

FAITH ^{AND} VICTORY

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Celebrating The Birth of Christ

While those about are in the din
Of gifts at Christmas time;
While "Peace on earth, good will t'ward men"
Rolls out the ancient chime;

Oh, let us pause in solemn thought
And ponder earnestly,
And ask ourselves if this we ought
Involved, engaged to be.

If Christmas means the birth of Christ:
Our King and Lord of all,
(We deem His worth so highly priced
To heed His loving call.)

The greatest gift one can bestow
Finds not its price in gold,
But rather what his heart can show
In deeds of love untold.

Unrighteous mammon cannot buy
True riches that we need:
Eternal dwellings in the sky
For which the heart doth plead.

A token of one's love sincere
Need not expensive be;
No need to plunge in debt severe
The love of Christ to see.

Pull back your lavish spending, know
As Christ has wisely said
That life is not vain riches' show
But love and joy instead.

Rejoice in Him this Christmas day,
And love your fellow man;
Reach out your helping hand and pray,
And do the best you can.

Just celebrate the Saviour's birth
As He would want you to
By magnifying His great worth
Of hope and gladness new!

—Leslie C. Busbee

A Brief History of Christmas

December 25 has not always, since the time of Christ, been celebrated as the birthday of our Savior. According to history, there was in earlier times, no strict uniformity in the day for celebrating the Nativity, the different churches disagreeing as to the exact date. Some favored January 2, some January 6, some celebrated May 20, while others fixed the date on April 18 or 19, and still others on March 28. The uncertainty existing in the minds of the historians at the beginning of the third century proves that there was no formal observance before the middle of the century. We have no historical record that our Lord's birthday was celebrated during apostolic times.

The first man to fix December 25 as the correct date, seems to have been Hippolytus of the second century. He believed that Jesus' life from conception to crucifixion was exactly thirty-three years. Since the crucifixion occurred on March 25, Hippolytus calculated that the Annunciation to Mary, or the Conception, took place in the same month, thirty-three years earlier. He decided therefore, that Jesus must have been born in the month of December, on the twenty-fifth day. But the uncertainty of all dates discredits every attempt at fixing the correct date. Indeed, some think it is almost certain that December 25 was not the date of Jesus' birth; for it is then the height of the rainy season in Judea, and shepherds would not likely have been watching their flocks by night on the plains.

The earliest record of the recognition of December 25 as Christ's birthday is in the Philocalian Calendar, which shows that the celebration of that date was a Roman practice as early as 336. An Armenian writer of the eleventh century states that the celebration of Christmas was invented in Rome by a heretic and first observed in Constantinople in 373. The present date has never been adopted by the Armenians; they still celebrate January 6. The church at Jerusalem also celebrated January 6, about the middle of the fourth century. At about this time, the Jerusalem bishop asked the bishop at Rome to ascertain, if possible, the exact date, in order to over-

come the difficulties of nonconformity between the Eastern and Western churches. It is represented that a calculation based on the supposition that Zacharias' vision took place during the Feast of Tabernacles, thus favoring December 25 as the date for Christmas, was submitted to the church at Jerusalem, who, nevertheless, persisted in celebrating January 6, until the year 549 or later. In Egypt, the Western birthday was opposed during the early part of the fifth century, but was observed in Alexandria as early as 432.

Owing to the widespread belief in the earlier centuries of Christianity, that Jesus was born spiritually, that is, adopted as the Son of God and exalted to divine rank and power at the time He was baptized by John, the date of His baptism was considered much more important than the date of His physical birth. During these centuries, little attention was given to the date of His birth in the flesh. But by the middle of the fourth century, the former prevalent belief had given place to the doctrine based upon the first chapter of John's gospel and the Epistles of Paul, maintaining that Jesus existed with the Father from eternity, and that He was absolutely divine from the time of His conception. With the spread of the latter belief, the date of the physical birth of Christ became of greater importance to Christianity.

The date we now celebrate was not fixed by mere accident. The discussions and conclusions of the church fathers doubtless had a great deal to do with fixing December 25; but it is believed that the ancient heathen festivals which were held at the same time of the year, also had a powerful influence over Christianity in deciding the date. Almost all the heathen nations of the early centuries A. D., regarded the winter solstice—the time when the sun reaches its most southern point—as a very important event of the year. It was the beginning of the renewed life of nature and of the gods, and the beginning of the lengthening of days. Especially the more northern countries hailed this point of the winter with great delight; and from the oldest times they celebrated this season with sumptuous festivities. At the winter solstice, the Germans held their great Yule feast in commemoration of the return of the fiery sun-wheel. It is stated that many of the beliefs and usages of the old Germans and also of the Romans were carried over from heathenism into Christianity, some of which survive at the present day. Christianity itself added dramatic representations of the birth of Christ and of the first events of His life. This occasioned the composition of the manger songs and numerous Christmas carols. The Christmas trees adorned with lights and gifts were also introduced with the custom of exchanging presents and preparing special Christmas dishes. Thus Christmas has become a universal social feast day.

December 25 is observed religiously by Roman Catholics and by almost all Protestant bodies. However, the Scotch Presbyterians and the English Nonconformists generally reject religious Christmas

observances, holding that such celebration savors too much of Catholicism. It is said that the Puritan founders of New England established Thanksgiving Day as a substitute, in some degree, for Christmas.

We as the saints of God observe the day in memory of the birth of our Savior into this world for the salvation of souls, without any regard to the exactness of date. One thing we do know, that He was born "to save his people from their sins," and that we have by His mercy obtained this salvation. For this greatest of blessings and many kindred benefits, we offer to Him heartfelt devotions on the day generally commemorated as His birthday.

—From *Gospel Trumpet* in 1911, by F. W. Heinly

Have Faith in God

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb. 11:1. "For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Rom. 8:24, 25.

How many times do we fear to trust unseen things with God, and thus grieve Him—the One who cares for us through every circumstance in life? At one time I desired a favor of God, but it was necessary to wait a while before it could be granted. I had a great fight with the enemy before I obtained victory and could take God at His word, resting assured that when the time came He would do His part; but when I yielded all my will into His will my faith looked up in such confidence that I felt sure the result was safe. Praise His holy name! He not only gave me the desire of my heart, but a great blessing beside. So, dear ones, it pays to trust for things unseen, for He never fails. Let us not be as was Thomas to whom Christ said, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed." John 20:29. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." Heb. 10:23. "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." James 1:6, 7.

If we do not receive what we desire of God, it is because we do not ask in accordance with His will, or we do not ask in faith believing; for God cannot lie, and His Word says: "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. 21:22. "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Luke 11:9.

My continual prayer to God is, in the language of the apostle (Luke 17:5), "Increase our faith," for His Word teaches us that "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Heb. 11:6. "But let us, who are

of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." 1 Thess. 5:8.

Let us not any longer grieve our heavenly Father with our unbelief, for in Heb. 3:17, 18, we read, "But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?" We see that they could not enter in because of unbelief; and if we have unbelief in our hearts we cannot enter into the joys of salvation, nor receive the many blessings that He has in store for them that love Him.

—Mrs. H. A. Shook

The Beauty of Virginity

God had spoken in prophecy that He would send His only begotten Son to this world to destroy the works of the devil in the hearts of mankind. Now the time had come. His Word was to be fulfilled. His Son was to be born of a virgin from the house of David, who was of the family of Abraham. No doubt there were many young maidens in the lineage of David and the house of Judah. But this young maiden must be a virgin—one who had not known a man. The sin of fornication could not have been committed. She was to have a pure and clean body, which is beautiful in the sight of God. She was one who had kept her natural desires under control and had her mind on purity and holiness. She was to be one of whom the Bible says, "Unto the pure all things are pure." (Titus 1:15)

Where was this beautiful virgin to be found? God, the Father, took note of all the young maidens. Maybe it wasn't hard to find a pure maiden in that day. Our heavenly Father found Mary, who was of the lineage of David. She was a beautiful young maiden who was betrothed to Joseph. In other words, they had mutually bound themselves to each other to be married. She was the one that God chose to become the mother of His only begotten Son. Matt. 1:18-23.

