarcely ever spoke to their children only when reproving. Take them with you to the meeting. Take them with you, if at all convenient, when you go on your charitable errand. Take them for a drive. Take them to the woods and the fields, and there tell them of God.

Many opportunities will be afforded for you to show an interest in and appreciation for your child. Give him your attention and you will win his love and obedience and make him feel that there is freedom at home. Neglect him, treat him with indifference, and you will make his little heart cold and make him feel he is your slave.

Among the coarse and vulgar we have heard parents in provocation speak thus to their children: "Haven't you any sense?" "You are the foolishest thing I ever saw!" "I'll box your head off!" "I'll beat you to death!" "I wish you were dead!" and other like expressions. Such is awful language, but it has escaped the lips of many a parent. Before the public they like to appear gentle, mild and sweet-tempered, while in the privacy of their homes they are snarly, snappish, and cross. When it pleases God to remove one of their little ones to a more peaceful home above they mourn most bitterly; more because of remorse of conscience than from a fountain of pure love. There is, however, many a parent who longs to be tender and kind to his loved ones, but because of his bondage to the tyrannical power of an ill, impatient temper, he utters under provocation unfeeling, inhuman speech toward his little ones. In his calmer hours he weeps because of this bondage. To all such we would say, there is help for you in God. Jesus can set you free. Yield yourself to Him. He will pardon your sins and sweeten your life by His grace.

—C. E. Orr, from "The Gospel Day"

"FAITH AND VICTORY"**16-PAGE HOLINESS MONTHLY**

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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 sinful world and entire devotion to the services and will of God. Its characteristics: No discipline but the Bible, no bond of union but the love of God; and no test of fellowship but the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

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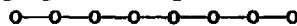
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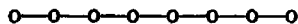
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Looking in retrospect we gratefully acknowledge God's many blessings upon us and His publishing work throughout the past year of 1969. In this new year of 1970 we are praying for and anticipate greater grace and help from God to meet the greater tests and problems we shall face. God's Word indicates that world conditions, spiritually and morally, will get worse and worse, so we must without fail put on the whole gospel armour of God in order to stand and overcome in the oncoming battles.

With the Lord's extension of time and our lives, there lies before us precious opportunities as well as solemn obligations to be at our best in the service of the Master. The past is gone forever, but the present is at our disposal. What shall we do with the time God has allotted to us? Shall we waste it in careless living for ourselves, or shall we dedicate our time and talents to the glory of God and the advancement of His cause in the earth?

Though we do not know what the future holds, yet we do know who holds the future, and we can safely follow Him.



Question for you to answer: Why are the aims and objectives of the National Council of Churches practically the same as the objectives of the American Communist Party?



Thank God for the Church that Jesus built upon the rock of eternal truth, against which the gates of hell (false creeds of men) cannot prevail. This divine organism, governed by the Holy Spirit, is both inclusive and exclusive. It includes all the saved and excludes all the sinners. Jesus Christ is the door, and all who enter by Him are saved from their sins. Their names are not written in the earth, but high up in the Lamb's book of life. Do you know that your name is written there?



The Lord has graciously added a new worker to His gospel publishing activities here in answer to prayer. For some time the Lord had been talking to Sister Joan McIntosh of Conway, Mo., about coming to help in the office, and on Jan. 10 she arrived to begin her service unto the Lord. She is readily tak-

ing hold of the work, helping in the mailing department, proof-reading and typing. Her services are certainly appreciated, and we welcome her as a co-worker in the Lord's vineyard and in the Guthrie congregation. May the Lord bless her abundantly.

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This literature ministry is primarily and essentially a work of faith in God. It is God's work and He has proved repeatedly that He can take care of His own. As "workers together" with the Lord, we are delighted in His service, and we appreciate all those who have and are faithfully supporting the literature ministry by your prayers and means. Your treasures are being laid up in heaven where your affections are centered. What you have sown you will reap in everlasting happiness.

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Reports from various sources indicate that the California State Assembly meeting at Pacoima, held Dec. 26 to Jan. 4, was indeed a time of feasting on the good Word of God, a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

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Bro. Ray Key, formerly the pastor at Kalamazoo, Mich., was united in marriage to Sister Nellie Bethel at Springfield, Ohio, on November 15, 1969. Their address is 1702 Kenton St., Springfield, Ohio 45505.

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Man feels that he has many important duties and obligations in this life, but there is one supreme duty that is more important than all others. The Wise Man summed it up in these words: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:13, 14.

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Those who have the dates for the Church of God campmeetings please send them in by Feb. 15, 1970, so we can publish the entire list in the March issue.

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More of those excellent out-of-print books that were written by the pioneer ministers of the "evening light" restoration movement will be reprinted and added to our stock as time and means permit.

Ever since its inception in 1923—47 years ago—this publication has held up those precious Bible truths which brought forth this "evening light" restoration under the labors of D. S. Warner and his associates. God preserved a "remnant" who did not compromise with the great apostasy of 1910-14, neither will they bow to the present worldly innovations which seek to enter. God is moving by His Spirit in these last days and gathering the "holy remnant" to the heights of Mt. Zion.

The workers at this gospel publishing plant are "earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints" according to the exhortation in Jude 3. We solicit your prayers that we will be steadfast, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

—Lawrence Pruitt

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(All of the above items are postpaid at prices quoted.)

FAITH PUB. HOUSE, P. O. Box 518, Guthrie, Okla. 73044

Departure of Aged Brother

A delayed report informs us Bro. Lester Hassinger of Batavia, Ohio, passed away on December 3, 1969, with a heart attack. Though aged and infirm in body, he was faithful in passing out gospel tracts and having the paper sent to whomsoever he felt would be receptive to the truth. —Editor.

WORDS OF SYMPATHY TO THE BEREAVED ONES: Well do I realize that kind words of sympathy can do but little to comfort and ease the sorrow of an aching heart when the hand of death has taken away our loved ones. And yet there is One to whom we can look in time of sorrow—whose name is "The Word of God." He is all in all to those who put their trust in Him. He can soothe every sorrow and wipe away every tear.

Sin, sorrow, sickness, bereavement and death became the common heritage of the human family when Adam and Eve disobeyed the Lord in the garden of Eden. How

very, very sad they must have been when bereavement became their unhappy lot! Sin was reigning.

