

Megiddo Message

Vol. 78, No. 4
April 1991

Come, Prince of Peace



Shepherd of Israel and Guardian of our souls, Thou source of all life, all light, all beauty, all love, high above our highest imagination or thought, we worship Thee. We come into Thy presence at this sacred junction in our lives, our hearts overflowing with gratitude.

We thank Thee for bringing us safely to this hour; that in a world filled with dangers Thou hast protected us from harm; in a world filled with fear and uncertainty Thou art preserving us upon a sure foundation of faith. Renew in us the hope which Thou has set before Thy human children; may we long for it with a longing that cannot be suppressed; may we be captured by it, may its reality be our dominant thought each day, each hour; and may we be anxious to bear any cross or make any sacrifice, knowing that anything we do for Thee Thou wilt abundantly recompense to us in Thine everlasting Kingdom to come.

We thank Thee for the gift of Thy Son, He who trod every step of the shining way to life; He who is even now at Thy right hand, awaiting the Day when He shall return to take the throne of Earth and reign in power and glory for the good of all Thy children. Through Him we know Thee; because of Him our way is surer, our path brighter. In Him we have seen the complete pattern of the life Thou dost require of us; help us to follow diligently in His steps.

Father, we thank Thee for those everywhere who make possible the blessings we enjoy. We pray for those who minister to our needs, both temporal and spiritual. We pray for our nation, and for those in authority, who maintain such peace and order that we are not hindered in our service to Thee, that we may perfect in our lives Thy standard of holiness and carry forward the work which Thou hast commissioned us to do.

We pray for all the members of Thy great Church universal, wherever they may be. We pray for those who are separated from us by many miles of land or sea, who are making a sincere effort to please Thee. And we would remember the thousands of known and unknown men and women whom even death cannot sever from Thee, who in their day fought the good fight and kept the faith, and now are awaiting the great Day of Coronation. We remember with special gratitude those whom we have known, whose pattern of holiness was a stimulus to us, whose faith we follow.

We pray also for those who are not yet Thy people, of whom it shall one day be said, "These are the children of the living God." And wilt Thou help us all to prepare the more earnestly for the Day of Christ, and when we have completed our work bring us at last to a place in the glorious Kingdom of Thy Son, our coming King, whom we delight to honor. Amen.

MM

Megiddo means ...

"a place of troops" (Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon); "a place of God" (Young's Analytical Concordance). Megiddo was and is a town in Palestine, strategically located, and the scene of frequent warfare. In the spiritual parallel, it is a place where soldiers engaged in spiritual warfare gather to renew their strength and courage (II Cor. 10:4-5).

We believe ...

- **IN GOD**, the Creator and sustainer of the earth, the world, the universes, and all life, in whom we "live, and move, and have our being."
- **IN THE BIBLE** as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.
- **IN JESUS CHRIST**, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be king of the whole earth.
- **IN THE HOLY SPIRIT**, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate His supreme power and authority.
- **IN LIFE** as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.
- **IN HUMANKIND** as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.
- **IN OURSELVES** as capable of applying in our own lives the precepts and principles taught in the Word of God, in this way perfecting that high quality of moral character which God has promised to recompense with life eternal in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.
- **IN THE PROMISE OF GOD**, that a new age is coming—is near—when the earth shall be filled with His glory, His people, and God's will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

Soon-coming events ...

THE HERALD AND THE KING

OUR PLANET will soon witness the greatest events in its history. For centuries God has been silent. But that silence will soon be broken by the arrival of Elijah the prophet, who comes to herald the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: ...lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6).

Then shall follow the King of kings and Lord of Lords, to begin His momentous work of transforming our world into the glorious and eternal Kingdom of God.

The Bible pictures all events, all men and all nations moving together toward this one God-ordained climax, when "the kingdoms of this world" will become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15), a kingdom in which all will enjoy the blessings of peace, equity and prosperity. When the task is complete, our earth shall be numbered among the heavenly, glorified worlds and filled with immortal inhabitants, bringing to reality the promise of our Lord in His prayer: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

Inside...

Abib and New Year Issue

<i>New Year Prayer</i>	2
<i>Seasonal Articles</i>	
COME, PRINCE OF PEACE.....	4
To have the peace we first need the Prince	
GIFTS FOR THE KING	7
Our gold, frankincense and myrrh	
"STAR OF THE EAST"—What Was It?	9
All Glory, Laud and Honor	
TO JESUS CHRIST THE KING!.....	11
Honoring Christ's birth	
<i>Feature</i>	
FULFILLED...FULFILLED...FULFILLED	14
Prophecy is for us	
<i>Letters</i>	17
<i>Abib Calendar</i>	18
<i>Poem</i>	
I'M PACKING UP!	18
<i>Sermon</i>	
WAITING FOR THE KING.....	19
The fifth and final Conqueror	
<i>Poem</i>	
FROM GLORY UNTO GLORY!	24
<i>Lines to Live By</i>	27
<i>Article</i>	
VISIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR.....	28

Megiddo Message

April, 1991
Volume 78, No. 4

a religious magazine devoted to the cause of Christ and published

for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. Official organ of the Megiddo Church, L. T. Nichols, *Founder*; Newton H. Payne, *President and Editor*; Ruth E. Sisson, *Executive Editor*.

THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE is available in microfilm from University Microfilms, Inc., Serials Acquisitions, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE (USPS 338-120) is published monthly (except July) by the Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619. Second Class postage paid at Rochester, New York. **SUBSCRIPTION RATE:** One year (eleven issues) \$2.00. **POSTMASTER:** Send change of address to Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619-1697.

Unsolicited manuscripts for publication are not accepted.

Bible Quotations: Unidentified quotations are from the King James Version. Other versions are identified as follows: NEB—New English Bible; NIV—New International Version; NASB—New American Standard Bible; RSV—Revised Standard Version; TLB—The Living Bible; JB—The Jerusalem Bible; Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English; Moffatt—The Bible, A New Translation; Spri—A Translation of the Old Testament Scriptures From the Original Hebrew, by Helen Spurrell.

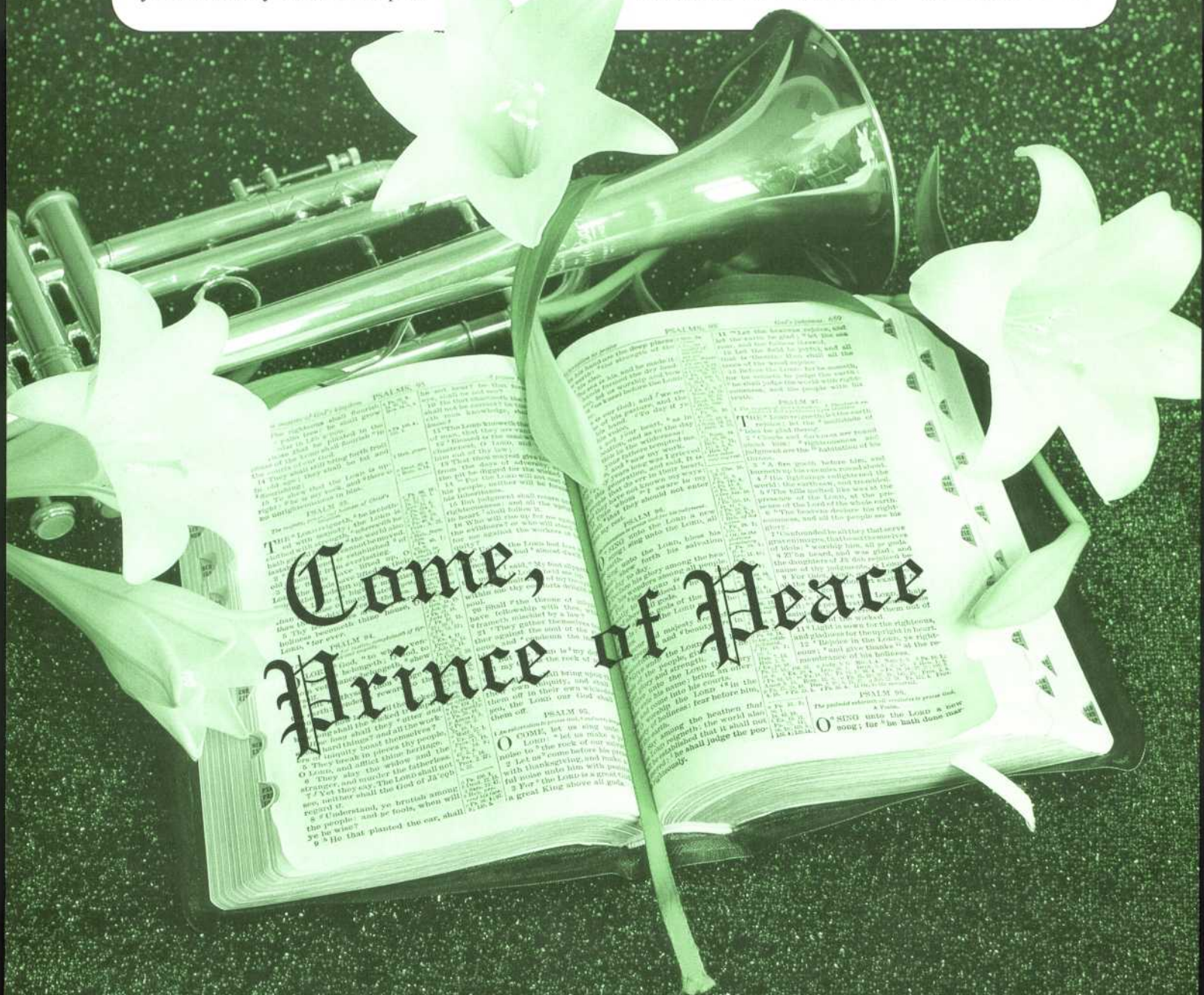
Somehow in this world of fear and tumult, strife and war, hatred and revenge, the Prince of Peace seems out of place. Truly, we need the Peace—almost everyone longs and prays for it. But even more we need the *Prince*, someone with power and authority to take a situation in hand, correct the wrong, and give the troublemakers their just deserts.