How beautiful is the great plan of God! The first woman, Eve, had sinned and caused the whole world of mankind to be plunged into sin. Now a beautiful virgin, who was full of purity and cleanness of both mind and body, was to become the mother of the Son of God who was to redeem mankind from sin. Woman at last was to be used to help redeem the world from the sin into which she had plunged it. How wonderful it was that God found that darling maiden full of purity! She fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah the prophet who said, "... Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isa. 7:14. Immanuel means *God with us*, which implies God incarnated, or God in human flesh. Surely it came to pass as John says, "... the Word was God, ... made flesh, and dwelt among us, ... full of grace and truth." (John 1:1, 14) "... For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he

might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John 3:8, 9. What a glorious experience this is! It could only come to us because God found a beautiful maiden who was a virgin. This is a doctrine of the Church of God—that Jesus was born of a virgin—and it is a beautiful fact and foundational truth that has given us salvation.

Let us think of our day. If God were looking for a virgin today, just how many would He find? It is sad that in our society there is a teaching, which is from the pits of hell, that one should give sway to his or her desires, regardless of what they may be. The Bible is not regarded as the basis for the control of the body. Recently, someone told me that while she was listening to the radio, a preacher said that "when the Bible says we are saved from sin, that it means the soul is free from sin and not the body." We are living in a very evil day when it is encouraged to sin with the body. People of the world do not hold purity of the body in high esteem, as do those who are truly living according to the Bible. The Bible says, "Flee fornication. . . he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. 6:18-20. Purity of mind helps keep the body pure. Resist any thought that would cause you to lose control of your body. Never allow yourself to be put into a position that you can't control your mind and body according to the Word of God. The Apostle Paul said, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." 1 Cor. 9:27. By the power of the Holy Spirit, each one of God's children can keep his mind pure, and then "unto the pure all things" will be pure. Today God is looking for those in whom His spirit can dwell, who are willing to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1b) How beautiful are young men and women who have holy, clean thoughts and keep their bodies pure and clean!

—Sis. Marie Miles

Dedication is the yielding of your heart, your life, and your ways to God and walking with him in **all His ways**. It is to follow where He leads; to bow submissive to His will, as the slender plant bends to the evening breeze or the ship is turned about by the helm.

—C. E. Orr

God's walls round about us are salvation, and as long as we keep hid away in the secret of His presence, no evil can touch us. It is impossible for the devil or any of his hosts to make his way through the presence of God to injure our souls. It is possible for us to keep so hid away in His presence that that wicked one toucheth us not.

—E. E. Byrum

FAITH AND VICTORY

16-PAGE HOLINESS MONTHLY

This non-sectarian paper is edited and published in the interest of the universal CHURCH OF GOD each month (except August of each year, and we omit an issue that month to attend campmeetings) by Lawrence D. Pruitt, assisted by Marie Miles and other consecrated workers at the FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 920 W. Mansur, Guthrie, Okla. 73044. (USPS184-660)

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This publication teaches salvation from all sin, sanctification for believers, unity and oneness for which Jesus prayed as recorded in John 17:21 and manifested by the apostles and believers after Pentecost. By God's grace we teach, preach, and practice the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the same gospel which Peter, John, and Paul preached, taught, and practiced, including the divine healing of the body. James 5:14,15.

Its motto: Have faith in God. Its object: The glory of God and the salvation of men; the restoration and promulgation 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 service 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.

Through the Free Literature Fund thousands of gospel tracts are published and sent out free of charge as the Lord supplies. Co-operation of our readers is solicited, and will be appreciated in any way the Bible and the Holy Spirit teach you to do or stir your heart. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Read Exodus 25:2; 1 Chron. 29:9; 2 Cor. 9:7; and Luke 6:38.

Freewill offerings sent in to the work will be thankfully received as from the Lord. Checks and money orders should be made payable to Faith Publishing House.

A separate Missionary Fund is maintained in order to relay missionary funds from our readers to the support of home and foreign missionaries and evangelists.

In order to comply with the Oklahoma laws as a non-profit religious work, the Faith Publishing House is incorporated thereunder.

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EDITORIALS



THE SEASON'S WARMEST GREETINGS ARE EXTENDED TO ALL OUR READERS, praying that Christ's holy presence may be your portion during this holiday season and forevermore.

Though the exact date of our Saviour's birth is not known, yet it is a historical fact that He was born, and the year of our present calendar is calculated from that momentous event. In the fullness of time God sent His only Son as the long-promised Messiah to redeem mankind from the bondage of sin. Jesus was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil out of men's hearts. He did not come to "condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Neither does He impose Himself upon anyone, but His offer of salvation is a free gift. Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Rev. 3:20. If you are not saved, Jesus stands at your heart's door and knocks for admittance. Since the latch string is on the inside, you must willingly and gladly open the door and invite Him in. With the Apostle Paul we exclaim: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" 2 Cor. 9:15.

Truly, Christ was born into the world, but the most important event in your life is when He is born in your heart. If He is not now living there and governing your life, He was born and has died in vain as far as you are concerned. May He be crowned the King in every heart!

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Thinking of Christ's birthday at this season of the year, let us give a birthday offering more directly to Him and His great cause. It is nice to give gifts to friends and relatives, but whose birthday should we be remembering? What would be more fitting than to give a gift or offering in honor of our Lord and Saviour to a needy person, a special offering for literature evangelism, or to support the home and foreign missionary work? Jesus said in Matt. 25:40, "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

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As this last issue of the year of 1980 goes to press, we offer many thanks to our readers for the considerable number of yearly gift subscriptions that you have sent. We welcome all you can send at any time at the price of \$1.00 for three yearly subscriptions. We pray and trust that the Bible truth in the coming issues will prove a real spiritual blessing to every recipient. There is transforming power in believing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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By the 10th of December, bound volumes of the eleven issues of the Faith and Victory paper for 1980 will be available at \$1.00 each, plus 60c for postage

and handling. Ready now are the 1980 Beautiful Way books for Juniors (52 papers for the year) at \$1.00 each, plus 60c for postage and handling. Send your order TODAY!

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Scripture Text Christmas Cards — 14 cards in box. Sunshine Line—price per box, \$2.00, plus 65c for postage and handling. Order your supply NOW!

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This 1981 Wall Calendar has beautiful nature scenes in color for each month with Scriptural emphasis. Size 7¼ by 13½ inches. Price, \$1.25 each, plus 65c for postage and handling, which is a total of \$1.90, postpaid to your address.

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"Secular Humanism: The Most Dangerous Religion in America" is the title of a book that every one should read, especially ministers and teachers. This deceptive doctrine has infested all the nominal churches, and poses a threat to the very elect. This book contains 81 pages in a heavy paper cover. The price is \$2.00, plus 60c for postage. Order TODAY!

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Some saints from the Guthrie congregation accompanied this writer and his wife on Sunday, Nov. 2, to Wichita, Kansas, where we enjoyed the all-day services and fellowship of the Wichita Church in their annual autumn meeting. The preached Word and the truth in song were precious to our souls.

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The Oklahoma State Assembly Meeting, the largest winter gathering of God's people in the U. S., will be held, Lord willing, at Guthrie, Okla., from Dec. 26, 1980 to Jan. 4, 1981. Further announcement of the meeting appears in this issue.

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God still rules in the kingdoms of men and gives authority to whomsoever He will. Evidently the Lord has ordained that Ronald Reagan will be the next president of these United States. The Scriptures exhort us to pray for our rulers and all those in authority. In these perilous and perplexing times they surely need divine wisdom. The greatest need is for this whole nation and the entire world of mankind to repent and turn back to God. That is the only hope for this world, as we are right on the brink of disaster and the wrath of God to be poured out in fury.