But let us look at the marvels of divine grace. In our blessed Saviour today we find help in every time of need. David said his help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth. Let your hearts be comforted in the Lord, considering the exhortation in Jer. 9:23, 24, and the comforting thoughts from Rev. 14:13, and many other Scriptures. The Bible abounds in them and they were written aforetime for our comfort and consolation. Prayer is the key that unlocks that great divine storehouse of blessings.

Psalms 146:5 makes a wonderful declaration. Can we not say the same, namely, "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God." Through these comforting words may your precious bleeding hearts be blessed.

—Little Mother Ethel K. Miles

ALL-DAY MEETING NOTICE

Lord willing, on Sunday, February 15, there will be all-day services at Boley, Okla. Dinner will be served in the dining hall. All are cordially invited.

Christian love,

—Katherine Williams

CHURCH HISTORY BOOK WANTED

If anyone has the book, "When the Trumpet Sounded," by Charles E. Brown to loan or sell, please contact Bro. Ted Saltee, Inwood Road, New Burlington, Ohio 45343.

SEARCH IS SET FOR NOAH'S ARK

Dec. 31, 1969—Explorers will climb high on Turkey's Mt. Ararat next spring to retrieve from an icy prison what they believe may be the remains of Noah's Ark, the leader of the expedition said.

Harry Crawford, 35, director of field operations for the Washington-based SEARCH Foundation, Inc., said his party will attempt to remove from an ice pack above 13,000 feet elevation a "dark object" that casts a ship-like shadow when surface snow is melted.

He said tooled wood, waterproofed and in a remarkable state of preservation, has been found on both sides of the ice pack.

"Indigenous timber simply does not grow on Mt. Ararat or on any area of eastern Turkey," Crawford said.

He said airplane pilots have persistently reported seeing the shadow, shaped like a ship, and said he and another explorer also saw it from a cliff above the site. He said the object appeared to be about 450 feet long.

Workers reportedly found the prow of an ancient ship jutting from the peak when they were barricading against avalanches following an earthquake in 1840.

Explorer Marco Polo mentioned an ark near the summit of Mt. Ararat in 1300 A.D., Crawford said.

—Taken from "Okla. City Times" 12-31-69

REPORT FROM THE FIELD

Dear Saints and fellow-laborers in the Gospel: We count it a blessing and a God-given privilege to greet you again in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, thanking and praising Him for His saving and keeping grace, for keeping us saved from the power of all sin "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom

ye [the saints] shine as lights in the world." Praise God! I surely thank the Lord for salvation and for His present help in our many needs and requests we hold before Him.

We give thanks to the Lord for enabling us to attend the Hammond, La., Assembly meeting in November, for the first time. I had long desired to attend the Hammond meeting. My heart did rejoice to be there with the saints. We appreciate the warm love and hospitality of the dear saints. The Word of God was preached under the anointing of the Holy Ghost. It truly fed our souls. The singing was richly anointed. It was encouraging to hear the young saints singing praises unto the Lord. We thank the Lord for every one.

We appreciated the invitation for breakfast in the home of Bro. and Sis. Coffey, which we, (Sister Hazel Clark and I) enjoyed very much, not realizing this would be our last opportunity to be in the home with Sister Coffey. She seemed very happy during the meeting, and we enjoyed her so much, but the Lord took her Home. While at the meeting we stayed in the home of Sister Gladys Cashio who made it very comfortable for us.

Leaving Hammond, I went to Fort Lauderdale, Fla., to be in a meeting (a new field) with Sister Mattie Savage. The Lord wonderfully blessed the meeting and the attendance was good. The Lord blessed with good altar services. Bro. and Sis. H. Hargrave and the saints from Goulds, Fla., were faithful to attend the meeting, driving a hundred miles nightly to the services. Several of them were working daily. This was quite a sacrifice, but the Lord rewarded them for it by anointing the services and blessing their souls. The Lord surely showed Himself strong in that meeting. We had oppositions, but the Lord took care of that. Thank the Lord! . . . We also had street meetings while there. We were thankful for the literature that was given us from Faith Publishing House that we had to give out to hungry souls. It is our prayer that the literature will be a blessing to souls, helping them to find the Lord as their personal Saviour.

Returning home from the Florida meeting, I stopped in Alabama and was there with the saints a few days. I was happy to find the saints encouraged and happy in the Lord. He blessed in the meeting there. We met a sister minister who is looking toward Zion. She seemed sincere and wanting the truth. She desired prayer that the Lord would lead her. Do pray for her.

I wish to thank all the saints for your prayers for us while on this missionary trip. The Lord surely answered your prayers. We give Him all the praise and honor for it. Please continue to pray for me.

I returned home in time to be in the Oklahoma State Assembly meeting at Guthrie, Okla., which was a wonderful meeting. I was thankful to see all the dear saints.

Yours in His great name, —Katherine Williams

NATIVE MEXICAN MISSIONARY REPORT

Valle De La Trinidad, B. C., (Jan. 10)—To the brethren who are scattered throughout the world: May the peace of God be in your hearts. Dear brethren, we have thought and prayed to God before starting to write this letter, desiring that it might be food for all those who are working together with God in all the world.

I want to tell you that God has blessed us in the work, and the people in this place are recognizing the truth of God and are being saved each day. I know that God is touching the hearts of souls each day, so much so that the place where we meet for services will no longer hold all the people. We are praying that God might

give us a larger place. We are very contented with God because we can see that He is convicting people of their sins. And our desire is that they might be saved. We have the promise in the Word of God and it is truly for us.

My children and I always pray for my father and my brothers that they might be saved, and today we have seen that God has answered our prayer. My father is now saved, and two of my brothers who were not saved are now saved. Now there remains only two of them who are not saved, but I believe that God will give them this great salvation. My youngest brother had a car accident and the doctor said that he had a fractured skull. I was very sad and began to pray, and God spoke to me and told me that He had permitted it in order that my family might be saved, and I arose trusting in the promise of God that my brother be made whole. Another brother was saved, too, and I thank God for the love that He has for His children.

I want to thank all the brethren who have been praying for us, who have written to us, who have sent offerings, and for the Jeep which we now have—thank you! I only know that we are truly debtors to God and Him we want to serve.

I'm asking that you pray for Brother David and his wife who are waiting a call from God to know where to work. Pray also for Brother Chon.

Greetings from all the brethren in Mexico.

With Christian love, —Tomas Mendoza and family
P. O. Box 3979, San Ysidro, Calif. 92073

MESSAGE FROM MISSION IN INDIA

S. India (Jan. 1)—Beloved Bro. Pruitt and co-workers: Warm and brighter New Year greetings to all of you in the gracious name of Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2).