We need what the stricken Apostles sought as they stood by Christ just prior to His ascension. We say, "Lord, isn't it time for you to destroy the wicked pow-

ers that dominate and terrify us? Won't you, right now, usher in the Kingdom of perfect peace and righteousness we long for?"

When the Disciples asked this question, the Lord put them off by declaring that it was not for them to know the time of His return. But could we nearly twenty centuries later ask the same question, His answer would be very different, for we are living right now in the era of His coming, when He will return to destroy the wicked powers that dominate and terrify our race, and bring in His everlasting kingdom of peace and righteousness. For remember, "the earth is the

Come, Prince of Peace



Lord's, and the fulness thereof," and when the time is right He will step in and claim it. A Sovereign God has decreed that deliverance will come, that war and grief and pain and death shall not always prevail in the earth; that the rule of sin and misery shall end. An age of peace will dawn with the return of Jesus Christ at the end of this age. The promise is certain: *He shall come again.*

Come, Prince of Peace.

The hour is imminent, but it has not yet arrived. This means that there are still battles to be fought, battles for righteousness and truth. There are still wills to be broken, hearts to be turned, dispositions to be mastered. For we are not ready for the Prince until He is truly *our* Prince, until we have given Him full jurisdiction in our lives, to be the dictator over our concerns, our thoughts, our ambitions, our interests, our all.

Still our longing hearts cry, Come, Prince of Peace! Come, with rewards for the righteous and punishments for the wicked.

Come, with your blessings of health and happiness and healing for all mankind.

Come, and make wars to cease to the ends of the earth.

Come, and rescue our youth from the mire of corruption, and our children from those who exploit and victimize them.

Come, and silence those who deny and desecrate Your holy Name, who publish obscenities and flaunt integrity.

Come, and purge the earth of the sensual and vile, the rebels, the lawless, who care only for their own pride and power.

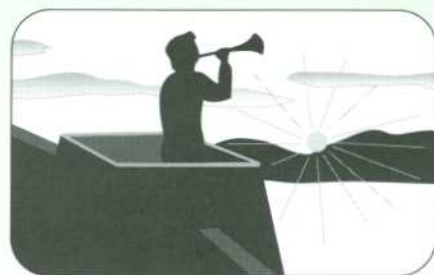
Come, and shatter every stronghold of error and sin.

Come, bring down the haughty and exalt the humble.

Come, Prince of Peace.

Strangely, though, this Prince offers peace only on His own terms, and He will not compromise. When He came the first time, He came to His own, but His own did not receive Him. Rather, they crucified Him. They did not want His type of peace—the price was too high.

The same hostility exists today, though in another form, for men still love darkness rather than light. The Prince's authority is still rejected, the masses preferring strife to peace. As Christians we must be prepared to face this resentment and hostility, all the while striving to maintain our own peace with God. Remember the words of the apostle Paul to the Philippians, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6–7, NIV).



*Awake! Arise! O Church of God,
The crowning day is near;
The Lord of earth, the King of
kings,
On earth will soon appear.
Lift high the standard of your faith,
Quit you like men, for Christ be
strong;
The reign of sin and death on
earth
Will not continue long.*

*Awake! Arise! O Church of God,
And shout the victor's song;
Lift up your heads in confidence,
And bravely march along.
Put on the armor of God's might,
And, pressing onward, win the
fight;
Make known to all the world
around
That truth is this world's light.*

*Awake! Arise! O Church of God,
The morning draweth nigh;
The ear of faith thro' midnight's
gloom
Can hear the watchman's cry.
He comes! He comes! the Prince
of Peace,
The chosen King takes His
domain;
He comes in glorious majesty,
Forevermore to reign.*

Come, Prince of Peace

If we are a friend of the Prince of Peace, we cannot expect the compliments of this world. If, perchance, we should find our lot in this world comfortable and pleasant, we ought to seriously inquire if we might not have succumbed to it. The absence of conflict may well mean the absence of the Prince in our life. For if the world rules us, we will be at peace with the world; if Christ rules, we will be at peace with Him, but at odds with the world. For said the Prince Himself, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18-19).

The Prince of Peace is coming, whether we are ready or not.

Even in the everyday situations of life, the Prince of Peace brought a strange toughness. All was not smooth and agreeable with everyone He met. Far from it! Those who were satisfied with themselves and their religiosity He called scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites. Those who sought to deceive with smooth words and pleasing appearances He called serpents, a generation of vipers. To those who exalted themselves because of their ancestry and assumed superiority He replied, "Ye are of your father the devil," adding, "and the lusts of your father ye will do" (John 8:44).

No, the Prince of Peace is not the fabled "gentle Jesus meek and

mild." Even during His earthly ministry, His was not a gospel of "peace at any price." When He found the money changers in the temple, who had no right to be there, He took a whip and forcefully drove them out. Such harsh action from the Prince of Peace? Indeed! His was a tough-minded peace, an uncompromising peace that demands uprightness before God and peace only with truth and with those who uphold and practice righteousness. Only such know the meaning of real peace.

He is first of all a *prince*, one with authority, one commanding, one who came the first time wielding the sword of the Spirit right and left, and one who is coming again with unlimited power to put down evil and exalt righteousness.

Would we find favor in His sight? We must if we would live in His kingdom, for the Prince of Peace will have no place for the insincere, the double-minded, the haughty, the selfish, the deceitful, the troublesome.

The Prince of Peace has set His standards, and He has set them high—which He has every right to do. "Blessed are the poor in spirit:...Blessed are they that mourn:...Blessed are the meek:...Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness:...Blessed are the merciful:...Blessed are the pure in heart:...Blessed are the peacemakers:...Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake:...Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." And then to sum it all up He says in words too clear to be set aside: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:3-11, 48).

Only when we have met Jesus' standard of character shall we find

peace and the eternal friendship of the Prince of Peace.

Of this same Prince it was written before He was born, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end" (Isa. 9:7)—He was born to rule, and rule forever.

What is it that causes strife? What is it that militates against peace—in the world, among the nations, in ourselves? James asked this very question long ago, and answered it: "From whence come wars and fightings among us? Come they not hence, even of our lusts that war in our members?" (James 4:1, RSV).

This is where the Prince of Peace makes His first claim to authority, on the personal level. We must make peace with Him in our own hearts first. It is a thoughtful question we should ask ourselves: Would a multiplication of my own heart to the hearts of others bring peace or war? Where does the problem lie? Am I myself a center of peacemaking or of discord? Do I allow little disagreements and feelings to disturb my inner peace, or am I able to maintain a steady, onward march to the Kingdom, come what may? What bitterness do I nourish, what resentments do I harbor? When I am tempted to be disturbed, am I able to turn it over to the Prince of my life and let Him handle it, while I go on unhindered with my life of service to Him?

Can I look squarely at myself and my own inner strivings and still say, "Come, Prince of Peace"?

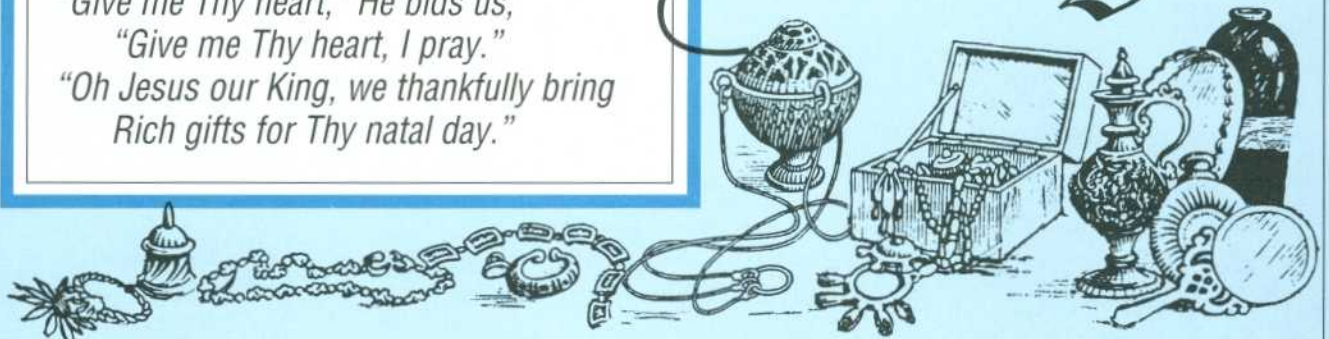
The Prince of Peace is coming, whether we are ready or not. Why not busy ourselves getting ready to welcome Him, so that we may greet Him with joy and hear His welcome words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you!" MM

*They brought Him the best, the fairest
That earthly wealth could find
They offered to Him the rarest,
All else they left behind;*

*We too have a gift to offer,
A gift that He longs to hold,
The one He counts dear,
More precious, more near,
Than incense or myrrh or gold.*

*"Give me Thy heart," He bids us,
"Give me Thy heart, I pray."
"Oh Jesus our King, we thankfully bring
Rich gifts for Thy natal day."*

Gifts for the King



Christ's birth into the world was an event of such importance that a host of angelic beings celebrated it by singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

We read also that three wise men from the East came bringing gifts for the Christ Child. They brought Him of their royal treasure, the most valuable commodities they could procure: gold, frankincense, myrrh. And they gave them in lavish measure to celebrate His birth.