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Phillip Gellenbeck and Rosie Huskey of the local Guthrie congregation were united in holy matrimony on Saturday afternoon, Nov. 15, 1980, in the Guthrie chapel before many witnesses with the pastor, Bro. Leslie Busbee, officiating. Our best wishes and our prayers are for this Christian young couple that they will have a long and happy life together in the service of the Lord.

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Another 10,000 pounds (five tons) of printing paper have been ordered shipped from the paper mill

at the cost of \$4,210.00. It is expected to arrive in 60 or 90 days. The gospel, or the good news of salvation through Christ, must continue to go forth to all nations that they might believe and be saved from sin. We are grateful to all those who are praying for and co-operating with us and the Lord in this literature ministry.

—L. D. Pruitt

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Excellent Gift Suggestions

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Memoirs of George E. Harmon, sponsored by Vera M. Forbes. Recently off the press, this book is an autobiography of our beloved Bro. George Harmon, a long-time minister in the Church of God, including the record of the memories of a few others who knew him. It will inspire your faith in God. Its 56 pages with four pictures is bound in a heavy paper cover. Price, 60c each, or two copies for \$1.00.

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The Key to Peace by Marie Miles. Recently off the press is this 32-page booklet, in which the plan of sal-

vation is made plain for young people and adults. The price is 35c each, or three copies for \$1.00.

Echoes From Heaven—a new song book of 195 songs in shaped notes. In a heavy paper cover, this song book is priced at \$1.75 each.

No. 1 Stereo Song Record by the Phillips Evening Light Singers. Fourteen songs by the Phillips family on 33 RPM record. This No. 1 record may be ordered from this office or purchased directly from Bro. Paul Phillips, 1220 Wabash St., Wichita, Kansas 67214. The price is \$5.00 each, plus 84c for postage and handling.

No. 2 Stereo Song Record by the Phillips Evening Light Singers. Eleven songs by the Phillips family—Bro. Paul Phillips and his six children. On the cover for the record is a large picture of the singers. This record No. Two may be ordered from this office or purchased directly from Bro. Paul Phillips, 1220 Wabash Street, Wichita, Kansas 67214. The price is reduced to \$5.00 each, plus 84c for postage and handling.

Stereo Song Record by the Evening Light Gospel Harmonizers. The twelve songs, just recently recorded, are sung by seven California gospel singers and composed by one of the singers, Bro. Philip Matthews of Fresno, California, who is also sponsoring the production of this record. Price, \$6.00 each, plus 90c for postage and the handling.

The Stereo Gospel Song Album titled, "Songs Mother Loved" by the Carver Family. Sung and dedicated by the Carver children to the memory of their mother, May DeLee (Jackson) Carver, who departed this life to be with the Lord in 1967. On the jacket of the record is a nice, large picture of Sister May Carver. The record has twelve songs which you will surely enjoy hearing. The price is \$5.00 each, plus \$1.00 for postage and handling.

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In Memorial

Faron Allen, son of Norman and Rhenda Allen, was born at Bentonville, Ark., on Feb. 10, 1976, and departed this life to be with the Lord at Neosho, Mo., on Nov. 7, 1980, at the age of 4 years, 8 mos., and 28 days.

Survivors include his parents of their home at Neosho, Mo.; two brothers, Marshall and Kent of the home; two sisters, Marcy and Krystal of the home; maternal grandmother, Mrs. Lou Bray of Garfield, Ark.; paternal grandfather, L. A. Allen of Exeter, Mo., and many other relatives, friends, and saints.

Funeral services were conducted by Bros. Vada McMillian and Austin McMillian. Bro. Jim McMillian conducted the graveside service at Liberty Cemetery near Garfield, Ark.

[Editor's note: Bro. and Sister Norman Allen are the caretakers living on the National campground at Monark Springs, Neosho, Mo. Our sincere sympathy and prayers are extended to and for them in their deep sorrow at the loss of their little son in the

vehicle accident. May the God of all comfort be their portion.]

Note of Thanks and Appreciation

Since it would be almost impossible to write to all the dear saints, we wish to take this means to express our deep appreciation for all the concern and love shown to us by the dear saints in the loss of our little son, Faron.

We don't have words or ability to even come close to telling everyone how much we appreciate all the beautiful flowers, food, love offerings, and most of all, your prayers.

We desire prayer that we may be drawn closer to the Lord at this time. Even though our hearts are broken, we believe our God doeth all things well.

—Bro. Norman & Sister Rhenda Allen & family
Rt. 7, Box 368, Neosho, Mo. 64850

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Sister Mamie (Joiner) Flynn of Loranger, La., born October 19, 1899, departed this life November 1, 1980, at the age of 81 years and 13 days, having been a lifelong resident of Loranger, La.

Sis. Mamie was married to Bro. Dallas Flynn in 1925, and had been faithfully and patiently caring for him during his affliction for about thirteen years, when God lovingly and tenderly relieved her of her duties of life.

Sis. Mamie is survived by her husband, Bro. Dallas Flynn; three sons, Delbert Flynn of Tulsa, Okla., Kenneth Flynn and Herbert Flynn, both of Loranger, Louisiana; one sister, Sis. Elva Joiner of Loranger, La.; ten grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Sis. Mamie was preceded in death by three sisters and four brothers.

Funeral services were conducted in the Thomas Funeral Home in Hammond, La., by Sis. La Vern Manuel and Bro. Bob Forbes, with graveside services conducted by Bro. Merrill Williamson in the Oak Grove Church of God cemetery near Loranger, La.

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Earnest Benjamin Weir was born Nov. 21, 1883, at West Plains, Mo., and passed away on Nov. 2, 1980, in Raton, N. Mexico, at the age of 96 years, 11 months, and 11 days.

He went to what is now the State of New Mexico in 1908-10, and filed on a homestead claim. In that area he lived the remainder of his life.

On Nov. 14, 1916, he was united in marriage to Florence M. Griffith. To this union three sons were born. His wife preceded him in death on June 25, 1941.

Bro. Weir had been affiliated with the Church of God for many years, and often attended the state and national meetings in Oklahoma and Missouri.

Survivors include: three sons, Earnest of Capulin, N. Mex., and Edwin and William of Raton, N. Mex.; one brother, Harry Weir of Oregon; 13 grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren.

The funeral service was conducted in Raton, N. Mex., by Bro. Richard Madden, assisted by other saints as singers. Interment was in Mt. View Cemetery, south of Capulin, N. Mex.

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MEETING NOTICES AND REPORTS



ALL DAY SERVICES AT BOLEY, OKLAHOMA

Lord willing, there will be all day services and baptizing at the chapel of the Church of God in Boley, Oklahoma, on Sunday, December 7, 1980. We extend a warm welcome to all to attend these services. Come praying the Lord will give us a glorious meeting in Zion. We will be looking for you.

Yours in His Great Name, —Katherine Williams

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CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY MEETING

The annual California State Assembly meeting of the Church of God will be held, Lord willing, December 26, 1980, through January 4, 1981. The campground is located at 12312 Osborne Pl., Pacoima, CA. 91331; phone (213) 899-9021.

An invitation is extended to all to come praying and expecting a rich spiritual blessing. Expenses will be met by freewill offerings and accommodations will be available for everyone. Out-of-town saints should bring their own bedding, if possible.

For further information, contact Bro. Robert Sherman, (213) 896-7593, or Bro. James Pierro, (213) 896-5331.

—Edward Sorrell

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OKLAHOMA STATE ASSEMBLY MEETING

The 74th annual Oklahoma State Assembly meeting of the Church of God will be held, Lord willing, at Guthrie, Okla., on Dec. 26, 1980, to Jan. 4, 1981, inclusive. The meeting begins the day after Christmas with the first service at 10:30 a.m. A hearty welcome is extended to all to attend this annual gathering of God's people in the central area of the U.S.A.