Your letter dated Dec. 9 reached me duly. Thank you very much for the contents. The year 1969 left us with great victory and let us exalt His name together at the dawn of a happy new year. The "Shepherd and Bishop of our souls" was good to us last year and "thanks be unto Him which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." (2 Cor. 2:14) "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15).

We trust the Lord, the Captain of our salvation, that He will take us through without fail with His powerful and good hand in the future, also that "we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:10) and to go forward with fresh vigor, increased faith and joy in the Lord in 1970.

Now we are quite busy like bees with our annual convention at Karikkom which we recently determined to conduct from January 15 to 18. We have to prepare and arrange several things as to erect a flat roof and arrange seats, etc. This time we are very glad to inform you that several youngsters and other people, including my brothers and sisters, have determined to take water baptism in obeying the will of the Lord. Praise the Lord, for He has begun to work in many souls here. Also, we wish to have the Lord's Supper after the baptism. We invite your earnest prayers for the blessings and profit of this convention and all other conventions.

We enjoyed and tasted very much the one-day fellowship at Trichur on the 14th of December. We from Karikkom, Bro. L. K. John and others from Calicut and all the believers converged at Trichur. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in

unity . . . for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for ever more." Psalm 133.

Next week I wish to attend a convention at Challiserry which is far away from my place.

I wish you all a prosperous and progressive new year.
Your younger Brother in Christ, —John Varghese

GREETING FROM NIGERIAN PASTOR

Midwest Nigeria (Jan. 5)—Dear Bro. Pruitt: Greetings in the holy name of the Baby born in Bethlehem to you and all the saints of the Church of God throughout the land who labored tirelessly and faithfully for the Master in the year 1969 in the task of soul-winning. There is a promise of reward for soul-winners—Psa. 126:5, 6: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Thank you for your letter dated 9th December, 1969, contents of which were noted. We are well and marching on spiritually. We are indeed grateful to God for hearing our prayers and attending to our needs. Of a truth, he has kindled a fire of revival which is burning here with great intensity. Praise Him! . . .

We are praying the war to end to allow for free movements for spreading the gospel of Christ to those still held in the prison of Satan. We shall forever follow the great commission as recorded in Matthew 28:19 despite difficulties and disappointments which are bound to arise. . . . We are not to go empty-handed to the Saviour. As the chorus in a song has it: "Must I go and empty-handed? Must I meet my Saviour so? Not one soul with which to greet Him? Must I empty handed go?" God forbid that we shall fail in this commission.

Faithfully yours in Him, —Titus U. E. Enu

MISSION REPORTS FROM NIGERIA BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR ENDED ON JAN. 12

Under date of Dec. 31, 1969, Bro. B. U. Etuk, who is overseer of the 20 mission stations of the Church of God in the Southeast State (Biafra) of Nigeria, sends the season's greetings to the Church in America.

In his message on Sunday, Dec. 14, 1969, which was the last day of their annual convention, Bro. Etuk assured his hearers, among whom were representatives from most of the 20 mission stations, that "I will continue to call upon the American saints . . . to rise up and aid us in a once-for-all liberation of this zone for Christ. By this I mean sending to us the tools for this arduous task and a resident missionary. I am convinced that God will take the case to their hearts and that they will do their best."

Enclosed with Bro. Etuk's letter was a detailed report of the 3-day annual convention in December written by the mission secretary, Bro. Nse Umanah. Evidently this convention was very profitable. Pastors J. U. Etuk and A. J. Ubaha baptized 156 members—78 by each. Eleven elders and seven deacons were ordained. The Lord's Supper was served to the attendance of more than 2,500.

Under date of Jan. 8, 1970, Bro. J. U. Etuk, pastor of the Church of God mission at Ikot Ezen in Southeastern Nigeria, writes the following:

"Dear Bro. Lawrence: 'Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.' Psa. 149:1. Thank you for your encouraging letter of Dec. 17, received on the 26, and the contents of U. S. currency . . . to aid me and my family in the gospel work here."

On the same date this faithful pastor made an appeal for funds to repair his Honda 125 motorcycle which has been out of service and in need of repair for two and one-half years. Lord willing, this special need will be supplied from the Missionary Fund at this office in the very near future.

Bro. M. U. Ekpene, pastor of the Uyo district in southeastern Nigeria, wrote on Dec. 31, 1969, and enclosed a summary of the year's mission activities in that area. During the year the number of members increased from 469 to 621. Engaged in mission work at several stations were 23 elders and 15 deacons. Their special project in this district was the maintenance of an Orphans' Home. At the time of writing 108 orphans were registered, and more were coming in as the tragic results of the civil war which ended, thank the Lord, on Jan. 12, 1970. Food to feed these orphans was hard to obtain, and Bro. Ekpene made desperate appeals to various sources for help. In fact, this office sent a request to the International Red Cross in Geneva, Switzerland, to rush relief supplies to this particular Orphans' home.

Two and a half years ago the eruption of the civil war in Nigeria cut off our communication with the 20 Church of God mission stations located in Biafra, the rebel territory in southeastern Nigeria. About eight months ago communications were restored when the Federal troops liberated the area of the mission stations. From the believers came tragic reports of suffering with appeals for special prayer for God to intervene and end the war. Since the rebel section was blockaded, starvation, malnutrition and disease took a terrible toll in the dense population. Now we rejoice with much thanksgiving to God that the war officially ended on Jan. 15, but the hundreds of believers still need prayer and help in this trying period of reconstruction. A newsman on the battle-ground eight days after the war reports through United Press: "The people who once bore the name of Biafrans cannot possibly bury their millions of dead, and the rotting bodies pile up by the thousands in the scorching sun . . . what I saw was unbelievable poverty . . . men in rags, women fearing attack, children with stomachs bloated." Biafran money is now worthless and it cannot buy food for the starving. Only by touching God on His throne through prayer can we help these suffering people. Saints, let us pray earnestly for their temporal and spiritual welfare in this great tragedy.

The Church of God native missionaries are still pleading for resident missionaries from America. Who will respond to the call of God and say "Here am I, send me"?

Prayer Requests

Minn.—Bro. E. J. Kirchner is in a nursing home now and he desires continued prayer.

Pa.—"Ulcers, diabetes, nervous spasms, arthritis." —Rebecca Honse.