No longer is the Christ-child a child, but a man, the best of men who ever graced our earth, a King in His own right. Hence today our gifts are gifts for the King, and we must bring our best for them to be acceptable.

The people of Israel were severely censured for bringing their second best, the maimed or blemished sacrificial animal from the flock or herd, to offer to the Lord in sacrifice. The principle is eternal. No halfhearted or less-than-perfect sacrifice on our part can meet with Divine approval. And it must be brought willingly. The edict was: "Of everyone that offereth willingly shall ye receive my offering."

The gift that we have to offer, a gift that our King longs to hold, the one He counts dear, more precious than incense or myrrh or gold, is the gift of ourselves. God wants us to offer our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is our reasonable service (Rom. 12:1). Jesus exemplified this in His own life by doing always those things that pleased His heavenly Father. David described it as "a soul with its evil crushed: a heart broken with penitence" which God will never despise (Ps. 51:17, Moffatt).

Gifts for the King

The three wise men showed their wisdom by bringing gifts to the newborn Child. If wise, we too will bring gifts. They brought *gold*. That signifies the giving of tangible wealth. We, too, can bring gold, the cheerful giving of that which we have earned with our own hands, and by the sweat of our brow. It is the giving of that which we have saved through thrift, economy and personal sacrifice. It is the giving of that which we feel is our very own to help others in

God wants—not coins but character; not tithes but tithers; not gifts but givers; not yours but YOU.

temporal or spiritual need. By such giving one is not in reality giving to the Lord, he is only *returning* to God what already belongs to Him.

And we must be willing to give more, much more. We are asked to give our heart. "My son, give me thine heart."

If *frankincense* denotes worship. In the words of a familiar hymn, "Worship is a goodly thing if performed with a humble heart." The worshiper recognizes someone higher, better, superior in every way to himself. In worshiping he acknowledges someone to whom he can bow, and to whom he can look up. This worship we owe to God, as well as to His Son, our coming King. To worship is to show highest esteem, to confess Him to be above us in rank. No one

has learned to evaluate himself in his true light, or to sense his own smallness, until he develops an attitude whereby he longs to worship a Being higher and mightier than himself.

Divine worship and reckless self-esteem cannot dwell together in the same human breast. One or the other must give way.

Worship is the proper expression of gratitude by a mortal man to his heavenly Father. There is no sweeter service possible to man. It is beautiful: "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Ps. 29:2). It is a definite command. But our worship must be sincere. True worship takes us out of ourselves, above ourselves. Worshiping is a turning of our faces toward God.

The worshipful man is a thankful man. He is humble, not self-conceited, not selfish; and in everything he will give thanks. Numberless blessings have attended our lives; to take them for granted with no thought of the Giver would bring no frankincense to our King. So "come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker" (Ps. 95:6).

And they brought *myrrh*: service and loyalty to God, the giving of ourselves. God wants men. Not coins, but character; not tithes, but tithers; not gifts, but givers; not yours, but *you*. A mortal man can do nothing greater than to give himself.

God asks us to give our own thoughts and ways. He wants us to willingly exchange them for His thoughts and ways. He wants us to give up our own private opinions, our own conception of what is right and what is wrong. He wants us to surrender our freedom of speech. He commands: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11).

He asks us to be ready to give to others: give brotherly love, give sympathetic understanding, give Christian affection, give consideration to the viewpoint of others, to those who honestly disagree with us, as well as to those kindred spirits who share our viewpoint.

If we have given ourselves as a gift to our King, our family life will show it. We will do all within our power to promote peace and harmony. Our speech will be straightforward, not ambiguous, or obscure. Our attitude will be peaceful, forbearing, conciliatory. We will at all times show a pattern of good works, giving no offense to any.

In Matthew 10, Jesus groups all the factors entering into the bringing of gifts for the King under the simple formula of giving "a cup of cold water" to one of His "little ones." And in chapter 25 He pictures the Judgment scene with the sheep placed upon His right hand and the goats on His left. He is saying to the sheep: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (vs. 34-36).

Among those placed on the right hand, very few lived during Jesus' short stay on earth, hence, few ever were acquainted with Him personally, so in humble surprise they ask: "When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them,....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" (vs. 37-40).

(Continued on page 10)



Star of the East

What Was It?

It is written in the Gospel of Matthew that a star guided certain wise men from the East to the place where lay the Christ child, the newborn King. We read that "the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy" (Matt. 2:9-10).

Through the centuries this unusual star has been the subject of countless drawings and works of art associated with the Nativity. It has also been the subject of numerous speculations: What was this star?

The ancient peoples, ignorant of the magnitude of the heavenly bodies, thought that the stars could leave their orbits and herald the advent of noted personages. Believing in astrology, they thought the stars and planets could move at one's command. In fact, we are told, "It was the sober belief of primitive Greece that the sun was a torch and the stars candles periodically lit and extinguished" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*).

But the God of the Bible always condemned such ideas. The command was very plain: "Stand now with their enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries,...Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them" (Isa. 47:12-14).

Star of the East

Astronomers have tried to identify this singular "star" which marked Jesus' birthplace with a comet, a meteor, or some other heavenly phenomena which appeared about the time of the birth of Christ, but with little if any solid satisfaction. Speculations are many, but the question remains largely unanswered: What was this star?

If God could summon a multitude of His heavenly hosts to attend this auspicious announcement, could He not send another angel to stand over the birthplace, to show the way to a few who were intent on visiting the Christ Child?

While we do not question the ability of God to make a celestial phenomena coincide with the birth and place of His Son, we do not see any need to resort to this explanation when the Scriptures offer other possibilities.

Among the definitions given by the Hebrew Lexicon for the original word translated "star" we read, "Metaphorically, a prince...an illustrious prince."

The Bible uses the word "star" in this sense. In the first book of the Bible, in Genesis 37, we are told that Joseph dreamed a dream, and in that dream he saw "the sun and the moon and the eleven stars" make obeisance to him (vs. 9-10). When he told his father about the dream, his father replied: "What is this dream that thou hast dreamed?

Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" (vs. 10). Jacob did not even consider a reference to the literal sun, moon or stars, but recognized immediately what was represented by the dream, that he was represented by the sun, the mother by the moon, and the eleven brethren by the eleven stars.

In Numbers 24:17 is a prophecy of Christ which uses the "star" symbol in the same metaphorical sense. We read, "There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." Christ was to be this "star."

The "star" is especially appropriate in its symbolic sense because some of the properties of a "star" are also those of "an illustrious prince." A star radiates light, and we know from the Bible that immortal beings also radiate light. Jesus Himself said, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43). The prophet Daniel stated this same fact when he said, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3).

This light from immortal beings will provide illumination for the new age, physical as well as spiritual. Isaiah prophesied, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory" (Isa. 60:19).

When John saw the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, he saw a city of light. We read: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved

shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there" (Rev. 21:23-25). What a glorious source of never-failing light!

On the night Jesus was born, the announcement of His birth was delivered to shepherds, and the messenger delivering it was an angel. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy...For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:8-11). Then after the one angel had spoken, there was with this angel "a multitude of the heavenly host praising God..." If God could summon a multitude of His heavenly hosts to attend this auspicious announcement, could He not send another angel to stand over the birthplace, to mark the place for the few who were intent on visiting the Christ Child?

MM

Gifts for the King

(Continued from page 8)

Small, seemingly unimportant acts of kindness to the brotherhood will have much to do with obtaining a favorable verdict from the Judge of all the earth.

Let us not be reluctant to bring to the King our gifts of myrrh, faithfulness to God and service to others. Let our lives be so scented with the fragrance of righteousness that its fragrance will flow out to others, bringing benediction and Divine blessing upon all whom we may chance to meet.

Let us this New Year bring gifts for the King of all the earth, that in the Day of the dispensing of the rewards it may be His good pleasure to give us the Kingdom. MM



To **JESUS CHRIST** *the KING!*

When and how should believers honor Jesus Christ? When is the anniversary of His birth? and when is the beginning of the sacred year? Is it in December or May, October or January?

Does the celebration of December 25 honor Jesus? It is a widely acknowledged fact that December 25 is *not* the true date of the birth of Christ. Nor is the common manner of celebrating, with its gross commercialization, any tribute to Him.

Why Not December 25?

The origin of the December festival is simple history. For more than two thousand years before Christ was born, the winter solstice was celebrated by Egyptians, Assyrians and Babylonians. In Rome, December 25 was hailed as Brumalia, the birthday of the "new"-sun after its long journey southward. The date was welcomed by kindled fires and lighted candles as tokens of festivity. It was a time of wild license and revelry.

Why does our present so-called Christian culture associate *Christ*

with this godless, pagan day of merrymaking? Did God arrange that His Son should be born into the world at such a time, and that His followers should celebrate Christmas then?