The chapel is located on the corner of 6th Street and West Warner Avenue. The dining hall and dormitories are in the same block for your convenience. All who come will be cared for. The expenses of the meeting will be met as usual by freewill offerings.

We are praying and expecting the Lord to send Spirit-filled ministers to preach the Word with heaven's anointing. All hungry souls seeking light or spiritual help, come, and God will meet you here. If you are sick in body, come and be healed by faith in the Great Physician. Saints, come praying with a burden for the unsaved and for all who need help in soul and body. These are perilous times, and we need to be about our Father's business, doing all we can to rescue lost souls.

Please send all contributions for this coming State meeting directly to Sister Frances Deforth,

Route 2, Guthrie, Ok. 73044. For further information, contact the pastor, Bro. Leslie Busbee, 1014 W. Mansur, Guthrie, Ok. 73044, phone 405-282-2421. The phone number at the chapel is 405-282-5499.

—Editor

Note to Oklahoma saints: Pillows are needed for the men's dormitory. Please bring one when you come to the meeting.

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WICHITA, KAN., MEETING REPORT

Dear Bro. Pruitt,

The autumn revival at Wichita, Kansas, closed on Nov. 9.

Time moves onward in a steady march toward eternity. We were solemnly warned several times during our meeting that time is running out and Jesus is coming soon. Bro. Mart Samons even told us that while he was quite busy recently, God said to him, "Be ye ready." Will we be ready when Jesus comes, or will some of us come under the warning in the Bible that says because our Lord delays His coming we will get careless and drift back into the world? May we all take these warnings very seriously.

The Lord was faithful to send us warning as well as encouragement. We were exhorted to see Jesus in everything that touches our lives; to have faith in God, and to be willing to "stand in the gap." We were told that it is better to be safe than sorry, especially where our souls are concerned. We heard about "the Word," "the truth," and "real salvation," and we are sorry that more people did not seek God to be delivered from sin. We appreciated the gathering of the saints, and we are thankful for each one the Lord enabled to attend the meeting.

Let us be watchful, careful, and prayerful saints, being sure to stay in the straight and narrow way, because we must endure all the way to the end in order to be among the number that is caught up with Jesus in the air to be with Him forever.

—Submitted by Shirley Knight

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OKMULGEE, OKLA., MEETING REPORT

The Spirit of God was faithful to the saints again in Okmulgee, Okla., and sent in ministers and workers of His choosing. We thank God for all those who shared in the burden for souls. The Word was quick and powerful, sharp as a two-edged sword. It pierced unto the dividing of soul and spirit, and was faithful to discern the thoughts and intents of the hearts of men. Everything is naked and open before Him. (Read Heb. 4:12,13.) He knoweth all things. "His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. . . ." 2 Chron. 16:9. His hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy that He cannot hear, but iniquity separates and then He will not hear.

Out of all the rich Word that went forth and the laboring in the gospel with much conviction, there

was very little yielding to the wooing of the Spirit. Only two sought the Lord at the altar of prayer. May they strike the Rock, and gain that steady faith to be ready at His coming. The time has come that they will not endure sound doctrine, but have heaped to themselves teachers having itching ears. They have turned from the truth and believed fables. There is a letting down here and there, and a setting up here and there. Divisions are rampant, and coldness waxes worse and worse. The "old paths" are looked upon as not needed. We must remain sober and vigilant, for our adversary the devil is that roaring lion that seeks whom he may devour.

Ministers from Bakersfield, Oakland, Pacoima, Sacramento, Calif; Wichita, Ks.; Oklahoma City, Nowata, Edmond, Tulsa, Sapulpa, Okla., and saints from Boley, Okla, and other congregations were in the battle. Our souls were revived by the Word and Spirit of our God that liveth and abideth forever.

—Sis. Erma Johnson

Prayer Requests



W. Va.—"Please pray for my knees. I have a lot of pain in them. I can't get around as well as I used to. I know the Lord can heal me as He has in the past."

—Sis. Patty Edmonds

Ill.—"I do not have use of my body and I can't walk. Pray that the Lord will heal me so that I can get out of this nursing home."

—Nellie Woods

Md.—"Please pray for my daughter who married last January. Her marriage has been nothing but chaos. She and her husband fight, and he has left her for the second time. Someone is going to get hurt."

—A grieved mother

Fla.—"I have a cataract on one of my eyes. I know God is able to heal. He has healed me many times."

—Florence Lovett

Okla.—Remember Vera Gellenbeck in earnest prayer. She needs God's help physically and in other ways. Pray earnestly for Bro. Harry Gellenbeck and the family that God will give them wisdom to know how to help her, and that He will also give them physical strength.

Saints, be encouraged in the Lord. If we look around at the world conditions, people's failures, the increase of false teachings, and listen to gossipers, we will go down. But we find none of these discouraging things by looking to Christ. God can help us to live in the Spirit and to walk in the Spirit day by day. We must be convinced that God has all things under His control and that He will have the last word, so to speak. If we are His, we will not go down or be dismayed. "The government" is "on his shoulder." He is taking care of His Church and His people. He is keeping the record of all things. Let us rest in Christ.

We need to carry a soul-burden. By so doing, we will be doing something about this sin-cursed world. Each one will be working in the place and calling that God calls him to. Each of us will pray for the

other, instead of criticizing him who is working in his own place. For instance, some may have a burden to pass out tracts. Another person who does not have that burden or calling might say, "Why do they do that? Most of them are wasted and their time is lost." That is a wrong attitude. You should pray for them, and maybe give them some money to help buy more tracts. Some might have a calling to work with children. Another might say, "You are wasting your time, as the parents will refute all you tell them." That, also, is a wrong attitude. If that is not your burden, pray for that one who has the burden. Maybe someone has the burden to lead the singing, take prayer requests, lead out in prayer, or testify at every opportunity. Get behind that one and pray for him. These are needful works for God. We need those who are zealous for God's work. My father used to say that he would rather see a person with a lot of zeal making a few mistakes, than to see someone with no zeal at all. If you can't, by the power of the Lord, do it better than the one you are criticizing, then you do not have a right to say a word about him. These are prayer requests that each of us need to pray about. Work for God.

Pray for our young fathers and mothers, also. They need much wisdom in training their children. Pray for them more than you criticize, and by so doing your criticizing will cease. Parents need God's help to be able to bring their children under control when they are tiny tots, as it is hard to bring teenagers under subjection who were not taught to respect nor obey authority in their early years.

Pray for the aged saints. It takes grace to grow old. Besides afflictions on an aged person's body, he has to face the changes of being taken out of his home, and many times away from his loved ones. All of this is hard to bear. Pray for them to hold fast to the Lord through the many changes of growing old.

—Sis. Marie Miles

PHILIPPINE MISSION REPORT

San Jose City (Oct. 23)—Dear Bro. Pruitt: Greetings to you, to your co-workers, and to all the saints of God in the U.S.A. I hope these lines find all of you in the grace and peace of our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ.

It is my pleasure to give you a short report of the activities and progress of the Lord's work in this area of the Philippines. The month of October is a busy month for us in the gospel field since it is not raining so hard now. We have already gone to 38 places conducting open-air services and Bible studies. Some brothers and sisters are going with us. The young ladies are teaching the children. We conducted a gospel meeting in Caridad Sur yesterday, and I am very glad to report that it was a blessed meeting. Many souls came forward during the invitation song confessing their sins with tears before the Saviour. They were so happy and thankful for our concern for them. Four denominational preachers came to the

meeting and opposed us openly, but the Lord stood with us and the truth prevailed. Some saints from Caridad Norte and from San Jose City attended the services. They were all happy on the way because while they were walking in the heat of the sun they were singing hymns and sharing precious verses of the Bible.