Calif.—"Sister E. M. Zinn is very low" with dropsy. Do pray God to relieve her suffering. —Sis. Ruby Stover

Ind.—"My son has a nervous condition. . . . He needs to work." —Sister Mae Hill.

Kansas—Sister Naomi Hiebert has a hernia and is very nervous.

Ill.—Sis. Pitts has sinus trouble and bad eyes. Her son has stomach trouble and a growth close to the spine.

Texas—"Request prayer for me." —Sister Ever Batts

Calif.—"Sis. La Verne Manuel was too ill with the flu and cough to be out to services Sunday so Bro. and

Sis. O. B. Wilson came to help (at Pomona)." Remember Sister La Verne in prayer.

Ga.—Sister Nelson is not well and Sister Bowers has a hurting in her side.

A person wrote that she desired to be saved. Earnestly pray for this soul.

Ohio—"I've been having pressure in the top of my head." Sister Carter is seeking God to heal her aged mother. She has pneumonia after having strokes. —Sister Maudie Sharp.

Okla.—"Please tell everyone to pray for my mother, Mrs. Florence Gassett. She has been real sick for some time and she wanted me to write to you saints for prayer."

Ala.—Dear Ones: I received your tracts and was happy to get them. Enclosed is \$1.00 for them.

After I wrote for the tracts I entered my 22-year-old son (my only son) in the hospital. My heart aches as I write this letter. The diagnosis was Hodgkins Disease, so you can see why I am upset.

You don't know me or my son but I believe you know Jesus. Will you pray for God to touch his body and heal him? I know God is able to heal. I need lots of prayer for my faith to grow stronger. It was such a shock to us all. He has never been ill and weighs 212 pounds.

My husband is in bad health. He is 52 years old and has had two heart attacks. This grief over our son has caused his chest to hurt badly. Please pray. I will deeply appreciate the prayers of everyone there. Thank you, and may God bless everyone.

Sincerely,

—Mrs. James Harland

Pray earnestly for a soul who had a good experience when a teenager but became discouraged through some things she saw and drifted far from God. Now since she is married and older she says she can't find the love she knows it takes to love God supremely. She feels desperate. She wants to be saved.

Continue to remember our dear Bro. and Sis. Barton. There are others who are still brave soldiers of the cross. They are steadily and firmly trusting God for their healing. How wonderful it is to see these dear ones letting their light shine out through their steady faith in God. One Brother was ill and someone said, "I am going to pray for your faith." He said, "You don't need to pray for my faith, because if I didn't have faith in God I would get the best physician and be treated." He was waiting with faith for the answer to come in God's time. Be encouraged, dear ones. It is God's will to heal us. Read the Word and it will build up your faith into active faith. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17) "Beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." Jude 1:20, 21.

We thank God for those we have heard from telling how God has heard and answered prayer. It does our hearts good and causes us to rejoice to hear about God working today in a world of unbelief and wickedness. Be encouraged in our God. He is real and is a living God to those who seek after Him. —Sister Marie Miles

The only reason we do not hear of more people being possessed with devils now is that there is not enough spiritual power and discernment among the professed followers of Christ to detect and expose the devil.

—D. O. Teasley

"Most of our troubles are pulled from the past or borrowed from the future." —Alice Cole.

From The Mail Box . . .

Okla.—To "Faith and Victory:" Wife and I left Lakeland, Fla., on Sept. 3, 1969, and flew from Tampa to Oklahoma City to come to the Golden Rule Home at Shawnee, Okla. I, Fred Cook, was suffering a bad case of depression and malnutrition, down to 119 pounds. In about thirty days I weighed 140 pounds, and felt a revival of spirit and happiness. Praise the Lord! My dear wife, Alice L. Cook, was suffering a nervous breakdown and was extremely nervous. I am happy to say at this time of writing her nerves and health are much better. We are happy and healthy. Thank God! I am eighty-eight, and my dear wife is ninety-two.

We would like to see every Church of God campground in the country have a home for the aged saints of God, a home for the blind, a home for the handicapped, a home for the retarded and unwanted children. Jesus said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Let the Church of God be the one to do it and the blessings of God will follow. . . .

We are happy and hope to travel to our journey's end in loving fellowship of the saints of God at the Golden Rule Home. May God bless the "Faith and Victory," and Bro. Smith and all the Golden Rule Home residents.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

—Fred and Alice Cook

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

Oregon—Dear Sister Marie: I am glad I am able to greet you again in this new year in the precious name of Jesus whom I love so much and who did so much for me.

I want to send some more money to help in this great gospel work. I do hope and pray it will be the means of saving many souls. Oh, how we need to do everything we can to help get souls saved! I feel that time is closing up for all of us. We are in the last days when sin is abounding everywhere. The devil is surely reaping a large harvest. Oh, I hope and pray that dear souls will wake up. The Lord will not always strive with man. So many of my dear children are not saved. Do pray with me for them.

—Sister O. K. Myers

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Oklahoma—Dear Sister Marie: We appreciate your prayers. We are thankful to be saved and know the Lord gives us grace. . . . —Joy Williams

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N. Mex.—Keep praying for us. . . . Jesus has suffered so much for me and I'll never have to suffer as He did, so it comforts me to know that He cares for us and has suffered all. . . . We are here at Papa Weir's and he is very good to us. . . . I was glad to get the "Faith and Victory" paper and I could hardly wait to read it. . . . Keep praying for us. —Viola Weir.

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Md.—Dear Saints: I would like to receive the four-ounce sample of gospel tracts, also a price list of the books you have. I enjoy the "Faith and Victory" paper. Sincerely,

—Yolande Blackburn

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

Arkansas—Greetings to all the dear workers at the Print Shop: This is another wonderful day that the Lord has made for us to enjoy. Oh, how good it is to have our all on the altar for God! The Lord is so good to me and kept me safe through all this cold, ice and snow. He supplies all my needs in every way.

The days are not long and lonely. I pray, read and sing, and do the few things that need to be done. I

write letters, too, and soon the day is gone. God is watching and blessing.

I enjoy the "Faith and Victory" paper, and hearing from so many of the dear saints. Enclosed is an offering to help send the gospel to all the world. Pray for me as I do for you each one. May God bless you.

—Sister N. E. Adams

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

Pa.—Dear Sister Marie, greetings in Jesus' dear name: Thank the Lord for saving and keeping me. I am so glad there are still saints who will stand for the whole truth.

Mother is doing pretty well for her age. She gets real hot spells in her head, then she has to lie down. She is still crocheting afghans.