He did *not*. December 25 on the Christian calendar was a third century innovation. It was not among the holy days carried over from Judaism into the early Church (remember that the Jews were not even willing to recognize that the Messiah was born), nor was its observance begun by the apostles. But in the early centuries after Christ, as the church began to depart from the teachings of its Founder and enlarge its practices and beliefs, the December 25 celebration was added to the church calendar as a "Christianized" festival because of its universal attraction and irrepressible popular appeal. By thus doing the expanding church could win the favor of thousands of pagan worshipers who would, with a few concessions, come into the "fold." To strictly enforce the narrow principles Jesus taught and forbid the

celebration of the winter solstice was unthinkable. Even some so-called "Christians" themselves wanted to celebrate it. The *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* tells us that the celebration of the winter solstice was "too deeply entrenched in popular custom to be set aside by Christian influence....The pagan festival with its riot and merrymaking was so popular that Christians were glad of an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in spirit and in manner."

Sir George Frazer, in his book *The Golden Bough*, writes as he compares Christian and pagan religions and practices that "it was the custom of the heathen to celebrate on the twenty-fifth of December the birthday of the sun. Accordingly, when the doctors of the church perceived that the Christians had a leaning toward the festival, they took counsel and resolved that the true Nativity should be solemnized on that day. It would not be necessary for the newcomers to the faith who had grown up in a pagan world to give up the festive merrymaking of the December holidays."



In the *Encyclopedia Britannica* we find this comment concerning December 25: "This was the date of a pagan festival in Rome, chosen in A.D. 274 by the emperor Aurelian as the birthday of the unconquered sun, which at the winter solstice begins again to show an increase of light. At some point before A.D. 335 the church at Rome (not the God of heaven) established the commemoration of the birthday of Christ, the Sun of righteousness, on this same date." Here they made a connection: that Christ being called the "Sun of righteousness" could be symbolized by the physical sun; hence, those celebrating the sun worship festival could think one step further and at the same time worship Christ as the true "Sun." This was how St. Augustine justified the selection of the date: Christians, he said, should celebrate December 25 not on account of the sun or any sun god but on account of the Sun of righteousness. Even he did not claim it to be Christ's actual birth date.

Is there anything whatever in the Bible to support the observance of December 25? There is nothing, *absolutely nothing*.

Many people who recognize that December 25 is not the true date of Christ's birth rationalize that since the Bible does not tell us the actual date, God could not condemn us for celebrating another date, so long as our heart is right.

We agree that there is no text of Scripture which tells us precisely the date of Christ's birth. We must also remember that the calendar being used at that time was not the same calendar we use today, hence we cannot say Jesus was born on any date on our calendar.

Christ's Birth...When?

Even though we are not told an exact date, the Bible does give us some information about the time of

Christ's birth. To understand it, we first need to locate the beginning of the sacred year, according to Bible reckoning.

From God's directions to His chosen leader Moses, we can learn the date of the beginning of the Hebrew year. At the time the Israelites departed from Egypt, God commanded (Ex. 12:2), "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." And we read the name of this month in the next chapter: "This day came ye out in the month Abib" (Ex. 13:4). The month Abib, then, is the first month of the Bible year.

Abib, or Nisan, is appropriately named; for "Abib," according to the Hebrew Lexicon definition, means "spring, sprouting month, the month of green ears, beginning with the new moon of April or March;...the month of flowers." At the beginning of this month, the first new moon after the vernal equinox, the Hebrews of old recognized the beginning of the sacred new year. The command of God regarding the recognition of this month was specific: "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the Lord thy God" (Deut. 16:1). The month Abib being the first month of the year was to be remembered and observed; it was an important day; also the Passover, which fell on the fourteenth of this month, the anniversary of the night when the Israelites left Egypt, was to be commemorated.

A Spring Date

We feel that the Bible evidence strongly points to a spring date for the birth of Jesus Christ, a date coinciding with the beginning of the sacred New Year. Observe these points:

1) *At the time Jesus was born, shepherds were watching their*

flocks on the Judean hillsides.

The Gospel writers tell us about the time and circumstance of Christ's birth. We read from Luke's Gospel: "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2:8). This could never have occurred in Palestine during the month of December, for the shepherds, we are told, brought their flocks from the mountains and fields and corralled them not later than mid-October, so that they could have protection from the cold rainy season that followed. The sheep were not sent out again until the early spring. The account of Luke, then, limits the time of Christ's birth to the season between March and mid-October.

We are told also by reliable sources that the sheep were actually "watched" in the fields only during the lambing season, which is the spring of the year.

2) *At the time Jesus was born, Caesar Augustus had issued a decree that all should journey to their own city to register for the purpose of taxation.*

If a ruler wished to collect as much tax as possible, it would be unreasonable that he would make such a decree at a season when the roads were for all practical purposes impassable.

3) *At the time Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph were attending a sacred Jewish feast at Bethlehem, the city of David, both of them being of the lineage of David.*

In First Samuel 20 we have a record of David's plans to be absent, for safety reasons, during the following feast days—which could easily have been the Abib or New Year feast, though we are not told. He said to his bosom friend Jonathan, Saul's son, "If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he

might run to Bethlehem his city: for there is a yearly sacrifice [feast, margin] for all the family" (v. 6).

Psalm 81 speaks again of a significant new moon feast, which was a time of celebration and rejoicing: "Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psalter. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob" (vs. 2-4). And verse 5 seems to connect this with the Abib season: "This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt," or as the Knox translation reads, "when he left Egypt"—and we know that the Israelite people "left Egypt" in the month of Abib (Ex. 12:2; 13:4).

If God sent angels to announce the glad tidings of His birth, can we be wrong in our tiny echo of those tidings?

It might well have been the observance of this important new moon feast, probably the feast of Abib, rather than the tax decree, which called both Mary and Joseph to the city; for the presence of only the male member of the house was required for registration. We read: "And all went to be taxed, everyone into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; [because he was of the house and lineage of David]" (Luke 2:1-4). Joseph went up *with Mary* at the time Jesus was born, hence it seems much more

likely that she would have accompanied him for the purpose of attending the feast, not for the matter of the taxation.

4) *The first tabernacle was set up precisely, by Divine decree, upon "the first day of the first month" of the year (Ex. 40:2). It seems reasonable that God arranged that the birth of His Son should occur on the same significant day of the year, He being the reality which the first tabernacle typified.*

What is the connection of Christ with the tabernacle in the wilderness? The tabernacle in the wilderness was God's way of dwelling with men, a symbol of the role Christ shall fill as the eternal tabernacle of God dwelling with men, when "they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God [Christ, Emmanuel, "God with us"]—Matt. 1:23] (Rev. 21:3). Again, Christ is the head of the spiritual house of the Lord (Heb. 3:6), the first stone to be completed for the eternal structure, even the "chief cornerstone" (I Pet. 2:5-6).

For these reasons, the members of the Megiddo Church set aside the first day of the sacred New Year, Abib (which falls on the first new moon after the spring equinox, this year on April 14-15) to thank and praise God for bringing us to another new beginning and to honor our coming King.

Is It Wrong to Celebrate Jesus' Birth?

Some people who recognize the paganism of the December 25 celebration feel that it is wrong to celebrate Christ's birth at *any* time. They point out that the only birth-days mentioned in the Bible are those of Pharaoh and Herod.

While this is true, it may be coincidental; for there are other considerations.

The Bible tells us to render "honor to whom honor" is due (Rom. 13:7), and to whom could more honor be due than He who is our Elder Brother, our Judge, our Advocate with the Father, our perfect Pattern and Example, our coming King? Surely a life so pure and holy and dedicated, and so essential to us, is worthy of special honor. Should not a day spent honoring Him and refreshing ourselves in the principles He taught be of benefit to us in our effort to become *like* Him? Living in an age when His return is imminent, we feel our obligation the more keenly, to do all we can to stimulate ourselves in our effort to prepare for the great Day of the Lord.

By setting aside the first day of the year for spiritual observances, in memory of the New Year and of the birth of Christ, we counter the December 25 observance and take an open stand for God and His cause.

Also, by observing Christ's mortal birth we reinforce our belief in Christ's *mortal* (not Divine) nature, that He did not pre-exist but was in "all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). We honor His birth as the *beginning* of a life and not the incarnation of a life that had been existing for centuries.

At the same time we honor the King, He whose greatest work in our behalf is yet future, when He shall "come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe" (II Thess. 1:10).

In the words of the familiar hymn, "All glory, laud and honor to Jesus Christ the King."

We honor Him not as a babe in a manger but as a mortal being who went the whole way to immortality, and in whose steps we are privileged to follow. If God sent angels to announce the glad tidings of His birth, can we be wrong in our tiny echo of those tidings? MM

Fulfilled... Fulfilled... Fulfilled...

One of these days something dramatically new will occur. The events forecast for the endtime all fulfilled, the heavens will open and down the parted skies will come the King with all His retinue of shining angels. Then will follow the Judgment of His servants and the crowning of the saints, the inaugurating of the new Government, and the ensuing battle of Armageddon. Then there will be worldwide programs of rehabilitation, re-education, restoration, and reconstruction. There will be the glorious Millennium, a thousand years of peace, progress and prosperity while the populace of the Kingdom are developed. Then will follow the final Judgment and the dawn of Eternity. All this is forecast in the Word of God—it is enough to overwhelm the human mind!