The tricycle is now a great help for us in going to rural areas where transportation is very scarce. It can accommodate four or five persons on a better road. We are earnestly praying for the Lord to supply means for the gas we consume every day and for other expenses in our widespread evangelism. Though we are far apart our hearts are with you and we pray for all of you.

Your Brother in the one true Church,

—Matias S. Tangunan

NIGERIAN MISSION REPORT

Bendel State, Nigeria (Oct. 28)—Dear Bro. Pruitt: Greetings in the powerful name of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your letter dated Oct. 2, 1980, with its contents duly noted with immense thanks.

Enemies of souls are meeting their doom as the Lord is wonderfully blessing His Church with the power of the Godhead. We praise Him for His awareness of our need. To God's glory we report that our concentration with fasting in prayer for granting power unto His Church of this "evening light" has not been in vain. The power of Jesus is the talk of the day in Kwale, resulting from the deliverance of two possessed damsels, Stella and Rose, from whom were cast out evil spirits in the name of Jesus. The Lord is praiseworthy to plant such a higher power in His commissioned vessels. These two are not the first. We can now count seven who have been delivered from demons. The fame has gone far and wide. A woman drove all the way from Benin City to request permission to bring her possessed child after our return from the Tombia campmeeting in November. It is the Lord Himself that sets them free.

Bro. Robert Eckenwiler of the Wichita, Kansas, congregation is scheduled to arrive at Lagos, Nigeria, at 7:10 p.m., Nov. 6, 1980, touching down on the soil of Africa for his first time. He will participate in our National campmeeting which will be held on the island of Tombia near Port Harcourt from Nov. 14 to 23, 1980. He will attend all the spiritual meetings of the congregations of the Church of God in this area.

Yours for souls,

—Titus U.E. Enu

MISSION REPORT FROM INDIA

S. India (Oct. 20)—Dear Bro. Pruitt, the dear ones in the Print Shop, and the dear saints abroad: Greetings of Christian love to all of you again in the sweetest name of Jesus Christ, the Lord of all.

Thank you very much for your kind letter dated Oct. 1, and the enclosures were noted with much gratitude. May God bless each donor to the Lord's work in India.

We were very sorry to read the sad news of the automobile wreck in Oklahoma City, resulting in the death of two dear young saints. The Church of God in India extends its heartfelt sympathy and condolence to all the bereaved relatives, to the saints at Guthrie, and the Crutch Church of God. May the Lord comfort each one.

We are glad to inform you that one more new mission station was opened for us at Chirattakonam where five families have already come out of "Babylon." We have already started a congregation in a rented house. The main problem is the lack of finance which hinders us from approaching new stations. "Soap, soup, and salvation" is the best method of spreading the gospel in the poor areas. The need for a van is very urgent, and I doubt that the saints in America have forgotten our need for the van. I don't know how the fund for a van is progressing.

Our 15th annual General Campmeeting is scheduled to be held in the second week of January, 1981. We request the presence and prayers of the saints everywhere for this convocation. May the Lord send those from America to participate in this meeting. Surely, this is the last period of time for this world. We hear of wars, earthquakes, and other signs. Our Lord is at the door. Let us do everything quickly for souls. Let us pray one for another. Our continued prayers are for your healing.

My wife sends her Christian love to all the sisters in the Church in America.

Yours in Christ,

—John Varghese

REPORT FROM OJOS NEGROS, MEXICO AND SPANISH LITERATURE PROGRESS

Dear Ones: Greetings in the precious name of Jesus. Word from the Escobars is that he has obtained inside work four days a week within two miles of Ojos Negros, Mexico, in answer to prayer. He is feeling much better and thanks the Lord for it. There were six deaths in less than two weeks in Ojos Negros, and some of the "wakes" were held in the chapel. The Escobars felt impressed of the Lord to refuse one group's having their "wake" in the chapel, and although they didn't know why, the Lord did. During the "wake" in a nearby residence, another man was killed. Only then did the Escobars understand why the Lord had them to refuse the group to have the "wake" there in the chapel. They were grateful for His leadings and protection over the work. They have a very special request before the Lord. Pray for them and for the work.

Since caring for my aged mother (91), and only being able to work with the Spanish literature one week of the month, I am behind, but the Lord knows all about it. I have committed all into His hands. He helps me to be content, knowing His work for me at this time is to be faithful to her. "Honor thy father and mother . . . that it may be well with thee . . ." Eph. 6:2a, 3a. Orders are being sent out and new requests are coming in, so we know the Lord is

blessing its distribution, and we thank Him with all our hearts.

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the reformation who has prayed for and/or given to the support of the Spanish printing work this year. The Lord only can and will reward you. The Escobars also sent thanks to all the saints and asked further interest in your prayers, as I do.

Yours for souls in Mexico,

—Bro. Mayarino Escobar and family
Ap. Postal #284, Ensenada, B. Cfa., Mex.,
And Sis. Opal Kelly, 919 W. Mansur,
Guthrie, Okla. 73044

WAITING FOR VISA TO INDIA

Okla. (Nov. 15)—Dear Brother Pruitt, and all saints everywhere: Greetings to everyone in Jesus' dear name. I had hoped that by the time this paper went to press I would have some news concerning my application for a visa to enter India again this December, but I am still waiting, and waiting.

I have prepared to go, and any day now I should know whether the visa has been granted or not. My scheduled departure is for Dec. 30, 1980, but I am also on a waiting list for an earlier departure if someone should cancel out. Whether I go or stay, I want you to keep praying for me.

I know the little book on "India" that God blessed me to write has been put away "to keep" with many of the writings out of mind, but always remember that the daily needs in India are many. Keep giving and praying for this worthy cause half way around the world.

Your Sister in the Lord, —Dorothy Keiser
Rt. 6 Box 10, Shawnee, Okla.

From the Mailbox . . .

Mich.—Dear Sis. Marie, Bro. Pruitt, and saints there and everywhere: Greetings in the name of our kind heavenly Father. I am happy to be able to report victory over sin and the devil which are causing so much trouble in the world today.

I want to let you dear ones know that I have improved much and am now able to do my housework. Praise the Lord! I am not completely well, but my trust is in the Lord that He will heal me completely. I thank you for your prayers. The dear Lord has been with me. He said He would "never leave nor forsake" us. Surely, every promise has proved true. . . . —Sis. Lela Stewart

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Miss.—For many years I've been receiving the *Faith and Victory* magazine, and I certainly appreciate it. I look forward to it each month. God will reward you there for your faithfulness in getting His Word to the lost world.

My race here in this world is almost finished. I've already passed my 84th milestone, and have lived alone since my husband passed in 1970. I love the

Lord, and it is my purpose to serve Him until He calls me Home. Pray for me that I'll fill my place here.

Bro. Pruitt, I pray that God will have His way in the healing of your body.

May God bless each of you at the Print Shop, and help you to carry on until He says, it is enough.

—Mrs. Olen Williamson

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Calif.—Dear Sis. Marie: We had a good three nights' meeting this past weekend. Bro. and Sis. O. B. Wilson came from Oregon to be with us. Others came from Canada, Jefferson, Or., and Pacoima, Calif., to be in the meeting. The Lord poured down blessings from heaven. Four souls were saved. Our souls were filled and overflowing with joy.

The way of the cross grows sweeter day by day. What would we do without Jesus? He is our life, our light, our joy and peace. There is nothing more we could want. . . .

Christian love, —Letha Reece

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Okla.—I am still saved and encouraged in the Lord, and still rejoicing in my soul. The Lord blessed my soul during the meeting here at Green Pastures. Oh, our souls rejoiced in the Lord! I have been in good meetings, but they were not like this one. The Lord was surely in this place.