An offering is enclosed. May God bless all you do there for Him. May He give you wisdom to write the things that are needed most.

Please pray for my unsaved loved ones. This new year is all fresh and new and another opportunity to work for our Lord. I pray God will help me to reach more souls this year.

In His service, —Dona Campbell and Eva Cox

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

Penn.—Dear Friends: I enjoy your "Faith and Victory" paper very much, so please send your paper to this address for three years for one dollar.

—Mrs. Grover Wareham

Testimonies and Answers To Prayer



Illinois—Dear Saints: Just a few lines to let you know how the Lord heard and answered prayer for my husband Arthur after I phoned the other morning. The pain in his chest began to let up in perhaps half an hour, and he just kept getting better until about noon he got ready and went to Decatur—alone. It hasn't bothered him any more. I am so thankful for the good way God cares for us and I so appreciate the kindness and love the saints have one for the other. I can't walk yet, but almost. I bear some weight on my limb now. Thank you for your prayers. May God bless you all.

—Vivian McClain

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Calif.—Dear Saints: Greetings of Christian love in Jesus' precious name. I am thankful to be saved and sanctified, and I am pressing my way from earth to Glory. Dear ones, I have fully counted the cost and made up my mind to make heaven my eternal Home. As I consecrate my life more fully to God, I am learning His ways. I have found that God wants us to live faithful lives in order to be vessels in His hands to use in bringing other souls into the kingdom.

Prov. 11:30 tells us that the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life and he that winneth souls is wise. Dear ones, let us all be wise in God's sight. We are living in the last evil days; therefore, what we are going to do for God, we must do in a hurry. All of us should be able to see the abundance of wickedness and calamities, and also the signs that Jesus is coming soon. We are living in the midst of the signs of the end of time that Jesus revealed to His disciples in Matt. 24. Let us as saints of God be faithful and obedient to the Word of God. We could not have been redeemed from sin had it not been for the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Matt. 26:39 tells us that He went a little farther and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this

cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." This offering is sufficient to redeem the whole world if they will to be redeemed. Praise the Lord!

Dear saints of God, pray for me that I consecrate and dedicate my life more fully to God and live so close to Him that I can hear His still voice and forever do His will. I want to live a life so I can be used in God's vineyard anywhere He sees fit. —Bro. Robert Sherman

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Mo.—Dear Ones: I am filled with much gratitude to the Lord for all His precious blessings to me throughout the past year. It has been one of many trials, but they have all led to victory. I feel unworthy of all He does for me.

My family has really been an encouragement to me and I feel very fortunate to have a Christian home and teachings. To see them striving each day for a closer communion with God makes me try harder, too. I feel very weak and insufficient within myself, but I know God does help me and will continue to do so. I want to consecrate my life fully to Him and open my heart to His complete will. I see each day some way in which I can move up in my life.

I have a real burden for the young people, especially those who don't know the joy and contentment of a Christian life. Pray that I can, in some way, be a help and encouragement to them. I truly do appreciate those who have given their hearts to God. I thank God for their lives and pray that each will draw closer to the Lord every day.

It is my desire to be a blessing in this life and to make heaven my home. Pray that I will know God's will for my life. —Jeanie Allen

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La.—Dear Bro. Pruitt: Greetings of love in the name of Jesus to you and to all the readers of the "Faith and Victory." I would like to take this opportunity to express my most sincere and heartfelt thanks and appreciation to everyone who helped to make my Christmas so memorable. The cards, letters, and gifts have filled my cup to overflowing, and no words that I could write would be able to express the joy I received in hearing from old and new friends. You just can't imagine how I look forward to December each year to send and receive Christmas cards, to hear from the saints scattered near and far, and see how the Lord has blessed them during the past year. Truly, I thank God for each and every one of you, not only for your remembrances at Christmas time, but also for your continued prayers throughout the year. Many are the times the Lord has blessed my spirit with thoughts of the saints praying in my behalf. And the strength of this itself has seen me through many trying situations and temptations. My continual prayer is that each of you will be blessed in a special way.

Today, January 7, marks the anniversary of my fourth year here in Angola. It has been a time of much trials and testings. But I am glad to say that never before has my determination been greater to keep pressing on. There are times when I long for a return to the serenity I had while being on death row. Some might think this a foolish statement, but when one is looking at death as a neighbor, you find a certain amount of peace and contentment that you otherwise do not have. Bro. Carver used to tell me that my real trials and testings would come after I was released from death row, and at the time I found it hard to take him seriously. But the months and years have proved him correct. And yet, I can't say that I would change things, because the Lord means more to me with each passing day no matter how

hard the pressure. The valleys and the hills are simply a process of our growing. If we stay with the Lord, we know that never do we walk alone because we have His assurance that He will not leave us nor forsake us. To recall these promises is indeed comforting. If I had one wish, it would be to always measure up to what the Lord would have of me. In this I covet your continued and fervent prayers.

My work here at the hospital is progressing well. I truly thank the Lord for the opportunity to work in this job. I enjoy my work. My living conditions are of the best here in the prison. One matter that might be of interest is something that happened to me several months ago. The equipment assigned to my office was all up-to-date and gave good service. The one exception to this was my typewriter. I don't believe there was a more deplorable typewriter anywhere in the whole world. Since a good 50 per cent of my work requires typing, it stands to reason that I must have a machine that does not break down all the time. Inmates are allowed to have their own personal typewriters. I considered the purchase of my own machine. I went ahead on this, but for a reason I found myself blocked in getting the kind of machine to suit my needs. It puzzled me because I had prayed about it, and I knew the Lord knew my needs in this matter. Then about two weeks later my boss came down to my office pushing a stretcher, and on the stretcher was a new IBM electric typewriter. It really thrilled me to see the Lord work in this. It seemed like such a small matter, but even here He took care of me.

One huge disappointment was the reversal of approval on my having a tape recorder. My heart had filled to the brim at the thought of finally being able to receive sermons and gospel music. The machine itself had even arrived when suddenly it was denied. The hurt has been long lasting, but I know the Lord had a reason, and I am trusting to His judgment in the matter. Maybe, if we would all make it a matter of prayer we could find that permission would once again be granted. I know that He can work, and I am expecting Him to do just that. Praise His name!

My mother is much better, although she still has recurring attacks of her illness. It has been two years since last she had been to Louisiana for a visit, and my prayer is that later on in the year her health will permit her to make a short visit south.