Incredible as it all may seem, *it will surely come to pass*—the God of heaven has decreed it. It will come to pass, and right here in our world! The ground on which we now stand

will be under the jurisdiction of the new Kingdom; so will the land that is now under the dominion of every other government on earth today, whether China or Egypt or Germany or Spain. "All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God" (Isa. 52:10). All people everywhere shall bow before the new King, "all nations shall serve him." His dominion shall extend "from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Ps. 72:8).

Quite naturally, there are unbelievers who scoff at all this. They look upon Bible prophecies as mere fancies of human imaginations. They reason, just as Peter prophesied they would, that "all

things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Pet. 3:4), so why should they look for anything different?

But such reasoning is sheer folly. For whatever men believe or disbelieve, "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (Ps 24:1), and what He has foretold will come to pass,

SOON TO BE
FULFILLED

FULFILLED

SOON TO BE
FULFILLED

FULFILLED

SOON TO BE
FULFILLED

FULFILL

SOON TO
FULFILL

NOW gather thyself in troops,
O daughter of troops: he
hath laid siege against us: they
shall smite the judge of Israel
with a rod upon the cheek.
2 But thou, Beth-lehem
Ephrath, that art the least of
the thousands of Judah, thou shalt
be greatly enlarged, saying, I
will be as a city, as a city
of thousands.

wings of a fowl; the beast had
also four heads; and dominion
was given to it.

14 And now, behold, I come unto
my people: come therefore, and
I will advertise thee what this
people shall do to thy people
in the latter days.

SOON TO BE
FULFILLED

16 He hath said, which heard
the words of God, and knew the

REJECTED

~~MALACHI 4~~

4 ¶ Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

**SOON TO BE
FULFILLED**

ST. LUKE 21

ALMOST
FULFILLED

26 Men's hearts failing them
for fear, and for looking after
these things which are coming

**SOON TO BE
FULFILLED**

11 TIMOTHY 3

2 For men shall be lovers of
their own selves, covetous,
boasters, proud, blasphemers,
disobedient to parents, un-
thankful, unholy,
without natural affection,

3 Without natural
trucebreakers, false
incontinent, false
those that
4 Truly, highminded,
pleasures more than
loves of God:

5 Having a form of godliness,
but denying the power thereof:
from such turn away.

6 For of this sort the

man of God, whether it be a message of duty or warning, or a prediction of future events, has concrete assurance

years—even centuries—later. For example, consider the prophecies relating to the birth of Christ. Hundreds of years before it happened, the prophets of the Lord saw in vision or were told by Him when, where and under what circumstance the Messiah should come into the

vain objections of lowly mortals notwithstanding.

How can we know? Because we have prophecy upon prophecy that has been *and is being* fulfilled as foretold.

The accurate forecasting of future events is one of the strongest evidences of the existence of God and of the authority and integrity of His Word. He who can foreknow the future with certainty and accuracy and have it prove true in time must speak by Divine inspiration. And he who speaks as the interpreter or

that the prophecy will come to pass.

Both the Old and New Testaments abound with predictions of the future that were accurately fulfilled

world. Moses says, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me" (Deut.

The accurate forecasting of future events is one of the strongest evidences of the existence of God and of the authority and integrity of His Word.

18:15). The apostle Peter, addressing his countrymen after the healing of the impotent man, confirms this had happened (Acts 3:22), "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear." Then Peter continues in verse 24, "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."

We have the record of the prophecies which were spoken or written centuries in advance, and

them live and they shall see. "These things shall be," because the God of heaven has spoken; and just as surely as part of a prophecy is fulfilled as foretold, so surely shall the remainder be fulfilled. Nothing and no one can hinder the plan of God. What He has begun, He will finish, He who knows the end from the beginning and in whose Hand are the destinies of all men and nations.

The Bible prophecies are meant to be convincing; perhaps that is why God saw fit to give us a mixture of fulfilled, fulfilling and yet-

greater meaning for those living in the age when the Bridegroom shall return. Jesus may have spoken it especially for us, who in the closing hours of the Day would need special warnings as we face special perils—perils of material goals and satisfactions (Luke 21:34), perils of self-indulgence (Luke 12:45), perils of "drowsiness" when we should be exceedingly watchful and alert (I Thess. 5:6).

We today need the warning of God's prophecies as they have never been needed before. There is warning upon warning that the end is near. There is warning upon warning of the conditions we see in the world about us. How desperate our need for that stronger faith to grasp them and never let them go, not even for an instant. We want to be stung with a new awareness of our hope so that we may be fully awake as the reality unfolds before us. On the strength of what has been fulfilled, we can cling with new certainty to that which is still only promise, while we deepen our realization of the intrinsic value these prophecies hold for each of us personally. We are the blessed inheritors of the blessed hope. The prophecies are God-given foundation stones on which we can build a stronger faith at this time when faith is in desperate demand.

As we take another look at them, let us also look inward upon ourselves: Do we believe them? Do we fully believe them? Is the "blessed hope" of the glorious appearing of our Saviour a reality in our thinking? Are we so gripped by it that it is with us constantly, lending strength and stimulus to our lives?

Our Lord may not come in this year that is now dawning. On the other hand—He may! MM

(To be continued next issue)

The prophecies are God-given foundation stones on which we can build a stronger faith at this time when faith is in desperate demand.

we also have the record of their accurate fulfillments. Christ's birth, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension were all vividly and exactly foretold—and fulfilled. Some of the fulfillments are recorded by secular history as well. Coupled with these fulfilled prophecies are other forecasts yet unfulfilled. There are prophecies of Jesus' future work, His Kingship, and the worldwide government He will establish, along with many details about that government. There are also prophecies telling of the times and seasons when all this will begin to happen. This unique combination of fulfilled, fulfilling and soon-to-be-fulfilled prophecies—often within a single passage—gives us a faith, surety and conviction which can withstand the darts of the most skeptical. Our words may not convince them, but let

to-be-fulfilled prophecies. He knew we would need faith-stimulators as no other people ever needed them, and this may be His way of supplying our need. Perhaps this is also why He has not told us *when* any certain prophecy shall be fulfilled. He prefers to keep us in expectancy always. He prefers that we be always looking, living, longing for what He has declared shall be.

God's prophecies are an invaluable stimulus; they are so designed that they move us to alertness. There is no escaping their message. The attitude of the five wise virgins must be ours—alert, expectant, prepared.

The parable of the Ten Virgins was designed to stimulate believers in every age, for no persons ever had longer to prepare than the length of their lifetime. But it has even

Letters

From a Youth in Poland:

Depend on God Only

Not long ago we heard a tape recording of two church programs. The story of the Two Witnesses impressed me the most.

There was a story of a mother and daughter high up in the mountains, worshiping God in the proper manner; whereas the son, after marriage to a pagan woman, turned from this worship and easily agreed to the ceremonial and ritualistic observance of no spiritual depth. The son tried to convince his sister to be converted to this faith but as long as the mother lived, the daughter was afraid to make such a decision. After the death of the mother, the daughter, affected by loneliness and uncertainty, gave in and moved in with the pagans.

The moral of this story is that in losing one's spiritual support it is easy to give in to doubt and forget God. That is why it is so important for each one of us to be spiritually strong and never depend on another person but depend only on God, ask Him for help to persevere. The person may disappear but God is always there to help us.

Warsaw, Poland

M. K.

Totally Re-seed

We cannot ignore sin and let it grow in us. Just weeding our spiritual garden is not enough, we have to totally re-seed our plot. We must pull up the weed of complaint and replace it with the seed of

contentment; replace the seed of anger with patience, and pride with the seed of humbleness.

We must keep God's promises foremost in our minds. He is helping us to prevent sin and we can overcome all.

The crown of life awaits us, and we do want to be ready.

Georgia

C. P.

A Lover of Truth

To be identified with the believers of like mind and purpose is indeed heartening. Who today among the theologians talks about the necessity of being an overcomer—and the gracious rewards that go with it?

With so much pagan thought on every side, we need the proper tools to keep our spiritual mechanism in tune. Where in all of men's literature can we find such gracious words to incite us to strive and spur us to the proper action? My reply and my choice is with David in Psalms 18:32: "It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect."

Wyoming

J. A.

To Live Forever

Often I have meditated and tried to imagine what life would be like in the Kingdom. My first thoughts centered on knowing that I would never die, but have unending life like the angels.

Thinking of unending life changes your whole perspective. It would be a wholly different plane of existence. With

an immortal state, riches, honor and glory would have an altogether different meaning.

Now in our mortal state, our thinking is biased toward a measurable quantity of money which is required to provide the necessities of life. But in God's Kingdom, I believe our view will be from the opposite end of the spectrum, completely divorced from our common thinking now, for we are told in the Bible that it will be beyond our ability to even imagine, and I can readily believe that without reservations.

Louisiana

D.K.

In Appreciation

You are to be congratulated on your excellent magazine. These are difficult times and we hunger for the bread of angels. Some would say "there is no God." But it is inconceivable and unacceptable to imagine this is true.

God said to Abraham: "Get thee out of thy country unto the land that I will show thee" and Abraham obeyed. God spoke to Moses in the burning bush and he went forth to lead Israel out of Egypt. God spoke to Isaiah in the temple: "Whom shall I send and who will go for me?" and he replied, "Here am I, send me." The presence of God never leaves you the same as it found you. Each and every one of us must hear Him and answer by loyal obedience whatever the cost.

New York

L. S.

Obituaries

Andrew Stewart

On February 28 we met to pay our last respects to a friend and brother, Andrew Imrie Gray Stewart, known to the members of the church as Brother Andrew.