Continue to pray for us here. There are still some souls here that are stirred. Pray that they will get saved. The Lord is coming soon. Also pray for my knees and feet.

—Sis. Icylee Tillman

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Okla.—I am thankful for the blessed truth of God that encourages my heart. How happy I am that God, in His loving-kindness, has called me, so that I can rejoice in the everlasting kingdom of God. I love these writings in 1 Cor. 1:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Jesus is the truth, the way, and the life everlasting.

Pray for me. —Sis. Eva Penner

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Texas—Dear saints everywhere: I am still saved and sanctified, pressing on for the Lord.

I feel led to copy a few lines from the Bible and hope they will benefit every reader. Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of him sent sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours." John 4:34-38.

I have moved to Dallas, and left my home in Bogota, Texas. The Lord needs laborers here in Dallas, and we need help to pay for this chapel

building. Struggling beneath a heavy load, we need your prayers and support.

My two-bedroom home one mile from Bogota, Texas, is for sale. It consists of a little over ¼ acre of land with fruit and pecan trees. It has city water, natural gas and electricity. My asking price is \$8,000. For more information, write me at 725 N. Franklin, Apt. 121, Dallas, Texas 75211, or phone 214-948-7112.

Christian love and prayers, —Nellie Lovell

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Ark.—I am still pressing on. My prayer is that the dear Lord will help me to live clear and holy on every line and to stand up as a part of the Church of God, which I love dearly. I don't intend to depart from the truth. It's so sweet to me. Nothing else will satisfy the saints here at Grubbs, Ark. There are just a few here, and we do not have anyone to preach to us. We would be so happy if God would send us a minister, even if only once a month. We desire prayer to help us to know what to do concerning the work here. Please pray that God's will be done. We don't want to close the doors here if there would be one soul coming to the Lord. One soul is precious in God's sight. I have children and grand-children, and others who need the Lord. Oh, if they could only see this beautiful way!

I love every line of the *Faith and Victory*.

—Nellie West

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Ill.—Dear "Workers with God": We trust that the work is moving smoothly there and that each package of literature will be guided by the Master's hand where it will bring forth much fruit. He said it would accomplish what He desired and not come to nought, so that ought to encourage you even when you see no results.

The Lord's blessings upon His children are many and precious as we see His concern for us.

We are continuing to pray for you, Lawrence, as well as for many others. We, too, have some needs.

—The Reineking

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Okla.—Dear saints at Faith Publishing House: "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised." We surely do owe God all praise and humble thanksgiving. He is so good to us. He is so patient and merciful to us, and we are poor, needy creatures.

We're busy here in the Golden Rule Home. Sometimes we do not have enough nurses, especially night nurses. . . . Pray for us that the need will be supplied for a good God-fearing nurse or nurse's aid.

I enjoy reading the *Faith and Victory*. I sent my last two copies to Nigeria to Bro. Akang along with a Bible.

My head hurts when holding it in one position for a while, so pray for me.

It is nice to have Bro. Dallas Flynn from Louisiana here in the Home. He seems contented and thankful. Pray for him.

Love to you all, —Sis. Julia Llewellyn

Testimonies and Answers to Prayer

Calif.—Dear Sis. Marie and co-workers: We thank the Lord for those willing to dedicate their lives to the service of the Lord there at the Print Shop. We enjoy the literature so much. The saints should be so thankful for the printed material! It not only gives us a common place to write to and keep in touch with one another, but the sound Bible truths are there for the asking. We all should appreciate it.

We have had some wonderful experiences of healing. The Lord wants us to tell about them as an encouragement to others. Our children came down with a scaley, running mass of sores. The sores would pop out at different places on their bodies. They looked awful. We were very concerned. We were told that it was impetigo in the blood stream. We didn't know if this was true or not, but we did know it was very serious. We were told to take the scabs off and wash the sores. This was very painful to the children. We decided that God whom we were trusting could heal with the scabs on or off. So we didn't take them off anymore. Glory to God, He healed it all. He healed one of the children over night! We serve a mighty God.

One day, I burned my hand. It was so painful that all I could do was to keep it in ice water. We went to church service and I was anointed, but the pain remained. I put my hand back into the glass of water. The Lord began to deal with me about trusting Him and taking my hand out of the water. So I took it out, and told the Lord I wouldn't put it back, no matter how badly it hurt. The pain was so bad that I could hardly keep from screaming out. I was really fighting the devil about putting it back into the water. All of a sudden the Lord touched it and made the pain bearable. That encouraged my faith to claim the complete healing. Almost immediately the pain completely left. Praise God! My hand was cool and I could move my fingers.

I thought how encouraging it was going to be to give my testimony at meeting after the message. Suddenly, the pain came back. I started rebuking the devil and claimed the victory. The pain *all* left and it didn't come back. My hand didn't even blister. When God heals, He does a complete job. But we must resist the devil and claim the healing sometimes before it is ours. We truly thank the Lord for His dealings and blessings.

Please pray that we'll be open for the Lord to use us in His work in whatever capacity He sees fit!
—Sheri and Bryan Rich

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Okla.—Dear saints: The year of 1980 is so quickly coming to a close. One day I got to thinking back upon this year. It will surely be a memorable year for me. The Lord has been so near and dear to me. I have learned more how to just yield "my" will to Him and just rest in His love.

For several years I had been restless and fought resentment, as I struggled between two desires. A

part of me *thoroughly* enjoyed my job working in my family's business; and I would have loved to make it my life's career, but at the same time, I would be very dissatisfied, and resented my duty to my family. Yet, I knew that if God would have been pleased to release me of my responsibility, He would have opened the door for me to step through with a clear conscience, and until He did, I dared not make a change in my job. So I struggled on, praying for God's help when facing at different times trials of dissatisfaction. I hardly knew why I would be so unhappy at those times. I remember some advice my sister gave me once. She told me that there are situations in which we must get victory while *in* the situation before God could remove the situation. I found this to be very true for me in this situation.

Three years ago this past summer, I was going through a severe battle. I had even ventured to apply at two different places for another job. It was this same summer that I received a letter from Sis. Marie telling me that she felt impressed to let me know of the need for a worker at the Print Shop. When I got that letter, I remember thinking, "Maybe this is my answer!" That same summer it looked like an opportunity had opened for me to travel a few weeks with Sis. Karen and her father, Bro. Curtis Williams, as they held meetings in different places. I could never seem to get any leadings or to feel clear to go to the Print Shop, but I felt I had more of a burden to go with the Williams; so plans were made to go with them, leaving from the singing service in October at Myrtle, Missouri. In the meantime, Bro. Curtis' wrist was injured severely, so those plans fell through. I felt that I just couldn't bear to continue on working in my family's business at Thayer, Mo., but God gave me enough strength that this storm, too, passed over. I was able to go on with enough victory to stay. The next spring (1978), the Lord provided me with a trailer to call "my home," yet this didn't solve all my problems, even though it was a blessing to me. When I left it this past summer, one day as I was moving out, I paused and thanked God for permitting me to have that little "haven" to enjoy for awhile.

Some time after I had moved into the trailer, one evening I felt very troubled and got into my car and drove down the backroads. As I was driving along, I was pouring out my heart to God and began yielding to Him. As I think back, I believe it was that "yielding" to God that brought victory. I can remember coming home with a restful, peaceful feeling. If I remember correctly, it wasn't long until God opened doors to the release of my duty there. God was working in a way that the decision and plans were made for the whole family to go out of business. Since this was to take place the first of April, I felt it my duty and desire to stay with them to the finish, as I had no leadings to go elsewhere. At the first of the year, the Lord opened up a job where I worked part-time, and I appreciated the opportunity of that experience. Then, too, when we quit the business, I began working part-time for the company that

bought some of our trucks, etc. Yet, after awhile, I found myself getting restless again. When I learned that again there was a need for a worker at the Print Shop, I began to pray that the Lord would supply this need and send the one of His choice. I would tell the Lord, "Here am I, send me." I didn't want to lay the responsibility on someone else, but since the Lord had provided these other jobs for me and in times past the way hadn't been made clear for me to go, I guess I wasn't too much in earnest in thinking that maybe the Lord could, or would, want to use my services. I had no personal desire to come, as I had wanted to relax and enjoy the summer, yet my heart was fully yielded to His will.