Copies of the "Faith and Victory" are distributed to the inmates each month, as well as a few Sunday School lessons. And I can assure you that they are well received. May I also mention that it is our fond desire to have a chapel built to hold worship services in. At present we have no building set aside for the purpose of worship. But the future looks bright toward this end, and we are in prayer that within a year we can break ground on a chapel. Please remember these efforts in your prayer, too.

In closing, let me again express my thanks and appreciation for all that you have done for me. There is a certain amount of loneliness living in a place like this. And, as I said before, many are the times when this loneliness is comforted with thoughts of your love and prayers for me. May God strengthen us all on this journey through life, and bless us with increased faith to final victory in the name of Jesus.

Your Brother in Christ, —Wayne Turner

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"You can never do a kind deed too soon because you never know how soon it will be too late."

JESUS SET ME FREE

For ten years of my life I was an alcoholic. There is always some excuse for being one. Mine was that I needed a drink to help settle my nerves so I could sleep after a hard day's work. The drink grew bigger until it almost destroyed me, soul, mind, and body.

Then one Sunday afternoon I looked into the mirror at myself and simply said, "Lord, this stuff is ruining me, help me never to want it again." And it was done, just that simple. I have never wanted or touched it again.

However, I still smoked three packs of cigarettes a day and I was still a sinner. It was about two years later that several of my relatives invited me to go to church with them, but I was already a church member, and many of the members of my church did the same things that I did, so I was not interested in changing churches.

God had His way and finally one Sunday afternoon I called one of my nieces and they came and took me to their church. I will never forget that last Sunday night in June of 1955. The minister's text was, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman at the Well." Praise God, I met the Man of Galilee, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

As that little group of Christians knelt at the altar and prayed with me, Jesus completely changed my life. He removed all desire of wrong and evil habits. I was born of the Spirit, washed in His Blood, and my name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life in heaven.

I never knew Jesus would forgive all sin until that night, almost fourteen years ago, but I had a glorious experience in my soul, and it still lives within my heart today.

When I said, "Jesus, forgive me of every wrong and evil thing I have ever said or done, be merciful to me a sinner, come into my heart and give me complete assurance that all my sins are forgiven; save my soul, and help me to live for You by Your grace," praise the Lord, He did just that.

He will do the same for you if you are sincere and honest about it. My dear friends, our only weapon against evil is the Word and Spirit of God.

The Scripture tells us that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that He will not dwell in an unclean temple. This is why we must be born again. Jesus Christ died on the Cross and gave us a choice. I have made my choice. What about you? —Mrs. Mary James

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Abhor That Which Is Evil

Dear Saints, greetings: I am so happy that I love the Lord and I know He loves me. He has been so good to me that I want to love and obey Him in every way. He said if we loved Him we would keep His words.

I am 62 years old and have never taken a drop of medicine, for the Lord has been my Healer. I've had very little sickness in my life, and I am grateful to Him for health, but more thankful for salvation and the Holy Spirit that reveals many things to my heart, helping me to be ready at His coming. Oh, if sinners could only realize the awfulness of going into eternity unprepared, and make the necessary preparation!

Jesus said as it was in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, so shall it be in the end of time. Those same conditions are existing today, and wickedness

is increasing so rapidly that we know the end cannot be far off. Just read this statement: "Experts fear that alcoholism is engulfing women at an unprecedented rate." Female alcoholics are increasing in number rapidly and their ungodly dress is an abomination to God and to our souls.

Modern dress is an evil—a very great evil. We are told in Rom. 12:9 to abhor that which is evil. I believe if one realizes a thing is evil and abhors it, he is going to stay away from it and not have anything to do with it. We cannot keep just a certain distance behind the world and please the Lord. As the world gets farther away from the right and the hemline climbs higher, the distance between saint and sinner should be wider. I fear too many have left the mark where it was before the style for raising the hemline began.

Dear ones, let us take heed to ourselves that we please the Lord and not ourselves or to be seen of men. May we be very careful to obey the words of the Master. He tells us not to love the world. May we have a greater love for all things that pertain to life eternal.

—Mrs. A. E. Flynn

Was The Devil Ever in Heaven?

By Ostis B. Wilson

(Part Six, continued from last issue)

Revelation 20:1-3

Now let us look at Rev. 20:1-3. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

Here we have the binding of the dragon for a thousand years, etc. Note: it says he laid hold on the dragon. It is the dragon under consideration here. This dragon is identical with the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns of Rev. 12. The fact that it said "the dragon" proves it is referring to something with which we have already been made acquainted. Otherwise, it would have said "a dragon" and have given a description of him to identify him. Therefore we conclude there is only one dragon considered throughout the book of Revelation and "the dragon" of Rev. 20 is the same as the dragon of Rev. 12 which has already been discussed and identified at considerable length.

Rev. 20:1-3 is identical with the 12th chapter of Revelation and reviews the same period and conditions under different symbols. The binding of the dragon and casting him down into the pit is identical with his being cast out of heaven or his high, exalted position in the hearts and minds of the people of the religious world. Jesus spoke of this same thing when He said in Luke 10:18, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

The angel which came down from heaven properly represents the whole ministry of the early church who worked in such close contact with Christ through the Spirit and in such unison with each other that they properly stand together as one unified body that could be represented by one angel. The chain in his hand is the unbreakable chain of truth which exposes every false thing.

The works of the devil and all his false doctrines and religions can only live in darkness because he is the ruler of the darkness of this world. Truth is light. Light dispels darkness. When darkness is dispelled and the evil works of darkness and the devil are exposed they have no power to operate any more, hence, it is said this false system of religion (the dragon) was bound.

The dragon (paganism, heathenism, idolatrous worship) was overthrown and bound through the earnest, faithful work of the early church in getting the soul-enlightening truth to the world. Truth in the hands of Michael and His angels (Christ and His ministers) prevailed. The glorious triumphs of the early church continued until about A. D. 270 when the overthrow of the dragon power in a general sense seemed to be complete. However, about this time there began a decline in spirituality among the children of God which opened the way for a great apostasy and the falling away which finally led to the establishment of the Papal system about A.D. 530.

When the devil saw his first agent of deception (the dragon) was defeated and cast down, he just quickly changed his clothes, so to speak, and took on a Christian garb which he wore in the Papal system and continued right on with his work of deception and spiritual destruction but by means of a different agent. Note, it was the dragon (the system) and not the devil himself which was bound, cast out, etc., for the devil continued his work right on in the beast of Rev. 13 and he is the dominating spirit of Papalism as well as Paganism.