He was born in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, on August 3, 1912, and became acquainted with the Church in the early 1930's. He made numerous visits from nearby Hamilton, until he relocated permanently to join our Rochester Congregation in April 1959.

Brother Andrew was a wholehearted supporter and defender of the faith, always ready to present it to anyone who would listen. He was also serious about the evidence beneath it, and gave many hours to Bible study. He was a faithful attendant at all Church services and studies. He also took an active interest in encouraging brethren at a dis-

tance, writing many letters and visiting them whenever possible.

Brother Andrew was very generous with his time, his strength, his money, anything he had to give. He spent many hours in the care and upkeep of the Church grounds and gardens, always making a special effort to have everything looking its "best" for Church holidays. His willingness was outstanding. Whatever needed to be done, large or small, he was there to do his part.

When last September he learned that he was afflicted with the dread disease cancer and perhaps had not long to live, he faced the inevitable suffering bravely, trusting God for strength to endure to the end.

Death is truly termed an enemy; but it is not the worst enemy, for Christ has shown us that death can be defeated. He has not only told us but shown us beyond

all doubt that death can be conquered. For every true believer death is not the end. "Because I live, ye shall live also," He told His disciples (John 14:19). In that soon coming Day the "dead in Christ shall rise" (I Thess. 4:16).

Edna Bailey

We have just been informed of the passing of Mrs. Edna Bailey of Lewisburg, PA, on Saturday, February 23, at the age of 91. Sister Bailey had been a subscriber to the Megiddo Message since 1924, and a frequent correspondent as long as her strength permitted.

She was a firm believer in the second advent of Christ preceded by His herald Elijah, and looked forward to the Day when he would arrive with power to heal and bless.



I'm Packing Up!

*What shall I pack up to carry
From the old year to the new?
I'll leave out the frets that harry,
Thoughts unjust and doubts untrue.*

*Angry words—ah, how I rue them!
Selfish deeds and traces blind;
I will give them no more welcome!
They shall all be left behind.*

*Plans? The trunk would need be double.
Hopes? They'd burst the stoutest lid.
Sharp ambitions? Last year's stubble!
Take them, old year! Keep them hid!*

*All my fears shall be forsaken,
All my failures manifold;
Vain regret shall not be taken
To the new year from the old.*

*But I'll pack each sweet remembrance
Of the One whose law is light,
Who has sent me so much mercy,
In Whose love I take delight.*

*My contentment—would 'twere greater!
All the courage I possess;
All my trust—I need more weight there!
All my talents, more or less;*

*All my tasks; I'll not abandon
One of these—for pride or pelf—
Every trivial or grand one
Is a noble mine of wealth.*

*And I'll pack my choicest treasures,
Words of faith and hope I've heard;
Every lesson that I've mastered,
Every precept from His Word.*

*Ah, I've riches passing measure!
To my rags I bid adieu!
Yes, with gratitude I travel
From the old year to the new!*

ABIB MEANS

...“month of green ears,” “spring or sprouting month.” God commanded Moses to “observe the month Abib” (Deut 16:1; Ex. 12:2; 13:4) in remembrance of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt.

Abib 1

Sunday evening, April 14, continuing through Monday, April 15, Bible time being measured from evening to evening (Lev. 23:32). It was the pattern of the Hebrew people to begin the new year with the first occurrence of the new moon after the Spring Equinox. Accordingly, Abib First is the first day of the sacred New Year, and the day on which we observe the anniversary of our Saviour's birth.

Abib 13

The anniversary of the night when Jesus partook of the Last Supper with His disciples before He suffered. It falls this year on the evening of April 26. At this time we partake of the emblems (unleavened bread and grape juice) in obedience to the command, “This do in remembrance of me.” It is a sacred rite,

symbolic of the renewal of our covenant relationship with God, the bread representing the knowledge of the law of God, and the juice the wholehearted application of that knowledge to our daily lives, the offering of ourselves in total dedication to do the will of God.

Abib 15

The anniversary of the Resurrection of Christ, this year the morning of April 29. In ancient Israel, this was the day of the waving of the first sheaf of the harvest before the Lord. On this morning, Christ the first fruits from death rose triumphant over the grave. On this morning, after the crucifixion, even “very early in the morning,” certain women found their way to the tomb. Finding it empty, they heard those immortal words that still stimulate us today: “He is not here, for he is risen! Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”

Pentecost

Fifty days after the waving of the first sheaf offering, falls this year on June 17.

WAITING for the KING

That which follows is an eye witness account of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth in 1953. I quote:

"I watched in England with the coronation crowds. All London was a spectacle of fantastic preparation, for royal splendor defies description. As early as twenty-four hours before the dawn of Coronation Day, eager thousands began their struggle for a vantage point along the streets where the procession was to pass. Through the long night they waited patiently. What mattered the cold, or the hardness of the sidewalks? Were they not to see their queen?"

"Then as the morning came, those early watchers were joined by multitudes of others banked tier upon tier. Big Ben ticked above them as they watched. Occasionally their patriotic chatter was interrupted by the whisper, 'She's coming!' At this every eye strained eagerly to see if the report might be true. Again and again the whisper rippled along the sidewalks, 'She's

coming!' But always there was disappointment.

Big Ben had struck high noon before the coronation was completed at Westminster Abbey. Finally in the distance the trumpets were heard, and the waiting throngs passed the cry from mouth to mouth, 'The Queen is coming! The Queen is coming!'

Down along the centuries has echoed the promise of the Saviour,

"He is coming!" But always there has been disappointment. God's clock has not yet struck the hour.

The feeling of thousands who during the past century have hoped for Christ's return might be expressed in these words: "I can understand the disappointment of those who waited for Elizabeth II to appear, for that is exactly the way I have felt about the Second Coming of Christ. Father and

The next great event on the stage of human history is destined to be the second coming of Jesus Christ, to whom earth's crown belongs!

"I will come again!" Hardly had He disappeared into the skies when His followers, mistaken as to the time of His re-appearance, began to look for Him to return. Again and again a lone voice has whispered,

mother expected Christ's return, and they were disappointed. My grandparents before them were taught the Second Coming, but never saw that Day. How can I know that I too will not be disap-



WAITING for the KING

pointed? Christ may not come during my lifetime."

But the fact that the King has not yet come is no reason to doubt that He is coming. Or the fact that earnest souls began looking for the King to come before His actual arrival date does not weaken the assurance that He will arrive.

How could a child of the heavenly Father be worthy of His relationship if he was so little concerned about His Father's promises as to take lightly the forecast of the

that will yield to the computations of men. We cannot feed world conditions into a computer, along with the thinking of great leaders, and come up with the answer. Jesus said: "Ye know not when the time is." However, in I Thessalonians 5:1-4, the apostle Paul infers that while the Day of the Lord will come upon the unsuspecting world as a thief in the night, yet the times and seasons will be known to the believers.

It has never been God's plan to

ture is silent on the subject of the times and seasons when Christ will return, for it is not. The difficulty is that men are unwilling to accept what the Scriptures say about the future.

During Kaiser Wilhelm's heyday a certain prophecy was once explained to him. As he began to get the drift of it, as he began to see what its fulfillment would mean to him personally, he said, "I can't accept it! It doesn't fit in with my plans."

Nor did it fit into the plans of the ancient king to whom it was first spoken. Watch the intriguing drama as it unfolds!

An Ancient Drama

Absolute monarch of his golden day, the king lies in troubled sleep. As he tosses and turns on his royal couch, shadows of anxiety and distress steal across his face. The cares of world dominion have weighed heavily upon the ruler's mind. He has looked questioningly into the future. Would his kingdom pass into ruins as had those before him?

Now God takes note of what this man has been thinking and gives him a strange dream. And then He allows him to forget it! Morning comes, and the king's desperation to recall the dream brings confusion to the court. His counselors, even under threat of death, are unable to suggest what might have been the subject of his dream. But out of the confusion there arises a man of God—a captive from a conquered land.

The king—Nebuchadnezzar. The time—six hundred years before Christ. The hero of the hour—the prophet-statesman Daniel. Listen as in unmistakably clear language Daniel reveals first the dream and then its meaning; it is recorded in the second chapter of Daniel:

"Thou, O king, sawest, and beheld a great image." Eagerly the

The fact that the King has not yet come is no reason to doubt that He is coming.

return of His dear Son to earth? The day and hour not being revealed, believers in the Divine promise could not do otherwise than to—like the coronation of Queen Elizabeth—begin looking for the King "before" His actual hour of arrival. And this attitude is set forth by Christ as the correct attitude for the alert Christian: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (Mark 13:33-37).

God Always Warns

The hour of Christ's coming and the end of the age is not a secret

take men by surprise. He said through the prophet Amos, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). The great catastrophe of Noah's day was preceded by the preaching of Noah. The ministry of Jesus was preceded by the work of John the Baptist. Jesus foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, warning His followers to escape to the hill country for safety. Will no prophet warn men that the hour of Christ's coming is upon us in these last days? Yes indeed! God through Malachi proclaims: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6). And Jesus Himself declared: "Elias (Greek form of the name Elijah) truly shall first come, and restore all things" (Matt. 17:11).

The difficulty is not that Scrip-

king watches the noble face of the young Prophet as he speaks.

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay."

Yes, that is it! It was as if he could see it again! Absolutely spellbound, Nebuchadnezzar, proud monarch of the mighty Babylonian empire, looks at the youthful Daniel in amazement. Here an unassuming servant of God is reporting with uncanny accuracy the dream that only a few hours ago had flooded his mind.