One day, while talking by phone with my brother Paul, he asked me if I was going to answer the Lord's call. I asked him what that was, as I didn't know at first what he was referring to. He told me there was a need for a worker at the Print Shop. The thought came to me, "What is keeping me from going? All I have to keep me are my two part-time jobs. Although they may be depending upon me for these jobs, I can be replaced. The jobs were here before I was and will be after I leave. I don't feel the responsibility to them that I had to my family. I can no longer use my family as an excuse. They are no longer in business; they no longer need my services. So, I have nothing to keep me." I fell upon my knees and offered myself in all earnestness with no reserves. I made it a matter of serious prayer. I soon felt that God wanted to accept my offer.

I began making preparations to quit my jobs and to move. As I made plans to come to the Print Shop, I found myself yielding to Him more and more. The way was made clear, and I arrived here in Guthrie on June 19 to give my services unto the Lord. The Lord has blessed me since coming.

On either the second or third day after arriving, I felt a feeling of despair. I thought, "What am I doing here? I don't fit. I don't even belong here." I felt like such a stranger. I wished I could just run away. (I have never been very good at facing things.) I just stopped mentally and told myself that I had consecrated to come; I felt God put me here, so I was going to stay here. Then after submitting to that thought, the thought came to me that when God leads us somewhere or to do something, He doesn't want us to just "endure" the thing, but to be happy. After that, my soul and heart just overflowed with joy. Praise be unto God! I think I began singing. Such happiness and contentment I've enjoyed since being here! I can't say that I've not had any adjustment to leaving my former jobs and moving here, because there definitely have been. There have been times of a deep ache and longing to be back home with the dear people I worked with for so long, the work that I was familiar with, but the assurance of God's leadings in these transactions have brought peace to my mind, and there have been no regrets or desires to go back in reality. It's amazing to me. How I praise God for victory in both mind and soul! I know that it

isn't the "living here" that has brought it, but it has been the complete yielding of *my* will to *His* and resting in the leadings of God.

I appreciate and thank God for all His blessings upon me this year. There have been other special blessings that I do not have the space to tell of. One morning the Lord brought the song to my mind, "Oh, Golden Hours." The chorus goes, "Oh, golden hours will never wait; we must seize them while they come, or forever be too late. Oh, do not wait for something great; do whatever you find to do and do it right." Then all the verses begin with "Up and be doing." It is my fervent desire to remain true to God and always be yielded to His will and to be "up and doing" for the Lord, as we have no time to seek repose in our living for God. I desire your prayers that I might draw yet closer to God.

—Rebecca Sorrell

o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

Texas—Dear Sis. Marie: I'm sure you remember the prayer request I sent you to put in the *Faith and Victory*, and also asked all of you there to pray for the release of Tommy White. He was captured in Cuba when his plane went down as he was throwing out tracts. God has heard and answered prayer for Tommy White. He was released this week with all the other U. S. prisoners in Cuba. I thank God so much for hearing and answering prayer.

—Louise Strickland

o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

Kansas—Dear gospel workers: Praise be to God! It is a blessing to be saved and to know that one's soul is right before God. We are living in a world of men who praise the creature more than the Creator. They look and behold what man can do, but forget what God can do. The Bible tells us, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isa. 55:8, 9. This makes a righteous soul to stand in awe at the way God can and will work. Praise our God for the mighty works He does!

Do we realize that He has saved our souls from eternal fire and damnation? At times we feel as though we would like to have an easier road to travel, but how wonderful to know that Jesus Christ is always beside us. He helps to smooth the road. It is truly wonderful to serve the mighty God that we serve! I am endeavoring to serve and live for Him.

—Jerry Meek

o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

Louisiana—Dear ones in the Lord: I can say that the Lord is blessing us physically and spiritually. God has been so good to us down through the years. We can't praise His name enough for all that He has done.

It was six years ago this coming February that I had a light stroke. I suppose that was what it was. I knew that something had happened to me. I couldn't seem to read right or talk like I wanted to. We were

living in Hammond at that time, and the following Sunday we drove on over to Baton Rouge, as we were holding services there. When I got up to preach, I couldn't put my words together like I should. I had to sit down, and we just had Sunday school. The following Sunday I tried again, and the Lord helped me to bring forth a short message. I just kept on trying in the name of the Lord, and praise the Lord! I can talk, and the Lord blesses me in a wonderful way. The Lord has done many wonderful things for me. It would take too much space to tell all.

We hope all is well with everyone at the Faith Publishing House. We hold you up in our prayers, and also pray for the work there.

Our hearts were so touched over the death of the two young girls in Okla. City. Our hearts went out to the parents, and other loved ones. But it was good to know that their lives proved they were true Christians and loved the Lord. Our prayers have gone up to God for the parents, loved ones, and friends. "We sorrow not as others who have no hope."

We hope, Bro. Lawrence, that you are stronger in your body. I am thinking of the many precious promises found in Revelation second and third chapters, for those who overcome.

Love in Jesus' name, —Max Williamson
o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

Tex.—Dear Bro. and Sis. Pruitt: Thank you for agreeing with us in prayer when I called. My loved one is out of the hospital and has gone back to work. Thank the dear Lord!

I am pretty well over the flu or virus I had. My trust is completely in the Lord.

I'm always glad to receive my *Faith and Victory* paper. I love to read the testimonies. Also, I enjoy and am encouraged by the good articles written therein.

Bro. Pruitt, I do pray that God will give you continuous help with your affliction.

I am glad I serve a living God. He has been so good to me. I thank Him today for saving my soul from hell. Truly, I was lost and undone until He reached down His hand and lifted me out of the miry clay of sin. Praise the Lord! By His grace, I will keep saved, pressing onward and upward on the heavenly way. No turning back for me. I want to be victorious to the end of my life. —Sis. Velda Ellis
o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

Mo.—Dear Sis. Marie: Greetings in Jesus' dear name, the only One that we desire to please. This earth holds nothing much for us with so many ungodly deeds going on everywhere. It makes us want to draw closer to God.

Two or three months ago, my right hand was so sore that I could hardly move it. I could use it but very little, as it was so painful. I just prayed and looked to God. I think that it was on the third day that He just took all the pain away. Oh, how I thank Him! He knows and He cares. I am in His care to do with as He pleases.

My son's eye that was so bad, was the worst looking eye I had ever seen. A blood vessel burst in the eyeball when he tried to use a heavy hammer after he had hurt his cheek bone just under that eye. It had injured the vessel, and it broke and filled his eyeball with blood instantly. He came right to my house. His eye was greatly swollen. He said there was pressure behind his eye, and that it felt like it was going to pop out. One couldn't see the eye, just a small bloody line, as his eye was closed. He wanted me to pray. After prayer, he said it felt better. After a little while, he wanted prayer again. I asked him if he wanted me to call you folks, and he did. He said the pressure was gone and he could see a little. It just kept improving. It will be a year ago the first of January, when this happened, and it is still clearing up. He can see to his side now, as well as ahead. He said he needs more light and it is getting better. Although he isn't saved, he didn't see a doctor. He believes enough in God's power that he always comes for prayer and God has always answered. We thank God so much. His promises are true.

—Sis. Goldie Knapp

Question and Answer Column

By Ostis B. Wilson

Question: Please explain Rev. 11:15.