The Papacy was given power to continue 42 months.—Rev. 13:5. Counting 30 days to the month this would be 1260 days. Prophetic time was reckoned on the basis of a day for a year which would give us 1260 years that the Papacy was to continue.

Reckoning from the time set by most of the church fathers and historians for the beginning of the spiritual decline (A.D. 270) and continuing on ahead to the time of the Martin Luther Reformation when the power of the Papacy was broken (A.D. 1530) we have exactly 1260 years. However, if we reckon from the time of the complete establishment of the Papal system in Rome in A.D. 530 (the decline was more or less gradual and the Catholic Hierarchy was not fully established immediately, but over a period of about 260 years) and continue ahead from that date to the time of the Martin Luther Reformation (A.D. 1530) we have exactly 1000 years which was the time the dragon was to be bound.

This does not mean that the Martin Luther Reformation was a revival of Paganism but through

it the Papacy as a supreme religious power was broken and the devil thus exposed again in his work of deception revived the old dragon or Pagan system in a little different form and this began to be manifest soon after the Luther Reformation in the forms of Spiritualism, Christian Science, Free Masonry, and many others and it has been increasing all the time. And it appears now that it may reach its grand climax in the communistic powers that are spreading so fast over the earth at this time.

If we understand that there have been three major systems of false religion in the earth, Paganism, Papalism, and Protestantism, in that order, and operating one at a time and the spirit of the devil predominant in all of them changing from one to another as the power of each was broken by the power of God and His truth and that now in the last days they are all three operating in the world at the same time, all of these different things will not be hard to understand clearly.

Now for a brief reference to verse 4 of Rev. 20—"And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Note, it was not people upon this earth at all that is referred to here but the souls of them that had been beheaded (the martyrs of Jesus) in paradise. This was the company that "loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. 12:11. This is the same thing referred to in Rev. 12:5 which says, "And her child was caught up to God and to His throne."

This was that glorious company of converts who were not accounted worthy to live on the earth because of their faith in Christ; but were persecuted unto death. But as they were put to death down here their souls ascended up to God. The victorious reign of the church, God's true people, down here was cut off because they were not permitted to live here during that time so the scene shifts from earth to paradise where they did live on and reigned with Christ during the thousand years of the dark ages (A.D. 530 to A.D. 1530) when the Papacy reigned supreme and the dragon was bound.

The thousand years does not measure the duration of their reign at all. It did not end at that time. They are still living and reigning with Christ in paradise and will continue to live and reign with Him eternally in heaven. But with the coming of the Luther Reformation, the truth of "justification by faith" in God was restored and salvation work on a general scale began again and the people of God, His church, was again restored to that victorious, triumphant life upon the earth, so the scene shifts back down here where the work of salvation is being carried on and just leaves this grand company to continue their reign with Christ in paradise.

—O. B. Wilson

(To be concluded in the next issue, and then the entire series on this subject will be printed and made available at this office in booklet form.—Editor)

An Age-Old Question Answered

"Young preacher, I have called you to come and tell me about the glory that awaits me as my time has about come for me to leave this world. I want to hear again what I am to expect in death."

"Now, Grandma, you have fooled your relatives and friends many times when they thought you were about to die. You will be all right again soon."

"I know that soon it will be my time to go, so tell me about the angels that came and took Lazarus, the beggar, to Abraham's bosom when he died. (Luke 16:22) Tell me what I may expect in death."

"Well, now you are asking an age-old question. In the seminary from which I graduated we had many discussions about death. Some thought one fell into a state of unconsciousness and others spoke about how it was way up in history before the Jews thought about resurrection. Now, some scientists say —"

Grandma raised her hand. "Young man, I don't want to know what man thinks or says. I want to know what the Bible says. That is the only thing that counts. God's Word will stand when this old world is on fire. I don't believe in the old "ice-box" theory that when one dies he will be frozen for thousands and thousands of years. Read to me where Jesus told the penitent thief on the cross, 'Today, thou shalt be with me in paradise.' Read where Jesus told Martha, when her brother had died, 'I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?' (John 11:25) Read where Jesus told the disciples, 'In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.' (John 14:2, 3) Now, Preacher, when I die I will be in paradise at rest with the Lord, waiting for the general resurrection and final reward. Oh, the glory that waits those who are saved and ready to meet their God! My soul rejoices in the Lord and the glory from heaven is rolling over my soul. Soon I'll be in the presence of my Lord. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.' (1 Cor. 2:9, 10) Young preacher, you had better get filled with the Spirit of God and let the Holy Spirit teach you and not be listening to what man says. You had better be telling sinner folks to get godly sorrow and repent of their sins, so they will be ready to meet their God, because as death finds them, so will the judgment. There are just two appointments that everybody has to keep. The Bible tells us: 'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.' (Heb. 9:27) They die and the soul goes to that waiting place in paradise until the trump shall sound and time is no more."

"The dead will all arise. (1 Thess. 4:13-18) Jesus said, 'Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.' (John 5: 28, 29) The souls of those who are saved at death will go to paradise and be with the Lord waiting until the general resurrection, but those who have done evil and die in that state will be as the rich man Jesus told about. He said, 'In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments,' and he saw Abraham who was in a place of rest and comfort. There he saw the beggar, Lazarus, in his bosom quietly resting. The poor rich man said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But he said to him, 'There is a great gulf between you and us, so that no one can pass from here to you, neither can they pass to us, that would come from there. (Luke 16:19-31). Now, preacher, the Bible tells us the answer to that age-old question as to where we will go. Now you better get filled with God's Word and not with what man says, or you might miss heaven yourself."

"Grandma, you asked me to come and help you, but you have helped me, and I will do as you have said. Will you pray for me?"

The above supposed conversation answers the age-old question by the Bible as to what takes place at death which all of us will meet one of these days. Death is a passage and a translation. There is no state of unconsciousness, but instant crossing. I have been by the bedside of a number who knew everything right up to the last. They knew they were dying, but it only meant being with Jesus to them. The Apostle Paul tells us plainly that in death we are "absent from the body" and instantly "present with the Lord." (1 Cor. 5:8) Elijah and Moses appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration and conversed with our Lord. (Matt. 17:13; 1 Pet. 1:16-21.) This proves that the dead are active and are living and that they entered into that life in a single moment, at the time of death. Just so in a moment the wicked enter into torments and are active there.