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces....And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

The king relived the startling scene! He saw again the stately image with its head of glittering gold, its breast and arms of polished silver. He saw again the body and thighs of burnished brass, the legs of solid iron, and strangest of all, the mixture of iron and clay of which the feet were formed.

But why was the gold replaced by silver, and the silver by brass? What was the meaning of the great stone that came thundering upon the feet of the image to grind it to powder? What was this rock that would become a great mountain and fill the whole earth? Would Daniel tell him? Leaning to the edge of his throne, the monarch breathlessly awaited Daniel's next words. And how it swelled the king's vanity as Daniel said simply, "Thou art this head of gold."

Here was flattering news. He—Nebuchadnezzar—the head of gold! Any clever politician would have stopped there. But Daniel con-

tinued with the interpretation exactly as God had revealed it to him. "And after thee shall arise another kingdom."

Oh—! Could it be? Babylon was *not* to last forever. Was Babylon, then, only the first of a *series* of kingdoms that would succeed upon the ruins of one another? Could God be tracing the rise and fall of nations to the end of time? Was He answering only Nebuchadnezzar's questions about the future? Or was He answering yours and mine? We shall see!

"*After thee* shall arise another kingdom." These bold words were enough to blast anyone's dreams of grandeur. Here was anything but a happy revelation. More perplexing still, the proud king was to be succeeded by an inferior power. This did not fit into his plans. His kingdom must not be succeeded by another.

But the gold *was* replaced by the silver—and in Daniel's lifetime, at that! You remember Belshazzar's feast, when in a drunken revelry the

had swept the power of Greece to dizzy heights of victory in five short years. At the youthful age of twenty-five he was master of all he surveyed. Seven years later he was dead! So swiftly does earthly glory fade. The brass kingdom toppled.

"And the *fourth* kingdom shall be strong as iron," Daniel had continued in verse 40. That fourth kingdom was Rome—the iron monarchy of history. It was in the days of Rome that Christ lived and died. Roman soldiers officiated at the crucifixion. A Roman seal closed His tomb.

Four world empires! And would you not naturally expect that if there were four, there might also be a fifth, arising upon the ruins of the fourth? or a sixth, or a seventh?

But no! The divine forecast says in verse 41, "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided." Something new here. The order of events should be reversed. A division was to set in. And did it happen?

**"Take ye heed, watch and pray:
for ye know not when the
time is."**

kingdom was overthrown, conquered by Cyrus the Persian.

The dual monarchy of the Medes and the Persians, represented by the breast and arms of silver, ruled for about two hundred years. Today it, too, lies in ruins. The prophecy had said, "And another third kingdom of brass... shall bear rule over all the earth."

Climaxing in the famous battle of Arbela, 331 years before Christ, the young and ambitious Alexander

Yes. During the fourth and fifth centuries several distinct nations came into being within the boundaries of western Rome. Rome, the mighty empire of the Caesars, disintegrated before the onslaughts of barbarians, and in her place we see the well-known nations of Germany, France, Switzerland, Portugal, England, Spain, and Italy.

I ask you, Could man by his own wisdom predict the future with such accuracy? No! Fulfilled Bible



WAITING for the KING

prophecy stamps the Word of God as Divine. But now listen to verse 43: "And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

What do you think of that! Europe will not stick together!

The Hand that made the atom is "controlling" the hands that discovered its secret, for the kingdoms of this world will be in power when the great King arrives.

Just as the prophecy predicted long ago, men have repeatedly tried to unite the segments of ancient Rome into one mighty empire again. They have attempted to re-establish the dictatorship of the Caesars. But God says in seven crisp words of prophecy, "*They shall not cleave one to another.*"

These are the words—the seven words—that form a barrier to every dictator who dreams of world conquest. No plan to rule the world will ever succeed for long. For the God who knows the end from the beginning says that the broken pieces of Rome will not cleave together. They will not stick!

We begin to see the pattern behind history's uncanny repetition. Nebuchadnezzar had no trouble ruling the world. Nor did Cyrus and Darius, or Alexander, or the Caesars. But then all was changed. Since the days of the Roman Empire, history, like a broken phonograph record, tells the story of every would-be dictator in one persistent word: "Defeat—defeat—defeat!"

That one word tells the story of Charlemagne, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, Hitler, and every dreaming dictator who yet may follow. And back of it all is a power-packed prophecy.

Many powerful peace agencies have attempted to bring about a United States of Europe. But no man, nor group of men, no nation,

no combination of powers, can ever long succeed, for it is written, "They shall not cleave one to another." And today, with the world's two major nations divided so nearly equally in power—plus the potential for destruction provided by the hydrogen bomb—neither has a ghost of a chance to win over the other and survive.

And now the climax of it all, the destiny of the nations—your destiny and mine—is found in the words of Dan. 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed."

Not in the days of Babylon, not in the days of Persia, not in the days of Greece, not in the days of Rome, but down in the days of these kings, in our time, God will set up His kingdom. And Revelation 11:15 adds impact to the words of Daniel: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Wonderful news! The next great event on the stage of human history is destined to be the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom earth's crown belongs! His coming kingdom is the stone that will strike the image on the feet—not in the days of the head of gold, or the silver, or the brass, but in the days of the feet of iron and clay—and become a great mountain and fill the whole earth.

And there need be no fear. Men may talk of a switchboard of annihilation, triggered by some fumbling finger. But the God of heaven places barriers before nations, dictators, and "men." To all He says, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further."

Through these perplexing days you may have the settled assurance that the Hand that made the atom is "controlling" the hands that discovered its secret. God will permit men to go only so far, for the kingdoms of this world are not to be totally destroyed by man's ingenious devices. According to the Word of God, they are finally to surrender, not to each other, but to the scepter of Christ Jesus Himself.

If this were a political discourse, if these were ordinary times, you might appreciate this message and merely remark, "Well, that's interesting. It has added to my store of information." And all would be well. However, I sincerely believe that we are brought face to face with the most important decision a man or woman can make—that of placing ourselves on God's side.

The King is coming! No thoughtful man or woman interested in his or her own eternal welfare dare let this information go unnoticed. Some may not like it, may not care to adjust to it. But none *dare* ignore it. There is not time to ignore it!

No message for the new year could be more pertinent than the

warning to "get ready" for the coming of the great King. Someone has suggested that the message on the familiar religious wall plaque, "Rules for Today," would be much more meaningful if stated in the affirmative rather than in the negative. It then would read: "Do only the things you would wish to be doing when Jesus comes; say only the things you would wish to be saying when Jesus comes; go only to the places where you would like to be found when Jesus comes."

This was the message Jesus was stressing to His disciples—and to us—in Luke 12. Beginning at verse 35, we read (Moffatt translation): "Keep your loins girt and your lamps lit, and be like men who are expecting their lord and master on his return"—oh, He is talking about "our" very time. He is not talking about His own day—"be like men who are expecting their lord and master on his return from a marriage-banquet, so as to open the door for him at once, when he knocks" (vs. 35-36).

Jesus here illustrates His point by picturing a well-to-do householder. He had gone away from home to attend a wedding feast, leaving his house in the care of his servants. It was their duty to watch, to be awake and alert, ready to receive him at whatever hour of the day or night he might return. Likewise Jesus, the great householder, has gone to heaven, and for a time is seated at His Father's right hand, feasting on celestial glories. But some day He is going to return to His earthly house, and if we are to prove one of His faithful servant we must be awake and watching, to keep ourselves in perpetual readiness, in a state of expectancy, that whenever He comes we may be ready to open to Him without delay.

Christ is here talking about His

return, and about the people who will be living when He returns. In that day He told them it would be a long time before He would come back. But here He is talking of a class of people that will be living and looking for Him at His return. It is a striking thing that nineteen hundred years ago He would be talking about a people living down at the close of these Gentile times. And He said to them: "Keep your loins girt and your lamps lit, and be like men who are expecting their lord and master on his return." He was not talking about the people living in His day, He had no reference to those who are sleeping in death, but He is talking about the people who will be living when He comes. Blessed are those servants whom the lord and master finds awake when He comes! Yes, "wide" awake when He comes.

Our Lord would have us labor with our hands, just as Paul said he did, but be ready. Hold the things of this life with a loose hand ready to drop them at a moment's notice when Christ appears. "Whether he

not think the time of waiting excessively long. Do not think He is not coming, whether it be the second or third watch, or even later, do not grow tired of waiting. The King is coming!

Then in v. 39, Jesus uses another simile to stress the importance of watchfulness, the thief entering under the cover of darkness: "Be sure that if the householder had known at what hour the thief was coming, he [would have watched], he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. So be ready yourselves, for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect." Who is it that does not expect Him? Do you suppose those who are watching will be taken by surprise? Do you suppose it is that class? No, indeed! those expecting their Lord will not be taken by surprise!

Let us read on. "Peter said, 'Lord, are you telling this parable for us, or is it for all and sundry?'" I am always glad that Peter asked that question, "Are you talking this way for our enlightenment, Lord?"