Answer: I will explain this text to the best of my understanding, but I promise you that it will not be according to the general interpretation of this text in most religious circles. I do not understand this text to refer to a future time when Jesus Christ will come back to this earth and establish a universal kingdom which shall reign over all the kings and kingdoms of this world.

Before going further, I will insert the text which is to be the center of this discussion. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Please note that this was a permanent, eternal, unending reign (for ever and ever) referred to here; not just a thousand years nor any other measured duration.

This verse of Scripture refers to the glorious triumphs of the gospel of Christ over the entire world and in all nations. Paul said in Romans 10:18, "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Jesus gave the commission in Matt. 28:19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, . . ." The commission of Jesus is recorded by Mark in Mark 16:15, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." As this commission has been executed and the gospel has been proclaimed throughout the world and to all nations, it has had a profound effect and influence, and there have been converts to the Christian faith in all nations and among all people.

When John had a vision of the entire redeemed company in Rev. 7:9, he said: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." In 1 Pet. 2:9 Peter referred to the people of God as "an holy nation." The "Holy Nation" of God is composed of the saved people out of all of the nations. In Eph. 2:14 and 15, we read, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; . . . for to make in himself of the twain one new man, so making peace." The "both" and the "twain" here refer to the Jews and the Gentiles, and the converts from among both of them constituted "one body" (verse 16) and make up the "one new man"—or one holy nation, or one kingdom. In other words, the kingdom of God spread over the whole earth and to all nations and people through the effects of the gospel and there being converts to the Christian faith among all the nations.

The conversion of the Gentiles and their influx into the Church or kingdom of God was prophesied throughout the Old Testament. God told Abraham in Gen. 22:18, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Paul refers to this covenant between God and Abraham in Gal. 3:16, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Therefore, it is evident that this covenant was confirmed in Christ, and He fulfilled it, and through Him the kingdom of God extended over all the world because He tasted death for every man.

Isa. 49:6 says, "And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." In Isa. 42:6 God was speaking to His Son, Jesus, and said, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles." Isaiah 60 contains a prophecy of the glories of the Church of God in this gospel age of time, and in verses 3-5 we read, "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee."

In the second Psalm, all of which is a prophecy of the coming of Jesus and the attitude of the people toward Him, and the effects of His work, etc., verse 1 says, "Why do the heathen rage?" It has been the general pattern of the heathen throughout their

history to "rage" against the true and living God Who gave them their being, by living in open rebellion against Him and His holy will by not honoring Him as God but setting up their own idol gods and worshipping them instead of the true God. By this means, they fell into the deepest depravity and degradation possible. Paul describes the depths of their degradation and the cause of it in Rom. 1:21-32. Please read this entire passage. Psalms 2:8 says, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

When the Jews at Antioch rejected the preaching of Paul and Barnabas concerning Christ, they turned to the Gentiles saying (Acts 13:47), "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." In Dan. 7:14, when Daniel had a vision of the kingdom of God, he said concerning Christ, "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." In a prophecy concerning Christ's kingdom in Psalms 72:8 it says, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." Paul declares these prophecies to be fulfilled in his ministry.

The kingdom of God was set up, set in order, and established on the Day of Pentecost, and soon afterward the gospel was preached unto the Gentiles and there were very many converts among them, and the Gentiles were received into the Church of God. So, it is evident that this was all fulfilled in the atonement of Christ and the ministry of the early Church and the converts to the Church throughout the succeeding generations, and that the kingdoms of this world became the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ through the effects and influence of the gospel.

Thankful Let Us Be

Thank you, Lord, for the night,

Thank you for the day;

Thank you for what's right,

And for this holy way.

Thank you for the dear saints

That walk in holy light;

Thank you for their prayers

That help me see aright.

Thank you for Thy Spirit

That makes salvation complete;

Thank you for rebukes

That keep me low and meek.

Thank you for everything

That you let come on life's way,

To help and guide my soul

To that land of perfect day.

—Effie Miller

Islam Religion of the Middle East

In the middle East and north Africa, the Moslem religion is an important part of the people. Except in Israel, Turkey, and Lebanon, most people in this region are Moslems—followers of Mohammed, and speak Arabic. (It is a mistake to believe that all Arabs are Moslems. Lebanon is an Arab-speaking country, but half its people are called Christians. In Turkey, the people do not speak Arabic, but most of them are Moslems).

Since the Moslem religion affects almost everything the people do, we should know something about it. The Moslem religion was founded by Mohammed early in the 7th century. Mohammed lived in Mecca, Arabia, a city that is Holy for Moslems all over the world. Mohammed called his religion Islam. Islam means "surrender to the will of God." Those who follow Mohammed's religion are called Moslems, or "surrendered ones." It is not correct to call them Mohammedans, for Mohammed did not put himself before his people as a god. He said that he was a prophet, or messenger from God.

Mohammed taught that there was only one God. He called that God *Allah*. There could be no images or idols of Allah. Mohammed set up some rules that all Moslems had to follow, and those they still follow today. First, all Moslems believe in one God, Allah. Second, each Moslem must pray five times a day. (When Moslems pray, they turn toward Mecca, the Holy City.) Third, Moslems are expected to fast (go without food) from sunrise to sunset during the holy month of Ramadan. Fourth, they are required to give help to the needy and poor of the community.

Finally, each member of the Moslem faith must make a trip to the sacred Mosque, or Temple of worship, at Mecca. This religious trip is called a pilgrimage. This pilgrimage should be made during the life of each Moslem. Every year, thousands of Moslems from different parts of the world travel to Mecca to fulfill this duty.

After his death, Mohammed's followers put his words in a book called the *Koran*. This *Holy Book* is considered by Moslems to be the word of God. It is the book used by most Moslem children in learning to read.

Moslems believe that theirs is the only true religion. Each Moslem city has a Mosque, or Temple, of worship. Every morning the Moslem is awakened by a call to prayer from the Mosque. Every Friday the faithful Moslem goes to the Mosque and listens to a reading from the *Koran*. There are no idols or images in the Mosque, and no one may enter who is not a Moslem. The religious beliefs that Moslems share have brought them close together. These beliefs have been carried over into their day-to-day living and into their forms of government. For example, shopkeepers must close down during prayer time.

These rules of religion may sound good to a lot of folks, and they may argue that these folks have a right to their own beliefs. But I disagree, on the grounds of what Jesus taught us. The Islam religion

does not believe on Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. In fact, Mohammed is their Prophet, but Mohammed died just like any other man, and is still in his grave. But Jesus, the Son of God, arose on the third day, and is alive and sitting at the right hand of God.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:18,19.

"And he [Jesus] said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." John 8:23,24.

Those who are fighting in Afghanistan call their war "A Holy War." How could you call anything "holy," when they deny the existence of the Son of God?
—Earl Bliss

Come Home, Poor Sinner

Are there any sinners in the room tonight?

Jesus died to wash you in His blood and make you white.

If you will only ask Him, with an earnest plea, He will freely pardon and give you liberty.

I was once a sinner, and heard the Saviour's call; I answered, "Lord, have mercy." He saved me from the fall.

And now I follow Jesus—He is my all in all; I'm marching now with others along the holy way, And we will dwell together in the land of perfect day.

We never will be sorry that we turned away from sin, And let the Holy Spirit come and dwell within. If you have not received Him, He's calling now for you.

If you will heed and answer, He'll save you through and through.

There is nothing gained by waiting—The door will soon be closed;

Then you will cry with others at last "Too late, too late"

To enter the golden gate.

Eternity is long. I am told it has no end.

Now is the time to seek the Lord. Come while He may be found.

He is not so far away, if you'll just turn around; He is waiting, and has been waiting, to hear your feeble plea:

"Dear Jesus, I surrender. I'm coming, Lord, to Thee. I want to dwell forever with Thee in eternity." Heed the call. Come Home poor sinner.

—Ulysses Phillips

Humility seeks to be humble for no other reason than to be humble.
— C. E. Orr