We need to take what God says and not what man tries to reason out and tell us. —Sis. M. Miles

"It Is Well With My Soul"

H. G. Spafford was a wealthy Chicago merchant. One night his warehouses burned to the ground and the next morning found Mr. Spafford poking around the smoldering ruins, realizing that he had lost his principal wealth in that fire. After a while, a messenger came to him and handed him a cable. He read, "Saved, but alone," and under it the signature of his wife. Naturally he was filled with consternation, for his wife and two children had gone to Europe only ten days before. His worst fears were realized as he went into the streets and bought a newspaper and

there read that the ship on which his family had sailed had sunk off the coast of England.

With sudden intoxication of sorrow, he realized that his wife had escaped but the two darlings of their hearts had been lost. Crushed by this blow, beside which his financial losses seemed as nothing, he went back to his home to cry out his heart before God; for Mr. Spafford was a Christian and took his God with him into his grief. Soon the sunshine of God's love shone through his sorrow and flooded his mind and soul. After a bit, he went to his desk and there penned the lines:

"When peace like a river attendeth my way;
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul."

Then he pointed to the wells of salvation from which flowed through his being this confidence and peace:

"Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul."

"My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought—
My sin—not in part but the whole
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!"

—Selected by Sister Vera Forbes

Question and Answer

Question: What did Jesus mean in Matt. 9:13 where He said He would have mercy and not sacrifice?

Answer: Consider a moment what a sacrifice is and why it is needed. If mankind had been guilty of no wrong-doing, he would have needed no sacrifice, for that was the purpose and intent of the sacrifice in the first place, to take away or atone for sins already committed. Of what benefit was the entire process to God? He did not particularly want His innocent animals destroyed, nor did He want the sin committed and the man defiled to begin with! By extending a part of Himself—mercy—He could reach back to the source of sin and remove the cause in men's lives so that literal sacrifice need not be practiced any longer. In His mercy toward fallen and sinful mankind, He made the perfect sacrifice once and for all, by the offering of His own dear Son that men might be made free from sin in-so-much that they need not sin any longer. John the Baptist began the proclamation of the good news that reaches even to us today. (See Matt. 3:1-12.) The combination of repentance and forgiveness is far superior to the old custom of sin and sacrifice.

In the text of Matt. 9:10-13, where Jesus was associating with publicans and sinners and was accordingly accused by the Pharisees, it could do nothing else but expose their lack of spiritual understanding, for where would one expect to find a Saviour except among those He was seeking to save? When

they could comprehend His mission upon earth it would become clear to them why He was willing to mix and mingle with folks who needed what He had to offer. He plainly taught in verse 12 that it was those who are in trouble who need help. The Pharisee who accused was just as much in need as the publicans, but the Pharisee would not own and acknowledge his need, therefore the Saviour could not impart to him the help he needed. —C. W. Wilson

Are You a Wide-Awake Prayer Warrior?

Prayer is, of course, one of the most effective ways of administering the victory of Calvary, and it is one of the two tasks to which the apostles gave themselves (Acts 6:4). You can be sure that it will be hindered and assailed from all quarters. Who has not gone apart to pray and found his mind to go blank or be flooded with temporal or distracting thoughts? Some, on the other hand, fall asleep while at prayer. Again, it is surprising what a lot of things you remember that you have to do when you decide to pray! Have you ever associated these hindrances with the powers of evil? Do you realize that they can interfere in your prayer life?

I always associate the devil with that sluggish, helpless night which the disciples spent near our Lord on the eve of Calvary, when reprovingly He said to them, "Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, lest . . ." I think the devil must have caused them to sleep when they should have been vigilant and supporting the Lord in His conflict. The incident at least shows the advantage of fellowship in watching and prayer.

Here and there we find souls who are so eager to pray that they wear themselves out in battle. They allow the devil to press them beyond the measure of the Spirit, as their physical collapse indicates. With most of us, however, there is a grave lack in prayer. If we understood the wide range of administrative power that prayer offers, we would pursue it to its limits and press the battle to the gates. Let us remember that talking and writing about prayer is not praying. The devil does not care how much we discuss and applaud the subject, so long as we do not pray. A book on how to pray is good, but the best and only way to learn to pray is to do it.

Place yourself at God's disposal as a PRAYER. Study as much to pray as to preach. Be ready to cooperate with God for the deliverance of some of the captive souls and see what happens. You will no longer wonder if there are forces to contend with other than flesh and blood. You will know, and in knowing you will understand that unless these satanic powers are reckoned with, you are not going to get the answer you need.

People who have discovered the value of prayer know that they will be assailed from every quarter and in every quarter, and they know it to be worth while to guard their power to pray more than anything else. How easy it is to lose the spirit of

prayer! The Holy Spirit of God is so easily checked and grieved on our part that sometimes without our knowing it our ability to pray is gone. We may not know it until we kneel to pray or are faced with some situation demanding immediate dealing with God, but such powerlessness soon reveals itself.

The thing to remember is that the devil is probably more concerned with hindering prayer than anything else. Therefore, he schemes to get us to take ever so little a step "out of the Spirit." A wrong look, a feeling of resentment, a hasty word, some apparently trifling thing, and the line of communication is interrupted. A relatively little thing can rob us of our power to pray and our ability to believe. —F. J. Perryman

The Tongue

The tongue can be an awful curse
For not a man can tame it;
If you can think of something worse,
I'm listening; you name it!

Saint James defines it as a fire,
The fire of hell, remember,
Which kindles quite a bit of ire
Affecting every member.

With it is blessed the God above,
With it is cursed His people;
With it are sung the songs of love
That reach the church's steeple.

Through it great sermons pierce the air,
Proclaiming God's salvation;
And yet it's used by those who dare
To court their own damnation!

The tongue has caused great men to fail,
And hampered scores of others;
It's brought remorse and bitter wail
To children, dads, and mothers.

The tongue can scatter cheer abroad
Or fill the world with sorrow;
Its use by people who defraud
Can cloud a man's tomorrow.

It often severs friend from friend,
Creating untold sadness;
Or, to a quarrel brings an end,
Restoring healthful gladness.

It all depends upon the heart
Which sets the tongue in motion;
For there is where the troubles start,
And where begins devotion.

—Charlie Greene

"When I am weary I do not try to pray;
I only shut my eyes, and wait
To hear what God will say."

"Happiness is not always in doing what you like to do, but in learning to like what you have to do." —Beulah Harmon