The King of the ages is about to step over the threshold of time. Every timepiece of haughty man's vain programming will be stopped, never to be started again. Time will turn upon its hinges and become eternity!

come in the second or the third watch of the night and finds them thus alert, blessed are they!" (v. 38). The wording here suggests a little space of time near the end. If He does not come in the "second" watch of the night, then look for Him to come in the "third"; but do not think that He is not coming. Do

Peter did not just understand it. "What time do you refer to, Lord?" That was the pith of Peter's question. "The Lord said, 'Well, where is the trusty, thoughtful steward whom the lord and master will set over his establishment to give out supplies at the proper time?'" or,

(Continued on page 26)

From Glory

Unto Glory

"But we all, with open face
beholding as in a glass the glory
of the Lord, are changed into the
same image from glory to glory, even as
by the Spirit of the Lord." —II Corinthians 3:18

*"From Glory unto Glory!" Be this our joyous song,
As on the narrow way to life we bravely march along!
"From Glory unto Glory!" O word of stirring cheer,
As dawns the solemn brightness of another glad New Year.*

*"From Glory unto Glory!" Our faith hath seen the King!
We own His matchless beauty, as adoringly we sing;
But He hath more to show us! O thought of untold bliss!
And on we press exultingly in blessed hope to this.*

*To marvelous outpourings of His "treasures new and old,"
To largeness of His bounty, paid in the King's own gold,
To glorious expansion of His mysteries of grace,
To radiant unveilings of the brightness of His face.*

*"From Glory unto Glory!" What great things He hath done,
What wonders He hath shown us, what triumphs He hath won!
We marvel at the records of the blessings of the year,
But sweeter than the Christmas bells rings out His promise clear*

*That "greater things," far greater, our longing eyes shall see!
We can but wait and wonder what "greater things" shall be;
But glorious fulfillments rejoicingly we claim,
While pleading in the power of the All-Prevailing Name.*

*"From Glory unto Glory!" What mighty blessings crown
The lives for which our Lord hath laid His own so freely down!
Omnipotence to keep us, Omniscience, too, to guide,
Jehovah's blessed Presence with us ever to abide!*

*The fulness of His blessing encompasseth our way;
The fulness of His promise crowns every brightening day;
The fulness of His glory is beaming from above,
While more and more we realize the fulness of His love.*

*"From Glory unto Glory!" Without a shade of care,
Because the Lord who loves us will every burden bear;
Because we trust Him fully, and know that He will guide,
And know that He will keep all His beloved at His side.*

*"From Glory unto Glory!" Though tribulation fall,
It cannot touch our treasure, when Christ is all in all!
Whatever lies before us, there can be naught to fear,
For what are pain and sorrow when Jesus Christ is near!*

*"From Glory unto Glory!" O marvels of the Word!
"With open face beholding the glory of the Lord,"
We, even we (O wondrous grace!) "are changed into the same,"
The image of our Saviour, to glorify His name.*

*The things behind forgetting, we only gaze before,
"From Glory unto Glory," that "shineth more and more,"
Because our Lord hath said it, that such shall be our way,
(O splendor of the promise!) "unto the perfect Day."*

*"From Glory unto Glory!" Our fellow-travelers still
Are gathering on the journey! The deep, electric thrill
Of quick, instinctive union, more frequent and more sweet,
Shall swiftly pass from heart to heart in true and tender beat.*

*And closer yet, and closer, the golden bonds shall be,
Enlinking all who love our Lord in pure sincerity;
And wider yet, and wider, shall the circling glory glow,
As more and more we're taught of God that mighty love to know.*

*O ye who seek the Saviour, look up, in faith and love;
Come up into the sunshine, sent from our God above!
No longer tread the valley, but, clinging to His hand,
Ascend the shining summits and view the glorious land.*

*Our harp-notes should be sweeter, our trumpet-tones more clear,
Our anthems ring so grandly that all the world must hear!
O, royal be our music, for who hath cause to sing
Like the chorus of redeemed ones, the children of the King!*

*O let our adoration for all that He hath done
Peal out beyond the stars of God, while voice and life are one;
And let our consecration be real, and deep, and true;
O, even now our hearts shall bow, and joyful vows renew!*

*In full and glad surrender we give ourselves to Thee,
Thine utterly, and only, and evermore to be!
O Son of God, who lovest us, we will be Thine alone,
And all we are, and all we have, shall henceforth be Thine own!*

*Now onward, ever onward, "from strength to strength" we go,
While "grace for grace" abundantly shall from His fulness flow;
To glory's full fruition, from glory's foretaste here,
Until His very Presence crowns our happiest New Year!*



WAITING for the KING

(Continued from page 23)

"meat in due season" (vs. 41-42).

Jesus said, "at the proper time," that would denote the time when the midnight cry, The Lord is coming, get ready! was sounded, and someone started giving out the bread of heaven and the water of life. This is the portion of meat in due season. During the long twelve-hundred-sixty-year period all were asleep. God did not give out any meat, for there was no one to eat it. But in our day a time came when someone would take the food, the meat in due season, then it was given out.

**Will you place
yourself on
God's side?
NOW is the time to
decide.**

Then Jesus continues: "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant if his lord and master finds him so doing when he arrives! I tell you plainly he will set him over all his property" (v. 42).

Now continuing in Luke 12:54 we find Jesus discoursing on a theme that is related to what He said earlier in the chapter about His faithful servants living in expectancy. To the crowds he said, "When you see a cloud rise in the west, you say, 'There is a shower coming,' and so it is: when you feel the south wind blow, you say, 'There will be heat,' and so it is." Now, says Jesus, you can judge that. "You hypocrites, you know how to

decipher the look of earth and sky; how is it you cannot decipher the meaning of this era?" What time? Why the time He has been talking about in these last days when the faithful servant will give meat in due season, and the earnest life-seekers will be as men expecting their Lord. We see the signboards along the way with as much vividness as we can see an approaching shower, or forecast warmer weather when the south wind blows. Here is something written for us in this very time, hence Jesus says: "You hypocrites, you know how to decipher the look of earth and sky: how is it you cannot decipher the meaning of this era?"

Beloved ones, let us be as men really expecting their Lord. Let us show by our daily living that we *are* expecting our King. Can we induce anyone to believe that we are expecting our Lord if we are all engrossed in temporal concerns so that we have no time for Him and His interests? The Psalmist said: "I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works...They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom" (Ps. 145:5, 11-12). But if from one day's end to the other we never speak a word about Him or His coming, or the great work He is to do when He comes, can we make anyone believe we are expecting Him?

If expecting friends to visit us from some point a thousand miles distant, dear friends that we have not seen for twenty years, even if we were not certain as to their exact arrival date, we would be preparing for them, and every one we talked with would know it. Their expected visit would be the topic of our conversation. All who called upon us would be aware of our joyful expectancy. We would be talking

about it, planning for it, preparing for it. If we truly expect a heavenly Visitor, if we look with delight to Christ's coming to bring us the greatest blessings that can fall on a human being, our life will show it.

If expecting to meet a royal guest we would be concerned about our appearance. With the bride of Christ the clothing also is very important. It can mean the difference between rejection and acceptance. Paul, speaking of Christ and the Church, said: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:26-27). If expecting our Lord, our bright prospect will go with us at all times. We will be apprehensive lest we be taken off our guard, and that Day takes us by surprise. We cannot be waiting for the King until we are ready.

When Queen Victoria visited Lord Lester's proud castle in the midlands of the British Isles, rippling through the ranks of her eager, waiting subjects was the whisper, "The Queen is coming!" Then, as she stepped across the threshold into the castle, in her honor the great timepiece of the castle was stopped, never to be started again, forever marking the moment of her arrival.

The King of the ages is about to step over the threshold of time. Every clock, every watch, every timepiece of haughty man's vain programming will be stopped, never to be started again. Time will turn upon its hinges and become eternity!

Will you place yourself on God's side? This is the moment to decide. Eternity has no clock. Decision belongs to time, and the time is NOW!

MM

Don't Just "Wish"!

You wish you had more faith? Stop WISHING and start WORKING!

- *FEED your faith the facts*—and it will grow.
- *READ the Word of God*—and it will increase.
- *EXERCISE your faith*—and it will become stronger.

The more you apply what you know the more confidence you will gain. The more you look, the more you will see God working.

What is there about human nature that makes it easier to break a commandment than a habit?

Do worthy tasks remain undone because I lack faith, vision, courage, and the will to work?

The wisdom of life lies in avoiding nonessentials.



IT IS one of the fundamental laws of life that we lose that we may win; we serve that we may rule; we stoop that we may conquer; we sacrifice in one direction that we may secure liberty in another. We deny ourselves on the lower level that we may experience the greater freedoms of the higher; we suffer that we may enjoy; we die to self that we may live to God.

Why do opportunities always look bigger going than coming?—and difficulties always look bigger coming than going?

Besides the noble art of getting things done, do not forget the still nobler art of leaving some things undone.

Only those who are truly bound to Christ are truly free.

If Only ... !

How gentle we would be, if only we were not provoked; how forgiving, if we had not been so deeply wronged! How easily entreated we would be, if only others would be more reasonable; how understanding, if they were not so petty! How pious we would be, if only we were not so busy; the sick would be patient, if only he were well.

If only... if only... God help us!

*V*ision for the *N*ew *Y*ear

- * *to see in every difficulty an opportunity, in every hindrance a help to our spiritual advancement;*
- * *to practice the presence of God; to forget self and remember Christ;*
- * *to turn my weaknesses into strengths;*
- * *to see light along the edge of every shadow;*
- * *to be a living example of the joy of Christian faith;*
- * *to profit from the past, to live earnestly in the present, and look hopefully—eagerly—expectantly—to the glorious future God is holding for every loving, obedient one.*